

THE METHODIST CHURCH BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER September 2013

Welcome Victoria!

Rev Rob Anning, Superintendent Minister, writes:

On Wednesday, 4 September, 7.30pm at Marlborough Road Church, we will be holding a Welcome Service for our new Minister in the Circuit, Rev Victoria Bravette. Victoria will have pastoral charge of Marlborough Road, Grimsbury, Neithrop and The Fairway. She comes to us from serving in the Birmingham Circuit.

How we welcome a new minister is not just about the Welcome Service. Lots of planning has already taken place, and I thank all those who have contributed to ensure that the manse in Stroud Close has been cleaned, re-carpeted, decorated and made ready for Victoria's arrival. And the welcome does not end there. As much as we want Victoria to have a nice home to live in, we also need to ensure that she feels welcome in as many ways as possible. You all have a part to play in that. We hope she soon feels at home with us in Banbury.

All this talk about "welcoming" set me thinking about those words in Hebrews 3, verses 1 to 3: "*Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them; and those who are ill-treated, since you also are in the body*".

As we start a new Methodist year, we have the opportunity to take stock. Perhaps we should have on the agenda of all our church councils as they meet in the autumn: "How welcoming is our church?"

We who meet week by week, probably are unaware of the impression that visitors receive as they come into our buildings for the first time. Is the building welcoming? Is it shabby, untidy, uncared for? Is there always someone there at the door to greet people? And what kind of greeting do people receive? Do we explain what will happen in the service? Do we say "you can sit anywhere" and mean it? Do we explain about the books which will be used in worship? Do people go up to strangers and have a conversation? Do we get a name and address to give to the minister for a follow-up visit? And conversely, do we "smother" someone new? Perhaps we should have a "secret shopper" to visit all our churches and give us feedback on what they find!

Welcoming to a church is a delicate business, but one that we should consider on a regular basis for the welcome has a huge bearing on how someone feels about us in the future, and indeed, if the stranger decides to return and continue to worship with us.

And as Abraham and Sarah discovered, and the writer of Hebrews reiterates, sometimes when we welcome strangers, unawares we are welcoming angels.

IMPORTANT - NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

Please note that the phone number for Revd. Victoria Bravette will be 01295 709324, i.e. she will not be using the same number as Revd. Janet Jackson.

LECTIONARY READINGS SEPTEMBER 2013

Sept 1st

Sirach/Ecclesiasticus
10:12 – 18
or Proverbs 25:6 – 7
Psalm 112
Hebrews 13:1 – 8, 15
– 16
Luke 14:1, 7 – 14

Sept 8th

Deuteronomy 30:15 –
20
Psalm 1
Philemon 1 – 21
Luke 14:25 – 33

Sept 15th

Exodus 32:7 – 14
Psalm 51:1 – 10
1 Timothy 1:12 – 17
Luke 15:1 – 10

Sept 22nd

Amos 8:4 – 7
Psalm 113
1 Timothy 2:1 – 7
Luke 16:1 – 13

Sept 29th

Amos 6:1a, 4 – 7
Psalm 146
1 Timothy 6:6 – 19
Luke 16:19 – 31

THE SUDAN CHURCH ASSOCIATION Reg Charity No: 290607 POSTCARD COLLECTION

Very many thanks to all the thoughtful and generous people who have brought or sent postcards via the chapels of the Banbury Circuit. On many of my weekly visits to the church at Priors Marston, I have been able to add significantly to the collecting box there. During the year ending 30th June 2013 the postcards which Len Whittaker sorted and sold raised the sum of £11,550. This makes a total of £114,655.00 in the last 10 years and £186,650.00 since Len Whittaker became involved in 1987.

From Priors Marston the cards are taken to Leamington Spa, to a wonderful lady, Rev Elisabeth Mordecai who stores them ready for a collection, centrally organised by Mr Len Whittaker, in Essex. Len then sorts and sells them. The next collection in the Midlands is due on 9th or 10th September.

This year Elisabeth made a superhuman effort to attend the AGM of the SCA to meet a friend of hers, Bishop Ezekiel Kondo who had come over for a special reunion at Salisbury to celebrate 40 years association of that Diocese with the Sudan. Elizabeth worked with Bishop Ezekiel at the cathedral in Khartoum in the 1990's and was the first woman priest to officiate at the cathedral. Elisabeth's journey to the AGM was only possible because her Disabled Railcard entitles her and an escort to 30% discount off the rail fare. Nevertheless this must have been a considerable achievement for Elisabeth since the last time I saw her several years ago, she had difficulty with the steps into the pulpit!

Although the 2012-13 sum was lower than the previous year, it exceeded Len's expectation and in fact accounted for 10% of all the money that was sent in that year. The downward trend in the number of postcards might have been even worse if it had not been for the cards received from other charities and dealers who had already given up the struggle.

In spite of the somewhat depressing news of the supply of postcards, Len reports that the AGM was an excellent meeting. Normally only the 'diehards' attend, but this year it was standing room only. The committee had provided an excellent speaker in Baroness Cox who is very well equipped to speak about the Sudan and has the ear of many world leaders – and there were also 4 Sudanese singers!

The situation in the Sudan has improved in one major respect this year in that an agreement has been reached in Addis Ababa between the two Sudanese nations (North & South) ending the ruinous dispute about the sharing of oil revenues. Southern Sudan is rich in oil wells but the pipeline and port are in the north. For the Republic of South Sudan the agreement is a huge relief since the oil revenue accounted for 98% of their income.

In northern Sudan there are already disputes about the succession to President Omer Bashir who is due to retire in 2015. The President is still a wanted man according to the International Criminal Court, which makes any intervention by other states very difficult. Following government legislation Christians from the North have had to move to the South where language is often a problem. The remnant who have remained have become vulnerable and struggle to maintain their churches.

Once again very many thanks for all the cards you have brought. Please keep on bringing them used or not – to a chapel where I'm leading the service, or if you happen to be coming to Boddington they can be left there. The Sudan Church Association will be most grateful for them. Margaret Clarke

CIRCUIT SUPPER CLUB

We start off again on Thursday 26th September at 7 for 7.30 pm at Marlborough Road Methodist Church with the story of The Great Train Robbery of some fifty years ago a talk by the then young policeman who was sent to the farm where the gang had their hideout.

Do come if you can and enter any friends who would like to come as we do need to increase our numbers to pay our way and for the sake of our caterer. It's still £10 a head for the evening. Please let David Hughes know on (*contact steward or see paper copy for contact details*) by Monday 22nd September including any special dietary needs.

Future speakers – 24th October – Alan Brewer – Experiences of an ex BOAC Steward
28th November – Val Trinder – An illustrated talk 'In the Footsteps of Poets'
23rd January – Maureen Sutherland – Experiences of a tour guide

CIRCUIT QUIET DAY

This will be held on Saturday 26th October at Wroxton Methodist Chapel beginning at 10 am and finishing at 4 pm. Copious amounts of tea and coffee are available through the day and even cake at the end, but you will need to bring a packed lunch with you.

The cost for this Quiet day will be £5 and I shall be pleased to have names of those who wish to book a place by Sunday 20th October at the latest.

Dorothy Hewitson

CHACOMBE

Bible Study – Our sessions will start again on Tuesday 3rd September at 2 pm in the home of Joan Boyles. These will take place alternate Tuesdays. Further details contact Hazel Stagg. Anyone interested would be most welcome.

Coffee Mornings – We are changing our morning to Friday commencing 6th September at 10.30 am – 12 noon in the schoolroom and these meetings will be held alternate Fridays. Come and enjoy some homemade cake and a natter. We would love to see you.

CROPREDY

Bible Study every Wednesday pm Speak to Hazel Stagg for details.

Praise Evening 25th September 7.30 pm leader Rev Bill Rolph

HINTON METHODIST CHURCH (Woodford Halse)

Saturday 7th September from 10.00am to 12.00pm – Woodford Churches Together Tea & Coffee Morning at Hinton Methodist Church. There are cakes and biscuits plus a stall to purchase items for the chosen charity.

We look forward to seeing you there.

On Saturday 14th September from 10.00am to 12.00pm, Hinton Methodists are having a **Jumble Sale** in aid of raising funds for our church. You never know you might find an item of clothing you could not find elsewhere. Our prices will be very competitive. We look forward to seeing you there.

If you do not have a car the 200 bus from Banbury Bus Station stops outside the church.

On Sunday 22nd September 2013 we are having a Harvest Celebration with a difference. We are calling it **Salvation Army Food Day**. We are asking people to bring along items of non-perishable food and drink to the service on Sunday morning for the food bank at the Salvation Army in Banbury.

The Salvation Army is urgently needing food (dried, cans etc.) for the large numbers of poor and homeless that pop into their centre in Banbury. Hinton Methodist Church has been collecting for some time by leaving a large box in their church and when it is almost full the contents are taken to the Salvation Army.

MARLBOROUGH ROAD THURSDAY CLUB 7.30 pm

5th September – AGM and faith supper (bring a dish to share with others)

3rd October – Talk by Wally Lishman

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

UPPER BODDINGTON

We will be celebrating our Harvest Festival on Sunday 15th September. Details of the services printed on the plan are incorrect.

Michael King will lead a Family Service for us at 10.30 am. Our Anglian friends will join us for the evening service at 6 pm when the Rector the Rev Stevie Cross will lead our worship.

The harvest gifts will be sold by auction in the schoolroom on Monday 16th September at 7 pm and all the money raised from the sale will be donated to the MRDF.

Evening service at 6 pm on Sunday 22nd September will be conducted by the Rev Rob Anning and not by the Rev Stevie Cross as printed on the plan.

CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)

11th September – Rev Rob Anning – Communion

25th September – AGM plus ‘My favourite book’

9th October – Flower arranging with Margaret Hughes

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.

DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER EDITION

THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MARY TANNER

(contact steward or see paper copy for contact details)