

The Methodist Church
BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2016

Circuit Website <http://www.banburycircuit.org.uk>

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DEADLINE for the **MAY EDITION** is
TUESDAY 12th APRIL

Please include contributions for events occurring
up to and including at least Sunday 12th June

Send contributions to
Margaret Smith: 49 Queensway, Banbury OX16 9NF
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From the Editor's Desk:

A newsletter provides a wonderful opportunity to share news of coming events, views, opinions, joys and anxieties; it is also an opportunity to encourage each other. With this in mind, I'd like every reader to think what they would like to see printed here, let me know, and then go one stage further and make a contribution to its pages.

For instance, have you read a book or magazine article, seen/heard a television/radio programme lately that made you stop and think? Did it stir up strong feelings, present you with questions, or perhaps answer something you have been questioning for some time? Write about it and share it with the rest of us in the Circuit. It may answer similar (or other) questions for someone else, it may offer encouragement or bring joy to others, it may educate some of us.

Or, you may have been to a Day/Weekend/Longer Conference or Holiday where you have felt uplifted or challenged. Write about it for the newsletter so that others may experience that lift or challenge too. Your words may even encourage others to try a similar experience.

Have you read, seen or heard something that amused you? - Share it with the Circuit.

So, put on your thinking caps; as well as giving information about your planned events, what other items or articles are you able to offer?

Margaret Smith

P.S. Chapel Stewards: Please don't forget - let me know how many copies of the newsletter you require and if you need any larger print copies. Thank you.

April Lectionary Readings 2016

April 3rd

Acts 5: 27-32
Psalm 118: 14-29 or Psalm 150
Revelation 1: 4-8
John 20: 19-31

April 10th

Acts 9: 1-6, (7-20)
Psalm 30
Revelation 5: 11-14
John 21: 1-19

April 17th

Acts 9: 36-43
Psalm 23
Revelation 7: 9-17
John 10: 22-30



April 24th

Acts 11: 1-18
Psalm 148
Revelation 21: 1-6
John 13: 31-35

Lin's Letter

Dear Friends,

Be prepared to be excited by Jesus

As I write this letter I am in a car travelling to Presbyterian Synod in Leicester. Rev Chris Eddy is driving and Rev Jeff Smith is in the front with him while I sit in the back of the car writing. We've been having interesting conversations about the Budget, which George Osborne will be presenting later today and about our thoughts of sitting in a meeting for most of the day – I won't divulge our thoughts!

My mind, however, is focusing on the Circuit Meeting tonight. I am a hopeful person and am eagerly anticipating hearing the hopes and dreams, possibilities and potentials for our churches and circuit. Now that The Fairway Church is being built just think of the possibilities that offers us; a fresh start, the many families surrounding the building – imagine how God will be at work with us there wow!

This has been a long time coming. Most building schemes take years, but when they are of God they actually happen. The preparation work, the details, the various authorities that need to be consulted, the consents needed are all necessary and there are no shortcuts. Jesus talks of this in Luke's gospel (Luke 14: 28-32). In today's terms, this is a business plan; preparation, preparation, preparation.

We are in interesting and challenging times as we review the work in this Circuit. What does the future hold for each of our chapels? What is God wanting of us in this Circuit? How viable are we? Can we sustain the status quo or not, and if not what do we do? All of these questions are being asked as part of our review. Please think about them, talk to each other about them, pray about them and share with me, Victoria and the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) the answers and promptings you have.

Rev Jill Marsh, the District Director of Mission, is coming to our Circuit Meeting tonight and again to our June meeting. Her role means that she travels around the district getting to know each of the Circuit's and the many churches and chapels. She has met with our CLT and is helping us to assess where we are, how we can tweak the things we are up to and enliven the mission we are involved in.

I have used the words 'interesting' and 'challenging', which can be used in different contexts, but used them in the context of the church year. In time, we are just after Easter, we are celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, His rising from the dead. This was all for us, to give us new life. So as we move forward with a new sense of resurrection faith let us remember those post resurrection appearances in the gospels and, like the disciples, be prepared to be excited by the Lord. New life for them became a reality and so it is for us. Possibilities and potential are all around us.

Wishing you all every blessing as we continue to rejoice in this Easter season.

Lin 

CIRCUIT NOTICE BOARD

MARLBOROUGH ROAD

CAMEO

(Come And Meet Each Other)

Meeting at 2.30pm

on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month
in the Wesley Room.

Men and women of any age are welcome
to share in a varied programme.

Money raised goes to the

'Methodist Church World Mission Fund'.

13th April Rev Victoria Bravette

27th April Deacon Margaret Hale
'Humour in the Pulpit'

11th May Slides - 'A Trip on the Rhine'

25th May Rev Rob Anning

Although held at Marlborough Road, this
meeting has members from other churches.

Why not come and join with us???

Thursday Club

7.30pm at Marlborough Road

7th April Andrea Harding-Smith
(Bring-and-Buy)

5th May ... Wendy Humphris - Street Pastors

2nd June Evening in Shirley's Garden

7th July Lunch Out

4th August Quiz and/or Games

Enquiries to

Shirley Davies ☎ 01295 258193

EASINGTON

Ladies' Fellowship

Tuesdays at 2.30pm

A varied programme of speakers, quizzes
and slide-presentations is followed by
a chat over light refreshments.

All are welcome

NEITHROP

Chapel Fellowship

Wednesdays - 7.30pm

Enquires to Valerie Gainsley

vjgainsley@uwclub.net ☎ 01295 369244

13 April: The Nightingales - Singing Group

27 April: Quiz - Archie Buzzard

11 May: Margaret Clarke

HINTON at WOODFORD HALSE

Come and join with us for a

Free coffee, tea, cakes and biscuits

First Saturday every month,
10.00 am - 12 noon.

You may also buy gifts for a chosen charity.

*The Stagecoach bus number 200 stops
right outside Hinton Methodist Church.*

CHACOMBE

Coffee 'n' Chat

These popular sessions will be held on
Fridays 1st & 15th April

10.30am - 12 noon in the schoolroom

On 15th April we will be visited by the local
Primary School choir.

Do come along and join the fun.

We continue to sponsor Michael through
World Vision. He is twelve years old and
lives with his parents and three sisters in
Lufwanyama, Zambia. His special job is
fetching water. He has the opportunity to
attend a local school and our sponsorship
money will help him to receive an education.

CROPREDY

Coffee with Bring-and-Buy

2nd Friday every month 10.30am - 12 noon

When we meet and make new friends.

Praise Evening with Patricia Haley

23rd April at 7.00pm



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

UPPER BODDINGTON CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY

We invite friends from the Circuit to come and join in our celebrations and look forward to seeing you!

Sunday 17th April

10.30am: Family Service

6.00pm: Evening Worship

Both services will be led by Rev Rob Anning

Tuesday 19th April - 7.30pm

Sankey Songs of Praise Evening

Friends from other churches will join with us to sing favourite hymns.

During the evening a collection will be taken for the work of the Hosannah Children's Home in India.

Refreshments will be served after the singing.

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EASINGTON LADIES' FELLOWSHIP ANNIVERSARY

Tuesday 19th April - 2.30pm

Led by Rev Victoria Bravette

Followed by a 'Bring-and-Share' Tea

We extend a warm invitation to all.



WaterAid

Adderbury Churches are continuing to support WaterAid as our joint charity for a further year.

Our next fundraising event will be an illustrated talk by our Senior Steward, carpenter and joiner David Gibbard, on 'The Use of Wood in Domestic Life'.

This will be on Friday 20th May at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Light refreshments will follow and Val Trinder will be selling cards featuring her photographs.

All are welcome.



The Church of Scotland The **Methodist** Church



Churches working together...

joint public issues team

...to live out the gospel of Christ in church and society

Challenged to nominate the “greatest commandment” Jesus went to Deuteronomy 6 – “love God with all you are”. He did not, however, stop there but went on to also nominate the second greatest – “to love your neighbour as yourself” (Lev 19) - and then made clear that in this context “your neighbour” was anybody who needed help and support. Concern and care for others is not a voluntary addition to our faith but is at the very heart of it. That means taking an interest in the world around us and that must include how we organise ourselves as a society to respond to need – sorry, but that means politics!

With this in mind the Methodist-Baptist-URC Churches, later joined by the Church of Scotland, set up the “Joint Public Issues Team” (JPIT) to enable the Churches to work together to live out the gospel of Christ in church and society. Its aim is to promote equality and justice by influencing those in power and by energising and supporting local congregations – that means US! Current concerns and campaigns include social justice (e.g. trying to ensure - against current government policies - that everybody has enough simply to live on), social concerns (e.g. gambling and alcohol) and international affairs (e.g. human rights) plus many others.

If you have access to the internet, the easiest way to find out what is happening is go to the Methodist Church website (www.methodist.org.uk), follow the link to “Public Issues” and then explore. It is also well worth signing up to the (free) monthly e-newsletter PRAXIS.

Remember, on the authority of Jesus himself, this is not a voluntary addition to our faith but is at its very heart.

Jeff Smith

The latest (March) edition of PRAXIS announces several successes!

Working with “other faith groups, charities and academics” their campaigning has changed the Government’s mind on several important issues:

- the extent of child poverty will continue to be monitored (and not ‘swept under the carpet’)
- the Welfare Reform and Work Bill has been much improved (though it still includes plans to “deliberately leave many families without enough to meet basic needs”)
- plans to relax Sunday trading were defeated
- the Freedom of Information Act will not be weakened in order to hide Government actions from scrutiny.

JPIT also announced that it is urgently preparing a resource, entitled ‘Think, Pray, Vote’, to help people address the issues surrounding the EU-Referendum from a Christian perspective (and you can sign-up to be notified as soon as it is available).

Saying the Lord's Prayer

(Found in Christian Aid literature for 2002 - A reflection from Nicaragua)

Don't say "Father" if you don't behave like a son each day.
Don't say "Our" if you only ever think of yourself.
Don't say "As it is in heaven" if you only ever think of earthly matters.
Don't say "Hallowed be your name" if you don't honour that name.
Don't say "Your kingdom come" if you are weighed down with material goods.
Don't say "Your will be done" if you don't accept the hard times.
Don't say "Our daily bread" if you have no concern for the hungry or the homeless.
Don't say "Forgive us our sins" if you remain angry with your brothers/sisters.
Don't say "Lead us not into temptation" if you intend to continue sinning.
Don't say "Deliver us from evil" if you won't make a stand against injustice.
Don't say "Amen" without considering the words of your prayer



BANBURY STREET PASTORS

Caring Listening Helping & Praying
in our community and for our community.
The 21st century challenge for the Church to
bring positive changes to our community.

Our Story

We are part of a national team, first pioneered in 2003, continuing to grow throughout the UK and across the world.

Street pastors are trained volunteers from local churches; we care about our community. We are usually on patrol in a team of four (men & women) from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. on a Saturday night to care for, listen to and help people who are out on the streets. Our local coordinators and project leaders are Geoff and Su, and the small teams on patrol are led by a senior street pastor. We enjoy support from local churches and community groups in partnership with the police, local council and other statutory agencies. We are also supported by a team of prayer pastors who pray for us and the people we may meet out on a patrol.

Once upon a time.....

Before June 2011, people in different parts of Banbury were praying. They didn't know it BUT they were all praying about how to be effective, caring, Christians, in their community and for their community. They were praying about how to be Church OUTSIDE of our church buildings and how to reach younger people who were putting themselves in vulnerable situations when they were out 'in town'.

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Su and Geoff both decided individually that they had been called to put a plan into action and they contacted the Ascension Trust who coordinate and run the Street Pastor Project in the UK and throughout the world.

The Ascension Trust has a set pathway that a local area must follow in order to set up a local group of Street Pastors. After making contact with them the Ascension Trust will send a representative to talk with local church leaders. This happened in early 2011. People in local churches needed to show a willingness to get on board. Local church leaders were encouraged to try to get together a small group who could then form a management team. This needed people from five different churches, which happened on the 9th June 2011. At this stage, nine of Banbury's churches had pledged support. Five churches were represented at the first management meeting, Geoff and Su were appointed as coordinators and we elected a Chairman and Treasurer, as required. Banbury Street Pastors were on their way! We had support from the Town Council and the Police, which was a requirement of the Ascension Trust. It is what they call the URBAN TRINITY. We then held a civic reception in the town hall on 30th November 2011.

From this point onwards we recruited volunteer Street Pastors and prayer pastors. The training sessions started on the 28th January 2012 with the first session, called 'Roles and Responsibilities', led by Anwar Bourazza, from the Ascension Trust.

Our first recruits were commissioned on 23rd March 2012. The first full patrol was on the **31st March 2012**. Teams have been out on patrol almost every Saturday night, since March 2012.

A few thoughts shared from those Street Pastors.

Thoughts on working together feature strongly

It is an amazing way the churches can work together to be so clearly serving the community and to keep them from being obsessed with their own internal affairs. It is also putting ourselves in God's hands so deliberately.

I was convinced that "doing" things together as Christians is far better than "talking" together and moves the ecumenical movement on far quicker. I think the first years of the Street Pastors in Banbury has proved that.

The differences between denominations are put into perspective when we all work together for a common cause. It is then that we see our differences as insignificant compared to sharing faith and building the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Working alongside Christians from so many different churches is fantastic. We share our thoughts and ideas at times and sometimes have differing viewpoints but are united in our conviction that we go out into our community just as Christ did, to meet people and help those in need. It is a great demonstration that Christians can work well together and I believe that our contact with one another benefits us all.

I have got to know and respect lots of Christians from different church backgrounds and I have been amazed so many times when God has very specifically used our many and varied life experiences in the team, to help people in very difficult circumstances.

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Thought on sharing our faith

Although it is not really part of our job description to evangelise, I have had more opportunities in the last four years than I had in the forty years before, and almost all of them were as a result of people's questions rather than my 'preaching'.

Thoughts about what we have gained personally

Being an SP gives you an insight. Chatting with people makes you realise that human beings have so much in common; thoughts, beliefs, regrets, desires and needs, whatever their social circumstance. I am more tolerant and understanding.

I have discovered again just how much I can do by trusting fully in God's strength rather than in my own. I was never a 'night owl', I felt called to train as an SP, I did so having no idea how I would cope with being out late at night. In fact I have managed without any problem.

Being an SP has increased my faith in God so much. I have had to rely on Him for wisdom, patience, compassion, strength and He has never let me down. I am so much bolder in my prayers for everyone I meet, and now realise just how hungry people are for God.

I have a much deeper understanding of the lives of people in Banbury, who go out on a Saturday night, and also the Police and Bar Staff. I wouldn't have got that any other way (unless I decided to start clubbing or sleeping rough!).

For me, there has been the privilege of praying; I felt God touched him as we prayed together - a man, in his late 30s who had lost his family, job and accommodation; there were tears, and I felt God gave him hope for the future. We did hear later that he found a new job.

One afternoon, I came across a lady with her three school children who was trying to help an old man who had felt unwell and pulled off the road in his car. He was confused, she was distraught. My SP experiences gave me the confidence to intervene, call 999 and arrange for Police and Ambulance to attend. The policeman recognised me and was grateful for the assistance.

I am a member of a movement of unity that encourages us to try to see Jesus in our neighbour. Street pastors, for me, has been a unique opportunity to meet Jesus with every one we meet on the Saturday night and to meet Jesus in our fellow street pastors.

Stories from the front line

There are so many times when we have really helped someone in awful situations, that I wonder what would have happened if we had decided not to go out.

Drinks Cans lead us to finding someone in need.

On patrols we collect and bin cans because they are sharp objects and could inflict injury if used as a weapon. The can count was nearing 100, we diverted to find more and were attracted to a group of people in Lloyds Bank car park. They needed an ambulance but were struggling to make contact with the emergency services and identify their location, being new to Banbury.

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We were able to take over and direct the ambulance to us, and collect over 100 cans!

There was "Superman" a visiting football fan, separated from his friends, after they had stopped in Banbury on their way home. We met him in the market place trying unsuccessfully to find "the bus". We eventually, with the help of the Police, got him a taxi to Aldershot. At 2.30am we were asked by some blokes in a van, alias "the bus", if we had seen "superman". They were thrilled he was safe and amazed that we had been able to help! A costly ride home though!

Two young women we met outside The Wild Lime, who, after meeting us and asking who we were, responded "you alone give me hope."

Memories of people being so grateful for our listening to them, showing care and concern, and of walking in Banbury at night in all weathers, sharing with each other as we walk, feeling totally safe and at peace.

St John of the cross said "where you do not find love, put love and there you will find love " this is what has happened with the street pastors patrols. Every patrol I have been on, at least one person has said that what we do is amazing, in fact one night someone came out of a restaurant specifically to thank us for what we do and he gave us a donation.

So from a hug from a fragrant young lady at one end of the night to hug from a tattooed but broken tearaway at the other, via deep chats with youngsters in between, an absolutely terrific night.



**Working together to value and honour our town.
The URBAN TRINITY of
the churches, local government and the Police
making a difference for us all.**

Age is no barrier our teams range in age from 23 to 84! If you are interested in becoming a Street Pastor, Prayer pastor or general supporter, or would like to find out more about our work, please contact us using the details below;

email; banbury@streetpastors.org.uk

or Geoff and Su Scales ☎ 07575 837637 ☎ This phone is checked once a day).

If you are out in town on a Saturday night
do come and say HELLO - we would love to meet you.

~ ~ ~

If any Chapel would like a couple of Street Pastors to come and do a short slot in a service or on an LA day then please get in touch with me on ☎ 01295 263577 or ☎ 07813988617 and we will see what we can arrange. I also have some fliers, which I can email to anyone who would like to promote Street Pastors in their churches.

Wendy Humphris
MRMC & SP Management Team Member

Bible vs. Mobile Phone

I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our mobile phone?



What if we carried it around in our handbags or pockets.

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we turned back to go and get it if we forgot it?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to children as gifts?

What if we used it when we travelled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

This is something to make you say... hmm... where is my Bible?



Oh, and one more thing.

Unlike our mobile phone, we don't have to worry about our Bible being disconnected because Jesus has already paid the bill.

And no missed calls.

Makes you stop and think "Where are my priorities?"

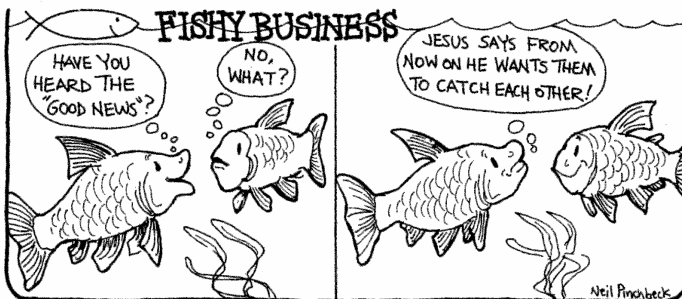
Quiz: Sixteen Hidden Books of the Bible

There are sixteen books of the Bible hidden in the following passage, how many can you find?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and to others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalised. But finally the truth struck home to the numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. I want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really difficult ones to spot. Others may require judges to help. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them. There will be lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete.

Relax now, for there really are sixteen books of the Bible hidden in this passage. One minister found fifteen books in twenty minutes but then took three weeks to find the sixteenth one.

Solution will be in the May Newsletter





DATES for your DIARY

Further details - elsewhere in this newsletter

Tip: To keep the dates readily available, pin this page to your home notice board.

(MC = Methodist Church)

- Apr 1 10.30-12noon..... Coffee 'n' Chat Chacombe MC Schoolroom
- Apr 2 10am-12noon..... Coffee Morning Hinton MC at Woodford Halse
- Apr 7 7.30pm Thursday Club Marlborough Road MC
- Apr 13 2.30pm CAMEO..... Marlborough Road MC
- Apr 13 7.30pm Chapel Fellowship..... Neithrop MC
- Apr 15 10.30-12noon..... Coffee with Bring-and-Buy Cropredy MC
- Apr 15 10.30-12noon..... Coffee 'n' Chat Chacombe MC Schoolroom
- Apr 17 10.30am Anniversary Family Service Upper Boddington MC
- Apr 17 6.00pm Anniversary Evening Worship. Upper Boddington MC
- Apr 19 2.30pm Ladies' Fellowship Anniversary..... Easington MC
- Apr 19 7.30pm Sankey Songs of Praise..... Upper Boddington MC
- Apr 20 2.30pm CAMEO..... Marlborough Road MC
- Apr 23 7.00pm Praise Evening..... Cropredy MC
- Apr 27 7.30pm Chapel Fellowship..... Neithrop MC
- May 5 7.30pm Thursday Club Marlborough Road MC
- May 7 10am-12noon..... Coffee Morning Hinton MC at Woodford Halse
- May 11 2.30pm CAMEO..... Marlborough Road MC
- May 11 7.30pm Chapel Fellowship..... Neithrop MC
- May 15 **Pentecost**
- May 15-22 **Christian Aid Week**
- May 20 10.30-12noon..... Coffee with Bring-and-Buy Cropredy MC
- May 20 7.30pm WaterAid Evening Adderbury MC Hall
- May 22 **Trinity Sunday**
- May 25 2.30pm CAMEO..... Marlborough Road MC

Regular Weekly Meetings

Tues 2.30pm Ladies Fellowship Easington MC

