The Methodist Church

Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit

Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 28

Superintendent Minister's Letter:

December 2019

Dear Friends,

How do we handle differences of opinion within the life of the church? Not very well, many people, with experiences of lengthy, fractious Church meetings would say! Yet differences of opinion are very common in church life. If we were to sit down and talk to many of the people we worship next to Sunday by Sunday, we would probably find that there are many subjects that we disagree on from Brexit to the music we enjoy, from favourite foods to the way we choose to dress, talk or spend our free time. Indeed, I would argue that our churches are better places for the wide variety of tastes and opinions we share.

When it comes to matters of faith – the authority of scripture, the virgin birth, the physical resurrection - can we live, work and pray alongside people in church life who hold very different views from ourselves? Or are we only ever happy when everyone else agrees with everything we say we believe in? I would like to think that the mark of a mature Christian community is one in which people of sincere faith can live peacefully alongside others who think differently. A church which can respect differences and draw strength from diversity.

At the moment, the Methodist Church is going through a 'period of consultation' as we discuss the 'Marriage and Relationships' report which was approved at this year's Methodist Conference. This is a very well thought through and stimulating document which forces us to confront a whole series of attitudes towards personal relationships. Later in this newsletter, Saira goes into some detail as to what these issues are. I was present at Conference when this report was discussed and voted upon. I came away that day feeling deeply proud to be a Methodist and the thoughtful, sensitive way in which the debate was handled.

I truly believe that same spirit of respectful faith will guide the discussions we are about to begin in our circuit this year. As a circuit, we too will listen to each other and learning from each other. The report, and the study guides that go with it will probably reveal quite a variety of very sincerely and deeply held views amongst our churches. We will need to listen to each other with love, patience, compassion and with open minds as we seek to understand God's will for our church.

It is my prayer that in this way, we can hold together as Christians who are truly open to the bidding of the Holy Spirit and be sure that God has led and guided us all as we talk and share together.

May the Good Lord, bless us all,

Richard



Advent from the Latin Adventus, meaning 'arrival'

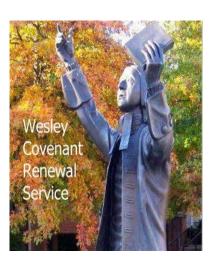
Circuit Advent Bible Study

Richard will be leading a series of Advent Bible studies on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm during December at Lewisham Methodist Church, Albion Way. These studies help us to think and reflect on the meaning of the birth of Jesus as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. They will be joyful and informative studies which will also include music and prayer.

Please do come and join us as we look at three of the Gospel's accounts of the nativity on the following dates: Tues. 3rd Dec.– Matthew; 10th Dec. – Luke; 17th Dec. – John

Circuit Watchnight Service Sunday 31st December 2018 at 11.15pm Lewisham Methodist Church led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom





Circuit Covenant Services

5th January 2020 Burnt Ash led by Rev. Rohama Asif 5Lewisham led by Rev. Richard Grocott 12th January 2020 Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott Hither Green led by Rev. Rohama Asif Upper Norwood led by Rev. A. Konadu-Yiadom 19th January 2020 Wesley Hall led by Rev. Richard Grocott Anerley led by Rev. A. Konadu-Yiadom 26th January 2020 Forest Hill led by Rev. Richard Grocott

A 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to experience a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: 16-23 March 2021

As part of the London District's theme Woven, you are offered an opportunity to join others from the London District to discover the setting of some of the most important events in Jesus' life and ministry. The trip will include eight days in Jerusalem and Galilee experiencing the story of our faith and transforming our understanding of the gospels.

For a brochure and further details, please email Linda in the Circuit Office, or Fola in the District office <u>fola@methodistlondon.org.uk</u>

The Welcome Service for Rev. Rohama Asif was held on Sat. 31st August 2019, at Hither Green Methodist Church, led by Rev Nigel Cowgill, District Chair



Looking at this photo of my welcome service, it seems like just the other day when I took charge of my responsibilities in this circuit, time flies. It is now November and we are approaching the blessed season of Advent. I see clearly how God is leading me through my ministry of pastoral, preaching and in all additional commitments and enabling me and my family to settle into this new circuit and area.

Wishing all of you a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Every blessing

Rohama

Marriage & Methodism



The Methodist Church in Britain is considering redefining marriage to include same-sex partnerships. Discussions are already taking place, and decisions are due to be made at the Methodist Conference in July 2020.

Our Circuit is holding a discussion forum at **7.30pm on Wed. 4th March 2020** at Lewisham Methodist Church; to be led by Revd Geoffrey Farrar, who was a member of the Connexional task group that worked for over two years preparing a report and presenting it to conference. *All are welcome*

Further details and copies of the leaflets 'Remaining Faithful', and 'A Case for Change' have been sent to your Church Council Secretary.

For details of discussions taking place within Methodism see:

https://www.methodist.org.uk/MandR19/

Report on London District Synod at Methodist Central Hall

Saturday 14th September 2019

The sensitive and respectful way in which the Service was compiled and delivered set the tone for the rest of the day. The hymns and readings chosen highlighted our calling as people of faith to listen and act respectfully as individuals and as members of different communities.

Journeying Together in Love, Faith & Joy, led by Rev Geoffrey Farrar & Rev Jongikaya Zihle, included reflection and conversation on the Conference report 'Marriage and Relationships'. 'God in Love Unites Us' provides an outline of the London District's proposal on ways forward which was approved at the July District Council. We were guided to ask very thought-provoking questions, e.g.

- Which of these relationships are Christian?
- What makes them Christian?
- What are the qualities?
- What makes a marriage a marriage?
- What are the qualities?
- What makes a marriage a "Christian Marriage"?
- Self-reflection- How do I know these things?

Why was the task group focussing on this theme?

- It is an important issue, although the Church did not say that this topic was more important than any other.
- It links with developments and understanding as well as the law.
- We need to talk about sexuality and relationships in a less negative way.
- The 3G Generate group highlighted the pastoral imperatives for many of our youth people
- The report needs to be taken back to our individual churches
- People need to explore and express their feelings and opinions in a respectful way.
- The report is not about gay/single sex marriage it is about a lot more.

Rev Jongi referred to Corinthians Ch. 13: 'We are made to be in relationship with God and with others'. Christians know a lot about good and bad relationships, but it is the quality of a Christian relationship that makes a Christian marriage different. The quality of a Christian Marriage is Christlike. Rev Farrar then gave three different marriage situations which illustrate the different and varied conditions in which people live in marriage. But they were still Christ like.

What is the purpose of marriage?

- For procreation?
- Remedy for sexual sin?
- Mutual comfort and help?
- What about singleness?
- What about marriages with no children?
- What about sexuality and the changing understanding of gender?
- What about the current situation of young people not wanting to get married?

How do we know what we know?

- We need to have honest reflection.
- We need to recognise that there are a variety of accepted methods of interpreting scripture. Rev Farrar used the Wesleyan Quadrilateral to illustrate the four areas that influence our source of morality and ethics to arrive at what we know:



Other areas covered at Synod:

- Rev Michaela Youngson shared some of her reflections during her year of travel in the UK. She highlighted examples of interfaith projects which illustrate the scriptural and historical context of Jacob's well. We can all drink from the 'water of life' and live our lives in action.
- Stamford Methodist Church illustrated love, a place of encounter and renewing, and for sharing food as a community. The clients included those from those receiving Universal Credit to the well-off. Each course had choices and there were second helpings of fresh food to take away. The volunteers worked in teams one team collected the food; another team planned and prepared the meals and the third team served and cleared up. They helped with alleviating loneliness in a most human, collaborative way.
- The second project in Milton Keynes is called the cycle project. This project helped the young men and women to gain National Qualifications. It engineered churches to come together as a community. The community spirit helped with healing and self-worth for both the young and old.

After a wonderful communion service Synod ended with an air of optimism and commitment. Let us hope that our circuit will be equally as inspired and engaged on the huge task ahead.

Circuit Forthcoming Events Tues. 3rd Dec. **Circuit Advent Course** 7.30pm Lewisham Tues. 10th Dec. **Circuit Advent Course** 7.30pm Lewisham Tues. 17th Dec. **Circuit Advent Course** 7.30pm Lewisham Sat. 18th Jan 10am-2.30pm **Prayerful Saturday** Anerley Tues. 25th Feb. LP & WL meeting Lewisham 7.45pm Sat. 29th Feb **Circuit Missions Day** 10am-5pm Burnt Ash Wed. 4th March 'Marriage & Relationships' discussion 7.30pm Lewisham Sat. 14th March Saturday 10am-2.30pm Anerley Thurs. 19th March **Circuit Meeting Sunfields** 7.45pm Sat. 28th March **Circuit Envisioning Day** 10am-4pm Lewisham Sat. 25th April Synod 10am Central Hall

Saira Bohan-Croft Circuit Synod Rep

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020 18th – 25th January 2020

On 10th February many Christians in Malta celebrate the Feast of the Shipwreck of St Paul, marking and giving thanks for the arrival of Christian faith on these islands. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles used for the feast is the text chosen for the Week of Prayer 2020. In such tempestuous journeys and chance encounters, God's will for his Church and all people comes to fulfilment. As Paul will proclaim, this salvation of God has been sent to all peoples (Acts 28:28).

Hospitality is a much-needed virtue in our search for Christian unity. It calls us to a greater generosity to those in need. The people who showed unusual kindness to Paul and his companions did not yet know Christ, and yet it is through their unusual kindness that a divided people were drawn closer together. Our own Christian unity will be discovered not only through showing hospitality to one another, but also through loving encounters with those who do not share our language, culture or faith.

Social media Show your support for Christian Unity by posting unity messages and details of your events to our <u>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Twitter wall</u> – simply add the #wpcuwall hashtag to your Twitter post (note there is a delay before they appear). You can also find updates about the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Twitter by following the <u>#wpcu2020</u> hashtag.



All Are Welcome

Please put a note in your 2020 diaries! Further details to follow

BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE CIRCUIT

LEAP YEAR MISSIONS EVENT

LET'S MAKE A LEAP RAISING MONEY FOR MISSIONS

SATURDAY 29th FEBRUARY 2020

BURNT ASH METHODIST CHURCH BURNT ASH HILL SE12 0QD

10am - 12noon Coffee Bric a Brac, Books, Bring and buy





12noon – 2pm Lunch Soup, Salad etc.!



3pm – 5pm

Afternoon tea Scones and Cakes with the Palm Court Style Trio



DROP IN WHEN YOU CAN DONATIONS INVITED

Profit will be divided between three Methodist Mission Funds

World MissionMission in BritainMethodist Women in Britain Projects

Come along to all or part of Anerley Methodist Church's PRAYER SATURDAY Saturday 25th January 2020 10am – 3pm



There will be interactive Prayer Stations; comfortable seats, and ambient music with screened images. Brief meditations will take place at the start of each hour. Light refreshments will be available all day including lunch time. People can come for all or part of the day. This is an opportunity for reflection, relaxation, and prayer, and enjoying Christian fellowship together. Further details from Peter and Margaret Boreham (Anerley) Next 'Anerley Saturday' is on Saturday 14th March 2020

'WOMEN EMULATING SUSANNA WESLEY (W.E.S.U.W)'

Saturday 21st December 2019: 11am-1pm Saturday 25th January 2020: 11am-1pm Venue: **Upper Norwood Methodist Church** Westow Hill, Upper Norwood, London SE19 1TQ *Refreshments will be served*



DO YOU LIKE A GOOD TUNE?

THEN WHY NOT COME ALONG TO A CONCERT BY THE

ELTHAM PARK PLEASANT SUNDAY AFTERNOON ORCHESTRA

26th January & 23rd February 2020 at 3.00pm ELTHAM PARK METHODIST CHURCH *Westmount Road SE9 1XX*

LIGHT CLASSICS
POPULAR STANDARDS
SHOW SELECTIONS
FAVOURITE HYMNS

ADMISSION FREE Refreshments available www.pleasant.org.uk



TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP at Forest Hill Methodist Church Sharing friendship, faith and fun December 2019 - January 2020

Tuesday Fellowship, an ecumenical fellowship group, meet at Forest Hill Methodist Church and Centre, Normanton Street, SE23 2DS, from 2:00 on Tuesdays for refreshments and chat, before we start 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 take a small voluntary offering. All are welcome, 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:

| 3 rd Dec | Craft Session: Sue Rhodes: Making (meaningful) Christmas decorations |
|--------------------------|---|
| 10 th Dec | Christmas spiritual party joint with Bible Study Rev. Abe Konadu- Yiadom |
| 7 th Jan 2020 | Craft Session: Sue Rhodes: making greetings cards |
| 14 th Jan | John Glover: YouTube worship songs |
| 21 st Jan | Juliet and Andrew Gibbs in conversation: Volunteering in China |
| | Website: www.foresthillmethodistchurch.org |
| | Telephone number: 020 8291 6996 |
| | Email: admin@foresthillmethodistchurch.org |
| | Tuesday Fellowship secretary: Sue Rhodes (suerhodespersonal@gmail.com) |



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



Dear Friends,

I hope you all are doing well and had a good summer.

Living Hope is grateful for your continued support and prayers.

The students are back after their summer holiday and have settled back into their school routine. All the students are progressing well in their studies. The students have been involved with art projects during the beginning of this term; helping to expand and nurture their creativity. The students have really enjoyed developing their artistic skills.

With your support, we will continue to help many families to educate their children. With our school, we are instilling hope and confidence in young minds that will 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,

Rev Imran Malik



Proceeds from the **Circuit Concert in June 2019** went to Summit Happy Home orphanage. They have responded by saying:

"On behalf of all the individuals we serve at K2 Adventures Foundation, we are so grateful. Thank you for your loving support of the orphaned children that reside at Summit Happy Home. Donations like yours will serve the children with their education and meals."

Kristen Salcito Sandquist K2 Adventures

"Thank you so much for your amazing generosity and hard work to make all this happen!! Summit Happy Home is a sanctuary of growth, safety, love and care for these incredible kids."

Blair Singer Mountain Leadership Experience



PRESENT



A PANTO FOR ALL THE FAMILY BURNT ASH METHODIST CHURCH HALL, LEE SE12 0QD Thurs. 5th December 2019 at 7.45pm, Fri. 6th December 2019 at 7.45pm, and Sat. 7th December 2019 at 1pm (limited availability) and 6pm Tickets £8.00 (£7.00 Concessions) Box office - rynInd@aol.com LOOP SYSTEM IN OPERATION







A Christmas Afternoon Saturday 7th December 2019

2pm-5pm

Adults £5, Children £3

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

Wesley Hall Methodist Church, Sydenham Road, SE26 5HF

Circuit Website: bhcpmethodist.org.uk

Deadline for information for next newsletter: 20th February 2020 Articles, posters for forthcoming events etc. always welcome Please email details to: office.bcpc@btinternet.com



CHRISTMAS SERVICES AROUND THE CIRCUIT Carol Services

8th December

10.30am Sunfields led by Milton Boothe

15th December

| 4pm | Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott |
|--------|---|
| 6.30pm | Upper Norwood led by Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom |

22nd December

| 10.30am | Hither Green led by rev. Rohama Asif |
|---------|---|
| 11am | Wesley Hall led by local arrangement |
| 5pm | Forest Hill 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 Rev. Abe Konadu-Yiadom |
| 6.30pm | Lewisham led by Milton Boothe |

Christingle Services

8th December

10.30am Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott

15th December

10.30am Burnt Ash led by Mary Sparkes11am Wesley Hall led by Rev. Richard Grocott

Nativity Service

24th December

4pm

Eltham Park led by Rev. Richard Grocott

