

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](mailto:super@banburycircuit.org.uk)

Rev Phil Robinson ☎ 01295 709717 [ministry@banburycircuit.org.uk](mailto:ministry@banburycircuit.org.uk)

**ECUMENICAL MINISTERS**

Rev Chris Gaynor ☎ 01295 271403

Rev Lynda Spokes ☎ 01295 253508



As we begin this new Methodist Year, let us remember.....

God is: Above us to bless us, below us to support us,  
before us to guide us, behind us to protect us  
and beside us to comfort us.

**DEADLINE - Third SUNDAY each Month**

For the **October** edition the deadline is **Sunday 15 September 2024**

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



## THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,

Two of the words that bring me the most joy are 'thank you'. It is a great feeling to know that something you have done or said has been appreciated by somebody. I have been lucky enough to receive the occasional card or note thanking me for something and they are always a tremendous encouragement - I keep them in a drawer as an inspiration and lift when I need one!

To my regret, I am not always as good at saying thank you as I could be - and this particularly applies to my prayer life. I sometimes charge straight in with a list of my requests, petitions (or occasionally complaints) without taking the time to give my gratitude for everything and everyone that has blessed my life or saying 'thank you' for answered prayers. One of my challenges to myself for this coming year (while I have a child in school, it will always feel like the year starts in September) is to start each day with expressions of thanks to God for all that I have been given and end each day in gratitude for the blessings that the day has brought.

In that spirit, I would like to give a huge 'thank you' to everybody for how you have supported me and my family during the process of probationary ministry and then, most recently, at my ordination. I was overwhelmed by how many people came to support me in person or upheld us in prayer at this joyful time. I am also enormously grateful for the gifts and cards that people were kind enough to send - each of them is greatly appreciated.

At a time when the world often seems to be getting angrier, I find that a smile and a 'thank you' goes a long way to defusing tension and enabling connection - it is harder to stay angry at someone who is smiling at you! We are called as Christians, not just to say 'thank you' but to display our gratitude to God in the way that we live our lives, and in doing so we hope to show others something of the love that their Creator has for them, enabling them to feel thankful as well.

I am looking forward to everything that this year will bring and give thanks for the opportunities that will be presented, to journeying with you all in sharing the love of God in the communities I serve.

Every Blessing,  
**Phil**

## THANK YOU

Written from Launde Abbey, a Christian Retreat and Conference Centre in Leicestershire, on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2024.



Dear friends in the Northampton District,

I wanted to thank you for all the encouragement, love and support that you have given to me while I have been your Chair of District for the last seven years. It has been an immense privilege and great joy and I am very glad I was able to serve you in this way. I will miss you.

My Farewell Service was simply perfect and I am so grateful to all those who worked hard to make it so. My family are still smiling over the song sung by the Superintendents Choir.

Thank you for the many, many gifts I was given. I will carry you with me every day I am President of the Conference as I carry the laptop bag you gifted me at my last Synod. The Jackie Morris Bluebell print is simply beautiful and it is now hanging over my desk in my study at home. I see it every day and that keeps you all in my thoughts and prayers.

The vouchers were completely unexpected – it's not often I am left speechless but on this occasion I was.

Thank you for your kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity. I do assure you that, "I won't forget my old District, when I sit in Wesley's Chair". Please keep me in your prayers.

Every blessing, as ever **Helen**

## From *The Methodist News*

Presbyters and deacons were received into Full Connexion during the Methodist Conference Worship on the Sunday morning, 30 June 2024.

On 27 June, *The Methodist News* website printed the testimonies of five ordinands as they prepared for their ordination services, which took place at five churches in and around Yorkshire.

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Continued from page 3)*

One of those testimonies was written by our own, **Phil Robinson**, who wrote.....

I am a 'cradle Christian' - taken to church since birth by my mum - but could never have imagined that I would find myself becoming an ordained minister.

For most of my life, as far as I was concerned, the people leading services were some special breed of especially righteous humans and this was something that someone like me - with all my flaws, doubts and hugely imperfect faith - could never aspire to be.

***However; one thing that I have learnt in my journey of faith is that ordained ministry is not something that you aspire to - rather it is something that you are called to.***

God has worked gently and gradually in drawing me to this point - firstly with the gift of friends and mentors as I became involved in church youth work nearly twenty years ago that eventually led me into a position within the Methodist Church in Southport, then being encouraged to consider local preaching and becoming accredited.

Then just at the point that my daughter had started school and I was wondering what to do after four years of being a stay-at-home dad, sending a minister within the circuit to boldly and directly challenge me to test a calling to ordination.

Even then, I was unsure whether this was the right path to take - doubting if it was something I could really do. These doubts persisted through my endorsement by the local circuit, the regional district and then the Connexional panel.

They still periodically surfaced through three years of training at the Queens Foundation in Birmingham and then onto my appointment as a Probationary Minister in the Banbury Methodist Circuit. Even now, I occasionally catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror wearing a clerical collar and think *'this is crazy!'*

***And yet...the belief in me exists and continues to grow that, even if I don't always know what to do, the God who created me, loves me and knows me does know and will continue to guide me in the right direction.***

You may be aware of the poem called 'Footsteps' where a man is shown by God where he has been carried through the storms of life. When I look back on my life and ministry so far, I can see where God has carried me - through times of mental illness and depression, through our daughter's treatment for leukaemia, through hardship, through challenge - and brought me through still smiling and still hopeful.

I can also see how I have been blessed in my ministry - I have the privilege of working with several village churches and have experienced the joy of sharing and witnessing the love of God with people at all stages of life and faith. Ordained ministry is by no means an easy path and is full of challenges, but is also often full of blessings. I give thanks to God for all that I have been blessed with thus far and look forward with excitement to the adventure to come.

## 'God for All' Conference Report

The report received by the Conference detailed the work undertaken since the *God For All* strategy was agreed in 2020 and how this has been shaping the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church while supporting its people in evangelism, discipleship, missional growth and leadership. The Conference voted to re-affirm the strategy, renewing its objectives until 2032.

# THE METHODIST CHURCH

A PLAN TO HELP US CHANGE AND WELCOME NEW PEOPLE

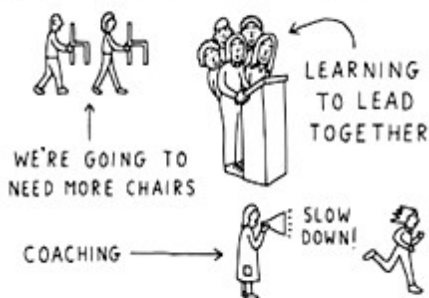
### 1 A CHURCH FOR EVERYONE



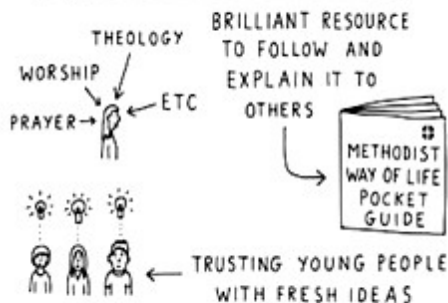
### 2 TELLING OUR STORY



### 3 PUTTING MISSION FIRST



### 4 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS



## Michael and Jocelyn Upton

Sad news of the death of Michael Upton and his wife Jocelyn. They each died at the beginning of July. Michael was well known at several churches in our circuit, lifting the singing with his deep voice. Jocelyn, a faithful member of Bloxham Baptist community, cared for her husband during his poor health. They are now in heaven.

**Anne Ransome & Stephen Haley**



### **JOINT PUBLIC ISSUES TEAM**

CHURCHES WORKING FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

#### **Public Issues Calendar**

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

- Sep 1-Oct 4..... Creation Time, Creationtide or Season of Creation
- Sep 6..... National Food Bank Day
- Sep 8..... Education Sunday
- Sep 9-22 ..... Fairtrade Fortnight
- Sep 10..... World Suicide Prevention Day
- Sep 12..... Disability Awareness Sunday
- Sep 15-22 ..... Disability Awareness Week
- Sep 16-23 ..... World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel
- Sep 21..... UN International Day of Peace
- Sep 22..... Peace Sunday
- Sep 26..... International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- Sep 30-Oct 6... Good Money Week

*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.*



### **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.**

A varied programme of Speakers, PowerPoint Presentations and Quizzes, is followed by light refreshments, usually finishing at about 4:00pm. Whether you would like to come regularly or just occasionally you will be most welcome.

~~~~~

**Meet Your Neighbour  
Coffee and Games Mornings  
Wednesdays at 9:30am**

**September 4 & 18, October 2, 16 & 30**

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

## HINTON

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

## HORNTON

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

## MARLBOROUGH ROAD

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

## CROPREDY

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

## WIGGINTON

**Coffee Mornings  
First Saturday each month at 10:30am**

~~~~~

### **Fund Raising for Ukraine**

Please could you consider donating 1p, 2p & 5p coins that you don't have a use for to our fund raising for Ukraine.

They may be dropped off at Wigginton Methodist Chapel at the Coffee Mornings - details above.

With our grateful thanks  
David and Cynthia Gardner

~~~~~

### **An Organ Concert**

by

*Nicholas Martin B.E.M.*

on

**Friday 27 September at 7:00pm**

**Admission £8.00**

To book your seat, please contact  
David Gardner ☎ 01295 271469  
or davidjg1@talktalk.net

**Tea, Coffee & Biscuits will be served  
in the interval**

*"An evening Not to Be Missed"*



## 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**

## 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 in St Francis Church**

For more information call Janet ☎ 01295 368238

or e-mail stfrancischurchbanbury@gmail.com

## BIG METHODIST WIN at RHS FLOWER SHOW

**Tatton Park, 17-21 July:** The first garden to be sponsored by the Methodist Church at the Tatton Park RHS Flower Show has won a **GOLD MEDAL**, the **ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION AWARD** and **BEST IN SHOW**.



***'This Garden Isn't Finished Without You'***, was designed by Ollie Pike from Pike Studio and the Methodist Church. To match the Methodist Church's ambitious aims, it largely focuses on sustainability and climate resilience.

*"It is a great privilege to get a gold medal. And the collaboration between the Methodist Church and everyone involved has paid off. To create a beautiful and sustainable garden that has involved the local Methodist community has been amazing. The RHS is recognising that we have pushed the boundaries of sustainability in show gardens and gardens as a whole, in aiming to achieve Net Zero by 2030."*

The design is rich with symbolism. Recycled colourful stone paving is a subtle nod to the colours of the rainbow flag/Pride flag, celebrating people who identify as LGBTQIA+. Plants such as achillea, salvia, and erigeron, which are not native to the UK but are naturalised here, show how, just like human communities, the garden is richer for the blend of plants from other cultures and nations. Supporting this inclusivity, the garden is designed to be accessible for those with physical disabilities and incorporates a calm area for neurodivergent visitors.

Large woven willow sculptures in three distinct forms surround an open table where people can come together. The garden celebrates diversity and inclusivity, with a broad mix of plants chosen to represent the resilience of people from all around the world coming together to form a community.

The garden will be relocated to the grounds of a Methodist Church near RHS Tatton Park.





## **CLOSURE OF ADDERBURY METHODIST CHAPEL 2024**

The Stewards and members of Adderbury Methodist Chapel wish it to be known that this chapel will hold its final service on

**SUNDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2024 at 3:00pm.**

**All are welcome.**

### **LECTIONARY READINGS**

#### **1 September Continuous**

Song of Solomon 2:8-13

Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9

James 1:17-27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

#### **Related**

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Psalm 15

#### **8 September Continuous**

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

Psalm 125

James 2:1-10 (11-13), 14-17

Mark 7:24-37

#### **Related**

Isaiah 35:4-7a

Psalm 146

#### **15 September Continuous**

Proverbs 1:20-33

Psalm 19

or Canticle:

Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 – 8:1

James 3:1-12

Mark 8:27-38

#### **Related**

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 116:1-9

#### **22 September Continuous**

Proverbs 31:10-31

Psalm 1

James 3:13 – 4:3, 7-8a

Mark 9:30-37

#### **Related**

Wisdom of Solomon 1:16 – 2:1, 12-22

or Jeremiah 11:18-20

Psalm 54

#### **29 September Continuous**

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Psalm 124

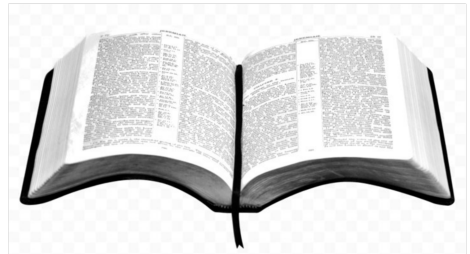
James 5:13-20

Mark 9:38-50

#### **Related**

Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29

Psalm 19:7-14



## How is Your Geography?

Do you know what these places used to be called?

The Czech republic/Czechia .....  
New York.....  
Ethiopia.....  
Indonesia .....  
Iran .....  
Iraq .....  
Istanbul.....  
Thailand .....  
Zimbabwe .....  
Malawi .....  
Ho Chi Min City.....  
Taiwan .....  
Sri Lanka .....



### **From the Editor's Desk:**

In the Methodist Church, September is the start of a new year, which has led me to a question.....

#### **What do you expect to see in our CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER?**

News, information about forthcoming events, reports on interesting or exciting meetings, reviews of books, TV/Radio shows that others have found helpful or inspiring, thoughts about our faith? So many possibilities.

If expectations are not to be disappointed, ***it is up to you*** – this CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER can contain all of the above ***if you write it*** and share it! May I repeat an earlier invitation to you to share with the rest of the Circuit those things that interest, excite or even concern you and make our newsletter worthy of eager expectation. It really is up to you.

Every blessing, **Margaret Smith**



## 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  
 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> Sat ..... 10:30am .... Coffee Morning..... Wigginton 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

Wed 4 Sep.... 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning ..... Easington MC  
 Wed 18 Sep.. 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning ..... Easington MC  
 Fri 27 Sep..... 7:00pm ..... Organ Concert by Nicholas Martin B.E.M. .... Wigginton MC  
 Sun 29 Sep... 3:00pm ..... Chapel Closing Service..... Adderbury MC  
 Wed 2 Oct..... 9:30am ..... Meet Your Neighbour Coffee Morning ..... Easington MC

### PRAYING for PEACE and JUSTICE throughout the WORLD

**September 16-23 is World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel.**

We may feel that our pleas fall on deaf ears and our hope falters under the weight of death, destruction and devastation, tested by the inhumanity of wars around the world, but we know that God's tears fall with ours. Let us continue to pray with all our heart for a ceasefire in Gaza, a release for the hostages and for just solutions that peace may flourish, not only in the land where Jesus walked, but throughout the world.

**Pray at 8:00pm each day for one minute.**

