

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012**

It's An Upside Down World!

Rev Rob Anning, Superintendent Minister, writes:

Anyone who takes a trip to Australia will know that experience, that feeling, that compared to living in the UK, you are actually on the other side of the globe. You only need to look up to the sky on a starry night from anywhere in Australia and you will see a very different sky. You are definitely “upside down” -- but don't ask me why you don't fall off!

For Christians, this should not be a new experience. As Kingdom of God builders, we know that in God's Kingdom everything is upside down. Many of the sayings of Jesus point to that upside down nature, eg “the first shall be last and the last shall be first”.

Even the nativity story suggests things are not done by human design but by God's design: Jesus our King is born into an “ordinary” family, not into wealth. He is born in a stable, not in a palace. His first visitors are plain ordinary shepherds; the richer, cleverer Magi have to wait their turn. All of this points us to an understanding that God's ways of doing things are often the opposite to our human ways.

As we step into a New Year and begin to think about what God might want each of the churches in the Banbury Methodist Circuit to be doing in 2012, we should remember that the first things that come into our head may not be what God wants. The Kingdom he wants us to build will certainly be “upside down” and in order to build that Kingdom requires us to think in new ways, to “think out of the box”.

And we are also required to consider taking risks. If a human being had been in charge of “bringing God into the world” through the nativity, he or she would have done a risk assessment, and the Bethlehem story would have been considerably different. There wouldn't have been a risky journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, there would certainly have not been a risky birth in a dirty stable, and the flight into Egypt would have been ruled out as too risky for a young child. But that is exactly the way God chose to do it, with all the risk that it involved.

In our Kingdom building, working through our churches and chapels, we need to combine some “upside down” thinking with a willingness to take risks. That way, we can be certain that we are more likely to be building God's Kingdom here on earth.

CIRCUIT SUPPER CLUB

The Banbury Supper Club speaker for January is the Rev Rob Anning speaking on "A Pilgrimage to Iona" on Thursday, January 26th at 7 for 7.30 pm. Bookings to David Hughes (*contact steward or see paper copy for contact details*) by Monday night January 23rd at the latest please.

HOUSE EXCHANGE

The House and car swop offer by a Methodist Minister in New Zealand for about four to six weeks in the second half of July and August 2012 is temporally off because he cannot get flights to UK at that time because of the Olympics.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

Dec 4th 2nd of Advent

Isaiah 40:1 – 11
Psalm 85:1 – 2, 8 – 13
2 Peter 3:8 – 15a
Mark 1:1-8

Dec 11th 3rd of Advent

Isaiah 61:1 – 4, 8 – 11
Psalm 126 or
Canticle: Magnificat
(Luke 1:46b – 55)
1 Thessalonians 5:16 –
24
John 1:6 – 8, 19 – 28

Dec 18th 4th of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1 – 11, 16
Canticle: Magnificat
(Luke 1:46b – 55)
Or Psalm 89:1 – 4, 19 –
26
Romans 16:25 – 27
Luke 1:26 – 38

Dec 25th Christmas

Day
Isaiah 9:2 – 7
Psalm 96
Titus: 11 – 14
Luke 2:1 – 14 (15 – 20)

Jan 1st New Year's Day

Jeremiah 31:7 – 14 or
Sirach/Ecclesiasticus
24:1 – 12
Psalm 147:12 – 20 or
Canticle: Wisdom of
Solomon
10:15 – 21
Ephesians 1:3 – 14
John 1 (1 – 9) 10 – 18

Jan 8th

Genesis 1: 1 – 5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1 – 7
Mark 1:4 – 11

Jan 15th

1 Samuel 3:1 – 10(11
– 20)
Psalm 139:1 – 6, 13 –
18
1 Corinthians 6:12 – 20
John 1:43 – 51

Jan 22nd

Jonah 3:1 – 5, 10
Psalm 62:5 – 12
1 Corinthians 7:29 – 31
Mark 1:14- 20

Jan 29th

Deuteronomy 18:15 –
25
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1 – 13
Mark 1:21 – 28

POSTCARDS FOR THE CHURCH IN SUDAN

Very many thanks to all those people who continue to bring their used postcards when I am in or near their churches. The collection continues and the postcards are eventually sold to provide funds for the Sudan Church Association, a small registered charity, number 290607. I take the cards to a collection box in the church at Priors Marston and they then go via Rev Elizabeth Mordecai, who lives in Leamington, to Mr Len Whittaker who lives in Ingatestone, Essex. Mr Whittaker has immense knowledge of the interest and value of the cards and he sorts them and sells them where he knows he can get the best price. In the last five years £60,000 has been raised in this way. In the year ending 30th June 2011 £12,180 was raised. I have been in contact with Mr Whittaker recently by both phone and letter. He receives the cards from all over the country by means of a network of willing volunteers. He then sorts and sells them. Most collectors these days only want cards relating a specific subject, but there are collectors for just about every subject under the sun. There is thus a value for every card and Mr Whittaker knows better than most people where to find it. Earlier this year Mr Whittaker had an article, entitled "Charity Postcards" published in Picture Postcard Monthly – for which he was paid! It certainly served to raise the profile of the collection we help to support. Mr Whittaker wishes his gratitude to be passed on to all donors of postcards, and the collectors. So, please, keep on saving your used postcards and pass them on to me whenever it's convenient. They will be put to good use. Once again, many thanks to all for your support

Margaret Clarke

ADDERBURY

Early Christmas shopping? – You've seen the Adderbury slide shows – now buy the calendar! Val Trinder has produced a calendar for 2012 featuring her photographs called Landscapes of Britain. The calendar is on sale, price £5 for Adderbury chapel funds.

There are now fewer than half a dozen copies left of Val's book "More Laughing Methodists" which has already raised well over £1500 for Circuit manse funds. If you haven't yet read it, or are in need of a novel Christmas present for some of your Methodist friends, contact Val (*contact steward or see paper copy for contact details*) to purchase a copy, price £6.99.

ADDERBURY COFFEE MORNINGS

Our December monthly Coffee Morning on Saturday 3rd December will be extra special to coincide with the Adderbury village Christmas Market. In addition to our usual Bring and Buy stall, there will be cakes and preserves for sale as well as Val's cards and calendars. Everyone is welcome to join us between 10:30 am and 12 noon. Please note that there will be no coffee morning in January.

BODICOTE

Coffee Mornings: - Bodicote will be opening the chapel for a coffee morning on the 3rd Saturday in the month 10.30 -12.00. We hope any friends near by will join us in fellowship. We hope to make this a regular get together so please come and join us.

Praise Evenings: - These will now take place on Fridays (not Thursdays!), beginning at 7.30 pm. If you would like to join us for a time of informal praise and worship, then please make a note of the following date in your diary: - 16th December.

Ladies Fellowship: - As part of our continuing outreach in the village, a monthly ladies meeting will commence in September, on Fridays at 2.00 pm. We would be delighted to see you there (whether you live in the village or not), and encourage you to bring along a friend. The next date is 9th December.

CROPREDY

We hold a Bible study meetings every Wednesday, for details of time and venues please contact Hazel Stagg after noon.

Friday 16th December carol singing on the Green proceeds for Action for Children more details later.

EASINGTON

On Saturday 3rd December from 10:30 am to 12:00 noon we are holding a **Christmas Coffee Morning** at the church in Grange Road. As well as the chance for some good fellowship over tea/coffee, there will also be stalls selling cards and gift items, all with a Christmas theme. We would be delighted to welcome all our friends from around the circuit.

Christmas Services and Activities

Friday 16 th December	7:00 pm	Candlelit Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, followed by seasonal refreshments
Sunday 18 th December	10:30 am	Morning Worship led by Deacon Margaret Hale
	3:00 pm	Crib Service (specially suitable for children)
Monday 19 th December	6:30 pm	Carol singing around the local area (in aid of Banbury Young Homeless Project)
Sunday 25 th December	9:15 am	Christmas Day Service led by Rev Dorothy Hewitson

Again, all friends from around the circuit would be welcome to join us for any of the above.

FAIRWAY

ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT SUPPER
SATURDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2011
At 6 pm Cost £7.00
Names to Connie Moses Or Marilyn Nutt
(contact steward or see paper copy for contact details)

HINTON METHODIST & ST MARY'S CHURCH COFFEE MORNINGS WOODFORD HALSE

Gods love is free so is our coffee and tea (And cakes and biscuits!)
You'll be very welcome to come and relax and chat between 10 and 12 o'clock in
Hinton Methodist Church on the first Saturday of every month

HORNTON

Our weekly coffee mornings are proving a great success – we would love to see you – they take place every Friday from 10.30 to 12 noon.

On the first Sunday in the monthly JIFFY service (Jesus is Fun For You). The service is aimed at young children and their families and begins at 3.30 pm.

MARLBOROUGH ROAD THURSDAY CLUB 7.30 pm

1st December – Carol singing with members of our Church Choir (please bring either mince pies or sausage rolls

5th January – Rev Chris Young (Baptist Church, Kings Sutton) – water colour painting

Enquiries: – Shirley Davies, *(contact steward or see paper copy for contact details)*

NEITHROP CHAPEL FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS HELD ON WEDNESDAYS AT 7.30

The meetings will be held alternately between Neithrop Chapel and the lounge of Yule Court, Boxhedge Square.

18th January – Aromatherapy – Marianne Allitt **Chapel**

UPPER BODDINGTON

This year our Carol Singing Evening will take place on Tuesday, December 20th, starting at 7.30 pm. This is a very informal event when we sing favourite carols for about an hour in the brightly decorated Chapel and then move into the adjoining schoolroom to enjoy a cup of tea and mincepies, with the opportunity for a good chat to friends too! The carol singing evening was started to replace singing carols around the two Boddington villages when the villages grew in size and the singers grew older. We take up a collection during our singing evening which is donated to Action For Children and although the collection raises much less than when we sang from door to door, at least we feel we are still trying to help the work among young people. Please come and join us if you can.

On December 24th at 2 pm, the Rev Janet Jackson will lead a crib service in the Chapel. There will be a warm welcome for anyone of any age at that event when our Anglican friends will join with us.

On Christmas morning we will have the usual short Family Service starting at 10:30 am. We invite everyone without a service in their own Church to come and join us as we spend a happy, joyful half an hour celebrating the birth of our Saviour before going home to our individual celebrations.

CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons each month except July and August at Marlborough Road at 2.30 pm and welcome Men and Women of any age to share a varied programme.

14th December – Christmas Dinner and carols

11th January – Mr & Mrs Alan Vincent – slides of South Africa

25th January – Mrs Hazel Stagg

The money we raise goes to the Methodist Church Fund for World Mission.

COME AND MEET US!!!

DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY EDITION

THURSDAY 12TH JANUARY

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MARY TANNER,

(contact steward or see paper copy for contact details)

CIRCUIT WEBSITE <http://www.banburycircuit.org.uk/>