

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

Bristol District



May Newsletter 2018

*The opening letter is written by Andrew Fleet
Circuit Steward*

The Wind of Change

“At Pentecost they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.” Acts 2 v1.



Many years ago I used to sail in a Mirror dinghy. It was so called after the tabloid newspaper as thousands of them were produced at a price affordable to most. With friends I would happily spend hours sailing lakes in a gentle breeze. On rivers we were often driven by a tail wind or driven by the current and sometimes becalmed. Then, occasionally on the sea the force of wind and swell of the waves made us fear that the little vessel might even capsize! Yes! And occasionally we got wet!

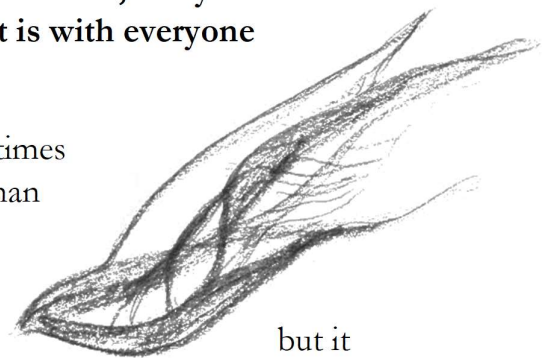
‘Wind’ is a good word to describe the Holy Spirit because when the wind blows there is change. The

Holy Spirit brings change like wind. John 3 v8 tells us:

“The wind blows wherever it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

As followers of Jesus we are born of the Spirit but sometimes we spend too much time being led by our heads rather than our hearts.

Taking the risk to be led by our hearts and ride the ‘wind’ where the Spirit takes us is an exciting journey means that our love of God has to prevail where, of we would just prefer to keep our feet on the shore and reason it all out.



but it
ourselves,

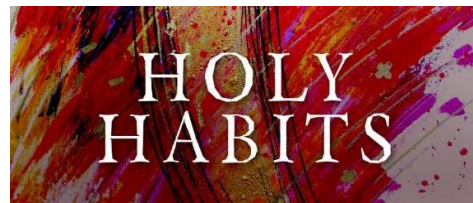
Discerning the 'wind' of the Holy Spirit, like good sailors, we need to gauge the direction, speed and timing of the 'wind' and then recognise His grace as we follow.



That's what John Wesley did as he stepped outside the comfort and discomfort of the church to preach in the highways and by-ways and by the anointing of the 'wind' of the Spirit came Methodism.

We have a particular task as a Circuit in these next few months to discern where the Spirit is leading as we change the structure of our Circuit to reflect the reduced number of presbyters in Connexion. There are challenges in this in our mission and for the role of 'the minister' as well as the part played by lay-people in our fellowships. Maybe we're even being taken back to Wesley's original notion of our Ministers becoming more itinerant and Mr. Wesley's preachers being more 'local' in their ministries. Pray God, with the gift of His wisdom, we as a Circuit will be empowered to seek His grace and anointing and that this will bring new ways of living as disciples of the Kingdom. We need to pray and share together, to work out our faith amid the waves and buffeting and the sometimes static moments of our lives when we find it hard to move forward.

On Pentecost Sunday at 4.30 p.m. at St. Joseph's College Swindon, we launch the 'Holy Habits' - discipleship thinking about ways in which we, as individuals and in our church lives, are being shaped by Jesus Christ



as we follow Him. The 'wind' of God's Spirit is seeking to bring change to us as we re-learn the Christian disciplines of our forebears not as the theory of reading a nautical chart but as the application of the sailor or fisherman riding the wind and plying the seas.

We pray that, as individuals and churches, both in Upper Thames and North Wilts. Circuits and with other churches who are joining us, God will truly bless the work that Andrew Roberts and the Bible Reading Fellowship have done in providing us with ways of distilling the 'life of discipleship' into real living for Jesus, so empowering us to change the world for His glory.

This Pentecost:

"I pray that out of God's glorious riches He may strengthen you with power, through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." Ephesians 3 v16-17



*Wind of God's Spirit, come stir us and move us,
Blow through our lives with your cleansing refrain.
Gentle and powerful come now to disturb us
That shaken and changed we may live to His Name.
Come now, breathe through our being.
Come now, move in our hearts.
Make us speak out through our acts of compassion
Change us, empower us in our many parts:
Breathe on us now!*

From the worship song: "Wind of God's Spirit" ©asfleet 2010

NB Deadline for items for the May Newsletter is Friday 25th May

Circuit News/Events

Circuit Service 20th May – Holy Habits Launch

There will be a circuit service on Sunday 20th May at St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon to launch Holy Habits. Please save the date in your diaries. This will be a joint event with North Wilts and will start with tea at 4.30pm followed by the Holy Habits launch service at 5.30pm. There will be car parking on site.

Sabbatical

As many of you will already know, Rachael continues her 3-month's sabbatical. She will not be back to work until Friday 22nd June. If you have any enquiries please contact Ian Robertson on 01793 751166 or ian.w.robertson@btinternet.com. For pastoral emergencies please ring Rev Dave Perkins on 01793 853197.

Bible Month

Even though we are not following Bible Month as a Circuit, Bible Month still continues in 2018. The book to be studied in June this year is Jonah. If you are interested and would like to know more, resources are available on the Methodist Church website:

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/>

Thy Kingdom Come 10th – 20th May 2018



To take part you can sign up and 'pledge to pray' on the Thy Kingdom Come website; www.thykingdomcome.global

There are many resources available on the website for both church and individual use.

Bereaved Parents Support Day

Saturday 9th June CARE for the Family are running a **Bereaved Parents Support Day** at Highworth Community Centre from 10am to 5pm.

The link to the event is <http://careforthefamily.cmail20.com/t/r-l-jrdliia-jhidhyuyjk-n/>

The Greatest Story Ever Toured – at the Bible Society

Join in an entertaining evening of comedy, discovery and music as you journey through the Bible. Hosted by Paul Kerensa (stand-up comedian and scriptwriter for *Miranda* and *Top Gear*) and Andrew Ollerton (author and presenter of *The Bible Course*) with music provided by Sound of Wales.

Tickets will go on sale from mid-April for 'The Greatest Story Ever Toured'. The Swindon event will be at Bible Society HQ on **Friday 25 May**, with doors opening at 7 pm.

Tickets are £6 – (£4.50 for concessions) and include interval refreshments.

Please **save the date** and come and share our passion for the Bible with laughter and learning along the way.

Purton

Sunday May 13th A CAFE SERVICE WITH BREAKFAST in the Purton Methodist Church for Christian Aid. Breakfast from 9am and the Service starts at 10-30 with a guest speaker. If you are able do come and join us... it's always a fantastic breakfast including porridge, bacon and croissants. All are welcome. Please contact the circuit office for more details.

Cricklade

SING A MUSICAL IN A DAY!

On Saturday 29 September 2018 at Cricklade United Church we are offering the opportunity to sing a musical in a day! Led by Christian Music Ministries - Conductor Annie Routley - we are intending to put on Jarius' Daughter composed by Roger Jones. The day starts with tea/coffee at 10am and is followed by workshops culminating in a performance at 6pm. Singers and musicians of all levels are all welcome. The performance is free and all are invited to come and see and hear the finished event.

We ran a similar day last year and it was a great success, much enjoyed by all who participated.

Further details nearer the time or by telephoning 01793 751020 or 01793 750556

Organ Celebrations

The 80th birthday celebrations for the pipe organ at Stratton Methodist Church has been re-organised for Saturday 16th June 4-7pm

Dates for your diary

10th – 20th May
Sunday 20th May
Friday 25th May
Saturday 9th June

Thy Kingdom Come
Holy Habits Circuit Service at St Joseph's Catholic College 4.30pm
Bible Society entertainment evening
Bereaved Parents Support Day 10am

Contact details (Upper Thames Circuit)

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