



The Methodist Church
Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit
Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 24

December 2018

Superintendent Minister's Letter: Is there room at the Inn?

Dear Friends,

When I begin a long journey, whether by car, by train, aeroplane or even by foot, I like to have a good idea not only of where I'm going, and which route I'm going to follow, but also where I'm going to stop along the way. Even if I use a Satnav, I like to look at a map and have some idea where I'm going. When Mary and Joseph left home to register for the census, they had to leave home without any such assurances. They could only hope that at the end of their journey they might find an Inn with a room where they could rest.

Luke chapter two tells us that Mary was heavily pregnant when she made this journey and Joseph must have been desperately concerned to find a room where they could rest as they entered Bethlehem. But they were out of luck. Every Inn in the town was full to the rafters, presumably because others were making the same journey! Yet one Inn keeper took pity on this young couple and rather than leave them out in the open, he offered them a cattle stall. Here it was, in these dirty, noisy, unhygienic surroundings that Jesus the Son of God, was born.

You can't help wonder whether God couldn't have arranged things a little better. Surely, he might have arranged for this census to be taken at a less inconvenient time for this unfortunate couple? Surely, he could have arranged for a room to have been free in a Bethlehem Inn and the local obstetrician to be at hand. Surely, he could have chosen a more glamorous place for his Son to be born than a dirty barn.

Yet perhaps this was exactly what God had intended to happen. Perhaps he knew that only by being born into this humble Palestinian family, the Son not of a Prince, but a carpenter, could Jesus grow to become the Saviour of the world. So, this humble Bethlehem scene clearly illustrates the depth of the love of God for us his people. The great and mighty God who made and created his world, who has guided and sustained his people since time began, is so concerned that we know and love him that at Christmastime he sent his Son into our world to be one with us that we might know his love for evermore. Will you find room for Jesus in the Inn of your heart this Christmas?

A Merry Christmas to you all, Richard

**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green
Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**

Advent

'Prepare Ye the Way'

Advent is a time of dual anticipation. As we wait for the birth of Christ celebrated at Christmas, we also wait for the second coming of the son of God, for Jesus' return. In the midst of preparing ourselves for Christmas, as we purchase gifts and fill our homes with festive decorations, it is easy to forget that the living God also asks us to prepare the way for Christ's return. This is a great promise, but also a great challenge.

How might we prepare for Jesus' return?

How would we want Christ to find us?

How might we build the Kingdom of God here on earth today as a sign and a prophecy of the Kingdom to come?

Watchnight Services



Watchnight Services around the Circuit:

Sunday 31st December 2018 at 11.15pm

Forest Hill: led by Rev. Dee Yeadon

Lewisham: led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom

Covenant Services

Covenant Services around the Circuit

6th January at Burnt Ash

6th January at Lewisham

13th January at Eltham Park

13th January at Hither Green

13th January at Upper Norwood

13th January at Wesley Hall

20th January at Anerley



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Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

At least once a year, Christians are reminded of Jesus' prayer for his disciples that "they may be one so that the world may believe" (see John 17.21). Hearts are touched and Christians come together to pray for their unity. Congregations and parishes all over the world exchange preachers or arrange special ecumenical celebrations and prayer services. The event that touches off this special experience is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Traditionally the week of prayer is celebrated between **18-25 January**, between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul. In the southern hemisphere, where January is a vacation time, churches often find other days to celebrate it, for example around Pentecost, which is also a symbolic date for unity.

The theme for the week of prayer in 2019, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue ..." is inspired by Deuteronomy 16:18-20.

FOREST HILL TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday Fellowship, an ecumenical fellowship group, meet at Forest Hill Methodist Church and Centre, Normanton Street, SE23 2DS from 2:00 for 2:30 on Tuesdays for refreshments, starting at 2:30 with a hymn and prayers, then listen to a speaker or have an activity. We do not duplicate what church does. We would love to welcome you, as we get to know each other better, make new friends and develop our skills.

Please come to Tuesday Fellowship meetings, featuring subjects such as:

4 December	Reminiscence / discussion: Teddy Fellowship
11 December	Christmas Party with Bible Study
8 January	(TBA)
15 January	Paul Glenly: My career as a Christian in the Fire Service
22 January	Getting to know our neighbours: Bishop Leroy Johnson: Rock – I - Ministries
29 January	(TBA)
5 February	Reminiscence / discussion: Armchair Travel
12 February	Moving Stories: Rev. Richard Grocott: My experiences as a Mission Partner in Italy
19 February	Potentially all age session
26 February	Alma Jenner: Linking Lives: Crofton Park Befrienders

Website: www.foresthillmethodistchurch.org Telephone number: 020 8291 6996

Email: admin@foresthillmethodistchurch.org

Tuesday Fellowship Secretary: Sue Rhodes : suerhodesspersonal@gmail.com

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

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued support for Living Hope. We are extremely grateful for your continued support and prayers.

A big thank you to all churches and individuals who have raised money through organizing various events. A special thanks to Andrew Tredinnick who in June walked around the 9 churches in the Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit and raised £455. Living Hope school will be using this money to buy a fridge and freezer for the students to keep their lunch and drinks fresh during the hot summer days.

The students are back at school after their summer holidays. They broke up at the end of June and started in mid-August. When they got back they celebrated the Pakistan Independence Day.

On the 14th of August, students wore something green & white (the colours of the flag). The teachers helped the students to decorated their classrooms and organised fun learning activities for them. Everybody had a great time!

All of the students are doing well but 4 of students have stopped coming due to family and economic reasons. It is bit discouraging news but we hope that their a few years of learning will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Despite this small set back your prayers and support are making a huge difference to our students' and teachers' lives. We will continue to help many families to educate their children. With our school, we are breeding hope and confidence in young minds which is going to make a huge impact for many years to come!

Please continue to pray for the work of Living Hope and its community,

Thank you, God bless,

Imran

Circuit Forthcoming Events

Thurs. 10 th Jan.	Circuit Treasurers meeting	8pm	Burnt Ash
18 th – 25 th Jan.	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity		
Tues. 5 th Feb.	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Wesley Hall
Wed. 20 th Feb.	LP & WL Meeting	7.45pm	Lewisham
Sat. 23 th Feb.	'Old Fashioned Afternoon Tea'	3pm	Burnt Ash

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Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**



A Christmas Afternoon

Saturday 1st December



2pm - 5pm



Wesley Hall, Sydenham

Adults £5, children £3

Come and enjoy an afternoon of browsing and
buying from our stalls, crafts, jewellery, cakes, toys, raffle
Entertainment and a Christmas Afternoon Tea

Further details: Sue Watkins: 0208 777 0085; or 0774 540 1987

susanwatkinsmum@yahoo.co.uk

Circuit Old Fashioned Afternoon Tea

Burnt Ash Methodist Church

in aid of Methodist Mission in Britain

Saturday 23rd February 2019 at 3pm

With accompaniment by Martin Cleave's Palm Court style trio

Donations are welcome in aid of the
Methodist Mission in Britain Fund.

Gift aiding envelopes will be available



Tickets not required

Further details from Mary Sparkes, Mission in Britain rep.

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THURSDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2018 at 7:45pm

FRIDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2018 at 7:45pm

SATURDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2018 at 2:30pm

TICKETS £7.00 (£6.00 concessions)

Pre-book at Box Office: rynInd@aol.com

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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?
www.pleasant.org.uk**

27th January; 24th February at 3.00pm

Carol Service

16th December 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 Website: bhcpmethodist.org.uk

Deadline for information for next newsletter: **25th February 2019**

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

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Carol Services

16th December

- 4pm** Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott
6pm Burnt Ash led by Linda Ryan
 Refreshments plus carol singing in the hall afterwards in aid of Action for Children
6.30pm Anerley led by local arrangement
6.30pm Upper Norwood led by Tom Bridges

23th December

- 10.30am** Hither Green led by Junior Church
10.30am Sunfields led by Rev. Bill Tardy
11am Wesley Hall led by local arrangement
5pm Forest Hill led by Rev. Dee Yeadon
6.30pm Lewisham led by Rev. Richard Grocott

Christingle Services

9th December

- 10.30am** Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott

16th December

- 11am** Wesley Hall led by Rev. Dee Yeadon

Family Nativity Services

23rd December

- 10.30am** Burnt Ash led by Jenny Hamill

24th December

- 4pm** Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott



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