

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

Bristol District



December / January Newsletter 2018

The opening letter is written by Mr Bob Mawer, Circuit Steward

As I write this, I have just finished reading the autobiography of Bear Grylls, published in 2011. I wanted to read it for two reasons. Firstly, because he is the Chief Scout, and my eldest grandson has recently taken on the role of "Young Leader" in a local scout troop that has contributed hugely to his childhood and early teenage development. Secondly, Janet and I are currently helping to lead an Alpha course in Shrivensham (a joint Anglican/Methodist initiative) which, of course, has Bear (real name, Edward) Grylls as its publicity figurehead.

It was not a disappointing read. Graphic, candid, honest and humorous are adjectives that come to mind when I attempt to describe it to others. There are multiple examples of adventures, scrapes, pranks - and near-death experiences (he stopped writing these down when they numbered 50!) from an early age into adulthood, alongside matters of the heart, family, love, loss and, of course, the faith that has sustained him, from the age of 16, through some of life's toughest physical and mental challenges, such as the successful completion of the selection process for the SAS and climbing Mount Everest. Says Bear, "I do possess an acute awareness that, through it all, someone has been blessing me greatly." For me, the stark contrast is between someone who has sought - and survived - extreme adventure; whose consequent injury and pain were, in that sense, self-inflicted; and someone else - who arrived humbly on this planet 2000+ years ago and whose only "adventure" was to do the things the Father told him and who, as a direct consequence, suffered extreme humiliation, indignity, pain and suffering - inflicted entirely by others - yet who went willingly in obedience to his Father ("Not my will, but yours") - in order, through his death, resurrection and ascension, to fulfil God's plan for the salvation of humankind - for you, and for me.

At this special time of year, let us celebrate, reflect and share with others our heartfelt gratitude for this, the most awesome gift of all.

Bob Mawer
Circuit Steward

NB Deadline for items for the February Newsletter is Wednesday 24th January

District News

Christmas Events at the New Room - see attached poster listing all events throughout December.

Circuit News/Events

Barnabas Fund

You may remember that during Bible month in June, Andrew Fleet produced a small booklet entitled Brotherly Love describing the story of James, the brother of Jesus, to help us in our studies of the book of James. Many booklets were purchased across the circuit and a total of £281 was sent to the Barnabas Fund to support Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus. Thank you to everyone who supported this.

Bible Study Day – Save the date - Saturday 3rd February 2018 10 – 4pm

To be led by Rev Bev Thomas 'Who do you see in the Kingdom of God?' at Highworth Methodist Church. More details to follow.

Highworth Methodist Church

- Highworth Church has once again invited Silhouette Theatre Co. this December:
"A Christmas Carol" suitable for children (6 years+) and adults.
Friday 15th December at Highworth Methodist Church. @ 4:30pm
Tickets £4:50 from The Lighthouse Bookshop.

Christ the Servant

- Caravanserai model will be at Christ the Servant from 27th November until Christmas. Please contact Chris German pioneer.christtheservant@gmail.com if you would like to book a slot to bring a group you belong to, or a group of friends

Shrivenham

- Christmas Tree Festival at Shrivenham Methodist Church, 14th, 15th & 16th December



The trees will be on display decorated in the themes of Christmas Carols. Coffee & mince pies will be served and donations will go to the charity Action for Children.

Also, Saturday morning there will be a children's workshop on 16th December making Christmas table decorations (£5 per child, please book by contacting Linda on 01793 783152)

West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze Partnership

- **A Nativity Festival** is being held at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze from 3rd to 11th December 10.00am – 3.00pm. Admission is free to see the nativity scenes from around the world created by the local schools. Poster attached.
- **Walking the Way** – Saturday 27th January 10.00 – 4.00pm to be held at Toothill Church. The day will be led by David Lawrence, Imagine Church Life Consultant in the South West. See poster attached for further information.

Dates for your diary

27 th Nov – 24 th December	Caravanserai model at CTS
3 rd – 11 th December	Nativity Festival at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze
14 th , 15 th & 16 th December	Christmas Tree Festival Shrivensham Methodist Church 10 – 12.30
Friday 15 th December	Silhouette Theatre Company HMC 4.30pm
Saturday 27 th January	Walking the Way at Toothill Church
Saturday 3 rd February	Bible Study Day

Contact details (Upper Thames Circuit)

Circuit Office

circuitadmin@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Superintendent

superintendent@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Senior Circuit Steward:

seniorcircuitsteward@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Circuit Treasurer

treasurer@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Postal address

Highworth Methodist Church
Vicarage Lane
Highworth
Swindon
SN6 7AD

Office Hours

Monday & Wednesday 8.30 – 12 noon

Telephone

01793 764544

