

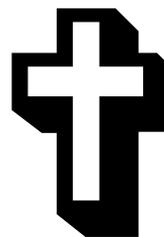
The Methodist Church – Bristol District

Upper Thames Circuit

Monthly Newsletter

No 19

May 2015



Dear friends

It's me again, how those months fly by, it seems like only last week that I wrote to you last. This month I am getting excited, not only do we celebrate Pentecost on May 24th, but as you will all no doubt be aware, it is Wesley Day, the anniversary of John Wesley's 'Heart-warming experience' when, as he wrote afterwards:

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Being good Methodists you will already know all this, but we live in a society which has largely lost hope, a society where if there is hope it is in material things and in human solutions. John Wesley and his brother Charles discovered what the disciples discovered, and what millions have discovered since Jesus died: that life is empty without Jesus living within. Despite all his good works before and after his Aldersgate experience, John Wesley like Paul the Apostle counted those works as nothing. For both of them it was what Jesus had done when he died upon the cross that mattered and the witness of the Holy Spirit living within. This is surely the message we need to take to a world that lives without true hope.

On 16th May we have a chance to explore discipleship and mission, maybe to rediscover or learn for the first time how to share our faith. Andy and Rhoda Fearon, friends of mine from Carlisle, are coming to Holy Trinity Shaw to share how they have established a new church on one of the estates in Carlisle. I joined them twice last year as they led outreach events and was so impressed by their gentle and natural approach to sharing their faith. This is not standing on street corners thumping the bible; it is learning to bless our local communities. Please do come along 10am till 4.15pm. Saturday 16th May at Holy Trinity Shaw.

And soon it will be June.

May God bless you richly and give you his assurance of salvation in your hearts

Keith

NB: The deadline for items for the June newsletter is Friday 22nd May.

DISTRICT NEWS/EVENTS:

Valedictory and Welcome Services for District Chair(s)

There will be a valedictory service for Rev Ward Jones at 3.30pm on Sunday 12th July in Clifton Cathedral and a welcome Service for his successor, Rev Dr Jonathan Pye, at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1st September in Bristol Cathedral. If there are sufficient numbers wishing to attend these services, transport (in the form of coach/minibus) could be arranged. Senior Church Stewards have been asked to complete a form for each event, identifying numbers for whom transport is required. So if you would like to attend either or both of these events, please contact your Senior Church Steward. All requests for transport should be submitted to the Circuit Office by the end of May at the latest. If you would like to contribute to a gift for Ward and/or Linda please contact your church treasurer, who will pass your gift, along with others, to the Circuit Treasurer, Mike Bathe. All contributions should be sent to arrive with the Circuit Treasurer by the 10th June at the latest, please, to meet District deadlines.

The Key – Training Event

This training day is CRUCIAL for ALL those working with children and young people who have not attended any 'introduction to children's and youth work' training in the last 5 years. Methodist Church Standing Orders suggest that engaging with this kind of training is mandatory along with the Safeguarding training.

It's also a great opportunity to reflect on what you do, to meet other people in similar roles and have the chance to share stories with each other. It's fun and informative, providing practical ideas and gives space for reflection and problem solving. If you have attended similar training many years ago (such as Spectrum or Kaleidoscope) then we still strongly encourage you to attend this as an essential refresher.

It costs just £5 per person.

For further information, please see poster which was sent as an attachment to the email to which this newsletter was also attached.

You can book by going to <http://www.bristol.anglican.org/event/the-key/> Complete the booking form, click 'submit', then pay on the day.

Don't hesitate to contact Emma Mills if you have any further queries or just to let her know you are hoping to attend.

Bristol District Youth Event

Leap & Learn

This DAY EVENT has been put together as a direct response to the young people of the Methodist Church stating that they wanted to learn more about mental health. They identified that they would also like their youth leaders and churches to have more information in order to be better equipped to support them. The young people have

identified “high rope” outdoor activities as something they are particularly interested in which is why we are off to “Leap of Faith” at “The Wild Place”.

£10 for the full day, including lunch, is a BARGAIN PRICE. For further information, please see poster which was sent as an attachment to the email to which this newsletter was also attached.

If you know of young people in a Methodist Church who might be interested, who aren't involved in a youth group, then they are of course welcome. Ministers & Church Leaders are also invited to attend with their young people. There will be activities on the ground at the 'Leap & Learn' activity centre so those who don't like heights can still actively participate.

Please drop Emma Mills a line sometime between now and the deadline to let her know if you are planning on bringing a group, to give her a rough idea of numbers well in advance.

Calling all Knitters and Crocheters

The Bristol District Youth Weekend takes place once every other year and it is in October this year. Despite my suggestion that perhaps it is time for a change in respect to the 'knitted character thing' we have going on, the young people voted to keep it going!!! So this year to fit the theme of 'Heroes who Rescue' we are supplying a selection of 4 knitting / crochet patterns.

All of the characters will again be sold or auctioned at the end of the weekend to raise money for charity.

We would be exceptionally grateful if you could help please! Please could you ask around your congregations again as it has proved a great way to ensure members of the district to feel connected to this youth event!

The patterns are attached to the email to which this newsletter was attached. The first pattern isn't that clear. Let Emma Mills know if you would prefer it as a Word Document.

- We would be grateful if the predominant colours could be green and yellow please.
- Please don't create any 'official' superheroes such as 'Superman' as we won't be able to sell them for copyright reasons.
- Please replace any letters (chest or belt) with the letter 'Q'.
- Feel free to make them as individual / unique as you want.

Understanding the Impact of Youth Work

On 18 June 2015, 9.30am - 3.30pm (9.30am refreshments, 10.00am start)
at University of Gloucestershire, Park Campus, Cheltenham GL50 2RH
Cost: £20

There is a growing consensus that those involved working with young people should develop ways that demonstrate the impact of their work.

This has resulted in many recent developments that seek to support youth practitioners, managers and commissioners in their roles. This conference therefore, seeks to explore these developments through key note speakers, workshops and discussions.

The conference is suitable for all involved in the youth sector, from volunteers, to employed workers, to managers, parish/town councils and those in the wider sector who are concerned how to demonstrate the quality of either their work or the work of others.

Partners involved: The University of Gloucestershire, The National Youth Agency, The Regional Youth Work Unit at Learning South West and Youth Focus West Midlands.

PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW, via the [University online shop](#). Contact: Anita Suarez: asuarez@glos.ac.uk for all conference queries or Telephone: 01242 715153.

CIRCUIT NEWS/EVENTS:

Circuit Plan Amendments

On 17th May the morning service at Shrivenham Methodist Church will be a Local Arrangement, in place of Rev Clive Deverell (who, despite his many talents, cannot be in two places at once!).

In the Plan for June-August, the valedictory service for Ward Jones is incorrectly shown as commencing at 3.00pm. It should read 3.30pm (but no harm in being early!).

Lay Worker Update

RESOURCES FOR MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP

The Circuit was disappointed to receive the news that the District Grants Committee declined to commit funds for our lay work programme when they met earlier this month. This clearly has implications for our plans for the Circuit.

We met as the Circuit leadership team on 30th March and agreed that we should take time to reflect and pray about this matter. We will also be seeking further understanding from the District Grants Committee.

Please join with us as we pray for wisdom and struggle in discerning the way in which God is leading us in the light of this news.

Pray that we might know whether to pursue our plans in faith that He will provide;

Pray that we might know whether to return to the Committee with alternative applications for funds and whether we should proceed to seek resources from other bodies;

Pray that He will guide us further, if this news is a signal from Him that we should revise our plans and seek to fulfil our calling to mission and ministry in another way.

Pray that we might be as “prudent as serpents and guileless as doves” – knowing both the wisdom and gentleness of God (Matthew 10 v16) as we explore the way forward.

Andrew Fleet

Mission and Discipleship Training Day

On this day, and with the Lord's blessing, Andy and Rhoda Fearon from the Vineyard Church will share with us their experience of the Lord working in Carlisle. Their theme is: "The Challenge of Making Disciples" and we will meet at Holy Trinity Church, Shaw for a 10.00am start. Please bring your own lunch – hot drinks will be available. Posters and flyers for this event should have reached churches by now. If they have not, please contact Andrew Fleet or the Circuit Office for more information. Don't miss what we pray will be a blessing to all who attend.

Action for Children

The annual **AFC Plant Sale** will be held at The Podium, Highworth on Saturday 9th May from 8.00am until 12 noon. Come early to snap up bargains from our colourful range of bedding and herbaceous plants, which are great for pots, baskets and borders. All profits will be donated to help Action for Children support over 300,000 vulnerable and neglected children who are desperately in need of our help today.

Blunsdon Methodist Church

There will be a "Craft, Cupcakes and a Cuppa" event at Blunsdon Village Hall on Saturday 16th May from 2pm – 5pm. Tickets (at £4.00 per person) are available in advance from Rachel Smith (07539 510256) email: rachel26smith@hotmail.com and a poster advertising this event is attached to the email to which this newsletter was attached.

Highworth Methodist Church

Highworth Methodist Church celebrates its anniversary on the week-end of 21st and 22nd November. Rev Paul Ashby and his wife Carmel will be here for the week-end and Paul will be taking both services at Highworth on the Sunday.

Shrivenham Methodist Church

Café Inspire

The next Café Inspire will be held in the Shrivenham Primary School on Saturday, 9th May, from 10.00am until 11.30am. So when you have purchased your plants at the Podium, come along for a coffee, 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. A DVD recording of Fiona Castle's talk at the Café Inspire Curry evening in October 2014 will be available shortly, at a cost to be decided. Proceeds will go to Fiona's international children's charity, Global Care. Please pre-order from Paul Holloway or from Bob Mawer at the Circuit Office.

Phakamisa (a Ministry of Pinetown Methodist Church, South Africa)

We had an amazing and uplifting visit from Thokozani Poswa, Director of Phakamisa in South Africa. She joined the Phakamisa UK Trust for its meeting in Berkhamsted on 18th April and then travelled to Shrivenham on the evening of Sunday 19th April, in time to make it for the evening service there. Whilst staying in Shrivenham, Thokozani visited Gloucester and Witney and was the guest speaker at a "late afternoon tea" event on the Tuesday evening, at Shrivenham Methodist Church. As somebody who was herself brought up in a township environment, she was able to talk authentically and enthusiastically about what God is doing through Phakamisa (which touches the lives of 16,000 children on a daily basis) among AIDS orphans and others who live on the breadline

in the townships around Pinetown, South Africa. She has now moved on to the East Midlands before going forward to Manchester and Birmingham, after which she will be returning to London for her flight back to South Africa in the first week of May. Please pray for her protection and that she may experience a real sense of God's blessing upon her as she travels and speaks. This is her first ever trip outside South Africa so it is quite a daunting experience for her. You can find out more about Phakamisa at www.phakamisa.org which is a web site run jointly by the UK and South African Trusts (or contact Bob Mawer at the Circuit Office – contact details at the end of this newsletter).

Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church

Come along for a **Vintage Tea and Musical Soiree** between 4pm and 6pm on Saturday 6th June. You will enjoy a delicious tea including a sumptuous selection of sandwiches, cakes and puddings, along with unlimited tea or coffee. Places are limited and you'll need a ticket (£12.50 per person) so make contact soon with Rev David or Chris Perkins (01793) 853197, or Fiona Fleet (01793) 345320. You will be helping to raise funds for a new Clavinova. Further information is at the end of this newsletter.

OTHER NEWS/EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Child Protection Co-ordinator (Volunteer)

Do you have a few hours a week spare to invest in the young people of our town?

A Hares Farming is seeking to recruit a Volunteer Child Protection Co-ordinator to join our new social action project, "Growing together". We aim to inspire young people to grow and cultivate organic produce and bring it to local market. By growing tasty fruit and vegetables together, we hope to promote the values of tolerance, respect and hard work – and show that growing together can be fun as well as rewarding! This local project will be based on our family run organic farm in Highworth. As a member of the Growing Together Team, the Volunteer Child Protection Co-ordinator will oversee our safeguarding arrangements. Appointment will be subject to Safer Recruitment procedures including a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

For more information about this pivotal role and an informal chat about our exciting new venture, please contact Jon Hares on 07878 422858 or email jonathan.hares@btopenworld.com.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Saturday 9 th May	Action for Children Plant Sale, The Podium, 8.00am – 12 noon
Saturday 9 th May	Café inspire, Shrivenham Primary School 10.00am – 11.30am
Saturday 16 th May	Mission and Discipleship Training Day 10.00am – 4.15pm Holy Trinity Shaw
Thursday 4 th June	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting, The Manse, 7.30pm
Saturday 6 th June	District Stationing Meeting

Saturday 6 th June	Vintage Tea Experience and Musical Soiree Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church 4pm – 6pm
Thursday 11 th June	Circuit Invitations Committee Meeting, Purton 7.30pm
Monday 22 nd June	Circuit Meeting, Braydon 7.30pm
Thursday 9 th July	Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting, Longcot 7.30pm

Contact Details

Please note the new email address for Mike Bathe, Circuit Treasurer, with immediate effect:

metabathe@gmail.com

Please note the following new address for Stella Tidmarsh, which takes effect immediately:

Dormer Cottage
29 High Street
Shrivenham
Swindon
Wilts
SN6 8AN

Telephone and email details remain the same

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

Please note: *the Upper Thames Circuit Office will be closed until Thursday 21st May*

A VINTAGE TEA EXPERIENCE & MUSICAL SOIREE

ON

SATURDAY 6th JUNE 2015 - 4-6pm

AT

Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church

Raising funds for A New Church Clavinova

**Come and enjoy a delicious tea
served on fine china and Including:
A sumptuous selection of sandwiches,
cakes and puddings,
with unlimited teas and coffee**

To book places and for tickets call:

Rev David or Chris Perkins 01793 853197

[skyeperky@hotmail.com]

Or

Fiona Fleet 01793 345320

.....

£12.50 per person (limited numbers)



Bristol District Children & Youth

1. Mental Health Workshop & High Ropes Activities

June 27th : For young people aged 11-23 who are linked with a Methodist Church in the Bristol District & their Youth Workers

EXCITING NEW BRISTOL DISTRICT YOUTH DAY EVENT

Morning = Mental Health Workshop

Afternoon = High Ropes & ground level fun outdoor activities

The young people of the Methodist Church have identified that they want to learn more about mental health in order to support their friends. They also identified that they want their youth workers and churches to be educated so they are better equipped to support people with mental health problems.

This workshop has been organised in response to that request. Dr Pooky Knightsmith who is facilitating this workshop is extremely experienced in working with young people and has experienced what it's like living with mental illness herself. I have attended workshops she has run and found them truly captivating & informative, offering practical solutions, resources and advice about where to go for help. This is her website <http://www.inourhands.com/student-workshops/> The workshop will be interactive & pitched carefully to make sure it's suited perfectly for young people. The youth workers will learn a great deal too.

In the afternoon we will be taking part in 2 hours of fun outdoor adrenaline filled activities at "The Leap of Faith" based at Bristol's new "Wild Place" attraction (just off the Cribbs Causeway M5 junction 17). Again these are activities which the majority of young people from our district have expressed an interest in. There will be high rope activities and also fun team work challenges on the ground, so there will be something for those who don't like heights. Adults are welcome to join in any of the activities (some have an 18 stone weight limit but none have a max age limit!). Check out their website here <http://www.leapoffaith.co.uk/>

The afternoon activities will only be open to those who attend the morning workshop, although if someone wants to attend JUST the morning workshop then they can do free of charge.

The event will only cost each individual (young people & youth workers) **£10 each!** A real bargain considering the Leap of Faith activities alone would usually cost an individual £30!!

SAVE THE DATE: Morning workshop venue & exact timings to be provided soon!

2. The Key

June 13th : Crucial Children & Youth Workers Core Skills Training Day

This training day is crucial for ALL those working with children and young people who have not attended any 'introduction to children's and youth work' training before. In fact Methodist Church Standing Orders suggest that engaging with this training is mandatory along with the Safeguarding training.

Please could you advertise this training day, passing the info onto anyone working with children or young people in an Anglican or Methodist church in the Bristol Area (the whole of the Bristol District and the Bristol Diocese), encouraging them to attend by reinforcing how crucial and invaluable it is.

The 'Key' training day we ran in January was a huge success and we hope to see many of you at this 2nd one.

It costs just £5 per person (you might want to suggest that your church or circuit can help with this cost?).

SAVE THE DATE: Venue to be confirmed ASAP

(hopefully in the Bradley Stoke area: near the motorway & a fairly central point within the District).

3. MAYC 70th Anniversary Celebration

31st May : The Methodist Association of Youth Clubs started 70 years ago.

Members of the Gloucestershire circuit are organising a service of celebration followed by an afternoon of sharing memories. They have approached me asking if I could help them advertise the event and to see if some of the current young people could be involved/attend. The "Methodist Association of Youth Clubs" finished many years ago and since then we have "Methodist Children & Youth".

This is open to anyone who is interested in attending.

SAVE THE DATE: More info to follow soon!

4. 3Generate

Methodist Church's Children & Youth Assembly (see attachment)

See attached flyer for full information.

NEW DATE 20th – 22nd November

NEW VENUE "PGL Adventure Centre, Swindon"

Please note the booking line opens on Saturday 6th June 9am. This event sold out within a couple of days last year so I strongly advise that you have collected in all the necessary information from the young people wanting to attend by the 6th June so you can get your tickets as soon as the booking line opens. It is a fabulous event and would be great if more of our district attended. Please ask your churches and circuits for assistance with funding.

Don't forget it's open to children too aged 8+ so please pass this onto the children's workers in your church.

Children & young people attend this event without their youth workers, although any offers from youth workers (employed or voluntary) to help at the weekend would be gratefully received. If you volunteer at the weekend then you won't be charged to attend. I have done it for 3 years now and find it really rewarding. Please contact me for further info if you are interested.

5. European Methodist Youth Camp

We are looking for a youth worker (paid or voluntary worker) to possibly take 2 young people to Belfast in the summer! Can you help? Travel and the ticket price which includes accommodation & food will be covered!

We have 2 members of the DYC (age 17 and 14) really keen to go to this conference and it would be a great experience for them. Sadly we are struggling to find an adult to go with them and the organisation state that at least one adult needs to attend to be responsible for young people under the age of 18.

Check out the full details here, it really is a very exciting opportunity http://download.emk-jugend.de/201501161135_EMYC_CampProgrammeInformation.pdf

If you are interested in finding out more please contact Emma ASAP Emma.YoutWorkEnabler@VirginMedia.com or 07989 496316.

It is not 100% certain that we will be allocated the places or that we have got the funding yet but we are investigating all that at the moment. You will not be expected to pay for the event ticket or the transport costs. We are ideally looking for a male youth worker but would be grateful to hear from anyone who is interested (who has up to date CRB/DBS checks and safeguarding training).

6. Matt Papa : Worship

Gloucester Guildhall on Thursday 21st May

Join Matt Papa for an inspiring evening of worship. Matt Papa is an American recording artist based out of Raleigh, North Carolina. He also serves on staff as a Christian worship leader at The Summit Church in Durham. For over a decade, Matt has been singing, writing, and recording songs that are saturated with God's Word. To Papa, a song is more than just lyrics and melody - it's a sermon people will remember.

This video clip gives you a good idea of his music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y91VvmkIAz0&spfreload=1>

and check him out here telling "The Story of God" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4cL-Zcxa9M>

Book your tickets here

<http://venues.gloucester.gov.uk/Freetime/Guildhall/listings/music/MattPapa.aspx>

7. Who on Earth Is God?

Making Sense of God in the Bible with Neil Richardson 21st May

WHO ON EARTH IS GOD?

Making sense of God in the Bible

You are warmly invited to an evening with Neil Richardson to explore the themes of his critically acclaimed new book, 'Who on Earth is God: Making sense of the Bible'.

Do you have young people currently asking lots of questions? Why not take them along? We have been informed that this would be appropriate for older teenagers to attend, although it's definitely not a specific 'youth event'.

8. Safeguarding Training

Gloucestershire Circuit dates: Anyone from the Bristol District is welcome to attend (i.e. if the dates suit better than more local training sessions).

As I'm sure you know by now, this training is mandatory and everyone working with children & young people in a Methodist Church must attend this training once every 5 years.

- Wednesday 20 May, Cinderford Methodist Church, 7-9pm.

9. Connecting Disciple LOCAL

17th June : A chance for lay workers from the Bristol and West Midlands Region to get together, network, worship, celebrate!

This FREE OF CHARGE event is primarily aimed for lay workers but volunteers are more than welcome to attend too.

10. Lay workers Gloucestershire Circuit Support Group

Are you employed by the Methodist Church and based in the Gloucestershire Circuit & feel you will benefit from meeting with others in similar roles?

A new informal support group has been set up for the Gloucestershire Circuit. The first meeting was in a coffee shop in Gloucester City Centre. It's a great opportunity for lay workers to share ideas, off-load, learn for each other, ask for advice, share resources and talk about good news stories too! If you are a lay worker working for the Methodist Church in the Gloucestershire Circuit then it would be great if you could join us. It's all relaxed and flexible.

If you are not a lay worker in Gloucestershire then why not set your own group?

It could be similar to this one, or an interdenominational youth work support group within a particular town/city, or a volunteer youth workers support group for your area?

If any support groups like this already exist, no matter how informal, I would love to hear about it, thanks Emma.

11. Ark Bus Drivers Required

Are you able to help this fantastic project? Are you over 25 with a full clean driving licence?

If interested or if you would like more information, contact them via their website

www.thearkbus.org.uk

12. DMLN : Bristol & West Midlands

Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network Facebook Group: A great way to connect with what's going on in our region of the Methodist Church

News, resources, articles and events from the Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network in Bristol & West Midlands.

If the below link doesn't work then type "DMLN Bristol & West Midlands" into Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/DMLN-Bristol-West-Midlands/334381623380567?fref=ts>

They are now on twitter too @DMLNbwm

Click on this link to see answers to frequently asked questions about the DMLN
<http://www.methodist.org.uk/learning/faqs>

13.The Youth Work Foundation

Financial support to would-be youth workers across England to help them access [JNC recognised qualifications](#).

The Foundation's mission is to support the most deserving applicants to become qualified youth workers regardless of their background.

This mission is built on a belief that young people benefit from youth workers who have a variety of backgrounds and life experiences

<http://www.nya.org.uk/supporting-youth-work/youth-work-foundation/>