



The Methodist Church
BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER
Circuit Website <http://www.banburycircuit.org.uk>
2024

CIRCUIT MINISTERS

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FEBRUARY



Shrove Tuesday & Pancake Day
February 13

Ash Wednesday & Valentines Day
February 14

DEADLINE - THIRD Monday each Month

For **March 2024** the deadline is
Monday 19 February 2024

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



WHAT IS LOVE?

Dear Friends,

Time marches on! We have only just taken our Christmas decorations down and already find ourselves deep in preparation for the next major season within the church - with an early Easter this year, Lent is but a few weeks away. Before then, however, we will be spending some time in various services exploring the subject of love in the run-up to the celebration of love (or of commercialism depending on your viewpoint) that is Valentine's Day.

Zoe has recently discovered a song from my teenage years (which I was shocked to realise makes it over 30 years old) called 'What is Love?' by Haddaway. She has been singing it around the house - although she's not always keen for me to join in! The song doesn't really try to answer the question in the title, but it has inspired family discussions on the subject - what does love look like?

The New Testament is very helpful on the subject - when Jesus is questioned on the subject of what the greatest commandment is, he replies in terms of love - to love God with all our hearts, minds and souls and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. It indicates that love is an unselfish act, taking others into consideration and treating everybody as being as important to God as we are.

Paul also expands on what love is in 1 Corinthians 13 (a passage you may well have heard read at weddings). Love is patient, kind, not jealous, not boastful, keeps no record of wrongs, protects, trusts, hopes and keeps going - quite a list! I don't know about you, but sometimes I find it hard to be as loving as I could be. In those times, what has helped me is receiving love from other

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people in the way that they act and the words they say. Receiving love helps me to remember I am loved by God and encourages and inspires me to show love to others.

As we enter a period where the word 'love' will be all around us, I pray that we will be able to experience what it is to be loved, that we all can know that we are loved and that will lead us to be able to show God's love to our friends, neighbours and communities.

With love, **Phil**



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.



JOINT PUBLIC ISSUES TEAM

CHURCHES WORKING FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

Public Issues Calendar

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

- Feb.....LGBT+ History Month
- Feb 12.....Racial Justice Sunday
- Feb 19.....Church Action on Poverty Sunday
- Feb 20.....World Day of Social Justice
- Feb 27.....Start of Fairtrade Fortnight
- Mar 3.....World Day of Prayer
- Mar 8.....International Women's Day

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.

EASINGTON

Ladies' Fellowship

Every Tuesday at 2:30pm.

Meetings following a varied programme of Talks, PowerPoint Presentations and Quizzes, followed by light refreshment, usually finishing at about 4:00pm, restart on

Tuesday 6 February.

Whether you would like to come regularly or just occasionally, you will be most welcome.

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### Fortnightly Meet Your Neighbour

#### Coffee and Games Mornings

**Wednesdays at 9:30am**

**Feb 7 & 21, Mar 6 & 20**

Even if you do not live close by, you are still our neighbour and will be most welcome.

## ADDERBURY

### Knitting Group

**1st Monday each month**

**2:00pm to 4:00pm**

Everyone is Welcome.  
Bring your needles to enjoy a natter while knitting.

## MUSICAL MEMORIES

A group for those with Dementia and their carers.

Come and enjoy a cup of coffee with singing and all things musical!

**1st & 3rd Mondays each month**

**10:30am to 11:45am**

**in St Francis Church**

For more information call  
Janet ☎ 01295 368238 or e-mail  
stfrancischurchbanbury@gmail.com

## MARLBOROUGH ROAD

### Weekly Coffee Morning

**Thursdays at 10:00am**

All are welcome

## HORNTON

### Coffee Mornings

**Fridays 10:30am to Noon**

Everyone Welcome

## WIGGINTON

### Coffee Mornings

restarting on **2 March at 10:30am.**  
and will continue on the first Saturday  
each month until November.

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Annual Plant Sale

Saturday 4 May, 10:30am to 3:00pm

CROPREDY

Coffee Mornings

2nd Friday each Month

10.30am - Noon

HINTON (WOODFORD HALSE)

Coffee Morning

First Saturday Each Month

10:00am to 11:30am

Everyone Welcome

GREATWORTH

The Art Group

meets in the Methodist Church
(OX17 2DT)

every 2nd and 4th Monday

(except Bank Holidays)

1:00pm to 3:00pm

Any medium of art is encouraged and all abilities are welcome to our friendly group.

No experience is necessary.

£3 a session



Circuit Service for Lent Sunday 18th February followed by a Circuit lunch

We welcome **Rev Andrew Roberts** who will be introducing us to our Lent theme based on his book: **'Following Jesus'**, which takes us on a journey looking at Holy Habits in the life and passion of Jesus.

Methodist Minister, Rev Andrew Roberts, was born into a Christian family and made his personal commitment to be a disciple of Jesus in his teens. University years in York were a hugely formative time. Andrew studied economics and served as President of the Christian Union – a role in which he was mentored by Graham Cray, for whom he would work many years later. Attending St Michael-le-Belfrey, he was greatly influenced by the ministry of David Watson. He was director of training for Fresh Expressions.

PRAYING for PEACE and JUSTICE

We have entered a new year and sadly the world continues to experience more and more conflicts with devastating consequences. In 2023, one-in-five children around the world was living in, or fleeing from conflict and it is projected that, in 2024, nearly 300 million people will be in need of humanitarian assistance and protection due to conflict and disasters. It is, therefore, important that we continue to **set aside one minute at 8:00pm each day, to pray for peace and justice throughout the world.**

We must not become downhearted, we must remember.....

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12 (NIV)



Continue to Pray

Are you becoming rather disheartened that our prayers for peace and justice throughout the world do not seem to be having any effect? Perhaps the article below, which I read recently, may give you some encouragement.

Margaret Smith, Editor

Patients admitted to hospital with heart problems suffer fewer complications if someone prays for them, according to scientists in the US.

The study carried out at *Duke University Medical Center* in North Carolina found that patients who received alternative therapy following angioplasty were 25% to 30% less likely to suffer complications. And those who received 'intercessory prayer' had the greatest success rate. The study, carried out between April 1997 and April 1998, involved 150 patients who had all undergone angioplasty - whereby a balloon is

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positioned in a hardened and narrowed artery and inflated to force it open. This procedure was followed in all cases by coronary artery stenting - which involves a flexible mesh tube being inserted into the artery to keep it open.

Patients were chosen **randomly** to receive coronary stenting with standard care **or** coronary stenting with one of four alternative therapies - guided imagery, stress relaxation, healing touch or intercessory prayer.

Intercessory prayer was provided by seven prayer groups of varying denominations around the world. **Neither the researchers nor the patients were aware who was being prayed for** but the results showed that, of all the therapies, prayer appeared to have the greatest therapeutic benefits.

...A nurse practitioner and co-director of the study, said the clinical outcomes between treatment groups were not significantly different but those receiving alternative therapies “had lower absolute complication rates and a lower absolute incidence of post procedural ischemia during hospitalization”...

An associate professor of psychiatry at Duke University Medical Center, said, “Some of the greatest scientific achievements have come from those who step outside of the box and I believe that this is what this study does. The results tend to lean toward prayer helping people, but more study is needed.”

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

PRAYERS for CIRCUIT YOUTH GROUP

I will be at the following churches in February to pray for a potential new circuit youth group. You would be very welcome to join me in prayer at these times - each meeting will last approximately 30 minutes.

	Phil
Marlborough Road:	Thursday 1st February..... 10.00am
Cropredy:	Friday 2nd February 9.30am
Hornton:	Friday 2nd February 12.00 noon
Hinton:	Saturday 3rd February 10:00am
Shipston:	Tuesday 6th February 1.00pm
Zoom:	Thursday 8th February 6.30pm (Link on back page)

A Child’s View of Love

“When my gran got arthritis, she couldn’t bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandpa does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That’s love.”
Rebecca, age 8.

“Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day.”
Mary Ann, age 4.

From ***Bursting at the Seams***, Killy John and Alie Stibbe, Monarch Books. *Used with permission*

The Example of Prayer

“Lord, teach us to pray.” Luke 11:1

We make the assumption that the disciples were familiar with the practice of prayer. Indeed they had been brought up in the Jewish faith and prayer was an integral part of Jewish worship (Luke 1:10). Some of them had been disciples of John the Baptist and later, in Luke 11:1, we are told that John taught his disciples to pray, yet the disciples still felt that their prayer life was so inadequate that one of them make this request to Jesus. I am sure that we all can sympathise with him.

There is no doubt that the disciples were aware of Jesus’ prayer life and realised that if prayer was important to Him it had to be important for them if they were going to be His followers. They must also have realised that His power in dealing with evil spirits and performing miracles, His wisdom in dealing with those who opposed Him, the conviction of His teaching and preaching together with His contentment all stemmed from His devotional life. This all gave them the desire to pray in a similar way.

Someone has said, “Seeking God, and listening to Him are important parts of the business of human life: and this is the essence of prayer.” Jesus clearly desired communion with His Father above all else and so should we. We have the privilege of not only desiring communion with God but also of experiencing it. Like Jesus, we need to set a regular time aside to nourish our prayer life and then we will be better Christians and more able to fulfil His calling in us.

Prayer:

Wrestling on in mighty prayer, Lord, we will
Not let Thee go 'til Thou all Thy mind
Declare, all Thy grace on us bestow.
(*Charles Wesley* MHB 541)

From *A Quiet Word*, Ross Adkins.
Used with permission.

FEBRUARY LECTIONARY READINGS

4 February

Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

11 February - Sunday before Lent

2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

14 February - Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

18 February - First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

25 February - Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38



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

Every Day, at 8:00pm, pray for Peace and Justice throughout the world

Weekly

Tue2:30pmLadies' Fellowship Easington MC
 Thur10:00am ...Coffee Morning..... Marlborough Rd MC
 Thur11:00am ...Informal Holy Communion Service.. Marlborough Rd MC
 Fri10:30am ...Coffee Morning..... Hornton MC

Fortnightly

Wed 7 & 21 Feb...9:30amCoffee & Games Morning Easington MC
 Wed 6 & 20 Mar...9:30amCoffee & Games Morning Easington MC

Monthly

1st Sat10:00am ...Coffee Morning..... Hinton [Woodford Halse] MC
 1st Sat10:30am ...Coffee Morning..... Wigginton MC
 1st Mon2:00pmKnitting GroupAdderbury MC
 1st & 3rd Mon10:30am ...Musical Memories.....St Francis
 2nd Fri10:30am ...Coffee Morning..... Cropredy MC
 2nd & 4th SatNightsStreet Pastor Patrols **Please pray for them**

Other Events

Thur 1 Feb10:00am ...Prayers for Circuit Youth Group Marlborough Rd MC
 Fri 2 Feb9:30amPrayers for Circuit Youth Group Cropredy MC
 Fri 2 Feb12 noonPrayers for Circuit Youth Group Hornton MC
 Sat 3 Feb10:00am ...Prayers for Circuit Youth Group Hinton MC
 Tue 6 Feb1:00pmPrayers for Circuit Youth Group Shipston MC
 Thu 8 Feb6:30pmPrayers for Circuit Youth Group ZOOM - link below

Prayers for Circuit Youth Group - Zoom Meeting Link

<https://zoom.us/j/94944798076?pwd=VkNUUWVaTDM1T1pzRUd0b1dxemZOdz09>
 Meeting ID: 949 4479 8076 Passcode: 484344