



The Methodist Church
Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit
Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 44

March 2023

Superintendent Minister's Letter

Lent 2023

Dear Friends,

Performers like musicians or comedians know how to play a crowd. They know how to build up tension and excitement as they sing their best songs or crack their best gags to an enthusiastic audience. They know how to deliver their best lines at just the right time, they know how to entertain!

Jesus was nothing like a modern-day performer. He certainly drew huge crowds of people to hear him speak or to see him perform a miracle. Those crowds who witnessed the feeding of the 5,000 or heard the sermon on the mount would have left inspired by what they saw and heard. However, Jesus was always eager to keep his followers' feet on the ground. An example of this comes in John's Gospel chapter 12. Jesus has just entered Jerusalem on what we now call 'Palm Sunday', he has been welcomed and acclaimed by the crowds with shouts of 'God bless the king of Israel'.

At this crucial moment, when many were expecting Jesus to lead his people against the evil Roman oppressors, Jesus now declares: 'The time has come for the Son of Man to be given his glory. 'About time too', many in the crowd might have said, but Jesus then tells one of his stories, 'I tell you that for certain, a grain of wheat that falls on the ground will never be more than one grain unless it dies. But if it dies, it will produce lots of wheat'. (John 12:24)

Can you imagine his disciples faces now? One moment Jesus is talking about being glorified, and the next about grains of wheat dying. Jesus was telling his disciples that his mission was to die but through his death would come new life for everyone. What Jesus was telling his disciples was that they needed to allow their old lifestyles to die so that a totally new life could emerge. To live you must be like that grain of wheat, first die in the earth.

As we enter the season of Lent, we all need to learn this difficult and painful lesson. The new life of the Easter resurrection is only possible if we first travel through the season of Lent with Jesus. Travel with him from his baptism at the

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

Jordan, his temptations in the wilderness, his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Last supper, the betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane, the trials before Herod and Pilate, the floggings, and the mocking as he carried his cross to Calvary where he died a painful death for our sins on the cruel Roman cross.

We have a choice whether to hold on to our lives as they are or give our lives to God. Just as Jesus was lifted up to die, so we can lift up our eyes to see that through his death, we can have life, and life in all its fullness.

I wish you all fruitful Lenten journeys of faith.

Kind regards,

Richard



Lent Reflections being held in person:

Burnt Ash Methodist Church

Meet in the Memorial Room at 11am on Wednesday mornings,
beginning on Wed. 22nd Feb. and running throughout Lent,
or join any time from 10am for tea/coffee and fellowship

Sunfields Methodist Church

Beginning Thurs. 23rd February, and running on Thursday evenings
at 7.30pm throughout Lent, the course reflects on 'Followers of Jesus'

All are Welcome

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

Circuit Evening Services/Gatherings on Zoom

The Circuit is continuing to run evening Services/Gatherings on Zoom:

When: The second Sunday of the month:

- **Sunday 12th March**
- **Sunday 9th April (Easter Day)**
- **Sunday 14th May**
- **Sunday 11th June**

Details of the Zoom Gathering/Service:

- Zoom opens from 6.00pm to allow us to gather and chat and stays open after the Service is finished
- Service starts at 6.30pm and lasts for 40 to 50 minutes
- volunteers to read or take part in prayers or testimony or offer a reflection are always welcome - don't wait to be asked

Zoom link (the same for each session):

<https://zoom.us/j/91829724673?pwd=WGpsL0RPbW9LSHZoMzBRd25uM3kwQT09>

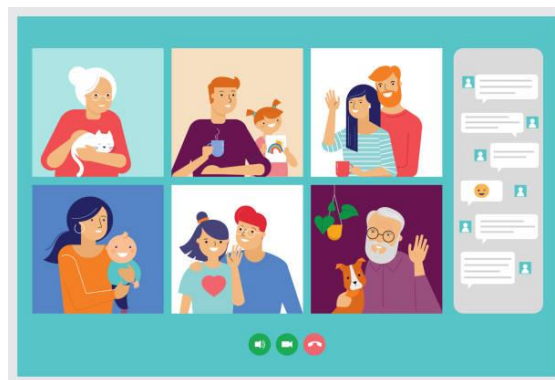
Please share the information with people who may not be at Church. One-to-one help with Zoom available, just email Margaret some time to practise!

We look forward to meeting each other on Zoom.

Margaret Boreham

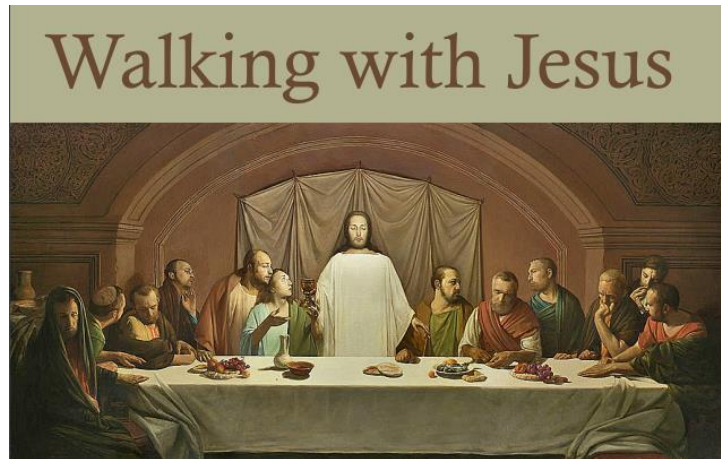
BCPC Online Team

email:mboreham5@gmail.com



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

Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit



Lent Bible Study 2023

You are invited to join the circuit Lent Bible study 2023. This will be by Zoom every Tuesday evening from 28th February, at 7.30pm. There will be five studies in the course.

We are going to use the study 'Walking with Jesus' by John Birch. John is a Methodist preacher, teacher and Christian author. If you are interested in joining for any part of the zoom course, please email Linda in the Circuit Office office.bcpc@btinternet.com who will send you the pdf version of the 25 page booklet that accompanies this course.

Each study relates an episode in the story of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. The course will include all four gospels. Each study will begin with devotions and will then feature Old and New Testament readings, and questions to encourage discussion.

The programme is as follows:

Tues 28th Feb: Approaching Jerusalem (Mark's story) led by Rev. Richard Grocott

Tues 7th March: Questions and Signs (Luke's story) led by Rev William Davis

Tues 14th March: The Last Supper (Matthew's story) led by Rev Charles ILunga

Tues 21st March: Arrest & Crucifixion (John's story) led by Rev Craig Gaffney

Tues 28th March: Resurrection (Luke's story) led by Stuart Watkin

As with previous studies, we will try to keep to a one hour time limit.

The recurring zoom link for this course is:

<https://zoom.us/j/97633256946?pwd=M1JkM3NrakQ4MzcweERYcHpwN3luZz09M>
eting ID: 976 3325 6946 Passcode: 648577

All are Welcome

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

Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit Envisioning

Saturday 21st January 2023

Summary notes as compiled in the plenary session

The event was well attended, and the reports presented were very well received. Discussions were constructive and amicable. Responses from the 3 discussion groups were noted as follows:

1. Spiritual growth:

Many churches feel that they are struggling to grow spiritually. Churches must ask themselves: 'Are we really open to the Holy Spirit?'. We rarely invite people to join us and need help with strategies to achieve this. For example, how can we encourage greater engagement with our user groups?

There is a desire for training, particularly with regard to worship leaders and stewards who are increasingly being asked to lead local arrangements.

Can we better share our human resources? Are there people in our churches who are not being asked to contribute and grow spiritually?

Fellowship Groups could be set up in some churches who don't have them at present, or strengthened where they do exist.

Could we make Methodist Prayer Handbook available throughout circuit and encourage 'Methodist Way of Life' by providing resources (available through the Methodist Church website).

2. Making The Most of Our Resources:

The discussion highlighted a number of areas where the circuit might be able to help individual churches:

Circuit churches should be more proactive in sharing good practice; eg Eltham Park Toddler Church is a great success, other circuit churches would be welcome to visit and see if a similar group could be set up in their own church. [This is not to be confused with registered nursery lettings].

It would be helpful if there was a consolidated list of reliable tradespeople compiled by, and for the use of, Manse stewards and Property Secretaries across the Circuit.

Circuit expertise and finance could help individual churches to redevelop property and enhance lettings potential. For example, Upper Norwood recently received a circuit grant to help renovate the hall, which is now providing an income through lettings.

Members from Wesley Hall talked about the difficulties in using their building – eg in access to halls for disabled people. It would be helpful to have clarity on Connexional rules regarding any redevelopment process. This might be an area where the circuit is available to advise and help financially.

Would it make financial sense to instal solar panels in circuit churches and manses.

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

3. Future shape of the circuit.

Does the New Places for New People agenda have anything to teach us? It is thought that the new housing development in Kidbrooke does not have a Christian presence; could our Circuit develop something here?

The Circuit has 12 active local preachers and 2 On Trial; there are an average of 117 preaching appointments to fill each quarter. Based on minister and LP availability, the Circuit is only able to fill 78%-85% of appointments each quarter. Remaining appointments taken up by visiting preachers or local arrangements.

A discussion at Church Council level re the possibility of amending service times to allow ministers to attend two Sunday morning services had been proposed by the staff team.

Both Charles and Richard end their current appointments in our Circuit in August 2025; Craig's ends in August 2026, and William's in August 2027. With a shortage of Ministers across the Methodist Connexion, there is some concern regarding future Stationing, particularly in August 2025. Geographically and numerically the Circuit could fairly easily be divided into three.

Possibility of employing a Circuit lay worker? This would normally be a paid role, working alongside the staff team with responsibilities including pastoral visiting, leading worship outside Sunday services, community outreach etc.

Going forward:

- A. The CLT to come up with an action plan based on the above.
- B. Churches to write a mission plan using resources available in 'Every church a growing church'.
- C. Church Councils to give serious consideration to amending service times to allow ministers to preach twice on Sunday mornings. Consideration also to be given to offering some joint services with another Circuit church in each quarter.
- D. Take encouragement from New Places for New People scheme and its possible implementation somewhere in the Circuit.

Richard

January 2023



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



Circuit Safeguarding

Hello friends,

Stuart Watkin and I started 2023 with a one-off face to face safeguarding training module 1 at Sunfields Methodist Church, on the 28th January 2023. We were very pleased to have new volunteers as well those whose training was overdue. There is still a handful of volunteers who need to update their safeguarding training module 1 with the district team.

Linda is managing the Advanced Safeguarding Training as she identifies those who need it. She ensures that those who register opt for the appropriate version of delivery, zoom or face to face.

DBS checks, the focus for the rest of this connexional year, continue at a steady pace, focussing on tiers of post holders within the Circuit. We hope to have all our DBS completed by July for all our volunteers, including new members whose job requires DBS.

There was a seamless transition between the old and new District safeguarding teams. The Safeguarding Programme continued as was planned by Becky and her team. We had our first Zoom meeting with Rachael Pielow, the Deputy District Safeguarding Officer on the 24th January 2023. The Annual Safeguarding Forum will take place at Central Hall on the 18th March with presentations and workshops. Coffee with Claire is on the 24th February. Do join. It is usually very informative.

We hope to put in place a holistic approach to recruiting, supporting, training, and retaining our volunteers. The strategy will incorporate the guidelines for safer recruiting, part of which we are doing anyway. We will use job descriptions, informal chats, and an induction period as well as ongoing training. But most importantly, volunteers will get support, have opportunities to discuss challenges /concerns with an identified person. In other words, our volunteers will be guided and supported in a structured way, from the beginning of their term of service.

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

We need our training to become embedded over time in our churches and communities at large. Training is not a tick box task. We will adopt and adapt The Methodist Successful Recruitment strategy in a gradual way, starting with a few willing new recruits.

Finally, our circuit has a safeguarding meeting on Saturday 1st April (PLEASE NOTE CHANE OF DATE) at Burnt Ash Methodist Church from 10am-12noon. It would be wonderful if all our safeguarding Officers met, have fellowship, be brought up to date and have an opportunity to have an open and honest discussion. Most important of all to CELEBRATE our successes and to say thank you to Elizabeth Buck for her long and dedicated service. Look forward to our celebration on the 1st April, 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Saira Bohan-Croft,

Circuit Safeguarding Officer, B Ed (Hons) MA.

Contact Details: saira2@ntlworld.com

Tel: 0208 699 6932. Mobile 07505629916



STOP PRESS: The Circuit is organising a coach for those wishing to attend Craig's ordination service on Sunday 25th June 2023, at 4pm, at Coventry Cathedral.

There are 53 seats available, and priority will be given to people from Craig's three churches. **Please book early to avoid disappointment.** The Circuit is subsidizing the cost of tickets, which are £10 for adults, £5 for children.

For further details please contact:

Mary Sparkes marysparkes@hotmail.co.uk

or the Circuit Administrator: office.bcpc@btinternet.com

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

**BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE
CIRCUIT MISSIONS**

LENT 2023

**SAVE 30 PIECES OF SILVER
FOR THE 40 DAYS OF LENT**



Matthew 26 vs 14 to 16

*Then one of the twelve disciples – the one named Judas Iscariot –
went to the chief priests and asked, “What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?”
They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to him.
From then on Judas was looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them.*

**STARTING ON ASH WEDNESDAY
22ND FEBRUARY 2023**

***Gift Aid in an
Easter Offering Envelope***

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

BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE CIRCUIT

Easter Offering Service 2023

‘No Borders to God’s Love’



Sunday 21st May, 4pm at Lewisham Methodist Church

Our Circuit Easter Offering Service will be held on Sunday 21st May 2023 at Lewisham Methodist Church. The theme ‘No Borders to God’s Love’ comes from Leviticus 19v34 ‘The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as a citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself.’

The service will include the dedication of the Easter Offering, all of which goes to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, supporting and working with over 100 Partner Churches and organisations around the world.

NB: We are delighted to advise that during this Easter offering Service, there will be a Celebration and Recognition of three of our Local Preachers, Garry, Mary and Paddy, who have been accredited as preachers in our Circuit of 25 years.

Do come along to join them as they celebrate this milestone wonderful achievement.

Congratulations to Stuart Watkin who is Candidate for Ministry

Many congratulations to Stuart Watkin who has been unanimously approved by the District Candidates Committee to progress with Candidating for Presbyteral Ministry.

This will now go to the Connexional Candidates committee.

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

Methodist Connexion: training schedule for all those involved in Youth and Children's work

Devised by the Methodist Youth and Children's Coordinator, Brian Smith, the training sessions below are varied and offer a little something for everyone; from Toddler Ministry to working with children with additional needs.

Webinar sessions/courses that are available are (in date order):

- Understanding the teenage brain: 23 March 2023
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/understanding-the-teenage-brain-a-webinar-tickets-411278022637>
- Ministry of Toddler groups: 24 April 2023
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-ministry-of-toddler-groups-a-webinar-tickets-411281071757>
- Family/intergenerational ministry: 15 May 2023
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/familyintergenerational-ministry-a-webinar-tickets-411284913247>
- Detached youth work - engaging with young people on the fringes: 12 June 2023
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/detached-youth-ministry-a-webinar-tickets-411290530047>
- Working with children and young people with additional needs: 10 July 2023
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/working-with-children-and-young-people-with-additional-needs-a-webinar-tickets-411294852977>

All these courses are shown as currently bookable via the link to an eventbrite page. Please consider registering for courses relevant to the roles you hold at your church, and encourage those for whom these sessions might be useful to register as soon as possible as places are likely to be limited.

For those reading this newsletter in hard copy, please also see the Circuit website bcpcmethodist.org.uk/category/newsletters/ to use hyperlinks for registration.

'Save the Date':

Friday 26th May, 7.30pm and Saturday 27th May 3pm

In celebration of the King's Coronation on Saturday 6th May 2023, College Park Players are currently in rehearsal for 'A Right Royal Revue' a programme of songs and readings featuring the monarchy past and present.

Further details will be available from runlnd@aol.com shortly.

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

	Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit Forthcoming Events	
Wed. 1 st March	Circuit Meeting at Wesley Hall Methodist Church	7.30pm
Tues. 7 th March	Lent Bible Study via zoom led by Rev. William Davis	7.30pm
Sun. 12 th March	Circuit evening service via zoom	6pm
Tues. 14 th March	Lent Bible Study via zoom led by Rev. Charles ILunga	7.30pm
Sat. 18 th March	District Safeguarding meeting at Westminster Central Hall	10am-3pm
Tues. 21 st March	Lent Bible Study via zoom led by Rev. Craig Gaffney	7.30pm
Tues. 28 th March	Lent Bible Study via zoom led by Stuart Watkin	7.30pm
Sat. 1 st April	Circuit Safeguarding meeting, At Burnt Ash Methodist Church PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE	10am- 12noon
Sun. 9 th April	Circuit evening service via zoom	6pm
Tues. 18 th April	Circuit Leadership Team meeting at Burnt Ash Methodist Church	7.30pm
Sun. 14 th May	Craig Gaffney's Testimonial Service at Wesley's Chapel, 49 City Road, EC1Y 1AU	6.30pm
Sun. 14 th May	Circuit evening service via zoom	6pm
Sun. 21 st May	Circuit Easter Offering service at Lewisham Methodist Church	4pm
Tues. 23 rd May	LP & WL meeting at Lewisham Methodist Church	7.30pm
Sun. 11 th June	Circuit evening service via zoom	6pm
Sun. 25 th June	Craig Gaffney's Ordination Service at Coventry Cathedral, CV1 5AB	4pm

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



DO YOU LIKE A GOOD TUNE?

THEN WHY NOT COME ALONG TO A CONCERT BY THE

**ELTHAM PARK PLEASANT
SUNDAY AFTENNOON ORCHESTRA**

**26th March; 30th April and
28th May 2023 at 3.00pm**

ELTHAM PARK METHODIST CHURCH
Westmount Road SE9 1XX

♪ **LIGHT CLASSICS** **SHOW SELECTIONS**
♪ **FAVOURITE HYMNS** **POPULAR STANDARDS**

ADMISSION FREE
Refreshments available

Circuit website: bhcpmethodist.org.uk

Deadline for information for next newsletter: 20th May 2023

Articles, posters for forthcoming events etc always welcome

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

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



**Bromley Methodist Circuit
in partnership with
Orpington and Chislehurst
Methodist Circuit**



All Local Preachers and Worship Leaders are invited to our

2023 Local Preachers' Study Day

Saturday 10th June 2023, 10am - 3pm

St Mary's Hall, Farleigh Court Rd, Farleigh, CR6 9PX

**Theme: How the story of Methodism shapes its
current mission and ministry**

Leader: Rev Dr Jennifer Potter

Rev Dr Jennifer Potter worked as a mission partner at a Methodist Girls' School in Zambia from 1971 -74. Then, after an MA in African Studies, she went to work mostly on local terms, in Botswana from 1975 until 1996. On returning to the UK, Jennifer worked as International Affairs Secretary for the Connexional Team for six years. She then did part-time pre-ordination training before being stationed at Wesley's Chapel in 2002 where she remained until retirement in 2018. She is now a part-time chaplain at the MHA Care Home in Shirley.

There is no cost to attending the day – please bring a packed lunch. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided.

To register for the day or for any more information please contact office@bromleymethodist.org or 020 8313 1029

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

BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE CIRCUIT

PRESENTS



We invite you to join us in promoting unity, friendship, love through fellowship while supporting our churches and organisations.

If you are interested, please get in touch

**Agnes Frempong
Manso**
07906118387
(Upper Norwood)

**Selina Blay
Yawson**
07737151839
(Upper Norwood)

**Ama Brehan
Ankah**
07957111810
(Wesley Hall)

Women Of Faith Sisters In Christ

*For women of all nationalities in
our churches aged 18 years and over.*

Meetings taking place on Saturday 25th March, 22nd April, 27th May,
and 24th June at Upper Norwood Methodist Church, 11am-1pm;
All are Welcome

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



EASTER SERVICES AROUND THE CIRCUIT

All are Welcome

Maundy Thursday Services: Thursday 6th April



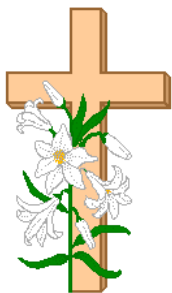
Eltham Park	7.30pm	led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
Forest Hill	8pm	led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)
Sunfields/URC	7.30pm	led by Rev. Craig Gaffney (URC)
Upper Norwood	7pm	led by Rev. William Davis

Good Friday Services: Friday 7th April



Anerley	9.15am	led by Rev. William Davis
Burnt Ash	9.30am	led by Dr Linda Ryan, followed by Walk of Witness and ecumenical service
Eltham Park	10.30am	led by Rev. Richard Grocott
Forest Hill	10.30am	led by Rev. Charles ILunga
Hither Green	12.30am	led by Craig Gaffney
Lewisham	9.00am	led by Rev. Richard Grocott
Sunfields	10.30am	Ecumenical service at Whitfield Mount
Upper Norwood	11am	led by Rev. William Davis
Wesley Hall	10.30am	led by Mr Chris Watkins

Easter Day Services: Sunday 9th April



Anerley	9.15am	led by Rev. William Davis (HC)
	11am	led by Mrs Valerie Tredinnick
Burnt Ash	9.15am	led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
	10.30am	led by Mrs Mary Sparkes and Mrs Jeannette Warren
Eltham Park	10.30am	led by Dr Garry Young
Forest Hill	11am	led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)
Hither Green	10.30am	led by Rev. Craig Gaffney
Lewisham	10.30am	led by Rev. Richard Grocott (HC)
Sunfields	10.30am	led by Mr Milton Boothe
Upper Norwood	11am	led by Rev. William Davis (HC)
Wesley Hall	9.30am	led by Rev. Charles ILunga (HC)

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