

The Methodist Church
BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER

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

2024

CIRCUIT MINISTERS

Rev David Alderman ☎ 01295 262602 super@banburycircuit.org.uk

Rev Phil Robinson ☎ 01295 709717 ministry@banburycircuit.org.uk

ECUMENICAL MINISTERS

Rev Chris Gaynor ☎ 01295 271403

Rev Lynda Spokes ☎ 01295 253508



**December
2024**

**January
2025**

Unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

**May Peace be your gift at Christmas
and your blessing throughout 2025**

DEADLINE - Third SUNDAY each Month

For the **February 2025** edition the deadline is **Sunday 19 January 2025**



If you have anything you would like to share with members of the Circuit, please send to Margaret Smith:
margaret@emjay.org.uk ☎ 01295 278841
or 49 Queensway, Banbury OX16 9NF

Christmas Message

Dear Friends

The Methodist Church Christmas theme for this year is ***“hush the noise”***. Christmas is loud, so much expectation, so many voices telling us what to wear, how to celebrate, what to eat, and what to buy.

When I was younger Christmas was a time of surprises. The excitement of a stocking full of small brightly coloured parcels, which until they were opened defied definition. Today we tend to ask people what they would like.

Lists are produced, ‘tokens’ are purchased, or money is given with a note – it’s better if you choose it yourself! Of course, that way we avoid getting the same thing twice over or the wrong make of aftershave. No longer does the grandson have to put up with winter underwear four sizes too big when he was hoping for a new computer game.

But on the other hand, perhaps we have lost something of the magic of Christmas. That spontaneous joy of giving has become more of a duty or mathematical exercise.

Most of us would admit to a secret love of surprises. The unexpected posy of flowers, the parcel through the post or the tiny gift on the tree that someone had spent time finding out what we would really like.

God is very good at surprises. A master of the unexpected, the beauty of the hyacinth which emerges from a dry bulb; the quivering perfection of a butterfly breaking free from a chrysalis; the sight of a rainbow appearing in a rain filled sky ... the list is endless. And, at Christmas, came the greatest surprise of all A baby, born in a stable, who was to save the world. I invite you to take time to ***“hush the noise”*** and listen to the love song that the angels bring.

Anne joins me in wishing you the joy of unexpected surprises this Christmas.

David

A statement in response to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury

In light of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury following the Makin Review into abuses by the late John Smyth QC, the Methodist Church in Britain joins others in praying for all those affected by abuse. Survivors have been courageous in speaking of their experience and in calling the Churches to account and we hope humbly to continue to learn from them.

We are Covenant Partners with the Church of England, an anniversary we marked in November. Dr Welby has done much to strengthen the partnership between our denominations and we pray for the continuation of this work and for those who will discern who should be the next Archbishop of Canterbury. We are committed to developing our shared understanding and desire for good safeguarding practice at every level of our churches.

Anyone who has suffered harm, discrimination or abuse in any Methodist Church can get support through the Methodist Church DAS Service by phoning: 02074675131 or email: dars@methodistchurch.org.uk, who will respond in confidence within three working days.

A prayer:

Loving God, we ask your forgiveness for the times when in your Church we have failed to protect vulnerable people.

We pray for your healing for those who have been hurt and for those who live with guilt and regret.

We ask for your wisdom and direction as we seek to keep safe all your children, in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

Advent Bible Studies

Spirit-filled Songs - Fairway Methodist Church

Mondays, December 2, 9 & 16

2:00pm-2:30pm Refreshments - 2:30-4:00pm study

December 2 - Benedictus, A Song of Salvation

December 9 - Magnificat, A Song of Justice

December 16 - Gloria, A Song of Peace

All welcome

~~~~~

### **'The Love Song' - Greatworth Methodist Church**

**Wednesdays, December 4, 11 & 18**

10:00am-10:30 tea, coffee and biscuits - 10:30-11:30 study

Contact Phil Robinson if interested, or just turn up on the day - **All welcome!**

## **Christmas Services 2024**

### **Chacombe**

*Carol Service* - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 6:30pm  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am

### **Cropredy**

*Carol Service* - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am

### **Easington**

*Carol Service* - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am  
*Christmas Day Service*—Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 9:30am

### **Fairway**

*Carol Service* - 15<sup>th</sup> December 3:00pm

### **Greatworth**

*Carol Service* - Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 6:00pm  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 9:00am

### **Hinton**

*Messy Church Christingle & Nativity* - Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 3:00pm  
*Carol Service* - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am

### **Hornton**

*United Christingle* - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 4:00pm (St John the Baptist)  
*United Candlelight Carol Service* - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 6:00pm  
*Crib Service* - Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 4:30pm (St John the Baptist)  
*United Carols* - Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 6:00pm

### **Marlborough Road**

*Carol Service* - 22<sup>nd</sup> December 4:00pm  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 9:30am

### **Shipston**

*Carol Service* - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am  
*Ecumenical Messy Church* - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 3:00pm (St Edmunds)  
*Ecumenical Carol Service* - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 6:00pm (St Edmunds)  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am

### **Wigginton**

*Carol Service* - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 6:00pm  
*Christmas Day Service* - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am

## In the Darkness

A modern day Psalm of Lament

Like shutters drawn on a window  
my hurting is hidden from view  
I don't *have* a visible illness  
so appear to be fine, like you  
But inside I'm broken and crying  
feeling useless and in a dark place  
with thoughts and fears that taunt me  
Alone in a frightening space  
Unable to stop my tears falling  
struggling to get through each day  
In the depths of my torment I'm drowning  
still desperate for some *other* way  
From the pit of despair I cry out to my Lord  
even though he feels far from near  
to help me, to save me, to hold me in love  
to tell me the darkness will clear

For did not *Jesus* suffer?  
In the wilderness? On the cross?  
And did *he* not weep, as a loving friend would  
when he learned of Lazarus' loss?  
Did he not say he would comfort and guide  
and give his love to all?  
To be with us in *all* things  
and lift us when we fall?  
I *have* to believe he is with me  
in the midst of the suffering I face  
and the tears that I cry he cries with me  
a gift of his healing grace  
So I will hold on in the darkness  
trusting in a presence I cannot see  
that the everlasting arms of God  
are holding on to me

**Helen M Lightbody Hedderly**

*Written as a project for one of the module sections on the Local Preacher's Course. The brief was to "prepare an item for use in worship that reflects your understanding of how pain and grief, hope and consolation can be expressed in the life of the Christian Community.*



### Worship on Thursday - 11.00am

You are invited to meet up and join with friends from across the circuit for a short informal act of worship, including Holy Communion,

**Thursday mornings at Marlborough Road Methodist Church**  
The service is led each week by one of our local circuit ministers.

### EASINGTON

**Ladies' Fellowship**  
**Every Tuesday at 2:30pm.**

17 December will be the final meeting of 2024. We do not meet during January, but once we restart, on Tuesday 4 February 2025, you will be most welcome.

~~~~~

Meet Your Neighbour
Coffee and Games Mornings
Wednesdays at 9:30am
Dec 11, Jan 8 & 22, Feb 5 & 19

Even if you don't live close by, you are still our neighbour and will be most welcome.

CROPREDY

Coffee Mornings
2nd Friday each Month
10.30am - Noon

~~~~~

**'Warm Spaces'**  
All are welcome  
**1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays**  
**10:30am - Noon**

**Methodist School Room**  
Many thanks to the Parish Council and the Brasenose Arms for their support.

### HINTON

**Coffee Mornings**  
**Second Saturday Each Month**  
**10:00am to 11:30am**  
Everyone Welcome

### HORNTON

**Coffee Mornings**  
**Fridays 10:30am to Noon**  
Everyone Welcome

### GREATWORTH

**Monthly Art Group 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday**  
**1:00pm to 3:00pm**

Any medium and all abilities are welcome.  
No experience is necessary.

**£3 a session**

### MARLBOROUGH ROAD

**Weekly Coffee Morning**  
**Thursdays at 10:00am**  
All are welcome

### MUSICAL MEMORIES

A group for those with Dementia and their carers.  
Come and enjoy a cup of coffee with singing and all things musical!  
**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays each month,**  
**10:30am to 11:45am**  
**n St Francis Church**  
For more information call  
Janet ☎ 01295 368238  
or e-mail  
stfrancischurchbanbury@gmail.com

## Online Bible Study

We have a small group doing Bible Study every Tuesday 2:00pm - 3:00pm on Zoom.  
If you would like to join the group please email: revchriseddy@gmail.com

**Chris Eddy**



## **JOINT PUBLIC ISSUES TEAM**

CHURCHES WORKING FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

### **Public Issues Calendar**

*For further information see <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/>*

Dec 1..... World Aids Day

Dec 2 .....International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

Dec 9 .....International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of  
the Crime of Genocide

Dec 10..... Human Rights Day

Dec 18 ....International Migrants Day

Dec 20 ....International Human Solidarity Day

January 2025 Dates are not yet available

*The Public Issues Calendar collects together observances in the year when  
Christians and those across wider society might focus their attention on  
certain movements towards peace and justice.*

## **PRAYING for PEACE and JUSTICE throughout the WORLD**

We may feel that our pleas are unanswered, our hope may be faltering, but we must continue to pray for peace and justice throughout the world. **Pray at 8:00pm each day for one minute.**



God of all hope and peace,  
we bring to you the needs of our broken and hurting world.

Our hearts are breaking with images of lives lost  
and torn apart by grief in so many places .

We pray for an end to violence and warfare and a beginning of understanding,  
so that the challenging work of rebuilding may begin.

Help us, O Lord, to affirm our common humanity  
so that in our differences we may work together for justice and peace.

In Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Action for Children**

## **Safe and happy childhood**

*Action for Children* protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

### **Secret Santa**

Each year, we ask people to be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child with *Action for Children* by donating directly to our appeal. You may have seen the advert on TV.



For vulnerable children across the UK, Christmas is anything but magical. No stockings. No presents. No festive food - maybe no food at all. Their first memories of Christmas could be going to bed hungry, being too cold to sleep and losing all hope when Santa doesn't come.

**But you could help change that. Your gift could help a vulnerable child feel the magic of Christmas.**

Being a Secret Santa means you could buy a child the essentials of warm clothes, a hot meal, or a special present just for them. They'll know Santa has remembered them - but they won't know that Santa is you. Or you could make a monetary donation. Last year, we were able to reach 687,755 children, young people, and their families. With your generosity, we could do the same this year.

You can make a difference, this Christmas and beyond by visiting [www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk) or writing to Action for Children, Children's Services Support Centre – Watford, 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG

### **More Emergency Phone Numbers**

*From the editor: A few more, there will be others in future editions.*

When you are lonely and fearful..... call Psalm 23  
When you grow bitter and critical.....call 1 Corinthians 13  
For Paul's secret to happiness ..... call Colossians 3:12-17  
For understanding of Christianity ..... call 2 Corinthians 5:15-19  
When you feel down and out ..... call Romans 8:31  
When you want peace and rest ..... call Matthew 11:25-30  
When the world seems bigger than God.....call Psalm 90

NOTE:ALL LINES TO HEAVEN ARE OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY!

From *A Bucket of Surprises*, J John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books.



## Out of the Mouths of Babes

A little boy and girl were singing their favourite Christmas Carol, 'Silent Night'. The boy concluded the rendition with the words, "Sleep in heavenly beans". His sister quickly corrected him; "It's not beans, it's peas."

Three young children were playing the parts of the wise men in a school nativity play.

They came to Mary and Joseph at the manger and said,

Magi 1: Here, this is gold.

Magi 2: This is myrrh.

Magi 3: And Frank sent this.

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open-mouthed and horrified for a minute, then she gasped, "Didn't you get my e-mail?"

*From A Stocking Full of Christmas, Mark Stibbe*

### CHRISTMAS FARE WORDSEARCH

With thanks to **Jenny Tustian**

APPLES

HAM

ROAST

ICING

SALAD

BISCUITS

JELLY

SALMON

CAKE

LEMONADE

SAUSAGE ROLLS

MINCEPIES

TRIFLE

CUSTARD

NUTS

DATES

PORK

FIGS

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | O | A | S | T | P | O | Y | S | R | E | D | I | C | I |
| M | N | E | C | O | Q | G | W | Y | U | D | K | S | X | D |
| E | E | T | R | I | F | L | E | S | E | T | A | D | X | R |
| E | M | Z | G | P | D | B | I | S | C | U | I | T | S | A |
| Y | I | R | G | N | W | V | A | D | S | D | S | V | A | T |
| H | K | V | S | A | I | E | D | A | N | O | M | E | L | S |
| Y | R | S | G | K | K | C | G | A | Z | U | D | D | M | U |
| U | A | M | I | L | K | E | I | K | K | K | T | H | O | C |
| S | U | J | F | H | R | S | H | C | R | D | R | S | N | O |
| H | U | S | M | O | W | E | W | A | G | O | O | R | J | M |
| Z | P | A | L | L | H | J | V | K | M | B | P | V | E | W |
| W | W | L | K | T | A | A | W | E | E | L | D | K | L | W |
| U | S | A | K | O | M | H | S | E | L | P | P | A | L | I |
| R | T | D | F | T | Y | F | R | T | Y | T | I | K | Y | N |
| S | E | I | P | E | C | N | I | M | J | Y | R | L | L | E |

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### **1 December - Advent 1**

Jeremiah 33:14-16  
Psalm 25:1-10  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13  
Luke 21:25-36

### **8 December - Advent 2**

Baruch 5:1-9 *or* Malachi 3:1-4  
*Canticle:* Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79)  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### **15 December - Advent 3**

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
*Canticle:* Isaiah 12:2-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

### **22 December - Advent 4**

Micah 5:2-5a  
*Canticle:* Magnificat (Luke 1:46b-55)  
*or* Psalm 80:1-7  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)



### **25 December - Christmas Day (Weds)**

*Any of the following sets of readings may be used on the evening of Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day. Set III should be used at some service during the celebration.*

I

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

II

Isaiah 62:6-12; Psalm 97; Titus 3:4-7;  
Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20

III

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98;  
Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

### **29 December - Christmas 1**

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
Psalm 148  
Colossians 3:12-17  
Luke 2:41-52

### **31 December - Watchnight (Tue/Wed)**

Deuteronomy 8:1-20 *or* Ecclesiastes 3:1-15  
Psalm 8 *or* Psalm 90  
Revelation 21:1-6a  
Matthew 25:31-46 *or* Luke 12:13-21  
*or* Luke 12:35-50

## Circuit Diary

You may find it helpful to note these dates in your personal diary.

### **December:**

Sun 1.....10:30am.....Circuit Advent Service at Marlborough Road  
Wed 4.....7:30pm..... Local Preachers' meeting via ZOOM  
Sun 29....10:30am..... Circuit Service at Marlborough Road

### **January:**

Thu 16....Time to be confirmed ..... Circuit Meeting - ZOOM

### **February:**

Sun 16....10:30am..... Circuit Service at Marlborough Road

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### **5 January - Christmas 2**

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalms 147:12-20

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:(1-9) 10-18

or

Sirach/Ecclesiasticus 21:1-12

*Canticle:* Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:(1-9) 10-18

### **6 January - The Epiphany (Mon)**

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

As 6 January is a weekday, these readings may be used on an adjacent Sunday.

[Note: in the past, Epiphany commemorated Jesus' baptism as well as the coming of the Magi – see Epiphany – arrivals/beginnings on the Methodist Church website]

### **12 January - Ordinary 1**

#### ***Baptism of the Lord***

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalms 29

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### **19 January - Ordinary 2**

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalms 36:5-10

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

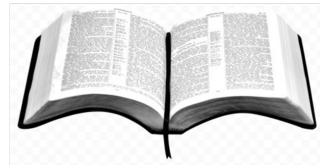
### **26 January - Ordinary 3**

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Psalms 19

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Luke 4:14-21



## Short Christmas Quiz

1. Which of the following is a variety of holly? a) Hedgehog b) Longspike c) Porcupine
2. According to the Christmas song, what are the six white boomers that pulled Santa's sleigh?
3. In Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, what marks the spot where Jesus' manger lay?  
a) Bronze plaque b) Golden Sun c) Silver Star
4. Visible in the British sky every December, what name is given to the Pleiades star cluster? Seven Saints b) Seven Seekers c) Seven Sisters
6. What one of the following is *NOT* part of Handel's Messiah?  
For Unto Us A Child Is Born b) Gloria In Excelsis c) The Hallelujah Chorus
7. What, on the Christmas tree, derives its name from the Latin *scintilla*, meaning spark?  
Candle b) Lights c) Tinsel
8. What nuts traditionally decorate the surface of a Dundee cake?



## 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.

See the **Circuit Preaching Plan** for information on **Regular Sunday Services**

### EVENTS and MEETINGS AROUND the CIRCUIT

#### Weekly

Tue ....2:30pm ..... Ladies' Fellowship (**NOT** during January) ..... Easington MC  
 Tue ....2:00pm-3:00pm .... Bible Study ..... ZOOM  
 Thur ...10:00am ..... Coffee Morning..... Marlborough Rd MC  
 Thur ...11:00am ..... Informal Holy Communion Service..... Marlborough Rd MC  
 Fri .....10:30am ..... Coffee Morning..... Hornton MC

#### Monthly

1<sup>st</sup>,3<sup>rd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Fri .... 10:30am.... 'Warm Spaces'..... Cropredy MC  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat..... 10:00am.... Coffee Morning ..... Hinton MC  
 1<sup>st</sup>&3<sup>rd</sup> Mon ..... 10:30am.... Musical Memories.....St Francis  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri..... 10:30am.... Coffee Morning ..... Cropredy MC  
 2<sup>nd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Sat ..... Nights..... Street Pastor Patrols ..... **Please pray for them**  
 2<sup>nd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Mon..... 1:00pm..... Art Group ..... Greatworth

#### Other Events

Mon 2 Dec .... 2:30pm ..... Advent Bible Study - Benedictus .....Fairway MC  
 Wed 4 Dec.... 10:30am .... Advent Bible Study - The Love Song ..... Greatworth MC  
 Wed 4 Dec.... 7:30pm ..... Local Preachers' Meeting..... ZOOM  
 Mon 9 Dec .... 2:30pm ..... Advent Bible Study - Magnificat .....Fairway MC  
 Wed 11 Dec.. 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning..... Easington MC  
 Wed 11 Dec.. 10:30am .... Advent Bible Study - The Love Song ..... Greatworth MC  
 Mon 16 Dec .. 2:30pm ..... Advent Bible Study - Gloria .....Fairway MC  
 Wed 18 Dec.. 10:30am .... Advent Bible Study - The Love Song ..... Greatworth MC  
 Wed 8 Jan..... 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning..... Easington MC  
 Wed 22 Jan... 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning..... Easington MC  
 Thu 16 Jan.... TBC ..... Circuit Meeting ..... ZOOM

**Angels:** Whenever angels appear in the Christmas story they say, "Don't be afraid". This happens four times during the events of the birth of Jesus. Someone has counted the number of times "don't be afraid" is said in the Bible - 365 times. That's once for each day of the year. Obviously, God doesn't want us to live in fear.