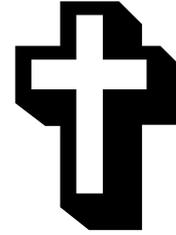


The Methodist Church – Bristol District

Upper Thames Circuit

Monthly Newsletter

No 34



November 2016

This Month's opening letter comes from Paul Holloway, Circuit Steward:

Dear Friends

As one of the Worship Leaders at our church here in Shrivenham I am often asked to lead the prayers of intercession at morning worship. I consider this a privilege as it enables me to bring together all the people, events and situations that our Saturday morning prayer group ask us to bring to the Lord as well as prayers for situations within the wider world. As Christians we know with absolute certainty that our God hears our prayers and that in his own good time and in his own way (which, more often than not, is not the way in which we would like them to be answered) he will indeed answer those prayers.

However certain we are about our prayers being answered it is nonetheless wonderful if we can in some way have that fact confirmed beyond all reasonable doubt and I want to share with you an experience that I had just a few weeks ago. One of our local preachers (known to you all but remaining nameless for the purposes of this letter) asked me to do the prayers of intercession and I duly prepared what I was going to pray for. After I had returned to my seat one of the other members of our congregation mentioned to me that one of our number was due to have an operation that coming week (a fact which I had not known) and that I had not prayed for that person. During the next hymn I went up to the preacher and he asked if I would go back to the lectern and say a short prayer for that person.

As I finished the prayer I opened my eyes and saw smoke (possibly incense) rising up from the Bible on the lectern. I was not imagining this (in fact I looked under the top of the lectern to see if the connection to the lectern mike was shorting out, which it wasn't. No one else saw any of this but I firmly believe that what I saw was a miracle and it has given me great comfort (and has made my daily quiet time even more intimate that it had previously been).

How great our God is. May he bless you all richly.

In His love

Paul

NB: The deadline for items for the December/January newsletter is Thursday, 25th November

DISTRICT AND CONNEXION NEWS/EVENTS:

NEWS FROM THE NEW ROOM

For all the latest news, please see Appendix 'A' of this newsletter.

CONNECTING DISCIPLES

The Connecting Disciples Lay Employees Conference, 6-9 March 2017, High Leigh Conference Centre

Bookings are now open for the Connecting Disciples conference for lay employees, which will take place on 6-9 March at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon. Early bird prices are available until 7 November 2016.

For further information and to book a place at the conference, please go to:

www.methodist.org.uk/connectingdisciples

Please note that an additional Connecting Disciples event will also take place at Cliff College Derbyshire on 9-11 June 2017.

Many thanks

Connecting Disciples 2017 Planning Group

NOTES FROM EMMA MILLS (District Youth Enabler)

1. District Youth Week-end: Fun Size
JUMP

Please see the poster and booking forms (attached to the email to which this newsletter is attached) for the "Bristol District Youth Weekend Fun Size" Day Event in March next year 2017.

UPDATE this is the event we talked about possibly holding in November this year but too many of the key youth workers couldn't make itso please note there will be no district event in 2016!!

There will STILL ALSO be the main District Youth Weekend in October next year 2017. Date & location to be confirmed very soon.

We really hope you and your young people can make this day event called JUMP. There is no need to wait until the booking deadline, feel free to send bookings as soon as you want!

2. 3GENERATE NEEDS YOU!

25th – 27th November PGL Liddington

As many of you will know 3Generate, the Methodist Church's Children & Youth Assembly, moved to Swindon last year and returns again this year. The event is very popular and growing year on year (this year's tickets sold out in record time).

As the event grows, the need for volunteers grows with it. Volunteers will be needed from all over the country, but Local people can play a vital role in the events success. The event particularly needs people to help set up on Friday, to man the registration desks on Friday evening, to help with de-registration on Sunday lunch time and clearing up on Sunday afternoon.

This year we have created a web page that lists all the volunteer roles that are needed, also more details and the application form, please follow the link below

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/mission/3generate/getting-involved/volunteering>

REGISTRATION DESK FRI EVE & CLEARING AWAY SUN AFT

If you are unable to commit to attending the full weekend or any of the roles below then PLEASE could you consider offering to help out with one or more of the following roles:-

- Setting up Friday 2.30-4.30pm
- Registration Desk Friday 6pm-10pm
- De Registration Sunday 12-3pm
- Clearing Away 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Please don't hesitate to contact Chris Parker for further information parker@methodistchurch.org.uk and/or chat to me J. As you would expect the majority of volunteers will need a relevant DBS and have had safeguarding training, also there is an on-line recruitment process for safeguarding reasons, but any queries regarding this please don't hesitate to ask.

Emma Mills

District Youth Work Enabler

Emma.YouthWorkEnabler@virginmedia.com Tel: 07989 496316

All of the following info which I thought you might be interested in has come to me via Facebook.

I highly recommend you have a look at (and ideally sign up for notifications from) the Methodist Children & Youth Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Methodist-Children-Youth-126895266084/> AND The Methodist Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/DMLN-Bristol-West-Midlands-334381623380567/?fref=ts> As they both provide really useful information

1) *LAY WORKER DAY RETREAT*

Advance Notice for all Lay Workers.

The DMLN Regional Team is delighted to offer another Day Retreat for Lay Workers at Barnes Close near Bromsgrove on **Tuesday 15th November 2016** (10am to 4pm).

The Retreat is entitled Preparing the Way. The day will be shaped to help us prepare personally for the Advent season and to reflect on how the Advent season can be one in which we invite others through our work to prepare for Christ's coming.

There will be time together and plenty of time for creativity, personal space and reflection. The day will be led by regional team member Andrew Roberts.

Places are limited to 33 and a contribution of £15 per participant is requested. To book your space please email Andrew via robertsa@methodistchurch.org.uk He will then provide details of how to pay the requested contribution. Please note that replies to emails may not be immediate during the summer holiday period.

2) *HOLINESS & JUSTICE SESSION RESOURCE*

In a time of turmoil we are called to do more than despair. Use this to explore Holiness and Justice with a children's or youth Group.

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2286893/conf-holiness-and-justice-booklet-0716.pdf>

3) *YOUNG PEOPLE & YOUTH WORKERS OPPORTUNITY TO MEET REFUGEES FROM CAMP AIDA IN PALESTINE*

The Methodist Church is excited to be linking with the Amos trust to offer the opportunity for Methodist young people (aged 12-30) and their youth workers to meet with Alrowwad refugees from camp Aida in Palestine. The refugees from near Bethlehem are visiting the UK for a couple of weeks in partnership with the Amos Trust and we would like to invite Methodist young people to come and meet them.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/methodist-young-people-meet-alrowwad-refugees-tickets-25266194869?aff=es2>

Emma Mills, District Youth Work Enabler Emma.YouthWorkEnabler@virginmedia.com Tel: 07989 496316

CIRCUIT NEWS/EVENTS:

Vacancy for Circuit Administrator

Please remember in your prayers the selection interview panel as they seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in conducting the interviews on 21st November.

Circuit Plan for December 2016 – February 2017

Apologies that the next Plan will not be available in churches until 20th November. In the meantime a copy of the preaching appointments is included as an attachment to the email to which this newsletter is attached.

Gospel Choir

It is proposed to form a Gospel Choir, comprising singers from the Upper Thames and North Wilts Circuits. If anyone would be interested in joining the choir, further details of the opening workshop, at Bath Road Methodist Church, are attached to the email to which this newsletter is attached.

Cricklade United Church

Please see (attached to the email to which this newsletter was attached) the poster advertising the next Cafe Theos event which will take place on Monday 14th November, 7.30pm, at Cricklade United Church.

The title is "Family Ties: Some Signposts in a Moral Maze", and the speaker is Rev Dr Jonathan Pye. This is based on a presentation he recently gave to the High Court on modern family life.

Rev Dr Jonathan Pye is a Methodist Minister. He is Chair of the Bristol District of the Methodist Church and Honorary Bishop of Joongang, South Korea. His Doctoral Research was in the management of pre- and peri natal deaths, and he continues to have an active research and teaching interest in end of life issues. He is an ethicist and theologian who has lectured in the UK, Canada, Australia, the USA and South Korea.

Please advertise this if you are able, and do come along if you can!

Highworth Methodist Church

A note from Lou Ashford:

This December on Wednesday 21st, we at Highworth have invited The Silhouette Theatre Company to present "A Twist in the Tail"; this is a family show which tells the nativity story from the point of view of the Inn- Keeper. I have seen Silhouette Theatre Company before and they are excellent. We wondered if **any of our Circuit Churches would be interested** in having them at their church either the day before or after? We can provide them with accommodation and the cost is £350 + travel which is reduced if more than one church books them to perform. The show lasts 1hour, 20 minutes.

We are also inviting Liz Babbs to bring her show "Cupcakes and Comedy" and wondered if any of the other churches would be interested in hosting her as well. I have information that I can forward to anyone interested.

Lou Ashford

(you can contact Lou by telephone: 01793 201703, or by email: louashford231@gmail.com).

Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church

Traidcraft Christmas Sale will be held on Saturday November 5th from 10am to 1.30pm in the Methodist Church at Royal Wootton Bassett. Tea, coffee, refreshments including soup and rolls will available. The sale will include food and crafts from different countries, many of which will be suitable for Christmas presents. Your support and prayers will be much appreciated. Bring friends and family to join in this event to help small communities struggling to feed, educate and care for their families in the poorer parts of our world.

Shrivenham Methodist Church

Café Inspire

The next Café Inspire will be held on Saturday 12th November in the Shrivenham Primary School, from 10.00am until 11.30am. Come along for a coffee, a bacon roll and/or some yummy cake and a chance to chat to folk of all ages who enjoy doing the same. Activities (creative and otherwise) are provided for younger and older children.

OTHER NEWS/EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Christmas Care 2016

Patsy Maloney has sent out a letter to ministers and a copy is attached the email to which this newsletter is attached. Please support this amazing work in any way you can.

Could you come to the rescue of a refugee child?

A campaign has been launched in Swindon to find caring people who could give refugee children a home. Following the Government's recent commitment to help more unaccompanied asylum seeking children from other European countries resettle in the UK, Swindon Borough Council has agreed to try and assist with this pressing need.

The children may have been separated from their parents by war, while others have been orphaned. They are predominately teenage boys displaced from countries such as Eritrea, Afghanistan, Iran and Syria. Extremely vulnerable, many of them have experienced trauma and being at serious risk of exploitation, sexual violence, disease and cold in their current situation.

Age, sexuality, marital status and whether or not you have children of your own are no barrier to becoming a supported lodgings carer.

Carers receive free full training and ongoing support, as well as payment and allowances to help cover their time and expenses. Placements vary in duration from a few months to several years.

Please spread the word and if you are interested call 01793 464329 or email fosteringrecruitment@swindon.gov.uk

News from Ammerdown

November

15 to 17 November Understanding Islam with Dr Chris Hewer A good understanding of Islam is a must in Britain today, where Muslims number by far the biggest religious group after British Christians. In many of our major towns and cities, they make up a substantial minority of the population. This constitutes an invitation to everyone to get to know Islam and Muslims better and to explore ways of building bridges of mutual respect and understanding. This particularly applies to those involved with Muslims as neighbours, friends, workplace acquaintances, or clients in the caring professions. For more information or to book a place go to <http://ammerdown.org/Understanding-Islam-2016> or email centre@ammerdown.org or ring 01761 433709

18 to 20 November Re-awakening the Sacred led by Dr Justine Huxley and Viviana Esse. They say: “The present times hold both a need and an opportunity for all of us to examine and re-invent the way we live. What is needed is a momentous transition to a new way of being – to live with awareness of our ‘interbeing’ with each other and with the Earth. An essential part of this transition is to reconnect with the dimension we call ‘Sacred’ and make it once again the foundation of society - but in a completely new way that goes beyond ideological or cultural differences and touches the essence of what it means to be human. This shift will enable our experience of life to come alive, for us to feel joy and magic, and to immerse ourselves in a new relationship with each other, with nature and with the inner invisible worlds.” For more information or to book a place go to <http://ammerdown.org/Re-awakening-the-Sacred-2016> or email centre@ammerdown.org or ring 01761 433709

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday 21 st November	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting, The Manse, 34 Wrde Hill 7.30pm
Wednesday 7 th December	Circuit Meeting, Toothill Church 7.30pm
Wednesday 11 th January	Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting Shrivenham Methodist Church 7.30pm
Saturday 21 st January	Circuit Study Day with Rev Paul Wilson (MET) on Ezekiel: “Seeking Spiritual Renewal” at Highworth Methodist Church, 10.00am – 4.00pm

UPPER THAMES CIRCUIT CONTACT DETAILS:

Office hours: 9.30am – 12.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays

Telephone: (01793) 764544

Email: upperthamescircuit@gmail.com

Email: superkeithosborn@gmail.com

Postal Address: Highworth Methodist Church
Vicarage Lane
Highworth
Swindon
SN6 7AD

News from The New Room, November 2016

Chapel remains open as museum work begins

IMPORTANT changes are taking place at the New Room in November as the Horsefair Project continues to progress. From **October 31st**, the Preachers' Rooms (museum) and the library will be closed to visitors.

The contents of the library and all the artefacts in the museum are being taken off site so that the refurbishment of the museum area can begin on **November 14th**. This will result in a larger exhibition about the Wesleys, Methodism and Bristol with new displays.

In November, the contractors will also 'break through' from the new building into the small kitchen on the upper floor level, to start creating a new corridor. On **December 23rd**, the shop in the chapel will close (so get any orders for next year's diaries and calendars in early!). It will not disappear completely, but operate as a 'pop-up shop' in the chapel from January until the new shop in the courtyard is ready.

During this time, the chapel will stay OPEN during the usual hours - 10am-4pm, Monday to Saturday.

GOOD HOMES NEEDED! We have three solid wooden benches and two wooden chairs which used to live in the Horsefair Courtyard. They are now looking for a good home and could make an attractive addition to a garden or patio in return for a donation to the New Room. Email David Worthington via info@newroombristol.org.uk if you would like to know more.

An evening for lovers of music, art and cake!

DO you like music? Do you like art? Do you like cake? Well, if you just like one, or all three, this event at the New Room on **November 4th** could be right up your street. The Newsmith Society presents '**All the Nice Things**' - a relaxed evening in the candlelit atmosphere of the chapel.

As well as live music from Dragoman and Johns & Nowak, artists Rosie Webb, El Hackwell, James Purveur and Hannah Bailey will be exhibiting their work, and there will (of course!) be cake! Organised by New Room volunteer Claire Hepden, the evening starts at 7pm and runs through until 10pm - just pop in.

Tickets cost £5.90 and are available through Eventbrite [HERE](#) or on the door. NB If you can't make it on November 4th, the artists will be exhibiting their work at the New Room the week before, from October 31st-November 4th, 10am-4pm.

Shout about peace with CND

YOUNG people in Bristol will be exhibiting artwork and writing on the theme of peace at the New Room in November.

The **'Shout About Peace'** exhibition, featuring work by 11-18-year-olds, has been organised by the Bristol branch of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament). For the writing competition, entrants were asked to consider a world without nuclear weapons, telling the world how they feel about nuclear weapons and what they think should be done with them. In the art competition, entrants were asked to depict what they would like to tell the world about nuclear weapons.

The competition aims to encourage students to find out more about the history of atomic weapons, the campaigns for nuclear disarmament and the current issue of Trident renewal. The artwork and writing will be on display in the New Room from **November 12th-25th**, Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm.

Methodist soldiers remembered

BRISTOL Methodists who fought in World War One will be remembered at the New Room on Friday, November 18th at 7.30pm. **'Harrison and the Hosegoods'** is a docu-drama, read by a group of performers and based on the book 'Three Brothers' by soldier and army chaplain Rev Dr Archibald Walter Harrison.

He tells the story of Arnold, Ralph and Gilbert Hosegood, whose parents attended Trinity Road Methodist Church in Whiteladies Road. All three brothers died in the 'Great War' and although the memorial and the church are now long gone, their memory lives on in this play.

'Harrison and the Hosegoods' starts at 7.30pm on November 18th. Please enter the chapel through the Broadmead entrance. Admission is £5, with the proceeds to be shared between The Royal British Legion and Faith in the Future - the redevelopment project at Victoria Methodist Church).

Cards for Good Causes

CARDS for Good Causes has opened for business at the New Room. The annual pop-up shop features cards supporting local and national charities plus a range of wrapping paper, Advent calendars, stocking fillers and small gifts. The goods will be on sale in the chapel until December 14th.

Christmas at the New Room

THE season of Advent begins on November 27th and by then, the Christmas lights will be switched on in Broadmead and the Christmas Market will be in full swing just outside our courtyard.

To celebrate the festive season, the New Room is hosting a range of events in December to which everyone is invited.

December 8th: Tales Before Christmas (for older children and adults) with storyteller Ken Luxon. 6.30-8pm. Admission free with a collection for charity.

December 15th: Bristol Hippodrome Choir presents a musical version of '**A Christmas Carol**' by Charles Dickens. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start. Tickets £10 (£8 concs) on the door or via info@choirbristol.co.uk

December 16th: Carols and Communion. Carols and readings and a short Holy Communion service. 1pm. Admission free with a collection for charity.

December 16th: Carols by Candlelight. Carols and readings in a candlelit setting. 6pm. Admission free with a collection for charity.

Lunchtime Concerts

Come and enjoy two lunchtime concerts at the New Room!

Fri, November 4th: "All Sam Wesley" with tenor Gordon Pullin, accompanied by Nick Sherwood.

Fri, December 2nd: The Beckford Singers of Bath.

Both concerts start at approx 1.20pm after the lunchtime Communion service.

Communion Services

Communion services in the chapel in November (1pm start)

November 4th: Rev David Weeks

November 11th: Rev Hilary Cooke

November 18th: Rev Gordon James

November 25th: Rev Mandy Briggs