



The Methodist Church

NORTH HERTS CIRCUIT

Superintendent Minister: Revd Andrew P Maguire MA BD

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Printed version of the circuit e-newsletter for August 2010

When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matt: 9.36-38

Please send me any news of events that you would like included, Celia 01462 481268

EVENT and GENERAL NEWS

Welcome service for Revd Bob Forrest at Arlesey on Sunday 5th September at 6.00 at Arlesey. Bob will have responsibility at Arlesey, Baldock and Stotfold. It would be great to have support from around the circuit and a full church to welcome him!

NEW CIRCUIT TREASURER NEEDED The help and thoughtful prayer of all around the circuit are requested please. We need immediately to appoint a new Circuit Treasurer. John Chastney, who has served us admirably, has been appointed to a Connexional role which means that he will not be able to carry on as Circuit Treasurer. Suggestions would be gratefully received of an appropriate person to oversee the circuit finances, maintain financial records, and to prepare accounts for the circuit funds.

Please speak to the Superintendent, or to one of the Circuit Ministers or Circuit Stewards. It is ESSENTIAL for the Circuit to have a treasurer. A job description is available from the Superintendent or one of the Circuit Ministers.

Auction of Promises Saturday 18th September 2010 7pm

We invite you to celebrate Harvest by coming together with Christchurch for a traditional Harvest Supper and afterwards to join the fun and bid for the items for sale in our Auction. The Auction will help to raise funds for Lideta, a poor community in Addis Ababa which Christchurch has been supporting, through World Vision, for the last 6 years. **To make this possible we need your help to make promises.**

Possible promises could be: 2 -3-hours gardening, Saturday afternoon or evening baby sitting, Two hours ironing, complete bicycle service, a fruit cake. (These are just a few ideas to get you thinking.) Promise forms are available in the Welcome Area.

A list of items to be auctioned will be available two weeks before the Auction itself so that you can submit your bid in advance if you are unable to come on the day. For further information contact Val Dowsett 01462 451515

Circuit prayer Circle

You are welcome to be part of an informal Circuit Prayer Circle. We hope to have a regular time of prayer that will rotate its place of meeting. Dates are as follows: Wed 22nd September at Arlesey, 7.30-8.30pm

Mon 18th October at Benington, 7.30-8.30pm

For more information please contact Doreen Archer (01462 731392), Helen Dearn (01462 625414) or Sheralee Ashby (01462 621776).

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED DURING SABBATICAL

I returned from my sabbatical on August 8th. I really valued the opportunity to pursue some reading and study of early Christian literature. My wife Helen and I took the opportunity to share in worship in churches of different traditions. It was also good to be

able to spend a little more time with friends and family, to go to several concerts and to have quality time with my parents during the celebration of their Diamond Wedding. I would like to say a big and sincere thank you to everybody who helped to cover for my responsibilities during my sabbatical, at Central, at Norton and in the Circuit. With good wishes to everybody for the new church year. Andrew Maguire

The Singing Thing Sunday September 26th. 2.30 - 7pm.¶

Light refreshments provided. Free event, donations towards costs welcome.

Do you love music but have never plucked up the courage to have a go yourself? Are you put off because you can't read music, or think you're not good enough? Or maybe you've sung with choirs but would welcome the chance to try a new way of singing.¶ Why not come along for an afternoon of enjoyable singing lead by local gospel singer Elaine Simpson? Elaine will be using her experience as a singing teacher and community choir director to take us all through the basics of singing together, finding harmonies and following the leader... wherever she takes you! Following the afternoon we'll bring the songs we've learned into a short service focussing on music and song. With everyone from doctors to TV personalities extolling the benefits of singing, and the Rock Choir topping the CD charts, here's a chance to get in on the act. And there'll be chances too for those hairbrush soloists feeling extra brave. On a personal note, when Elaine did a similar thing a while back my wife and daughters aged 16 and 4 were all in the choir - and they ended up singing at Hitchin's Rhythms of the World festival. I've also sung in a similar all-comers choir that performed on national radio after just an hour's rehearsal. It's amazing what can be done in a short time. So don't be shy - let your inner diva out and sing somewhere other than the bathroom. If you can't make the afternoon, why not join us at 6 and hear the results? Paul Arnold Director of Music. Christchurch, Hitchin. 07941 356026¶

'Healing Hope' Services

Christchurch is currently holding a monthly healing and wholeness service entitled Healing Hope. We would like to publicise these for anyone who wishes to be able to come to a service and receive Christ's love through prayer ministry.

For more information: - contact Shirley Rossall Tel.01462 431884

We are proposing to run Disciple course 1 in the Autumn.

"Disciple is a journey of biblical discovery in the company of others which will change you, and inspire new ways in you to make a difference for the kingdom." The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, General Secretary of Methodist Church. Disciple is run over 34 weeks. The course moves through the biblical story from Genesis to Revelation and require participants to commit to a daily personal Bible study alongside the weekly meetings. People who have followed Disciple testify to the way it has changed the way they see the world and their place within it as a follower of Jesus.

Contact Judith or Chris Bryant 01462 636191

Christchurch – Library – new additions

There is a list of new titles which we've added to the Christchurch Library. Borrowing is open to all the Circuit too. Nora Evans: 01462 433372

Interesting developments in work with youth in Hitchin

I'm Tom Lewis, the Leader of Youth and Children's Ministry at Christchurch Hitchin. I've been encouraged to advertise more widely some of the good things that are going on here across the Methodist circuit and the URC group.

There are a couple of upcoming events that we'd love to invite you to.

The first is Fuel. This is an event aimed at encouraging and training adults who work with teenagers. (Flyer is attached) It's a series of short workshops dealing with different areas of youth work and some space to chat and share with other local youth leaders. It's on Tuesday 28th September, 7:30-9:30 at Hitchin Christian Centre. If you are a youth leader then please do come along!

The other thing is a new event for 11-18s. It's called Epic and it will be running on Sunday nights at Christchurch Hitchin from 7pm. It's the place to be on a Sunday evening; you can stick into the action or chill out with your mates. You can run around and play sport or sit around and play Xbox 360. You can munch your way through the tuck shop or rustle up some culinary delights of your own. There are loads of other exciting things happening too and we'd love you to be a part of it!

Methodist Church E-news for August 2010

MRDF GIVEN NEARLY £20,000 IN A WEEK FOR PAKISTAN FLOOD APPEAL

An appeal launched by the Methodist Relief and Development Fund (MRDF) has raised nearly £20,000 in a week after devastating floods hit Pakistan.

The funds will help to support some of the people affected by the disaster, along with a £15,000 grant sent by the World Mission Fund to the Peshawar Diocese.

The United Nations is warning of a second wave of death, disease and food shortages. Over 1,600 people have already died and 14 million have been affected by the flooding. Donations to MRDF's appeal are helping to provide food packages to families in the Swat Valley and Kohistan Districts, some of the worst affected by the flooding. The packages include flour, rice, cooking oil and pulses. Gifts will also help to buy winterised tents and plastic sheets. Vulnerable families in the Swat Valley and Mansehra Districts will have access to medical attention, thanks in part to MRDF's appeal. Three mobile health clinics have been set up in these areas. MRDF is working through its emergency partner in the region, Action by Church Together (ACT) International. The grant sent by the World Mission Fund is supporting an emergency relief and rescue programme for more than 1,300 families affected by the floods. The Diocese of Peshawar is putting all its efforts into reaching those still stranded by the floods and feeding affected families.

Steve Pearce, partnership coordinator for the World Church, said, "It is difficult to imagine suffering on this scale and in response we can only pray and support those who are offering physical help. I know Methodists will do both effectively. Our partner Church in Peshawar is working with the Christian and Hindu minorities as well as the Muslim majority in the region and keeping in close contact with us. Please pray for Bishop Humphrey as he leads them." MRDF Director Kirsty Smith said, "The torrential rains have had a catastrophic effect on so many communities. It looks likely to affect even more people in the long-term than those affected by the Asian tsunami. Our emergency fund gives us - and the people who have donated to it - the opportunity to provide swift, tangible assistance to people in the midst of this crisis. We are very grateful to all who have given, and we intend to support as many people as we can in the immediate and longer term."

To donate to MRDF's emergency fund, call 020 7224 4814 to give by debit or credit card. Alternatively send a cheque made payable to MRDF (Pakistan emergency) to MRDF, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

METHODISTS SUPPORT RELIEF WORK CHINA FOLLOWING LANDSLIDE

A torrential downpour of rain triggered a landslide in Zhouqu, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Region in Gansu Province on 7 August. According to the rescue headquarters, by 12 August, 1,117 are reported death and 627 are still missing. Late on 12 August more torrential rain hit Zhouqu causing another landslide and the news is that three more people are reported missing and the 'life passage' which had been broken through the landslide is blocked again. The Methodist Church's partner in China is the Amity Foundation, an independent Chinese non governmental organisation with a Christian basis. It already has personnel present in the town, assessing and meeting needs. A grant of £10,000 from the Methodist Church's World Mission Fund has been given to Amity. The grant is an expression of solidarity and goes towards Amity's ability to commit to longer term recovery work.

GET CONNECTED - 11 SEPTEMBER 2010

The Methodist Church's London District is holding a big celebration youth event on Saturday 11 September 2010 with worship, dance and DJs. It takes place at Westminster Central Hall in central London. About 1,000 young people are expected to attend some from Methodist churches and friends and relatives. Workshops start at 2.00pm with advance booking and the celebration begins at 5.30pm.

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY - 12 SEPTEMBER 2010

This year's theme is migration with the title: Building Bridges or Barriers?

BRITAIN TOGETHER - SACRED STEPS

The Churches Tourism Association is the UK's leading body for promoting best practice in welcoming visitors to places of worship and developing the tourism potential and visitor experience of a unique part of our historical and contemporary sacred heritage. Its 2010 convention, Britain Together? Sacred Steps, takes place between 15-17 November at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. The conference is for everyone who'd like to open up their church building to wider audiences, learn how to enthuse visitors, and work across boundaries to link places of worship with their local communities.

With a combination of workshops and speakers (including the Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, former president of the Methodist Conference), discover ways to make your church worth seeing and hear fresh ideas from people who have already made their place of worship a must see experience for visitors.

METHODIST DIARY 2011 NOW AVAILABLE

The week-to-view pages start on Sunday (with extra space for notes) and include key dates in the Christian and Methodist calendars. As well as enabling day-to-day and forward planning, the diary gives you the information you need whenever and wherever you need it including Christian calendar dates for the next six years, a

directory of Methodist organisations and the lectionary. The diary is available from Methodist Publishing in three formats -original (£7), interleaved (£10) and personal organiser inserts (£10). Order your copy or find out more information at Methodist Church House 25 Marylebone Road London NW1 5JR: 020 7486 5502

GOD'S OPEN WORD - METHODIST PRAYER HANDBOOK 2010/2011

The Methodist Prayer Handbook is a companion and guide that will accompany and encourage you in your prayer life. Prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession and intercession provide a daily focus throughout the year, as well as a source of inspiration when you need it. The handbook includes a 31-day prayer cycle (with prayers from the districts and Methodist Partner Churches around the world) as well as daily hymn and lectionary readings. This year's edition is inspired by scripture: the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible in 2011 has become a springboard for the celebration of Scripture. God's Open Word joins this celebration, with many prayers inspired by the Bible, especially the parables. In its pages you will uncover biblical gems of insight and truth. You can order copies from Methodist Publishing (in A5 and large print A4 format) at Methodist Publishing House Tel: 01733 325002 There is 10% discount for orders of ten or more.

A POWERFUL RESOURCE

Bring something powerful to your home groups with MRDF's free study pack, 'What does the Bible say about power?'

Drawing on examples from scripture and the contemporary world, the pack explores the nature of power; and challenges us to think about the power we have and how we can use it. This six-week resource includes Bible studies, modern day examples of empowerment from MRDF's work and group discussion questions. Get your home group inspired to use the power they have to make a difference.

Order your free pack today at MRDF 020 7467 5132

GIVE A GIFT OF PEACE

Lavishly illustrated, A Gift of Peace is filled with encouraging words from the Bible, as well as prayers and other quotations. The booklet is ideal for personal or group reflection. Churches are also encouraged to share a little peace with their communities by giving the booklets away in the run-up to World Peace Day on 21 September. The booklet heralds the re-launch of the popular In Your Pocket series under the new title A Gift of.... This completely revised edition contains brand new images and quotations on peace, but retains the look and feel of its predecessor. It is available from Methodist Publishing at £5 for 50 copies.

INTER FAITH RELATIONS

On the Monday evening of Methodist Conference an Inter Faith Relations fringe event took place, with the Revd Dr Barbara Glasson and Imran Malik. On the 14-15 July a conference for district inter faith relations link people was held at the Touchstone Centre, Bradford. Accounts and photographs of both events can be found on the Methodist Church website.

SAFEGUARDING

All churches face tragic child abuse situations, and the African churches are working very hard to tackle the particular problems which arise when traditional beliefs about witchcraft become allied with child abuse. It is important that we offer them our support, for example through a local Churches Together group or if an African church hires your church premises. Afruca (Africans Unite Against Child Abuse) works in London and other large cities, supporting African communities in their transition to Britain, including British requirements about childcare. If you have any particular concern, you should always talk to your church or district safeguarding representative.

If you have any suggestions for stories or comments about E-News please contact E-News editor, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR
Main Switchboard: 020 7486 5502

THE BUZZ 85

THE BUZZ is a great resource that brings the whole Methodist Connexion together and allows us to share what's happening in our districts, circuits, churches and church groups. If you have any stories you would like to share, which illustrate how your church, circuit or district is working out the four aspects of Our Calling, then please get in touch. After you've held your event, do let me know how it went. Your ideas can encourage and inspire others to try something similar and I'm sure the latest stories below will do just that. The contacts will be pleased to give you more information. Lynne Newland

WORSHIP - Worshipping God through Jazz from Moseley Road & Sparkhill Circuit

After being widely advertised in the circuit and district, the first Jazz Church gathering took place on Sunday 20 June 2010 at Shirley Methodist Church. The service was well attended and the congregation enjoyed a mixture of traditional hymns and modern choruses arranged in a jazz style supported by the Jazz Church band with Laura and Themba on vocals, Adam on keys and Steph on drums. Using speech and live music, Adam and Jayne unpicked the "jazz factor" metaphor for living the Christian life in light of the vision of the kingdom, encouraging people to have that same biblical vision of a just world or new creation as they thought about their own mission and ministry. The buzz after the service in the coffee shop and all round the church was exciting as people discussed the issues raised in the service and began looking forward to the next Jazz Church on 17 October. Contact: Adam Sanders.

LEARNING AND CARING - 3,000 Isle of Man Christians unite as 'One in the Park' from: The Isle of Man District Christians of all traditions on the Isle of Man came together on Fathers' Day for what was probably the biggest ecumenical celebration ever seen on the Island. This historic event culminated in church leaders signing a Covenant for Mission. Over 3,000 people gathered in a massive tent in Douglas that had been erected for a weekend rock festival and kindly offered to us, free of charge, by the festival organisers. The theme of the celebration

was, unsurprisingly, that of unity. Worship was led by 'Manifest', a local band, and reflection was provided in drama and dance by members of the Island's Scripture Union team. The atmosphere was tremendous, with a real sense of joy that God's people had come together in this way, and longed to move forward together. Relations between the churches on the Island have been good for many years and tribute should be paid to the work of Churches Together in Mann over recent decades. But the last few years have seen a change of pace and a real desire for greater levels of commitment and co-operation between the churches - hence the Covenant. The Covenant for Mission takes as its starting point the faith in Jesus that the Churches have in common. It celebrates the diversity within the body of Christ, and confesses the sin of division. It then commits the Churches to working together in five main areas: making Jesus known; serving human need; overcoming divisions in the body of Christ; the call to exercise the gifts God has given to us; and recognising that we are stronger together, the commitment to listen to and learn from one another. As its title suggests, the focus of the Covenant is outward-looking, with its call to the Churches to look to the needs of the Island and the wider world. Bishop Robert Paterson, the Anglican Bishop of Sodor and Mann, led the part of the service in which the Covenant was signed and he was joined by representatives of all the denominations: Methodist, Baptist, Elim, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, and the United Reformed Church. The Revd Malcolm Peacock, Chair of the Isle of Man District, signed on behalf of the Methodist Church. After the service others were able to add their own signatures.

On an island of 80,000 people, a gathering at 9.30am on a Sunday morning of 3,000 people was a sign that the Church is very much alive and kicking. Pastor John Powell of the Elim Church reminded us all, as we left, of God's promise in scripture, that where there is unity it commands a blessing. Early in the service a seagull found its way into the tent and flew for a while over the heads of those gathered: maybe a dove wasn't readily available! We look forward to what God has in store for us in the future. Contact: Revd David Shirtliff 01624 621968

EVANGELISM - from: Chester-le-Street Methodist Church

"The vision for 'exalt' came out of a time of prayer during a Sunday morning service", reports Alan Irvin, Methodist local preacher in the Chester-le-Street Circuit. "We felt a need to create a contemporary act of worship that would appeal to those who are unfamiliar with modern forms of worship and also provide an opportunity for smaller churches in the region to be part of something bigger. We took on the challenge of the words of Psalm 34:3 "let us exalt his name together".... hence the name. We decided to hold 'exalt' on a Saturday evening and publicized it via flyers, posters, word of mouth, emailings and a website. We invited any musicians to arrive early and join an ad-hoc music group.

The response exceeded our expectations. Fourteen musicians arrived to form the music group, made up of individuals from six different churches, including two keyboard players who played at different times in the worship. The congregation

included people from 14 churches - Methodist, Anglican and Pentecostal, and in our prayers we celebrated and prayed for the ongoing witness and faithfulness of these churches in their communities. A sermon based on Hebrews 10:23-25 reminded the congregation of the need to "motivate and encourage one another" knowing that God is faithful. We used strips of fabric, individually, tied in groups and then joined across the whole congregation to symbolise our unity. Many people then laid their strips at the foot of a cross as a sign to encourage others.

The feedback from those who attended was that the event was spiritually uplifting and something we should do on a regular basis and the next 'exalt' is planned for Saturday 23 October." Contact: Alan F Irvin 0191 3890363

SERVICE - Serving the community in good times and sad times from: Shackles Off, Seascale. Shackles Off Drop-In Centre is a well used, fresh expression of church in Seascale, Cumbria and provides a safe, caring, drug and alcohol-free environment for those aged 16-25. But on the day in June when 12 people were shot and killed in Cumbria, the Centre took on a very different function. The Shackles Off Team reports: "On Wednesday 2 June 2010, a mist was over the sea and the sun had broken through. It was just an ordinary day. Some first heard the news on the radio, or later on television, but most people knew nothing of the events that were unfolding until the gunman had gone through our village. Seascale had shut down. This was a day no-one will ever forget. Every individual will always remember where they were, what they were doing and the emotions they felt. Shackles Off Drop-In Centre was used as a point of contact for the emergency services and as a refuge for those who had witnessed the horrific events outside. It was used as a hospital to help keep a man alive until further help came, and later it was used as a base for the investigating police detectives. For two days after that we stayed open to offer support and to comfort one another; our friends and our community.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have lost loved ones. As we later gathered together for a Service of Remembrance, over 500 people turned out in the rain to pray for those lost, hear comforting words and to stand together as a community united in grief and in mourning. A minute's silence was held and, as the service closed, there was an opportunity to lay a flower at the foot of our driftwood cross, made with wood from our beach.

Here in this village of Seascale, John Wesley's words were lived out by everyone.

'Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can'