

# THE METHODIST CHURCH BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER March 2014

## “When I am weak, then I am strong”

*Rev Rob Anning, Superintendent Minister, writes:*

Ash Wednesday, March 5, marks the beginning of Lent. Stretching before us is a period of 40 days towards Easter. We are urged to use this time to fast, to commit more time than usual to praying and studying the Bible, to consider some form of self-denial, to increase our charitable giving, and most important of all, to use the time for self-examination and repentance.

The 40 days of Lent equate to the time that Jesus spent in the desert in preparation for his three-year ministry. Some think that those 40 days are reflecting the 40 years of wandering that Moses and the people of Israel spent journeying from Egypt to the Promised Land. They used that time to increase their understanding of God and to change their ways to be closer to God's requirements.

The desert experience of Jesus is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. All three show us the humanity of Jesus as he is driven to his wits end by the conditions of his Spirit-imposed experience. But the experience teaches him that it is when he is at his weakest that he is tempted.

Jesus' response to the three temptations is always the same; he quotes a passage of scripture. In this way, Jesus strengthens himself by ensuring he is well connected to God. In this way, Jesus admits his vulnerability and calls on God to strengthen him.

When Jesus recognises his own weakness and throws himself on God's care, then Jesus becomes strong enough to resist the temptation.

Paul, writing in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, recognises one of his own weaknesses, some sort of physical ailment, and God's response to his prayer is: “My grace is all you need, for my power is strongest when you are weak”. In other words, Paul gains the strength of God by admitting his own weakness.

As we use the time of Lent to prepare ourselves for Easter, we could do worse than to recognise how sometimes our own pride prevents us from displaying our real weakness and thus preventing God, with all his power, to make us as strong as we can ever need to be. As always, the Kingdom of God turns things upside down. While the world loves strength, we need to recognise we draw closer to God in our weakness, if only we can be honest with ourselves.

After all, we couldn't find a more perfect example of strength from weakness than the Easter story.

## **WHO SAYS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH?**

Well, not exactly a free lunch, but a free tea or coffee! Fairtrade Fortnight begins on Monday, 24 February, and ends on Sunday, 9 March. To mark Fairtrade Fortnight, there will be a Big Brew served in the Wild Lime Café in Market Square, Banbury, near to M&S and HMV, on Saturday, 8 March, from 10am to 12 noon. Come along and enjoy a free cuppa and there will be activities for children too.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

The next Circuit Meeting will be on Tuesday, 18 March, 7.30pm at Hornton. The following Circuit Meeting will be on Tuesday, 17 June, 7.30pm at a venue yet to be confirmed. And the September Circuit Meeting will be on Thursday, 25 September, 7.30pm, venue to be confirmed.

## **WELCOME SERVICE**

The Welcome Service for our new Superintendent Minister, Rev Lin Francis, and her husband Geoff, will be on Saturday, 30 August, 7pm at Marlborough Road. The service will be led by our Chair of District, Rev Peter Hancock. Please put this date in your diary and note the start time of 7pm.

## **CIRCUIT SERVICES**

The dates of the Circuit Services for the coming months are: Sunday, 1 June, 10.30am at Marlborough Road. At this service we hope to present Mr Ross Adkins with his 60-year certificate as a Local Preacher and it will also be the service at which we will dedicate our Easter Offerings. Then during the Summer months, there will be two Circuit Services, one on Sunday, 13 July, 10.30am at Marlborough Road, and an evening service, 6pm at Hornton, on Sunday, 17 August. Everyone is welcome at all these services.

## **A CIRCUIT QUIET DAY**

Will be held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

## **CIRCUIT SUPPER CLUB**

The Circuit Supper Club meets again on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 7 for 7.30 pm at Marlborough Road Methodist Church. Our speaker is Pastor Barrie Lawless telling us about his Ministry in New York.

The cost is £10 per head for the evening which includes a two course meal and the speaker's expenses. 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 24<sup>th</sup> March at the latest.

We hope to see you there as it's the last Supper Club until we start again on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

## WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – 7<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2014

The service this year will be held at St. Mary's Church, Horsefair and will be hosted by the Anglican congregation. The service has been prepared by the women of Egypt and the theme is Streams in the Desert. Dr Isabel King will be the speaker and the service will commence at 2 pm. All are invited to join in this service.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The above organisation will be holding a Mini Olympics for children aged 7 to 11 on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> March from 2 – 5 pm at St. Paul's Church, Warwick Road. This is a fun afternoon of team games. Refreshments will be provided during the afternoon and the event will end with a short service and awards ceremony to which parents are invited. No charge is made for this event. For more details contact Margaret Hughes (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*).

### BANBURY STREET PASTORS

Banbury Street Pastors are now recruiting and are just waiting for you to get in touch. We aim to start a new training course in the next month or two and would welcome any expressions of interest. Have a look at the Street Pastor website [www.streetpastors.org.uk](http://www.streetpastors.org.uk)

Check out our Banbury page on the website. If you would like to come out with us on patrol as an observer, then that can be arranged.

If you are over 18, belong to a local church and are willing to undergo a CRB check we would love to hear from you. Please contact Su or Geoff Scales for more details (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*) We also have prayer pastors who pray for us whilst we are out on patrol. Some do this at our base at Marlborough Road and others pray at home. If this is something you feel you would like to be part of again please contact Su or Geoff for more details.

### LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MARCH 2014

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Exodus 24:12 – 18  
Psalm 2 or Psalm 99  
2 Peter 1:16 - 21  
Matthew 17:1 – 9

#### 9<sup>th</sup> March

Genesis 2:15 – 17, 3:1 – 7  
Psalm 32  
Romans 5:12 – 19  
Matthew 4: 1 - 11

#### 16<sup>th</sup> March

Genesis 12:1 – 4a  
Psalm 121  
Romans 4:1 – 5, 13 – 17  
John 3:1 – 17

#### 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Exodus 17:1 – 7  
Psalm 95  
Romans 5:1 – 11  
John 4:5 – 42

#### 30<sup>th</sup> March

1 Samuel 16:1 – 13  
Psalm 23  
Ephesians 5:8 – 14  
John 9:1 - 41

# **LENT STUDY 2014**

## **BUILD ON THE ROCK**

*Faith, Doubt — and Jesus*

Five Sessions  
meeting at  
Marlborough Road Methodist  
Church  
Tuesdays at 2pm

*March 18: Believing and Doubting*

*March 25: Jesus: Our Teacher*

*April 1: Jesus: Our Saviour*

*April 8: Jesus: Conqueror of Death*

*April 15: Jesus: Lord and Brother*

**Please let Rev Rob Anning know if  
you hope to attend any of the sessions  
to ensure we have sufficient booklets:  
01295 262602**

**RURAL CHAPELS VISION DAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2014 (WROXTON CHAPEL 10.30 – 3.30)  
FINAL REMINDER!**

No doubt all the rural chapels in the new South Northants (Hinton, Upper Boddington, Greatworth, Middleton Cheney and Chacombe) and Oxfordshire (Cropredy, Hornton, Easington, Bodicote, Adderbury) partnerships have this date in their diaries. The Revd Gordon Gatward will be an excellent speaker, drawing on all his years of experience as National Director of the Arthur Rank Centre at Stoneleigh. It is important for all the chapels to be represented, and we are hoping for either three or four reps from each church. Lunch will be provided. **It would be very helpful if the senior church steward could let Michael King know who will be coming from each church, with any specific dietary needs, either by phone or email** (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*), **by March 15<sup>th</sup>**. This will enable us to set up and cater appropriately for the day. It will be a day of sharing good ideas, hearing inspirational stories and moving us all on in our thinking about what God has in store for us in the Circuit.

**APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup> 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**

**Coffee & Chat** – These sessions are held on alternate Friday mornings 10:30 – 12:00. Come along and enjoy our hospitality – plus the cake! Contact Joan Boyles for further information (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*)

**Soup Lunch/Bible Study** – Contact Hazel for further details (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*). We will be joining Rob's Lent Studies at Marlborough Road so there will be no Bible Study during that time.

Worzel Gummidge Tea Party  
Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 3 pm  
All age Scarecrow Competition  
Children's competition – Decorate a Cake for Mothering Sunday  
Afternoon teas, cake stall, various other stalls  
Don't miss it!

## CROPREDY

For March Bible Study contact Hazel.

Our March praise evening will be on March 26<sup>th</sup> and will be led by Margaret Clarke at 7 pm.

## EASINGTON

On **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm** we are holding another of our (legendary) **QUIZ SUPPERS**. All friends from around the Circuit will be most welcome, together with their friends, neighbours, family etc. An enjoyable evening of fun and fellowship is guaranteed. Tickets (at £8 per head) are available from Jo or Ian Hearle (*see paper copy or ask a Steward for contact details*).

## HINTON METHODIST CHURCH (Woodford Halse)

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 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.



Women's World Day of prayer

**Hinton Methodist Church,**

Woodford Halse are hosting

Women's World Day of Prayer at 11.00am

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March for Woodford Halse

and the surrounding villages and denominations.

The service has been prepared by the women of Egypt on the theme

***Streams in the Desert***

Speaker: *Rev Mary Pheasey*

*All are invited to this service.*

Refreshments after the service will be

**“BRING and SHARE.”**

## MARLBOROUGH ROAD THURSDAY CLUB 7.30 pm

6<sup>th</sup> March – Meal out, venue to be decided

3<sup>rd</sup> April – Fire investigation by Martin Hocking

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

## **NEITHROP**

Margaret and family wish to thank friends in the circuit for their support, prayers, cards and telephone calls following the death of Kath. Also thank you Victoria, Dorothy, Rob and Trevor for the lovely service.

### **NEITHROP CHAPEL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME**

#### **ALL MEETINGS START AT 7.30pm**

5<sup>th</sup> March – Rev Victoria Bravette

2<sup>nd</sup> April – Table top games

19<sup>th</sup> March – Colin Davis

#### **CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)**

12<sup>th</sup> March – Mike King

26<sup>th</sup> March – Lent Lunch for MS at 1 pm followed by Robina and Les Kelland – MS

9<sup>th</sup> April – Lois-Ann Lawless

We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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

### **CHANGE IN NEWSLETTER DATES**

This year we are changing the newsletter dates. Instead of July/August we will be having a July newsletter followed by August/September. This will allow Rob to do a final article and the new Superintendent can start with the October newsletter.

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