



Circuit Exchange

Quarterly Newsletter
of the
Wantage and Abingdon Methodist Circuit

Winter 2018



From the Manse in Wantage...

Christmas for many can be a difficult time with mixed emotions and feelings that are starkly at odds with all the expectations that abound. There are so many pressures at this time of year – perhaps the greatest being that much elusive perfect Christmas. To enjoy a Christmas where everything is just right, as it should be - a textbook experience.

To help try achieve that goal, an army of celebrities and commentators, from chefs to fashion gurus, tell us how to make our roast potatoes even crispier and our turkey's more moist and flavoursome, what we should wear and how to make sure that our Christmas goes without a hitch, planning every second and every moment of this special day. Each year it seems that they up the ante and expectations become increasingly unrealistic.

The irony, of course, is that if everything were perfect then there would have been no need for Christmas in the first place. The fact that God in the form of a helpless baby was born amongst us was because we are not perfect, that we get it wrong and that we mess it up.

That first Christmas God quietly and silently slipped in among us, born into the messiness of our lives. He came as one of us so that in the end, we may be more like him.

From the Victorians to the modern-day advertising companies, there have always been those who try to sell us a perfect, make-believe Christmas and all that goes with it. However, in the real world in which we live, things go wrong, we muck it up, the unexpected happens, we are disappointed, things are not as we would want, tragedies take place and lives are turned upside down.

It is to and in these situations that the birth of Jesus speaks – that in our imperfection, in the maelstrom of life and with whatever we are grappling, he comes to us anew – bringing peace, love and hope and above all, the knowledge that we have not be abandoned.

Immanuel – God with us!

With much love and God bless this Christmas time,

Keith

Advent 2018.

This year, we are trying to do things slightly differently and to make the most of the season of Advent. Advent is, of course, a time for watching and waiting, a time for preparation and getting ready.

As a Circuit and as churches we will not be holding any business meetings during Advent. Instead, we will be encouraging one another to meet, pray, meditate and study. To make the most of this time, to try and help one another find space in the busyness and stillness amidst all the frenetic preparations that this season brings.

Our Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting agreed to write and compile a devotional booklet, based on the daily readings found within the current Methodist Prayer Handbook, "A world transformed"

Each day you will find within, the given Bible reading for you to follow in your Bible, a short reflection upon the passage and a prayer.

The **devotional is now on the Church and Circuit websites** and can be downloaded from there.

Paper copies will also be available in the churches ready for the beginning of December.

Please note that unfortunately when Keith was editing the contribution for **24th December** he accidentally missed off half the last sentence. The last sentence should read, "That is a wonderful thought to hold close as we approach Christmas Day."

CribFest

All Saints Methodist Church, Appleford Drive, Abingdon.

December 14th – 17th

All Saints plan to hold the CribFest over the weekend of December 14th-17th and it should be a scintillating display of Nativity Scenes from all over the world. Local schools have been invited on Friday 14th and Monday 17th. The CribFest will be open to everyone to see and enjoy on **Saturday 15th December** from 10:00 am. to 4:00 pm. There will be refreshments including mince pies. No charge.

On Sunday evening **16th December**, there will be a traditional Carol Service round the illuminated cribs at 6:00 pm.

If anyone has a nativity set that they would like to lend please get in touch with rhcoward@gmail.com . We will make sure that you have them back for Christmas.

Visit of Rev Gareth Powell, Secretary of the Methodist Conference

At our last Circuit Meeting in September, it was decided that we should hold an additional Circuit Meeting every year. Not, I hasten to add one that was for or about business, but rather an inspirational evening, where we invite someone to come along to speak to us.

We are delighted to be able to inform you that Rev Gareth Powell, the Secretary of the Methodist Conference, has readily agreed to come and be the inaugural speaker at our first additional and inspirational Circuit Meeting.

Gareth will be coming to inspire, challenge and encourage us as a Circuit, Churches and individuals as he helps us to look again and re-examine "Our Calling" and what it means and represents in the life of the Methodist Church today.

This meeting will be held at Wantage Methodist Church on **Wednesday 9th January** 2019 at 7:30 pm. This is an **open meeting** and not just for Circuit Meeting members, everyone is very welcome. So do come along to hear Gareth and here's to a great evening!

Talking as Christians to People who use Church Premises

Rev. Jill Marsh, District Mission Enabler, is offering an evening session to churches in our Circuit to enable us 'to find ways of developing intentional faith interaction with people who use church community centres'.

Everyone is invited to this session.

It will take place on:

Thursday, 28th February, 2019

7.30 – 9.30p.m.

at Trinity Church, Conduit Road, Abingdon OX14 1DB

Additional parking at Carswell Primary School, Conduit Road

If you plan to come along, it would be helpful if you could let me know, or know likely numbers from your church, in advance.

Many thanks. Malcolm Newton em.newton@waitrose.com

Food Hygiene Training

The Circuit is organising a refresher course and anyone engaged in catering is welcome to attend. If you are involved in church catering, and have had a food hygiene certificate from more than three years ago, you perhaps need to do a refresher course. This can be done online, or by attending a refresher course. Angela Rees will run the refresher course on **Saturday 26th January 2019** at Milton Methodist Church, starting 9:30 am, about 3.5 hours with a multiple choice test at the end. I've talked to Environmental Health about this as the certificates are issued by Angela herself- and they say that will be fine. We had a course run by Angela three years ago and were very pleased with it. She manages to make a fairly dull subject interesting!

The cost will be £22 per head to include refreshments (we need about 20 people). The circuit will pay half and usually your local church the other half. If you would like to attend this course please contact Mary Hancock imhancock@gmail.com to book a place.

Sunday, 27th January - Holocaust Memorial Day

This international day remembers the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, the millions killed under Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Wantage Chapel will be open between 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm for a period for quiet reflection and as the day falls on a Sunday, the Holocaust will be the theme for the morning's service which will be led by Deacon Selina Nisbett.

St. Mary's Childrey and Childrey Methodist Church Our journey – serving together.

As part of looking to the future Childrey Methodist Church and St. Mary's the Virgin are committing themselves to continuing their journey of co-operation and working together more closely.

A special service was held on Sunday 18th November in the Parish Church to celebrate that fact and to formally recognise these hopes and dreams.

During the service, we committed ourselves to each other and affirmed our way forward by saying these words together;

We, Childrey Methodist Church and St. Mary the Virgin, continue to commit ourselves to:

Make visible the unity of God's people

Uphold one another in love and in prayer

Explore all possibilities of working together and supporting each other

Share in worship, mission and witness

in order that we can serve better our community and the world.

As followers of Christ, we seek to journey together looking to God's guidance, as by faith and in confidence, we share in this pilgrimage together."

Revd Helen Cameron, the Chair of our District was the preacher, and the Archdeacon of Dorchester, The Venerable Judy French presided at Holy Communion. Their presence was an important and symbolic reminder not just of what is happening locally but also of the national Anglican Methodist Covenant that exists between our two denominations.

With over 30 people present, with support from the Circuit and other churches, it was a great occasion and we look forward with a sense of expectancy as to what the future will hold.

Chaplains Libby & Sarah with “Hope”

The Great Western Park community chaplaincy initiative has been recognised by a significant article in the Methodist Recorder complete with a picture of Libby & Sarah with the motorhome which is the base for their work .

Opening on 4th December in Hinton Waldrist Village Hall

The Cedar Community Club (for the young at heart)

A new community club for the over 60s

Tuesdays & Wednesdays 9:30 — 3:00

The Club can cater for those with mild to moderate dementia providing respite for carers.

Cooked two-course meal
Seated exercise

Music, crafts & games
Or just come and chat!

For more information ring: 01865 820952
Or email : thecedarcommunityclub@gmail.com

A new Community Club for the elderly is opening in Hinton Waldrist next month to replace the Kingsmoor Club which closed last March. This club was regularly attended by the late Greta Broughton and was a great support to her in her later years especially after her husband Gerald died. Greta's sister, the late **Brenda Izzard** was also a member at times before she was unable to get to the club. The new club has been **named The Cedar Community Club in remembrance of her** as her bungalow where she lived all her married life was called Cedar Glen.

Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection

Saturday 8th December, 10 – 2:30 pm, Wreath Making and Advent Reflections. Please join us for our annual wreath making and advent reflections. Please bring along secateurs, apron and any other special decorations of your choice. Basic materials provided. Bring and share lunch. Cost £20. Book through the Centre.

Saturday 12th January 2019, 10 – 2 pm, Presenting Richard Rohr CD, “The Spiritual Family and the Natural Family”. We will listen to part 1 of the CD and then reflect and discuss. Refreshments available. Cost: Donation.

Friday 18th January 2019, 7:30 pm, “Almost Closing The Circle”. Professor Martin Parsons will give a talk about immigrant children in Europe. Refreshments available. Cost: Donation.

Saturday 16th February 2019 – Moonrakers In Concert will perform from the classical and folk tradition. Their love of contemporary and traditional tunes and songs creates varied textures. Their material is largely from Irish, Scottish, Welsh and English composers. Tickets: £12 through the Centre or on the door.

Saturday 9th March, 10 – 4 pm, Rev Keith Green and others will lead us into Spring for reflections and quiet time. Cost: £15 including light lunch. Please book through the Centre or Keith, rkeith1037@gmail.com.

The **Circuit Calendar** can now be viewed at
<https://www.wantab.org.uk/calendar.html>.

The website and Circuit Exchange exist to link all parts of our Circuit together – let us know what’s happening at your church. Send items for inclusion on the website at any time.

Circuit Website - www.wantab.org.uk

Please remember we are always looking for up-to-date stories, even of relatively small-scale events, to ensure the site gives a fresh and up-to-date impression. Anyone can send a paragraph, long or short, ideally with a photo (from your phone?). Don't worry about your prowess as an author – an editorial eye can be cast over your work if you wish.



Christmas Tree Festival

at

Wantage Methodist Church

Raising funds for 'Little People'

A local support group for children and families in need

7th December 6-9pm - Dickensian Evening
+ refreshments and stalls

6.30pm - Caritas Children's Choir will be singing

**8th December 10am-12 noon - Coffee
Morning**

9th December 10.30am - Morning Worship

**We hope Christmas and the New Year
will bring you many blessings.**





Childrey Methodist Church



Christmas Coffee



Morning & Sale



Saturday 8th December

10.30am - 12.30 (ish)



**Stalls: Cakes, Toys & General Goods, Books,
Festive Games, Jewellery, Cornerstone Cafe,
Hamper Raffle and more!**



Plus Hot & Cold Drinks, Cakes & Mince Pies

Most stalls in aid of: 'Action for Children'

Everyone's welcome! :-)



**Donations to stalls welcomed:
See Doug Legge or leave at venue**



Christmas Services

Abingdon Trinity

December 2 nd	10:30	Gift Service
December 16 th	18:00	Carol Service
December 24 th	16:30	Children's Torchlight
	23:30	Communion
December 25 th	10:00	Christmas Morning

Abingdon All Saints

December 16 th	18:30	Carol Service
December 25 th	10:00	Christmas Morning

Abingdon Peachcroft

December 24 th	15:00 & 17:00	Christingle
December 25 th	10 :00	Christmas Morning

Didcot

December 23 rd	16:00	Carol Service
December 24 th	23:15	Communion
December 25 th	10 :00	Christmas Morning

Wallingford

December 9 th	10:30	Nativity
December 16 th	18:00	Carol Service
December 23 rd	16:00	Carol Praise
December 25 th	10:00	Christmas Morning

Milton

December 16 th	10:30	Nativity
December 24 th	19:00	at St Blais
December 25 th	11:00	Christmas Morning

Christmas Services

Wantage

December 16 th	10:30	kids@church Christmas Service
December 23 rd	18:00	Carol Service
December 24 th	23:30	Communion
December 25 th	09:30	Christmas Morning

Grove

December 23 rd	18:30	Carol Service
December 24 th	20:00	Communion
December 25 th	10:45	Christmas Morning

Childrey

December 9 th	16:00	Christingles at St Mary's
December 23 rd	15:00	Carol Service

Watchnight Service

December 31 st	23:30	Wallingford
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Covenant Services

January 6 th	Abingdon All Saints : Didcot : Wantage :	All at 10:30
January 13 th	Wallingford at 10:30	Grove at 10:45
January 20 th	Abingdon Trinity : Milton	at 10:30
January 27 th	Childrey at 11:30	