

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER
February 2014**

February: A Month of Ordinary Time

Rev Rob Anning, Superintendent Minister, writes:

The Lectionary, the calendar used by the Church which details the set readings for each Sunday of the year, calls the time between the major Christian festivals, such as between Christmas and Lent, “ordinary time”.

The month of February falls almost entirely in “ordinary time”. As a month, it often feels that way: cold, damp, grey, very ordinary, especially compared to the brighter times of Spring and Summer, and even the bright but cold days of Winter. It feels like a month of waiting; for Winter to end and Spring to arrive. It feels like a month when very little happens, and many people simply wish it would pass as quickly as possible.

February may be an ordinary month, almost a nothing month, with few highlights, except perhaps Valentine’s Day! But there is always something happening, even in ordinary time. The nights are getting shorter and we notice the days getting longer, the bulbs are beginning to stir in our gardens and trees and plants are starting to show signs of growth.

Some of us may feel that the majority of our lives are like February and ordinary time. We can’t live forever on the mountain tops, most of our lives are spent in the valley’s at the bottom of the mountain. There, in the thick of ordinary life, things continue to stir, God is active and there are signs of growth and hope all around us. But can we see them?

When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain top, those disciples with him were tempted to want to stay up high but Jesus encourages them back to the valley. Samuel Gregg sums it up in the closing lines of his hymn:

*No, says the Lord, the hour is past, we go;
Our home, our life, our duties lie below.
Here we sought God that we might know his will;
There we must do it, serve him, seek him still.*

For our Circuit, the month of February will be anything but ordinary. It will be a continuation of Preparing for Growth. On Saturday, 8 February, there will be a morning to help every church and chapel to prepare for September and beyond. See the information elsewhere in this month’s newsletter, and come along, put your toe in the water, offer your gifts and talents, in order to help our Circuit to be “Prepared for Growth”.

Preparing for Growth

**You are invited to a morning
to help the Banbury Circuit
Prepare for Growth**

**Saturday, 8 February 2014
at Marlborough Road Church**

**There will be two sessions:
10am to 11am & 11.30am to 12.30am
with coffee/tea in between**

**These sessions are for all members of your Church/Circuit
and those who already hold positions within the life
of the Church/Circuit,
who will share their knowledge and expertise.**

Pastoral Friends or Visitors

Chairing Meetings

Being a Church Steward

Being a Church Secretary or Property Steward

Being a Worship Leader

Being a Church Treasurer

*Leading Small Groups such as
Housegroups and Bible Study*

***Simply choose two sessions from the above list
that you are interested in and come along***

For more information, contact Rev Rob Anning 01295 262602,
Rev Dorothy Hewitson 01295 262784, Rev Victoria Bravette 01295 709717

LENT STUDIES

Rev Rob Anning will be running a series of five weekly studies during Lent on the theme: "Build On The Rock: Faith, Doubt – and Jesus".

The meetings will be at Marlborough Road Church on Tuesday afternoons, 2pm (note 2pm) to around 3.15pm.

The dates will be:

18 March, 25 March, 1 April, 8 April, 15 April.

Anyone from around the Circuit is invited to attend, so please put the dates in your diary.

If you plan to come, either sign up on the sheet on the noticeboard at Marlborough Road, or give Rob a ring on 01295 262602, so we can order sufficient study booklets.

NEW CIRCUIT SUPERINTENDENT

The Circuit Invitations Committee are delighted to be able to report that Rev Lin Francis BA (Hons) (Bristol), has agreed to take up our invitation to become the new Circuit Superintendent from 1 September 2014 (subject to Conference approval). Lin is presently the Superintendent Minister in the Brighton and Hove Circuit. She will come with her husband Geoff. You are asked to begin to pray for Lin and Geoff as they start to think about this move and all that it will entail.

THANKS

Margaret Hale and family wish to thank friends in the circuit for their support, prayers and cards following the death of Margaret's husband Ron.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2014

2nd February

Micah 6:1 – 8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18 – 31
Matthew 5:1 – 12

9th February

Isaiah 58:1 – 9a (9b – 12)
Psalm 112:1 – 9 (10)
1 Corinthians 2:1 – 12 (13 - 16)
Matthew 5:13 – 20

16th February

Deuteronomy 30:15 – 20 or
Syrach/Eccl. 15:15 – 20
Psalm 119:1 – 8
1 Corinthians 3:1 – 9
Matthew 5:21 – 37

23rd February

Leviticus 19:1 – 2, 9 – 18
Psalm 119:33 – 40
1 Corinthians 3:10 – 11, 16 – 23
Matthew 5:38 - 48

A CIRCUIT QUIET DAY

Will be held on Saturday 3rd May, when we shall be renewing our search for that elusive Kingfisher. Further details nearer the time, but meanwhile please note the date in your diary and if you want to book a place please do so as early as possible. The cost for the day will be £5.00.

Dorothy Hewitson (01295 262784)

CIRCUIT SUPPER CLUB

The Circuit Supper Club meets on Thursday 27th February at 7 for 7.30 pm at Marlborough Road Methodist Church. Our speaker will be Brigadier Robin Draper on the history of the county Regiment the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry, illustrated by a digital presentation through the kindness of the Rev Rob Anning. The Brigadier would be interested on the night to hear from anyone who has served or had relatives who have served in the Regiment, so do speak up.

The cost is £10 per head for the evening which includes a two course meal and the cost of the speaker. Please book in yourselves and any friends, mentioning any special dietary needs, with David Hughes (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*) by Monday 24th February at the latest.

March 22nd conference for rural chapels

Saturday March 22nd is a key date for leaders of the different rural chapels in the Oxfordshire and South Northants partnerships. Due to space constraints at Wroxton Methodist Church, where we will be holding this event, numbers are unfortunately restricted to a maximum of 4 per chapel. Those fortunate to attend will be pleased to hear that the Revd Gordon Gatward (until recently Director of the Arthur Rank Centre at Stoneleigh) will be speaking during the morning and sharing his many years of experience of rural ministry and mission. Drinks during the day and lunch all provided. It should be a very good day!

Michael King

April 12th An afternoon down on the farm in Greatworth!

Ross Adkins has kindly offered to host an afternoon, a short walk round his farm followed by questions and answers about some of the issues facing arable and livestock farmers at present. This will particularly interest those in the Circuit who live in urban areas! If anyone or any group is interested in a Spring visit to the farm, please contact Michael King (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*). We will need to limit numbers to 25 visitors, so first come, etc...!

CHACOMBE

Christmas services – The candlelit service was very well attended with the ever charismatic Barrie Lawless leading the proceedings. We were entertained by the Chacombe Hand Bell Ringers, Chacombe Brownies, a wandering minstrel and even Father Christmas turned up with his sack of goodies. Everyone enjoyed a lovely evening. The retiring offering from the candlelit service and Christmas Day service amounted to £140.00. This money was divided between Action for Children and World Vision Syrian appeal, each receiving £70.00.

Coffee & Chat – Held on alternate Friday mornings 10:30 – 12:00, these gatherings are as popular as ever providing an excellent opportunity for fellowship and you also get to sample some delicious homemade cake! Contact Joan Boyles for further details.

Chacombe Soup Lunches – Chacombe Bible Study is resuming in February on second and fourth Tuesdays at 2.15pm. On the fourth Tuesday we would like to have a time of food and fellowship commencing 1pm which will be followed by our Bible Study time all in the chapel schoolroom. You can come just for the food- or just for the Bible Study! (=with tea and cake). Please let Hazel know if you are interested. (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*).

HINTON METHODIST CHURCH (Woodford Halse)

Saturday 1st February from 10.00am to 12.00pm – Woodford Churches Together Tea and Coffee Morning at Hinton Methodist Church. There are cakes and biscuits plus a stall to purchase items for the chosen charity. If you do not have a car the 200 bus from Banbury stops outside the church. We look forward to seeing you there.

The SALVATION ARMY in Banbury are always in need of packets and cans of food and drink, such as, long life/powdered milk. Homelessness and poverty has increased with redundancies, unemployment and low pay. The Hinton Methodist Church in Woodford Halse is collecting cans, packets and jars of food and drinks. When you go shopping please add another item to put in the box that is held in Hinton Methodist Church. The Salvation Army are very grateful for the help we are giving as they are getting more people of all ages and all backgrounds turning up at their centre in Banbury. Thank you to all those that have put items in the box already.

MARLBOROUGH ROAD THURSDAY CLUB 7.30 pm

6th February – Rev Victoria Bravette

6th March – Meal out, venue to be decided

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

NEITHROP CHAPEL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME
ALL MEETINGS START AT 7.30pm

5th February – Anne Russell – Signature Tunes Quiz
19th February – Judith & Vernon Hurst – Holiday travels
5th March – Rev Victoria Bravette

CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)

12th February – Rev Victoria Bravette
26th February – Music afternoon with Andrea and Keith
12th March – Mike King

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

THE CIRCUIT NEWSLETTERS

When we print the next newsletter for February we have the job of trying to get it to the churches in the circuit as soon as possible. Through the years we have had a great deal of help from ministers, local preachers and from other friends who regularly visit individuals or groups. This has been very good and we are grateful to all who will still do this. However the fact is that we are all getting older and some are not as well as they would like to be and from September there will be only two ministers.

We would ask that if anyone in your church is regularly in Banbury on Thursday, Friday or Saturday they would be willing to pick up your newsletters from the Mustard Seed bookshop at the front of Marlborough Road Church. We will phone that person on the Thursday when they are printed if you give us a phone number. Please give the matter some thought and prayer. It is important that we all keep in touch with one another in the circuit.

The Office Staff! Katie and John Lee (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*) and Gwen Franklin and Archie Buzzard

DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH EDITION
THURSDAY 13TH FEBRUARY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO MARY TANNER
(*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*)