

LEICESTER TRINITY CIRCUIT

The Beacon

Winter 2018

Superintendent's letter



To my fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Greetings.

In the last issue of the Beacon, I shared with you some of the things that we envisage achieving as a circuit in the coming months and that with prayer, listening to one another and to God, we will make some moves forward in

faith.

I'm therefore pleased to update you on how we have been working together to achieve the goals we set for ourselves. Those who have followed the work that has been happening within the life of our churches will hopefully agree with me that we have made some significant progress in working together as the New Leicester Trinity Circuit. During the Circuit Leadership Team Vision Day, we prayed together and looked to map a way forward for us as a circuit. While the efforts made look appealing on paper the true challenge is to see these goals being owned by the people, for the people. This achievement will be something to thank God for.

From that meeting priorities came out that have implications in the short as well as the long term. We have continued with our weekly staff meetings which have proved to be positive in providing support for the ministerial team. This is crucial in that we share each other's joy and the challenges that we face in our work on a weekly basis. It is where prayer and counsel become important. As a way of continuing the support for ministers and individual churches and in line with our church policy we have seen Ministers attending church Councils in twos and threes. This may appear unfamiliar to some of our folk but the benefits of this arrangement are amazing. I'm hoping that this interaction will continue into the future as we are a "Connexional Church." As I go around our churches in the circuit I have heard so many amazing stories of new mission-focused initiatives by our church groups, too many to mention. I

would encourage all of us to celebrate those good things that God, through his faithful people, is doing in the life of our churches. Where there are challenges to find resources, we should as family be able to pray for and share the burden with one another.

In September we will as a Circuit welcome two Presbyters, the Revd Derek McLean and Rev. Jervis Daniel Jovan and their families. We will also be bidding farewell to Rev David and Jane Warnock are beloved brother and sister in Christ, as they move to their new appointment. I hope most of us in the Leicester Trinity Circuit join together in paying tribute to David for his caring, practical, welcoming ministry among those in what was then Leicester North Circuit and now in the Leicester Trinity Circuit. As a colleague I will miss his awareness of the church, the world and exceptional knowledge of the interpretation of the Methodist Church policies. We wish David, Jane and family all the best in their future ministry. We will miss him but one of the strengths of Methodism is the opportunity to share different experiences around the connexion and beyond. I hope we will all join together in the planned special services of thanksgiving.

As for me, my family is settling in well in the new surroundings. We have found that Leicester is an interesting city with its rich history, diverse communities, multicultural and generally lovely people. Sammie, my wife has taken a new post with the NHS here in Leicester which means that she will not be commuting miles to the West Midlands for work. Our second daughter Nozipho has begun her first year at the University of Leicester studying English. We are also blessed to have a new arrival in our family, our granddaughter Isabella. For all the blessings, we are thankful to God and for Leicester Trinity Circuit for having us as partners in ministry.

As we celebrate all the good things that have been achieved to this day, we also know that there is still substantial work to be done. Let us therefore continue to work together to seek God's guidance and pray without ceasing in continuing our call to share the gospel of love to those that we meet, in all the different opportunities available to us for mission. As a Circuit Leadership Team we will welcome some positive feedback from all our members about the areas we have done well in and those that we can improve upon.

May the peace of the Lord which passes all understanding keep you and guide you as you continue His work.

Yours in His Service

Revd Edson

When; Where; What.

Sat	Feb 10th	12 noon	Sth Wigston	Pancake Lunch. £4. 50
Fri	Feb 23rd	2 pm	Bishop St	MWiB AGM
Sat	March 17th	12 noon	Sth Wigston	Pudding Lunch £4.50
Sat	March 17th	7.30 pm	Syston	Global Harmony Concert
Wed	March 21st	7 pm	Aigburth	AGM
Sat	April 7th	evening	Christchurch	One Sound Concert
Sun	April 8th	10 am	Christchurch	One Sound Concert
Stop	Press			
Sun	Feb 18th	10.15	Edgehill Rd	Baptism of the great grandchild of one of our mem- bers

Regular Prayer meetings



Day	When	Time	Venue	
Sun	2nd of month	6 pm	Bishop St.	Inspiration eve...
Sun	3rd of month	8.45 am	Sth Wigston	Bible Breakfast
Tues	4th of month	1.45pm	Syston	Julian Prayers
Tues	Monthly	1.30pm	Wesley Hall	Church Bible Study
Wed	Weekly		Blaby	House group Bible Study
Wed	1st of month	11am	Wig, Mag.	Church Service
Wed	2nd of month	10.30am	Mayflower	Devotional room Healing service
Thurs	Monthly	7.30pm	118 London Rd. Oadby	Julian prayers 2718948
Thurs	Weekly	10am	Christchurch	Prayers
Sat	Weekly	10.15am	Oadby	Meeting room Prayers

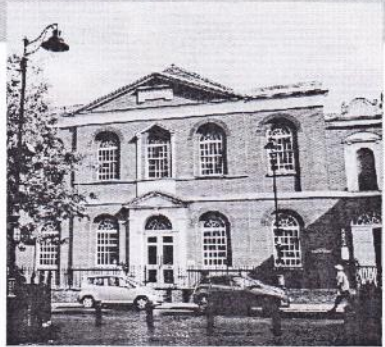
BISHOP STREET METHODIST CHURCH

10A Bishop Street, Town Hall Square, Leicester, LE1 6AF
www.bishopstreetchurch.org.uk 0116 255 4111

Spring 2018

TALKS IN THE CHAPEL:

Thursdays, 6.15-7.15



25th January '**Ladies sing the Blues**'

a talk by Leicester Jazz man Rob Charles.

22nd February '**Slavery and human trafficking in 21st century**' by Gill Spatcher of the Medaille Trust. This is a charity which supports women, men and children freed from trafficking.

22nd March '**Temperance Hall, Leicester**' a talk by Neil Crutchley on drink, temperance, and tee-totalism in the nineteenth century.

Free admission to these events.
There will be retiring collections in aid of the Church Benevolence Fund

Inspiration Evenings

These are held at Bishop Street Methodist Church for everyone who loves singing, thoughtful conversation and bible-based challenge. From 6pm we gather in the café for some simple food, maybe some homemade soup, rolls and good cheese. From 6.30-7.30pm local preacher, Leon Dundas and Revd Fran Rhys weave the worship between singing, prayer and bible reflection. If you've got an instrument, bring it along to add to the mix of musical talent! The evening ends at 7.30, knowing many, including children, need rest for the coming week! Inspiration Evenings are the second Sunday of the month and future evenings are: Feb 11, March 11, April 8.

Fran Rhys.

Listening service at Bishop Street Methodist Church

You may have seen some information about this recently, in your church notices. I saw a request there for volunteers and I wanted to learn more about it. After a chat with Audrey Baker, who is a counsellor and who was running the training, I decided to go ahead.

The service started before Christmas and someone is available between 11 AM and 12:30 PM on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, for anyone who wants to talk about their problems or concerns.

There is an obvious need for this, and as word spreads we will need more listeners.

If you want to know more about volunteering for this, or need a listening ear, speak to Fran Rhys at Bishop Street Methodist Church or me, Stephanie Houlden at Bir-stall Methodist church, or drop into Bishop Street cafe between 11 AM and 12:30 PM on Tuesday, or Wednesday

Stephanie Houlden stephaniehoulden@icloud.com

Safe Space Counselling service

The Safe Space counselling sessions take place at both Syston and Birstall Methodist Churches. The sessions are one to one. There is always another person nearby to pray for counsellor and client and to ensure safety and safeguarding issues.

Appointments are available Monday to Friday.

Our counselling service is working well, and this is just a note to remind everyone that this service we offer, is for **everyone** - **church members and those in the community**.

We have four working counsellors, and they are doing great work - helping people to find ways to resolve their difficulties, and 'loving them better' in our Lord's name. Our clients do not need to have a faith - we will welcome and help them anyway. **Prayer partners are always welcome.**

Contact Audrey - 07938779477 for any information and leave a message.

Adult careers advice service at Syston Hub

The Syston Hub based adult careers service, which started up in late September, has resumed on January 8th with a switch of days from alternate Tuesdays to alternate Mondays which is a much quieter day at The Hub. The service operates between 10.00 and 12.15 with two guidance sessions on offer at 10.00 and 10.45 respectively followed by drop-in time between 11.30 and 12.15 or 12.30 if very busy. This non-profit service is available both to unemployed interviewees and also to part-time workers (under 25 hours per week) who are asked to contribute £2 and between £4 and £6 (according to hours and wage) respectively half of which goes to The Hub funds and the remainder to the careers adviser to cover travel expenses and any photocopying or stationery required.

Contact with this service may be made preferably by dropping in to book guidance appointments or to use the drop-in service, or by messaging via Face-

book@Syston Hub Cafe -- phoning staff at The Hub on 07577513949 is an option but if they are busy they may not be able to answer.

All adults aged 18 and upwards are very welcome for guidance, information & advice or just a chance to improve their CV, interview skills and get some support and encouragement in their search for work or training. Please note that there will be no careers service on the scheduled date of Monday, March 5th but it will resume on Monday, March 12th

Robin Perry Syston Hub Careers Service

Spiritual Accompaniment -

A companion for the journey.

We are all on our individual journeys. Not just our physical journeys but also our spiritual journeys, our lives with God. Do you feel that this is the time to renew or refresh your spiritual life?

I have received training so that I am able to offer Spiritual Accompaniment to anyone who would like to explore their spiritual life, with a companion. What is Spiritual Accompaniment? This is an opportunity for a one to one, confidential relationship, with meetings of about 1 hour every 2 to 3 months, at a mutually convenient place.

What we talk about is up to you. It may be exploring your self-image and your relationship with God, encouraging your prayer life or exploring silence. Or it may be how we live our Christian faith in a secular world or within the Church Family. I do not claim to be an expert, but whatever you choose to bring I will be ready to listen, respond and share experience, as a companion on your journey. I ask for a small donation to help with my expenses eg. travel, training and supervision.

If you would like to take up this invitation or discuss it further please contact me at; **m.leftley@btinternet.com** or **0116 2608320**.



Wesley House, Cambridge Easter School 2018

Monday 26 to Wednesday 28 March

Power, Politics & the Passion: Good News in an Age of Fake News?

An opportunity for those who preach or lead worship to join leading thinkers and academics in Cambridge and spend time reflecting, learning and developing their skills.

- ◆ In-depth teaching, including seminar time with keynote speakers
- ◆ Practically-focussed workshops, including Revd Dr Mike Long, from Notting Hill Methodist Church, on 'Praying at the foot of Grenfell Tower'
- ◆ Daily prayers
- ◆ Free time to explore Cambridge

Residential: £495

Non-residential: £295

Revd Dr Sam Wells

Vicar of St-Martin-in-the-Fields and visiting Professor of Christian Ethics at King's College London.

*Power and Passion:
The Resurrection of
Politics*



Dr Elaine Storkey

Writer and
broadcaster

*The Politics of
the Cross*



Professor R Simangaliso Kumalo

President of
Seth Mokitimi
Methodist Seminary,
Pietermaritzburg,
South Africa

*The Preacher as the
Resident Theologian
for the Local
Community*



For further information and registration visit
<https://easterschool2018.eventbrite.co.uk>

Labyrinths



For some years now, since I designed a simple bead labyrinth on retreat, I've had a fascination with them and walked them whenever and wherever I can. A few years ago I made a portable one from string and beads which has worked well but the string is now fraying and it would be very laborious to restring it. I would love to design another one that is fairly portable ie one that can be carried in one or two carrier bags and laid down and packed away relatively easily.

The picture is of a simple, three path labyrinth on a beach somewhere. It was posted on Facebook by a friend. I was intrigued to know how it was made. Apparently people met and brought old curtains, duvets, bed sheets etc along with copious rolls of various tapes and made lengths of fabric 'snakes', for want of a better word! These were then used to lay out a labyrinth on the beach with the addition of some nearby seaweed! It would work just as easily in a church hall or garden.

I would love to run a workshop in the circuit to achieve a similar result (minus the seaweed of course!) If you would like to help or have materials you could donate then please let me know via

01162366312 or jokay1947@gmail.com.

News from the Churches

Blaby:

Our Christmas Tree Festival takes place around the start of Advent each year, and this is a rather strange time to be writing about it. However, the Christmas *Beacon* is put together too early, so perhaps this is a chance for you all to think back to Advent, even if we are approaching or in Lent.



There are ‘posher’ Christmas tree festivals and ones that raise more money. However, we see ours as a community event, when we encourage local individuals or groups to enter trees or come along to view them. Trees can be pretty or witty or promote a group, or all three if they like. We don’t aim to make a lot of money and don’t charge for people to come in – although it is 50p if they want a list of trees and a chance to vote for their favourite. We still raise about £1000 each year, mainly from the refreshments and the stalls on the Saturday. The total was £1002 this year and, having paid for our roof (yes I know I said I wouldn’t mention it again!), all the proceeds went to charities: Parkinson’s UK, Diabetes UK and Blood Bikes.

Visitors include children and grandchildren of church members, families who come to Tiddlers or Messy Church, local people who just drop in, some of them each year. We were pleased to welcome a couple from Claremont Street this year. We also welcomed the Parkinson’s Choir who asked if they could come and sing for a while on Sunday afternoon. Among others, there were trees from the Parish Council, the yoga group that meets on Thursday evenings and, for the first time, the local scouts whose hut is just down the road. Their entry was ‘Knotting around the Christmas tree’, an idea that they thought of for themselves, with the decorations made from brightly coloured cord demonstrating a variety of knots.

The congregation of our shortened and earlier evening service was swelled by some from the parish church who stayed on and one of our *Messy Church* families. The latter came for the son, Zac, to collect his prize (the cake) for guessing the weight of the cake. So if you never win at this you know what to do – get a four-year-old to do it for you! **Chris Merrill**

Christchurch:

Exciting news....

**OneSound are returning to the
Leicester Trinity Circuit to
appear at Christchurch!**

Saturday 7th April - evening concert

Sunday 8th April at 10am - service at Christchurch

OneSound is one of the UK's leading Christian youth ensembles. Born out of the MAYC Orchestra and Singers, OneSound provides opportunities for talented young Christians from across the UK to come together, perform and lead inspiring worship.

NOT TO BE MISSED!!



Claremont Street:

**Christmas Day Service at Claremont Street
Methodist Church 2017**

The true meaning of the Nativity story really came to life for the people who attended the service at Claremont Methodist this year!



Audrey Baker who was preaching on Christmas day had decided to put on an Adult Nativity at Church; she had asked me to assist her with the 'dressing up!' I was more than happy to help!

The congregation were not told what was happening until Christmas day morning service, so Audrey and I were not sure how many people would volunteer to be the Nativity characters but we needn't have worried!

As Audrey commenced the service; Keith Baker (at certain intervals during the service) read excerpts on the Christmas story from the 'Book of Books' which is a modern translation of some bible stories.

As Audrey asked for the various characters to come forward, people were very happy to oblige and they stood very still as I 'dressed' each person in their particular outfit! It was super to see people of all ages come forward to take part in the service to form the tableau and they all looked a wonderful sight at the end of the service!

The Angel Gabriel was a 12 year old boy from Harrison Road who stood very still throughout the service; Mary (Beverley Sweetman) was very attentive to her 'baby Jesus' in the Manger; Joseph (Martin) stood looking down on Mary and the 3 Kings proudly processed around the church carrying their gifts for the Baby Jesus!

The service was a sheer delight and it really felt special to be a part of it; many of the congregation said afterwards how they had really felt the true meaning of Christmas and it brought the significance of the birth of Christ to life at Claremont.

A very big 'thankyou' must go to Audrey for organising this wonderful service and to Keith for his readings and beautiful singing during the service; it meant a great deal to all of us and this will be a service we will never forget. One lady at Claremont summed it up by telling me that: 'This was a truly inspirational service!'

Christine Daye

Great Glen

Happenings at The Church at the Cross, Great Glen



Christmas services in the refurbished chapel were very special. For some reason, the changes seem to have improved the acoustics so that the singing at the well-attended Carol Service on the evening of 17 December conducted by our minister, Rev Fran Rhys, was truly uplifting, especially with the descant on the last verse of 'O Come All Ye Faithful.' The chapel had been beautifully decorated and looked really splendid.

An even bigger crowd gathered for the Candlelit Communion on Christmas Eve at 8 pm. With just the wall lights and all the candles lit, the atmosphere was magical. Fortunately, the new Communion Table had arrived just in time to be on show; it was dedicated during the service and universally admired. We sang 'While Shepherds Watched' to a local tune. Thomas Jarman, who wrote the tune 'Lyngham' was a tailor in Clipston (just the other side of Market Harborough) and played the organ at the Baptist Chapel there early in the 19th Century. Judging by the volume achieved, the congregation very much enjoyed singing his rumbustious tune. After we had shared the bread and wine together in memory of the Saviour's love, we finished by making our way outside to sing 'Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning' to the village – even though it wasn't quite midnight!

On Christmas morning, again led by our minister, we celebrated the coming of Christ with a 'Christingle Birthday Party for Jesus.' Everybody enjoyed making Christingles to decorate their homes or enjoy pride of place on the Christmas Dinner table.

All in all a wonderful time of sharing the good tidings of comfort and joy:

Jesus is born! Alleluia!

On 7 January 2018, we were thrilled to have Rev'd Helen Cameron, Chair of the Northampton District to lead our Covenant Service. Helen was unable to join us for the Rededication Service in September, having only just taken up her appointment at that time, and so very kindly came on this occasion instead so she could see what has been achieved.

Thanks to Helen's inspired preaching and conduct of the service, a full congregation found the occasion both rewarding and fulfilling as we renewed our covenant together. After the service, Helen was good enough to pose for these shots in the refurbished chapel.

See pictures in the centre pages

Gordon Webb.

Harrison Road :

Carol round - Harrison Road Sri Lankan congregation visited some Sri Lankan families on 24th Dec 2017 to deliver the message of the birth of Christ.



They visited around 10 families with two Santas who gave sweets and Christmas hugs to the children.

The families received a blessed prayer and the word of God with a gospel message. It was a great celebration and a blessed day.

We will do a Carol round in 2018 too. We are happy to visit any home.

See pictures in the centre pages.

Herose Dunstan

Oadby & Churches Together in Oadby:

We had a good Advent, entertaining about sixty children with their parents and guardians at Zeph's café "Santa breakfasts" on 22nd and 23rd December. The children had breakfast then made Christmas themed crafts in our worship area. Afterwards they heard the Christmas story with the help of visual aids from our knitted Nativity set, and received gifts from Santa and his elves, including a colourful mini book of the Christmas story, as part of our outreach activities. We had very many positive comments and look forward to Easter when we can offer a similar event.



Our Christingle service was held in the café on Christmas Eve and Rev Dave Warnock joined the family friendly worship which was also a joyful time.

Zeph's café has joined the national "Chatty Café" scheme, which designates a table for anyone who would like to have a friendly chat. Other customers who feel the same can join them. We are part of a local mental health and well being group that aims to increase opportunities for people to be less socially isolated, and this is one of the ways we can contribute. Of course our regular social and fellowship groups, WOW and Thursday fellowship, are already helping!

Churches Together Messy Church will be offering Palm Sunday worship with a real live donkey on 25th March. All being well the donkey and processing families will start at St Peter's and progress up to Trinity where they will receive a warm welcome, family friendly worship, crafts and tea. (The donkey gets to graze on our lawn).

Lesley Green

South Wigston:

Stir Up Sunday at South Wigston

Children and adults at South Wigston made Christmas puddings in a service which celebrated stir-up Sunday, the last Sunday before Advent. The name evolved from a traditional collect for that Sunday which calls on God to “stir up the wills of your faithful people that they, richly bearing the fruit of good works, may by



you be richly rewarded”. The analogy between stirring up good works and literally stirring up the fruits of the earth has been hard to resist ever since!

Three tables of adults and children, each put together a Christmas pudding, as they discussed ways the church could "stir up one another to love and good works" (Hebrews 10.24 ESV).

The Christmas puddings will be dessert at the church's Christmas meal, held in January. This delay helps avoid over indulging in December festivities and is something to anticipate helping tackle ‘winter blues’. The local worship team at South Wigston uses a café church model of tables, chairs and informality every fourth Sunday of the month.

See pictures in centre pages.

Diane Allen

Could you please pray for South Wigston Church as they start a new venture - **Bible Breakfast** - - Bible study over breakfast.

This will be on the 3rd Sunday of each month starting at 8.45 am. Everyone welcome.

Janice Garratt

Global Harmony's

www.globalharmony.org.uk

Spring Sing



Saturday 17th March
at Syston Methodist Church

High Street, Syston LE7 1GP **7.30pm**

Global Harmony is Melton's own world-music community choir. Presenting an evening of a capella songs from around the world, it promises to be a **vibrant experience, not to be missed!**

Tickets booked in advance **£7.50*** Under 16s free.

Syston Methodist Church call **0116 269 5130**

Global Harmony call **07890 633 997**

Refreshments included. There will also be a raffle!

*Tickets also available on the door **£8.**

Tickets also available from the **Hub Cafe** Syston

The Hub Cafe

Proceeds in aid of Syston Methodist Church Centre, working alongside others, for transformed lives & community in Syston.

The effervescent 'Global Harmony Choir' will be visiting Syston Methodist Church, for a one-off concert to help to raise money for Syston Methodist Church Centre.

Global Harmony is a mixed "a cappella" World Music Choir based in Melton Mowbray. www.globalharmony.org.uk

They are led by musical director Liz Underhill. It's a friendly and informal choir who have fun singing a wide range of unaccompanied songs from all over the world.

Jules Richards who has been part of the choir for 10 years says *"the experience of singing as part of an 'a cappella' community choir of 50+ people is something unique!"*.

If you might enjoy rhythms from Africa, stirring Eastern European harmonies, songs from the Southern Seas and the Americas, soulful gospel and blues as well as traditional folk and rock and pop - put this date in your diary and book some tickets!

Tickets can be booked in advance by calling Syston Methodist Church on 0116 269 5130 or Global Harmony on 07890 633 997.

They're also on sale from the HUB cafe in Syston.

£7.50 (Under 16s free). Tickets will also be available on the door at £8.

From the Editors.

Hello everyone and welcome to issue 2 of The Beacon. We hope you enjoy it.

There are quite a variety of articles from an inspiring letter from our superintendent Edson to a silly poem about Sat Navs. And in between there are many interesting pieces from around the circuit. There are some celebrations from Christmas and many things to look forward to. Two that stand out are Raise the Roof at South Wigston and the 'a cappella' choir called Global Harmony at Syston.

We'll be after articles of all types for the next edition . We like to look to the future rather than looking back-- although that has its merits too. We'd love some news about how your church is working in the community around you. So send anything to us . We reserve the right to edit. Jo and Anne

jokay1947@googlemail.com terando@live.com

Birstall

We have now removed all the pews from the church, having managed to find homes for them in other organisations, and replaced them with our lovely new chairs. This means our Walk in the Light project can now move on to the final phase, by creating a new pedestrian walkway through the car park, and having a lockable cycle storage rack outside.



For two Sunday evenings in January we will be holding informal worship in one of the smaller rooms. It is an opportunity to sit together in a cosy environment on cold winter evenings, to chat together, get to know people, and experience worship in a different way.

Birstall Methodist Church Christmas Festival was launched in 1999 with a display of decorated Christmas trees and a stall selling home-made cakes and preserves. Since then the Festival has gone from strength to strength encompassing many groups from the community – besides decorated trees we also have displays and models on a chosen theme. Stalls include Christmas gifts, hampers, and decorations – home-made cakes, preserves and crafts. Hot dogs, pancakes and fruit punch are served as well as light lunches and refreshments in the Coffee Shop. A truly village event. **See photos in centre pages**

The Christmas Festival was a great success this year, as we were able to remove all the chairs and use the whole of the main church for displays and stalls. This was as well as using the concert hall and other spaces for many other local groups. We managed to raise over £7,300, and also nearly £600 for the Defence National Rehabilitation Centre. We would like to give a huge thank you to all those who volunteered to help, make, bake, etc.

Churches Together in Birstall and Wanlip

On Saturday 20 January thirty nine people, mainly from the churches in Birstall and Wanlip, joined together to share a Frugal Lunch. This event was part of the

'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity'. We met at 12.30pm in Birstall Methodist Coffee Shop and after introductions and explanations about the idea of the lunch being frugal, we sat down together and enjoyed a bowl of soup, a bread roll and a glass of water. We had some prayer time and a very interesting talk by Rev. Paula Hunt about 'how to disagree well'. As 'door to door' collections have now ceased in Birstall and Wanlip, this event was an opportunity to raise funds for Christian Aid. It was an enjoyable afternoon of fellowship and £250 was raised for Christian Aid. A similar frugal lunch also took place at St Theresa's Church Social Area on Tuesday 23 January.

Pete Molesdale, Birstall Methodist Church

Rushey Mead Churches Together

Ken joins the children as they sing 'Jingle bells' as part of a Carol and Christmas song evening led by choir members and friends from Harrison Road M C together with members from Syston MC and friends from Churches Together in Belgrave and Rushey Mead. We thank Arti and Rocky Zain for inviting us again to sing at their pub, The Royal Leicester's in Rushey Mead. The mainly Asian clientele joined in with their usual enthusiasm.

See pictures in centre pages.

WANTED:

**A manse steward for Gartree Road
(currently the home of Rev. Edson Dube).**

The steward would share responsibility for the house with one of the circuit stewards, ensuring that it is kept up to CPD standards.

The circuit has a list of reliable specialists for most of the jobs so no specific DIY skills are needed.

Julie Manning (circuit steward) 0116 276 7916.

Articles that might interest you

Holidays and events:

“The Day the Steamer Comes”

We are all creatures of habit and this story from the other side of the world convinces me that it is a universal condition. Once while visiting family in Australia, we went off for a few days to explore the coast that lies between Adelaide and Mount Gambier, close to the border between South Australia and Victoria.

In a small township called Meningie, we booked into the motel and then went for a walk “along the front” which was in fact the shore of a large lake – so large that we couldn’t see the other side – formed at the mouth of the mighty Murray River. Nowadays the town is served by a dual carriageway, the Princes Highway, but not many decades ago the only supplies came from Adelaide on the weekly steamer.

While walking the waterfront path, we met a local lady cycling along, with her dog in the front basket of her bike. As we were obviously strangers, and being naturally friendly as most Australians are, she dismounted and we got into conversation. I remarked how much people seemed to get involved in local community voluntary work. This arose from seeing roadside signs telling us that the [named] family, or youth group, maintained the verge along a particular stretch of highway, or that a park was created and maintained by a local branch of the Lions or Rotary Club.

She agreed that voluntary work was widespread, especially amongst the recently retired. She herself had held several voluntary posts, one of which was to be the local librarian a few years back. The “library” at that time was only open once a week and consisted of a box of books! People would come into town to change their books on Thursdays, that being the day the steamer arrived and was therefore market day. Supplies of course, included fresh books.

Anyway, as times moved on, the road was built, families had different needs and weekend shopping became more popular. As book exchanges were declining, the lady thought that perhaps the best day to open the 'library' would be Friday. She consulted her friends in the local Women's organisations and got general approval. However, one of her friends had mentioned the proposed change to her husband and his response was, "*You can't do that, Thursday is the day the steamer comes!*" She had to remind him that the steamer had made its last weekly call at Meningie twenty years ago! The phrase "*You can't do that, that's the day the steamer comes*" has passed into the local vocabulary.

Ian and Barbara Bell

Keswick 2017

Every day we hear - or read thousands of words. When you have read this newsletter from cover to cover [as I am sure you all do!!], you will already have read a few thousand words. We hear the words spoken by loved family members in conversation, the words of politicians clamouring for our votes, and the words of TV newsreaders giving us accounts of world events. Many of these words will go in one ear and out the other. But what about God's Word?

Keswick Ministries has three priorities underpinning its work. These are: Hearing God's Word, Becoming like God's Son, and serving him in mission.

Keswick 2017 took as its theme "*Captivated - hearing God's Word*". Hearing and reading God's Word is just the start; it is not an endpoint in itself. In the parable of the sower, Jesus teaches the crowd around him about how people hear God's word and act upon it. Just as the farmer's seed requires fertile soil in which to grow and put down roots in order to yield a healthy crop; so the seed of God's word needs to fall into the "*fertile soil*" of open minds and hearts if it is to change lives.

It is as we listen to God's Word, that, by the power of his Holy Spirit, we are transformed into Christ's likeness [becoming like God's Son], and we are empowered and motivated to fulfil his mission in the world. [serving him in mission].

God's word changes lives! Through his word God inspires us, and rebukes us . He strengthens us for the work he wants us to do, and guides us along the path he wants us to take. As our loving Heavenly Father, he also comforts us in times of grief and hardship.

God's Word changes lives, but it is unchanging and consistent. His steadfast promises are the anchor for our lives when everything around us feels uncertain and insecure. Jesus tells us "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house upon a rock." [Matthew 7:24]. That rock is our Lord Jesus himself.

I spent two wonderful weeks this summer feasting upon God's Word at the Keswick Convention. Hearing God speak to me in the heart of his glorious creation - the Lake District - is an unmissable experience. I strongly recommend it!!



Heather Corlett

Book Reviews

Wilderness Taunts: Revealing your light

by Ian Adams (Canterbury Press)



This is a stark, searching book for when our faith feels weak, we are stressed and doubts are creeping in. Ian Adams created it during Lent, taking the temptations that Jesus faced as his starting point.

It is a series of meditations that imagines what taunts we might face now, as the author acknowledges that “to attempt to be a hopeful human being in the 21st century is a demanding thing”. Each meditation is accompanied by an arresting but often austere image, captioned by a verse of Psalm 88, and ending with a prayer, word or phrase.

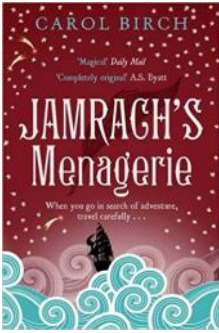
The meditations have uncomfortable headings such as “You have made your own God”, “Stop your dreaming” and “You don’t really believe all that, do you?”. They begin by developing each unpalatable theme, but then start to explore how, even in the darkness of such accusations, there is a hidden truth that can allow us to grow spiritually. Adams hopes that as a result of sitting with these meditations, we will be able to “step with imagination and generosity into whatever is being called of us”.

It isn’t an easy experience, but it’s one I can heartily recommend. It felt like a gift when I discovered it at Launde Abbey during a particularly difficult time. I’d be very loathe to part with my copy.

(Ian Adams is an artist, poet and priest and the author of “Cave, Refectory, Road” which I can also recommend.)

Lesley Green

Jamrach's Menagerie by Carol Birch (2011)



I belong to a book club in Birstall and this is the book we read over Christmas .

This book starts in 19th century London and the narrator is Jaffy, telling the story of his life and how his life changed after he was rescued from the jaws of a tiger by its owner.

Jaffy is given a job by Mr Jamrach , an importer of exotic birds and animals. When his friend is chosen to join an expedition on a whaling ship to catch “a dragon”, Jaffy signs up too and learns to be a sailor .

Having captured “the dragon”, and loaded with whale oil, the ship is caught in a storm and sinks

The book is very descriptive, well written and was nominated for several awards.

Mr Jamrach really existed and he did rescue a child from the jaws of his tiger. The events after the shipwreck are based on real events after The Essex sank .

I won't spoil it by telling you too much about the story, in case you decide to read it, but suffice it to say that I loved it and gave it top marks.

Stephanie Houlden

Plus 'The meaning of Baptism in the Methodist Church'

See page 32.

Poetry Corner

My love of poetry writing.

I have been writing poetry for about 15-20 years. I have written on all kinds of subjects; secular, sacred, serious and funny. I would say that my writing style is reflective. I joined a poetry writing group on an adult education course some years ago and found a love for the rhythm and flow of the words. Some of my work has been published in anthologies and I have a poem on a plaque in Victoria Park after winning a competition to write about the parks of Leicester in the local press some years ago. I hope you enjoy the poem I have written and I hope to write more in the future.

Seasons of the Spirit

It matters not when winter spirit flounders
to shadowed dusk, and landscapes coldly stares.
The Lord is nigh, to melt away the sorrows,
fear not, his love is near, he cares.

When newness of the springtime spirit opens
to bring new life and constantly re-new.
And chase away the winter of tomorrow
with budding buds, that give the awakening clue.

It leaps up forth, the summer visits venture
with brightest hope, and joyful summer haze.
To bring us times of goodness and of pleasure,
in oh so many many glorious way

Then Autumn falls, reciting winters entry
by dying leaves and trees without their charm,
but life again has drawn the line, the circle
back to our saviours all encompassing arms.



Beverly Sweetman Harrison Road Methodist Church.

Sat Navs

O Lord, I need a Sat Nav
I don't know where I *am*
Three times I've passed this junction
By following that white van.

Lord I do not need a Sat Nav
I'm quite happy with a map
If I don't know where I am
Then I'll ask a friendly chap.

Oh Lord, I'm on the slip road
A motorway's ahead
I don't know where I'm going
And the lights have turned to red.

I don't like Homer Simpson
Or some posh person's voice
I much prefer a road atlas
To help me make a choice.

I think I need a chauffeur
Lord, can you drive my car?
And I'll sit in the back seat
I know you'll get me there.

I know that you are with me
Wherever I may be
But I do not need a Sat Nav
To get from A to B.

Marion Moverly (Yorkshire)

Jo Kay (System)

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.
The eye is a better pupil, more willing than the ear;
Fine counsel is confusing, but example is always clear,
And the best of all the preachers are those who live their creeds,
For to see a good put in action is what everybody needs.

"I can soon learn how to do it if you will let me see it done;
I can watch your hand in action, but your tongue too fast may run.
And the lectures you deliver may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do.
For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give,
But there is no misunderstanding how you act and how you live."

-- **Edgar A. Guest**

**“A SNOWMAN’S LOT IS NOT A
HAPPY ONE — HAPPY ONE!”**

A Snowman came into our garden
He came in the dead of night
I had to take a photo
In case he disappeared from sight.
His nose was only a bit of stick
No orange carrot had he
And so he lacked that ‘joie de vivre’
T’was so very plain to see.
He was very still & didn’t move
Sitting in the middle of our lawn
Topped with a big black flower pot hat
He looked so very forlorn.
His little black eyes just stared at me
He had arms that didn’t match
Then I realized why he looked so sad
He’d soon be a slushy patch!



From Countesthorpe

You are invited to Raise a Roof!



for the Avoca
Methodist Church,
Insiza Circuit, Methodist
Church Zimbabwe

14 April 2018, 4-7pm

Venue: South Wigston
Methodist Church, Blaby Road, South Wigston
(plenty of parking at nearby Tesco's!)

Scrumptious Zimbabwean and British buffet, music,
fellowship and joy-filled celebration to feed your soul

Learn more about this special mission-minded church.
Tickets: £10 adults, £5 children, available beforehand
(contact Diane Allen - 0116 257 1069)

or on the door

A joint fundraising evening between Leicester Trinity, Leicester
West circuits and the Zimbabwean Methodist Fellowship in
Leicester

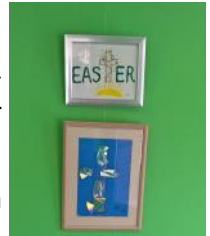
Leicester Trinity, Leicester West circuits, the Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship and the United Methodist Church Zimbabwe are joining hands to raise funds to help in the construction of a simple roof for the Avoca Methodist Church, Bulawayo District, Methodist Church Zimbabwe. This small church of 30 adults and 20 young people faithfully gathers each week in a borrowed school classroom or more often under an acacia tree in the village, for lack of a roof on the existing church building. And yet its commitment to God's mission has produced two ministerial sons, one of them the Revd Edson Dube, superintendent minister Leicester Trinity Circuit! Edson will speak that evening about Avoca Methodist Church, its context, and how the people have inspired and sustained him. He is joined by the Revd Cleopas Sibanda, national chaplain to the Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship in Britain. Saturday, 14 April, 4-7pm, venue: South Wigston Methodist Church, Blaby Road, South Wigston. Plenty of parking at nearby Tesco's. £10 adults, £5 children, tickets available beforehand or on the door.

Easter Sunday; 1st April 2018.

Easter is the most important celebration in the Christian calendar. Jesus died for our sakes and rose again on Easter Sunday fulfilling his promise of eternal life.

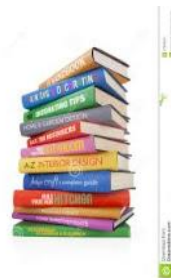
We need to prepare ourselves for this exceptional gift given to us by God.

Please check your own notices for **Lent Group** sessions, and **Holy Week** services either in your own churches or ecumenical.



All This for You

The meaning of Baptism in the Methodist Church



This recently published booklet explores the Methodist understanding of Baptism. Using vivid images and thoughtful text, it opens up the depths of meaning and significance contained in the signs and symbols of the Baptism service. The title of this excellent publication is drawn from the prayer which is said at the moment when an infant is baptised: *“For you Jesus Christ came into the world; for you he lived and showed God’s love; for you he suffered death on the Cross... for you he prays at God’s right hand: all this for you, before you could know anything of it.”* This is a book which would make an ideal gift for all who want to understand more about the meaning of Baptism:

- Parents of babies or small children who are considering bringing them to be baptized
- Godparents who are supporting those parents
- Young people and adults who have not yet been baptised but are considering it for themselves.

Equally this is a book which can stimulate discussion and reflection in a house-group or among any group of baptised members of the Church who want to reflect on what Baptism means. Two other books dealing with related topics are available in similar format:

- *Share the Feast – reflecting on Holy Communion*
- *Called by Name – being a member in the Methodist Church.*

For further information visit www.mph.org.uk

Howard Smith