



The Methodist Church
Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit
Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 39

December 2021

Superintendent Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

Advent 2021

November 28th will be Advent Sunday, and the start of the four weeks of Advent, which run up to Christmas.

Have you ever wondered what the word 'Advent' means? It comes from the Latin 'Adventus' and means literally 'imminent arrival'. All around us at this time of the year, there are many signs of the imminent arrival of Christmas. Many of our main streets are decorated with colourful flashing lights, some tasteful others rather garish! There are Christmas trees going up in schools, homes and offices. At home we will soon be writing out endless Christmas cards, preparing food in the kitchen and doing our Christmas shopping in those ever-busy high streets stores or maybe on line.

I know that for many of you, the very thought of these tasks can seem rather daunting, and Advent can be less of a period of joyful tidings than a season of mounting stress! I would like to suggest to you all however, that this year our preparations should be less about shopping and more about prayerful reflection as we wait in anticipation for the arrival of Jesus Christ, the babe in the manger whose arrival in our world we will celebrate on Christmas Day.

Advent should be the time of the year when we not only prepare our homes and kitchens but also prepare our hearts and minds for the arrival of Christ. This year, our circuit ministers are going to run an Advent Bible study course (by Zoom) on Wednesday evenings throughout December that will help us all with these preparations. The title of the study is 'Hearing the Advent story'. We are going to be studying the nativity stories in Luke and Matthew which challenge us to hear the biblical story afresh. We will hear again the stories of the Angels, the Prophets, the Shepherds and the Magi. As we study these passages afresh, I pray that many of you will join us, and that faith will be rekindled and refreshed.

May this Advent be a period of particularly fruitful devotion for us as a circuit as we recover from the devastating impact which the Covid Pandemic has had on all our lives in general and our churches in particular. May we look towards Christmas and beyond with a sense of hope and anticipation born out of a genuine

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desire to share with our world the light of Jesus Christ that is even now coming to our world.

Silent night, holy night:
sleeps the world; hid from sight,
Mary and Joseph in stable bare
watch o'er the child beloved and fair
sleeping in heavenly rest.

Silent night, holy night:
shepherds first saw the light,
heard resounding clear and long,
far and near, the angel song:
'Christ the Redeemer is hear'! (STF 217)

May the good Lord go with you all this Advent season and for evermore,

Revd Richard A.J. Grocott

Hearing the Advent Story

Circuit Advent Course 2021 on ZOOM

Wednesdays, from 1st to 22nd December, from 7.30pm

The four-week course will be led by our circuit ministers as detailed below:

Week 1: 1st December Led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom

Luke 1:1-38 'Hear the angelic messengers of God'

Zechariah and Elizabeth

Mary and Joseph

Appearance of Angels promising childbirth

Week 2: 8th December Led by Rev. Charles ILunga

Luke 1:39-80 'Hearing prophetic voices'

Mary and Elizabeth share their good news.

Zechariah's prophetic song.

Week 3: 15th December Led by Rev. Craig Gaffney

Luke 2:1-24 'Hearing the voices of the poor and the oppressed'

The birth of Jesus

The visit of the Shepherds.

Week 4: 22nd December Led by Rev. Richard Grocott

Matthew 2:1-12 'Hearing the voices of outsiders'

The visit of the Magi

Herod's threat and the flight to Egypt.

Zoom Link: Advent Course 2021, 7.30-9pm:

<https://zoom.us/j/92124603174?pwd=bkNhOVBMZHZXR1JsNnJhYjFUVUdpUT09>

Meeting ID: 921 2460 3174 Passcode: 760254

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Advent Prayer

Prayer of approach, longing and confession for the Advent season.

God, with us,
As we enter this season of longing and waiting,
bear with us a little longer;
Be patient with our impatience.

You have journeyed alongside us from the beginning of time,
Yet still we miss the signs of your presence.

When we are blinded by the brashness of this season:
Open our eyes to the glimpses of your glory.

When we want simple answers:
Open our minds to the hints of incarnation.

When we are deafened by our own shouting:
Open our ears to the whispers of your grace.

May we share with you in longing for restoration and renewal
and may we be watchful for the light that breaks through
the darkness of our world.
In Christ's name.

Amen

God says 'Be patient, watch and wait,
for the time is close at hand.'
Know that you are loved, forgiven and healed.

Amen.

Thanks be to God.

The Revd Michaela Youngson,
29 November 2018



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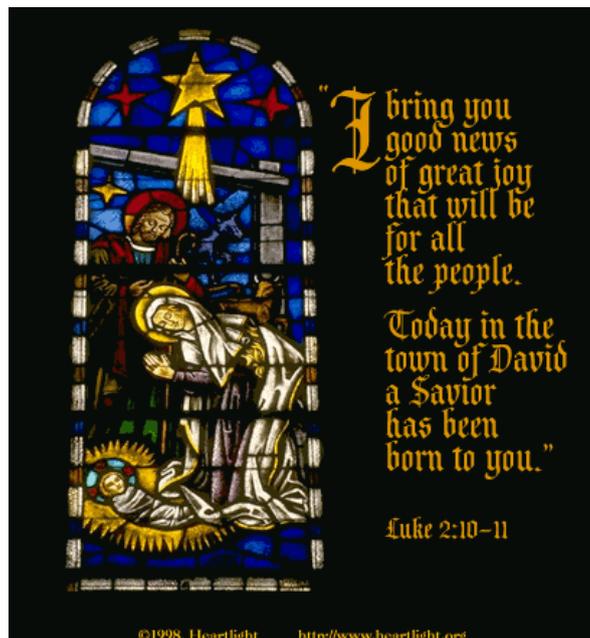
Advent and Christmas 2021

Great joy for all the people

But the angel said to them,

“Do not be afraid; for see –
I am bringing you good news
of great joy for all the people...”

Luke 2:10 (NRSV)



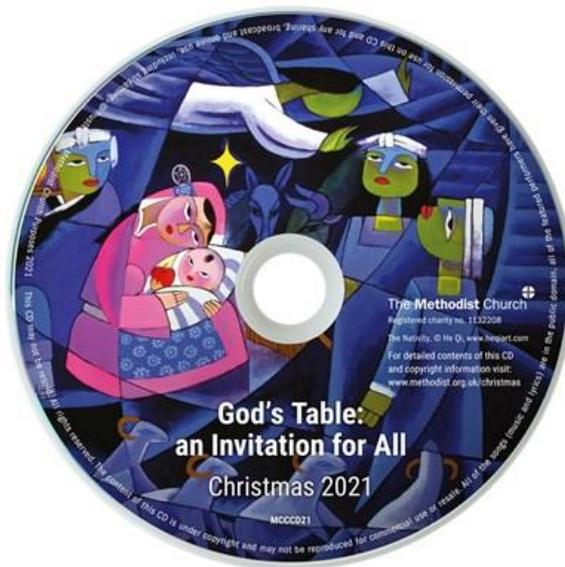
During the past two years’ lockdowns, communities have become further disconnected and dispersed. People are tired and many are living in more difficult circumstances due to the ongoing pandemic. Internationally, many people live in danger; from threats of war to wildfires. But the message of Jesus’ birth at Christmas continues to be one of hope in our troubled times. God’s love is stronger than our fears. And as we aim to be an increasingly inclusive, evangelistic and justice-seeking Church, this is, importantly, a joyful message “for all the people”.

Recognising everyone’s fatigue and the Covid-19-related uncertainty that surrounds the approach of Christmas, this year the Methodist Church is encouraging congregations to simply reach out to their communities with the angel’s message – to near neighbours and to people living on the margins. To reconnect, and assure everyone that the Methodist Church is praying for them and cares about their community and concerns.

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God's Table: An Invitation to All - Christmas CD

FREE CD of seasonal music and conversation for you to share, all copyright cleared (P&P charges apply). Available to order from www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/features/christmas-2021



PLEASE NOTE: The content of this CD is under copyright and may not be reproduced for commercial use or resale. All of the songs (music and lyrics) are in the public domain, all of the featured performers have given their permission for use on this CD and for any sharing, broadcast and online use, including streaming. © Trustees for Methodist Church purposes 2021. This CD may not be resold. All rights reserved.

Beneath the paper wrappings (StF 192) Words and music © Hole Music, sung by Rachel Williamson, accompanied by Shyrleen Pottinger (Scalloway Methodist Church, Shetland).

O little town of Bethlehem (StF 213) Words © Phillips Brooks; music – traditional English melody. Sung by the choir of Morpeth Methodist Church and St George's URC, directed by Gillian Irvine.

Into the darkness (StF 173) Words © Thankyou Music, administered by tym@kingsway.co.uk

How hard was that journey (StF+) Words and music © Paul Thompson. Performed by Matt Beckingham (www.youtube.com/c/MattBeckingham).

Hark! The herald-angels sing (StF 202) Words © Charles Wesley; music by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Sung by 'Sedecim', a chamber choir made up of pupils from Kent College, the independent Methodist school in Canterbury.

Love came down at Christmas (StF 210) Words © Christina Georgina Rossetti; music by Reginald Owen Morris. Performed by Caleb Dinger (www.calebdingermusic.com/home).

Circuit Website: bhcpmethodist.org.uk

Deadline for information for next newsletter: **25th February 2022**

Please email details to: office.bcpc@btinternet.com

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**'The light shines still, even now, in the darkness
but the darkness has not overcome it' (John 1:5)**

Please join us for a contemplative 'service with carols' to grieve our losses while holding on to the reality that Jesus is the Light and Saviour of the world. Followed by 'mince pies & 'non-alcoholic' mulled wine!

Sunday, 19th December 2021 @ 6.30pm
Upper Norwood Methodist Church: Westow Hill, SE19 1TQ

For more information, contact the Minister on 020 8653 4902 or visit our website at www.unm.church

Covenant Services around the Circuit

9th January 2022

10.30am at Burnt Ash led by Rev. Paul Hulme and Rev. Craig Gaffney

11am at Upper Norwood led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom

11am at Wesley Hall led by Rev. Charles Ilunga

16th January 2022

10.30am at Hither Green led by Rev. Paul Hulme and Rev. Craig Gaffney

10.30am at Lewisham led by Rev. Richard Grocott

11am at Anerley led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom

Safeguarding in the Methodist Church

The Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit is working hard to provide Safeguarding training (Foundation and Refresher) for all those within our community who are either obliged to, or wish to, receive Safeguarding training. However, please be patient, with a limited number of trainers, and a significant number of people desiring training, it may be a while before you are invited to attend a training session. Please talk to your church Safeguarding office who will be able to tell you more about the training, and whether you are on the list of those to be invited to attend when a session becomes available in your church. Alternatively, you can email the Circuit Administrator who can advise your current Safeguarding status: office.bcpc@btinternet.com

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The London District of the Methodist Church also offers an **Advanced Safeguarding** course. If you hold the following posts, you are *obliged* to take this qualification:

- Church Safeguarding Officer
- Local Preacher
- Worship Leader
- Those in voluntary roles that include leadership within the Methodist Church, which involves direct work with children, youth or vulnerable adults (ie Junior Church Leaders, Leaders of fellowship groups/class leaders involving vulnerable adults etc etc)

Many members across the Circuit have already taken this qualification, but we are anxious that *everyone* in the above categories is aware not only of the need to attend training, but how they may do so. Details of training sessions are listed below. You must hold the Foundation level before registering for the Advanced Training Session. Please note, training at Advanced level is open to anyone who feels they would benefit, even if they do not specifically work in the areas listed above.

Creating Safer Space Safeguarding Training **Advanced Module 2019 Edition: Available on-line, or in person**

On-Line Training Sessions (see details below)

Date	Time
Tuesday 7 th December	7pm-9pm
Saturday 29 January	10am-12noon
Thursday 3 rd February	7pm-9pm
Saturday 12 th February	10am-12noon
Wednesday 9 th March	7pm-9pm
Wednesday 13 th April	7pm-9pm
Saturday 7 th May	10am-12noon
Tuesday 17 th May	7pm-9pm

Face-to-Face Training Sessions (for venue, see website below)

Date	Time
Saturday 15 th January	10am-3.30pm
Saturday 26 th March	10am-3.30pm

‘Train the Trainer’ (on-line)

(For anyone interesting in becoming a trainer for the Foundation Module. Please first register your interest with Rev. Richard Grocott or Mrs Saira Bohan-Croft; thank you)

Date	Time
Saturday 26 th March	11am-4pm

To register for *any* of these training sessions, go to:

<https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/safeguarding/training-and-event-registration>

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On-line Advanced Safeguarding Training: How it works:

The course is split into three parts:

- **Advanced Module (online) e-learning** - this takes between 4 and 7 hours, depending on your learning style, to complete. It can be completed in smaller sections over approximately 3 weeks. (The accompanying Workbook is for your personal use and is not assessed)
- **Handbook** – to support learning during Advanced Module (online) and for further study and resources.
- **Advanced Module (online) Gathered Session** – a 2-hour group session via Zoom to consolidate learning from the e-learning.

N.B. the e-learning MUST be completed before attending a Gathered Session

The training aims to:

- consolidate and develop your previous safeguarding learning
- explore what this means in your designated role of responsibility within the Church
- further equip you with skills and resources to be confident in promoting good practice in the Church and community
- extend your understanding of responding well to different groups within the Church community.

To book onto a course you need to:

1. Select a suitable date on which to attend a Gathered Session. This session must be booked at least **4 weeks** in advance.
2. Book onto a course via
<https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/safeguarding/training-and-event-registration>

Please note that you will need to use some form of computer and have reliable Wi-Fi access throughout this training. You will also need to register for the course using the email address which you will use throughout the training programme. Once registered, you should receive more details via email and/or by post.

Once you have completed the course:

You will receive a certificate from the District Office. Please forward a copy of this certificate to the Circuit Administrator in order that your record can be update
office.bcpc@btinternet.com

Thank you

Circuit Forthcoming Events

Thurs. 13 th Jan.	Circuit Treasurers meeting	7.30pm	Zoom
Weds. 16 th Feb.	Circuit Meeting	7.30pm	Eltham Park

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Living hope is a project which aims to provide good quality education for disadvantaged children in Baddomalhi, Pakistan



Dear Friends,

I hope you are keeping well and it's so good to give you an update on the Living Hope School.

I am writing this newsletter from Paisley, Scotland. I moved here for my new appointment to minister in a few churches here, which started on the 1st of September. It has been really busy but I am enjoying being here. People are lovely and I feel that God has a plan and purpose for me in this place. You all are in my prayers as Living Hope School and I are in yours.

All of our students, teachers, and their families are safe. The infection rate is still very low in Baddomalhi. The school reopened at the beginning of August but all the schools were closed down twice due to a rise in Covid infection in the neighbouring areas.

The school reopened again on the 20th of September and all the students are back in school receiving lessons. All the covid measures are in place and hopefully children over 11 years old will start to receive their vaccination.

Most of the adult population in Baddomalhi has been vaccinated. We upgraded some of the old computers and our students are making the most of the technology. Computers and tablets have been hugely beneficial to their learning so we are still looking at buying more tablets.

Thank you very much for your continued support and prayer.

God bless,

Rev Imran Malik

1/2 43 Kilnside Road, Paisley, PA1 1RJ



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DO YOU LIKE A GOOD TUNE?

**THEN WHY NOT COME ALONG TO A CONCERT
BY THE ELTHAM PARK PLEASANT
SUNDAY AFTERNOON ORCHESTRA?**

30th January; 27th February at 3.00pm

**The PSA will also be taking part in the
Carol Service 19th December 2021 at 4pm**

**ELTHAM PARK METHODIST CHURCH
Westmount Road SE9 1XX**

Eltham Park Brotherhood & PSA Society: President: Rev. Richard Grocott BSc
As part of the National Brotherhood and Sisterhood Movement, our Society aims, through its orchestra to promote a spirit of Christian citizenship. In addition to some charitable work, the Society holds musical Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, or PSA meetings on the last Sunday of each month (except for breaks in August and December).

www.pleasant.org.uk

Circuit Stationing: September 2022

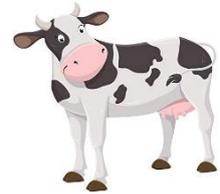
The circuit invitations team is delighted to announce that our circuit has, in the first round of Presbyteral stationing, been successfully matched with Revd William Davis. William will be joining our circuit in September 2022 and will have pastoral charge of Upper Norwood and Anerley Methodist Churches. William will be coming to us from the Wolverhampton circuit. Previously, he served part time in the New River Circuit (North London) and part time as Chaplain to the Ghanaian Methodist Fellowship. Prior to that, he served in a number of appointments in Ghana, his home country, including work in Christian education. He comes to us with his wife Vashti, who is an early years teacher. William and Vashti have four children, though it seems likely that only two will make the move back to London. William brings experience, enthusiasm and an eagerness to build churches and faith in our circuit.

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We are delighted to be back on stage!
Box office opens in mid-Jan. 2022.
Email now to be added to mailing list



'Jack and the Beanstalk'



BURNT ASH METHODIST CHURCH HALL
Lee, SE12 0QD

Thursday 3rd March 2022 at 7:45pm

Friday 4th March 2022 at 7:45pm

Saturday 5th March 2022 at 2:30pm and 6pm

TICKETS £8.00 (£7.00 concessions)

BOX OFFICE: rynInd@aol.com

LOOP SYSTEM IN OPERATION



WWW.COLLEGEPARKPLAYERS.COM



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CHRISTMAS SERVICES AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Carol Services

12th December 2021

6.30pm Anerley led by Mrs V. Tredinnick

19th December 2021

10.30am Hither Green led by Mrs Elizabeth Buck

10.30am Lewisham led by Rev. Richard Grocott

10.30am Sunfields led by Rev. Craig Gaffney

11am Wesley Hall by local arrangement

4pm Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott

4pm Forest Hill led by Rev Charles ILunga

24th December 2021

4pm Burnt Ash led by Dr Linda Ryan

'Blue Christmas'

A contemplative 'service with carols' to grieve our losses while holding on to the reality that Jesus is the Light and Saviour of the world.

19th December 2021

4.30pm Upper Norwood led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom

Boxing Day – 26th December

As Christmas Day falls on a Saturday this year, the circuit has taken the decision to suspend the preaching plan for Boxing Day. Local churches may decide to open for prayer. Instead, our circuit online team will be putting together a Boxing Day recorded service which will feature a variety of preachers and worship leaders, festive worship, prayers and creative reflections on scripture. The service will be viewable on the circuit YouTube channel.

Christingle Service

Christingle, from a word of German origin, *Christkindl*, meaning 'Little Christ Child', is used to celebrate Jesus Christ as the 'Light of the World'.

2nd January 2022

10.30am Burnt Ash led by Mrs Mary Sparkes



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