



The Methodist Church  
**BANBURY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER**

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

**2025**

**CIRCUIT MINISTERS**

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**ECUMENICAL MINISTERS**

Rev Chris Gaynor ☎ 01295 271403

Rev Lynda Spokes ☎ 01295 253508

**February 14:  
St Valentine's Day**

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>1</sup> Corinthians 13:4-7



**February 17:  
Random Acts of Kindness Day**

*(See article on page 7)*

**DEADLINE - Third SUNDAY each Month**

For the **March 2025** edition the deadline is **Sunday 16 February 2025**



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

## Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends

At the beginning of this year, a great deal of my time has been taken up with the subject of running. In my spare time, I am in training for the Stratford-upon-Avon marathon at the end of April, and as well as this, I have just begun to write and research my MA dissertation, looking into the potential for building a Christian community around a Parkrun-type activity - I'm very happy to discuss this with anyone who wants to know more!

I don't always find running easy (when I do manage to get off the sofa and go!), but I do find that I benefit from it immensely - and not just in terms of my physical fitness. The opportunity to get out into the countryside, to enjoy the wonderful hilltop views (though not so much the climb to get there), to drink in the sights and sounds of nature or to listen and sing along to some of my favourite music - these are all gifts that I feel extremely blessed by, and are times that I feel close to the God who created me and has guided me throughout my life.

Now, I am aware that running is not everybody's cup of tea - but are there things that you can point to, activities, hobbies or places that fill your heart with delight, that make your soul sing, that give you a powerful awareness of God's presence? As a young person, the people that inspired me and made me want to discover more about God for myself were those who were full of joy and kindness, whose eyes shone when they talked about what God had done in their lives, and who seemed to take delight in everything around them.

As a general rule, I do not go in for New Year resolutions but I do always want to do better as a minister and as a follower of Christ. To this end, I have resolved to try to be more joyful in 2025 - not to have a fake smile plastered on my face or disregard the very real trials and sufferings that people may have to endure, but rather to look for the delights, the joys and the hope that exist within our world, the signs of God's kingdom at work, and then to be able to share them with other people in the churches and communities in which I serve.

I look forward to journeying alongside with you in the coming year - may we find more of God's delights together!

Every Blessing, **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/>*

**February**..... LGBTQ+ History Month

Feb 3-9..... Race Equality Week

Feb 6..... International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM <sup>[Female Genital Mutilation]</sup>

Feb 9..... Racial Justice Sunday (also 14 September)

Feb 20..... World Day of Social Justice

Feb 28..... Rare Disease 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.*



### **Cost of Living Support Event**

**2:00pm - 4:00pm, Tuesday 11 February**  
**Marlborough Road Methodist Church**

A multi-agency partnership event  
to help you access support and advice on entitlements.

*Age Friendly Banbury partners are joining Banbury Larder and Job Club to offer support and advice to help you access your entitlements to combat the cost of living and winter bills. Drop in during this free event and chat to the friendly advisers from Citizens Advice, Age UK Oxfordshire, Banburyshire Advice Service and DWP among others. Hot drinks served and a friendly welcome guaranteed.*

### **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](mailto:revchriseddy@gmail.com)

**Chris Eddy**

### 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**

### EASINGTON

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

A varied programme of speakers, quizzes, slide presentations and informal chats, followed by light refreshments, usually ending at about 4:00pm.

Whether you wish to come regularly or just occasionally, you are most welcome.

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**Meet Your Neighbour  
Coffee and Games Mornings  
Wednesdays at 9:30am  
Feb 5 & 19, Mar 5 & 19**

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

### MARLBOROUGH ROAD

**Weekly Coffee Morning  
Thursdays at 10:00am**

All are welcome

### HORNTON

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

### HINTON

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

**St Francis Church**

For more information call

Janet ☎ 01295 368238

or e-mail

stfrancischurchbanbury@gmail.com

### **The Banbury Larder LUNCH CLUB**

Savour the flavours and share the laughter at our monthly lunch club.

**GAMES AND PUZZLES AVAILABLE**

from February 2025

**The first Wednesday every month  
12 noon to 2:00pm**

Everyone Welcome!

To register please email

Thebanburylarder@gmail.com

Marlborough Road Methodist Church  
OX16 5BZ

### CROPREDY

**Coffee Mornings**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Friday each Month  
10.30am - Noon**

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**'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.

**Answers (IN BOLD) to the Short Christmas Quiz from the Dec/Jan Edition**

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? **KANGAROOS**
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? **ALMONDS**

**Rhyming Pairs**

1. **CT** Leading robber .....**CHIEF THIEF**
2. **CB**irate employer .....
3. **FS** Speedy thoroughfare? .....
4. **PJ** Not a very pretty girl .....
5. **TD** Untrustworthy Richard .....
6. **BP** Desolate mountaintop .....
7. **CP** Not a very warm pond .....
8. **LM** A friend who is overdue .....
9. **MW** Large bet .....
10. **YF** Cowardly man .....
11. **WD** Jocular song .....
12. **GM** Jovial though humble servant .....
13. **RB** Royal Hound .....
14. **SB** Daft William .....

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### **2 February**

Jeremiah 1:4-10  
Psalm 71:1-6  
1 Corinthians 13:1-13  
Luke 4:21-30

### **9 February**

Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13)  
Psalm 138  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Luke 5:1-11

### **16 February**

Jeremiah 17:5-10  
Psalm 1  
1 Corinthians 15:12-20  
Luke 6:17-26

### **23 February**

Genesis 45:3-11,15  
Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40  
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50  
Luke 6:27-38

## 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.**

Creator God,

Today, in our fractured world, we pray for peace and justice; your peace, not built on broken promises and failing courage, but your deep peace, embodied in the service and sacrifice of Jesus.

May we follow Him, seeking your justice, acting in solidarity and hope, even when the way seems unclear and the powers of our world don't reflect your kingdom, your peace or your justice.

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

## Circuit Diary

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

### **February:**

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

### **March:**

Thu 6.....7:30pm.....Local Preachers' meeting at Fairway

Sat 29.....10:00am-3:00pm ..... LPWL Study Day at Marlborough Road,  
led by Rev Bruce Thompson; 'Preaching with Sensitivity – being aware of  
Judeophobia in the history of the Christian Church'

### **April:**

Thu 10....Time to be confirmed ..... Circuit Meeting at St Francis

## **Random Acts of Kindness [RAK] Day: Monday 17 February 2025**

Be inspired by RAK Day to bring joy to people you come across.

The day encourages people to do good deeds and celebrate the pay-it-forward mentality. Doing something kind for someone else can have a big impact not only on their day, but also on ours - being kind to others makes us happier and makes us realise we need to be kinder to ourselves too.

An act of kindness doesn't have to be a big gesture; the smallest act can have the biggest impact, turning someone's bad day into a good one. It's easy, free, and will put a smile on everyone's face.

On this day, stay alert for any inspiration to do something kind. You may see an old person who needs help carrying their shopping or see someone at the coffee shop or the supermarket who is short of change for whatever it is they're buying, just complimenting someone on their clothes or their smile can instantly lift their mood. A random act of kindness for someone may inspire them to pay it forward and do something kind for someone else. So you would be helping to make the world a better place.

### **Being kind is good for you!**

Evidence suggests that a major benefit of being kind is it's actually good for your physical and mental health! Studies have shown that when you are kind and helpful to others your brain is stimulated in much the same way as it is if you have received the act of kindness.

Being kind to others releases endorphins that relax the body, improve your mood, and make you feel good.

Being kind to others increases the production of oxytocin in the body, even watching an act of kindness take place can help produce this hormone. Having higher levels of oxytocin can lower the risk of heart disease and high blood pressure. It's a win-win!

Being kind to others can increase your levels of dopamine and serotonin. When your brain releases serotonin, it can help improve and stabilise your mood by reducing anxiety, and decreasing feelings of depression.

**Ideas** - things you could do to share some friendliness - see how easy it is to be kind:

- Smile at the people you come across on your commute.
- In the supermarket, buy some extra food and donate it to the food bank.
- If you see someone in need of help, such as a flat tyre, offer to give them a hand.
- Compliment a friend or colleague on their achievements.
- Take some home-baked goodies to share with people at work.
- Pay for the person behind you at the coffee shop.
- Offer to do difficult chores for an elderly neighbour.

These are just a few ideas of things you might do; let yourself be inspired and encourage others around you to do good deeds on **Random Acts of Kindness Day!**



## 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..... 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> Mon ..... 10:30am .....Musical Memories.....St Francis  
 2<sup>nd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Mon..... 1:00pm .....Art Group ..... Greatworth MC  
 1<sup>st</sup> Wed ..... 12-2:00pm.....The Banbury Larder Lunch Club ..... Marlborough Rd MC  
 1<sup>st</sup>,3<sup>rd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Fri ... 10:30am ..... 'Warm Spaces' ..... Cropredy MC  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri ..... 10:30am ..... Coffee Morning ..... Cropredy MC  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat ..... 10:00am ..... Coffee Morning ..... Hinton MC  
 2<sup>nd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> Sat ..... Nights ..... Street Pastor Patrols ..... **Please pray for them**

#### Other Events

Wed 5 Feb ....9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning..... Easington MC  
 Tue 11 Feb ...2-4:00pm ... Cost of Living Support Event..... Marlborough Rd MC  
 Wed 19 Feb ..9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning..... Easington MC  
 Thu 6 Mar ..... 7:30pm ..... Local Preachers' Meeting.....Fairway MC  
 Sat 29 Mar .... 10:00am-3:00pm.....LPWL Study Day ..... Marlborough Rd MC  
 Thu 10 Apr .... Time tbc .... Circuit Meeting .....St Francis

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