

# Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

## Bristol District

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## September Newsletter 2017

*The opening letter is written by Rev Rachael Wilson*

Dear Friends,

One of the things my daughter Trinity asked for to keep her occupied through the school summer holiday was a book of piano music by the composer Einaudi. It arrived a few days before we went away, and straight away she started to learn a piece that she had heard and particularly liked. After a couple of days of practice she brought me the music and showed me how far she had got with it (about two thirds of the way down the first page). Then she showed me that it goes on for 12 pages, with an increasing number of notes per page! “Well,” she said to me, “At least the holiday is long as well! I’ll just have to make a start and see how I get on.” She desperately wants to impress her piano teacher at her first lesson back in September!

Trinity’s words reminded me of somebody else I have been thinking about recently. Sophie Scholl was a German student, born in 1921. She was an anti-Nazi political activist, active within the [White Rose non-violent resistance](#) group in [Nazi Germany](#).

She was convicted of high [treason](#) after having been found distributing anti-war leaflets at the [University of Munich](#) with her brother [Hans](#). As a result, they were both [executed](#) by [guillotine](#) in 1943. Although only 21 years old when she was killed, before the judge at her trial she said, “Somebody, after all, had to make a start.”

We live in an increasingly troubled world. We hear of so many problems and tragedies and injustices, and often feel helpless in the face of these things. We want to do something, we want to help, but what can we do? When the needs around us seem overwhelming, one of the responses we make is to retreat. We can’t cope with the scale of the problem, and so we close our eyes, or we turn our focus in on ourselves, and we do nothing. But somebody has to make a start.

At the beginning of a new year in the life of our circuit we are about to make a start! We will no doubt face many challenges and difficulties in the year ahead, but we will also be given many opportunities and blessings. I hope that you might find Sophie Scholl’s words ringing in your ears in the year ahead as they are in mine, words that challenge and inspire, words that leave no option to sit back and do nothing.

One of the ways in which we can make a start is to think about how we live our lives. We can all make a start by trying to live beautifully and simply. We can make

a start by trying to be more loving and more generous in our families and communities. We can make a start by being more loving and more generous in our churches, both towards one another and

towards the world around us. We can make a start by being more loving and more generous to the environment, thinking about the levels of waste we produce day by day, thinking about trying to cut down the amount of plastic in our shopping trolleys, thinking about what might lie behind every product we buy. We can make a start by being more loving and more generous to all people everywhere, especially towards people who often face abuse and injustice because of their religion or race or social status or sexuality. We can all make a start.

When we get to this point next year and you look back, what will you have done differently? How many lives might have been improved, even just a little bit, because you have made a start to be different today?

Blessings,

Rachael

**NB Deadline for items for the October Newsletter is Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

## **District News**

### **Day of prayer at the New Room on September 1st**

The Methodist Church is encouraging churches, circuits and districts to mark the start of the Methodist New Year on September 1<sup>st</sup> with a Day of Prayer and Fasting.

The Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit and the New Room have teamed up to offer a Communion service and prayer stations at the New Room for anyone around the district who would like to take part.

Between 10.30am and 3.30pm on September 1st there will be four prayer stations in the chapel to enable people to take time out for prayer and reflection. At 1pm we will be holding a short Communion service, as is our usual custom on Fridays. This will be led by both of us and will focus on the themes of the Methodist New Year and 'Day by Day'.

All the details are on the enclosed poster and booklet, which also contains thoughts on reflections on the fasting element of the day. Please share with your churches, colleagues and anyone else who may like to come along. All are welcome.

With best wishes

Mandy Briggs and David Alderman

### **Methodist Women in Britain**

A poster is attached relating to a service to be held in Bath on 23 September for the induction of Jane Parsons as the next District President for Methodist Women in Britain.

### **Bristol District Youth Weekend - EWEnique - October 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> 2017**

Nailsea Methodist Church

See attached poster for details

## Circuit News/Events

### Circuit Leadership Team

From September 2017, Mike Ashford will be taking up the position of Senior Circuit Steward for the Upper Thames Circuit. We wish him well in his new appointment. Andrew Fleet will be continuing as a Circuit Steward. We thank Andrew for all his hard work over the last 4 years.

### Circuit Service

The Circuit Service this quarter will be taking place at Toothill on **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 6.30pm.** Rev Jan Partridge will be the preacher - she is also celebrating 20 years at Toothill.

### Christian Concert

#### **An Evening with Paul Field, Geraldine Latty and guests**

**7.30 p.m. Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at St Joseph's College, Swindon**

Following the very successful evening with Stuart Townend last year we are delighted that **Paul Field and Geraldine Latty** have agreed to bring their music to an evening at St Joseph's College, Ocotol Way Swindon SN3 3LR on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Paul, a well known Christian musician and songwriter, has written songs for many artists around the world in styles ranging from country to gospel and rock and pop. He wrote the Millennium Prayer, a hit for Cliff Richard, the musical CARGO and collaborated with Garth Hewitt to produce 'The Dalit Drum'. He has had No. 1 chart success with his songs in the UK, USA, Holland, South Africa and Germany and his Christian songs include: 'Still You speak', 'You are the Lord', Lord make me a Mountain and 'Go peaceful'. Last year he produced his latest solo album: 'Being Myself'. It is good to welcome Paul back to our area.

Geraldine, is a gospel singer and songwriter, a performer and a vocal coach. Her music fuses Soul, Gospel, Blues, World, Jazz, Classical and Rock. Her songs include: 'Shout it', 'It's amazing' and 'Lord I come and Dance. She is well known for her music ministry with her husband, Carey and often leads worship including Spring Harvest and FocusFest. Her new solo album: 'Can you see it?', produced this year, is a musical adventure expressing the wonder of God. We are delighted that she has agreed to collaborate with the Stand and Praise Gospel choir which was formed earlier this year under the leadership of the late Jim Eddings and it is hoped they will join her in some songs on this evening.

Join us for this celebration of God's grace in music and song.

Refreshments will be available and on-site parking is free.

Tickets: £12

Available from: [venuehire@stjosephscollege.net](mailto:venuehire@stjosephscollege.net) [Tel. 01793 714608]

and The Lighthouse Bookshop, Highworth [Tel. 01793 763337]

## Gospel Choir

Christian Gospel singer, **Geraldine Latty** has agreed to come to Swindon with her husband, Carey, on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September from 7.00 p.m. for a 7.30 p.m. start** to rehearse the choir in two of the songs we have learnt with Jim and to teach us to sing a further song which we can perform with Geraldine. Both in preparation for the concert on 13<sup>th</sup> October, to be held at St Joseph's.

The rehearsal will take place at **Toothill Church, Flint Hill, Swindon SN5 8AH**. We felt it would be a wonderful thing for the choir to be able to perform at this large venue with Geraldine and that this could be a tribute in memory to Jim and all God enabled him to do with us.

We are searching for a leader/musical director who might take the Gospel Choir forward from the work that Jim did with us and have started to make enquiries with a view to starting rehearsal at the latest in November 2017 and hopefully no later than early in 2018.

Please will you let Chris German know if you have **ideas for such a person** who we could contact. **Please will you also pray** that God will lead us to the right person for this work and that, if it be His will, we may find a way to continue to grow in singing His praises through the medium of gospel.

## Holy Habits



**with Rev Andrew**

**Roberts**

Discipleship specialist in the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network.  
Previously he was Fresh Expressions' Director of Training

**10.00am - 4.00pm, Saturday, 21st October 2017**  
**The Methodist Church**  
**Rope Yard, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4**  
**7BS**

**Hot drinks available**

The Revd Andrew Roberts will be leading a day's seminar to give you an overview of the Holy Habits programme, with suggestions for further reflection and action that can be used individually and by smaller or larger churches in our circuit. Please see attached poster.

Andrew will also be leading worship at Cricklade on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October at 10.30am.

## Highworth Methodist Church

Highworth are holding a Christian Mindfulness course starting on Tuesday September 19<sup>th</sup> 7.30 - 9.00pm. This will be led by Anna Miles. Please see poster attached.

### The Knitted Bible

It is hoped that Highworth Town is going to be transformed during the first week of October. The Methodist Church have managed to borrow **The Knitted Bible Exhibition** but instead of exhibiting it in church it will be going into shop windows to form Town Trail.

Children from the local schools will be taking part in identifying which bible story is in which shop window. Anyone can take part and quiz sheets will be available at the Lighthouse Bookshop.

It is also hoped that alongside the Town Trail we can Yarn Bomb some of the High Street ...so it really will be transformed....in colour and, we pray, in inspiring our children to look at the stories of the bible.

Your prayers for this event are gratefully received and of course you are very welcome to come and take part. Poster attached.

Linda (aka Lou)Ashford

### Dates for your diary

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Circuit Service at Toothill 6.30pm
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> September	Gospel Choir rehearsal at Toothill 7 - 9.30pm
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> September School, Bath	Upper Thames Circuit hosting Synod at Kingswood
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> September	Christian Mindfulness Course at HMC 7.30pm
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> September	Circuit Meeting at Highworth 7.30pm
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	LP's & WL's meeting at Highworth 7.30pm
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> October Geraldine Latty	Christian Concert at St Joseph's with Paul Field &
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> October RWBMC	Holy Habits introduction with Andrew Roberts at

### Contact details (Upper Thames Circuit)

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