

# BIDEFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2008/January 2009 - Issue 80/1 - Cost 30p

Welcome to Edition Number 80/81

**Please note my e-mail address bucklanddave@btinternet.com**

Please continue to send details of future events, activities or 'anything', you wish to share with the Circuit to Dave Watson by e-mail; phone 01237 451437 or to 6 Greenings Road, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, EX39 5LU. Please send them before the 20th of each month if possible.

Thanks - Dave Watson

SORRY

The Editor & the team would like to apologise for the lack of the Newsletter during December. We had a major problem with the computer & we could not access or finish it off. I think the computer was getting worn out (like the editor). It has now been rejuvenated (not sure about the editor). Hopefully back to normal now. David Morris' message is what would have been in the December edition, but I think still relevant!!

From Rev David Morris – Superintendent Minister

Dear Friends,

Well, it's coming up to Christmas again. We struggle to observe Advent while the rest of the world is already thinking 'Christmas'. Even in these straitened times we consumers are being urged to spend more money to keep the economy afloat and each other happy, although anyone who's battled with the traffic at Morrison's or Sainsbury's recently might be forgiven for feeling that seasonal goodwill is already in short supply.

Have you noticed that many if not most of the presents that we give to each other, at least within families, tend increasingly to be non-essential items. I don't mean that we necessarily give presents that are out-and-out luxury items but that, because we generally acquire most of the things we need for our daily lives as we go along, the presents that we give are sometimes the sort of thing that is not needed for our normal living. So perhaps our children no longer get a new dressing gown as a Christmas present; they've already got one. If anyone gives me the proverbially awful tie, I can smile sweetly, secure in the knowledge that I won't actually have to wear it because I've got plenty of other ties. The essential goods are mostly taken care of in the ordinary course of events and this causes problems when we come to buy presents. We all have to face that question, 'what do you give to the man or woman who has everything (they need or want)?' It's not that we or the people to whom we give presents literally have everything; it's just that in our successful materialist society many of us seem to have all that we reasonably need or want yet we still feel the necessity to give and receive presents 'because it's Christmas.' And therein lies the central paradox for Christian people.

The material goods that are the visible hallmarks of our successful materialist society (yes – it is at least comparatively successful even now) are easy to decry because we have the luxury of taking them for granted. We have probably all complained at one time or another about the increasing commercialization of Christmas but in a world of want, which is what much of this world really is outside our little corner of it, what we need is more of these goods, not fewer. We need more of this commercialization, not less. The commercialization of which we complain is in some ways a mark of success which we should hope to spread to those parts of the world in which a present might be much more costly for the giver and essential for the recipient than is usually the case for us. To spread our success, we need to continue to be materially successful ourselves. As a society, we're not going to be much use materially to anyone else if we are impoverished ourselves – that's a part of our current problems that hasn't received much emphasis yet. Yet we know that the Christmas story is about a God who didn't need or use material goods to change the world in the most dramatic fashion. He needed materiality, human flesh and blood, but not the commercial sort of material goods. The life to which the child was born was one which did not sit easily with the conspicuous consumption that was evident in some parts of his society as it is evident in some parts of ours. So we have a paradox here for Christians at Christmas – we are material and materialist creatures in a materialist world yet we celebrate the action of a God who asks us to live beyond materiality. But we have to function as disciples in this world as best we can. Adopting a purist stance and decrying all that the modern Western Christmas is about will not make God's story more credible. So how do we respond to the real nature of this Christmas story while staying in touch with our world as it is?

Well, here's one way. We can invent a notional family, say mum, dad and 2.4 children, less materially blessed than ourselves. We then give to the charity of our choice (how about Christian Aid or MRDF?) as much of the price of Christmas for this family as we can afford, food, presents and all, and take that sum out of what we would normally spend on ourselves and our family so that we genuinely share our materiality with theirs. If we get the chance, we let people know what we've done and why – that way, more people might try it next year. However we do it, the important thing is to use the blessings God gives us to bless his world and its people – and enjoy it!

May God bless us all this Advent and Christmas

David

#### Items For Sale

Northam Methodist Church have a redundant modern style piano to 'offload'. Please contact Ted Monk on 01237 477085. Free to a good home but new owner to collect.

Singer Magic Steam Press for sale at £50. In working order. Please contact 01237 475285

GARDEN GNOME - Available for small garden jobs such as weeding, raking, tubs, leaf clearing etc

To help to go to CAMBODIA next year - please phone RACHEL ASH - 01805 623790

Appledore Methodist Church have items to clear. Donations please for the Cambodia Youth Project – items include Stacking Chairs, Prayer and Praise Hymn Books & electric organ. Please Ring Julia on 01237 425361

#### Alwington Methodist Church

We wish you all a very happy New Year and would like to thank everyone who has supported our Coffee Mornings during 2008.

Our Coffee Mornings continue and will be held at the Methodist Church on Tuesday January 6th and Tuesday February 3rd between 10.30am & 12 noon.

At 10am before the coffee morning our monthly prayer meeting is held.

A warm welcome to everyone

#### Torrington Methodist Church

'Inspire' Youth Service will take place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm at Torrington Chapel. All welcome.

#### Holy Land Pilgrimage from Rev. Peter and Mrs Ann Whatton

We are gradually filling the places for this wonderful opportunity to go to the Holy Land .

If you are thinking at all about going, now is the time to make your decision, because the number of pilgrims to the Holy Land has nearly trebled in the last year, the opportunity to go at such a reasonable cost is unlikely to be repeated in the future. So don't put your decision off. Come with us in October 2009 and enjoy the fellowship and friendship and have the chance to grow in faith at the very places where it all began. We appreciate this seems a long way ahead, but due to the increased number of pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land, travel companies are asking for numbers 11 months in advance of the pilgrimage.

Deposits of £150, plus booking forms should be into us a.s.a.p., certainly before Christmas (what a wonderful Christmas present for a loved one, giving them the opportunity, not only to celebrate Christmas here, but to stand where Christ was born).

Fermain Chalet, 11 A Stanwell Drive, Westward Ho! EX39 1HE Tel. 01237 421420

The Christian life is a pilgrimage often of ups and downs and sometimes of forward and backs. But hopefully as we continue to work out our faith in the day to day things by attending and being part of our church and studying our bible and working through life's experiences we do grow closer to God.

Often an experience will help us to have a real sense of knowing what it is to live in the light, even though we are living in a dark world.

John and I went on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Rev Peter and Ann Whatton in May 2008. Just this last weekend as I write, we reunited with our friends who went on the same Pilgrimage. It was wonderful to hear of how the experiences of visiting the Holy Land and being in the places where Jesus had walked and taught had impacted on the lives of people. The feeling of being on the shores of the Sea of Galilee were somewhat awesome to many, whilst being in Jerusalem where our Lord was Crucified was special to me.

The Holy Land experience brings home and reinforces the scriptures, helps one to know that the Messiah story is real and true.

As I said after our first trip to the Holy Land, one does not have to go to the Holy Land to have the Jesus experience, but the trip is a wonderful boost and confirmation of faith. So, if you would like to have the Holy Land experience Peter and Ann are arranging another visit in October 2009, they would love to hear from you. You can contact them on 01237 421420. Sheila Babb.

#### Winter Warmer with Christian Guild.

Peter & Joan Bolt have been asked to 'host' at Treloyhan Manor, Cornwall for the last 2 weeks in January for 'Lazy Days & Cosy Nights'. We have now heard that the hotel is offering a special daily rate for that period of £35 for bed, breakfast & evening meal. They would be glad to welcome any members of the Circuit who feel that they would enjoy a relaxed & warm winter holiday – for as many nights as you wish.

St Ives is easy to reach – if you don't want to drive – there is a rail service all the way or Express Coach from Exeter. Book direct with the hotel on 01736 796240 & Quote WW8.

#### Prayer & Praise

The January Prayer & Praise will take place on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January at Gammaton Methodist Church at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Contact person for Prayer & Praise is Shelia Babb on 01805 622949

#### Clovelly Methodist Church

An Exhibition of pictures of paintings by Maureen Farley will be held during January in Clovelly Methodist Church. All paintings are for sale with the proceeds being divided between – British Heart Foundation; Friends of Hartland Medical Practice Association & Clovelly Methodist Church.

After the death of Patrick I wish to do this to help his chosen charities. If anyone is interested in a painting, please contact me for more details (price, size & medium). Contact Maureen Farley on 01237 431451 or at 3 Winsworthy, Higher Clovelly.

I look forward to your support – Thanks Maureen

### Littleham Methodist Church

The monthly Coffee Morning will take place on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January from 10-30--12noon Coffee & Biscuits 50p. There will be a Bring & Buy Stall.

### Alverdiscott Methodist Church

We are holding a Quiz Evening on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January with teams of 6. Please arrive at 6.30pm for a 7pm start. Please let David & Margaret Reed know by Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January about your team. Light refreshments will be available.

### Parkham Methodist Church – Ladies Club

The Ladies Club meets at 2.30pm in the Sunday School room each month.

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January – Speaker is Mrs Sybil Thompson on ‘Cretans – Ancient & Modern’

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February – Speaker is Jonathan Marshall on ‘Working with Falcons’

### Local Preachers Support Group

The next group of LP Support Group Meetings will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January & Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009. They will take place at 56 Hanson Park, Northam & will be led by Rev David Morris.

### Northam Methodist Church

The Bright Stars Theatre Group present ‘BABES in THE WOOD’ at Northam Methodist Hall with Rev Paul Martin as THE DAME. This takes place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> January and Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> January. Nightly at 7pm with a Matinee at 2.30pm. Cost adults £5, OAP’s £4 & Children £3. Contact 01237 408226 to book your seat. Proceeds for Northam Youth Club.

Thursday Fellowship meets every Thursday at 2.30pm at Northam Methodist Church. The cost is £1 which includes a draw, tea & biscuits. Contact Maggie Smale on 01237 421956 for more details.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February – Speaker is Liz & Cecil Watkins – Cedar County Duo – Christian Country & Western Music

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February – Speaker Jackie Avery – Helping Families in the Service

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February – Speaker is Mrs Prance on the Greyhound Trust

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February – Speakers are Beth & Brian Cook with a Talk on Peru

### Ordination.– from Sheila Babb

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2009 the Rev Graham Slingo will be Ordained. The service is to be held at Darlington Street Methodist Church, Wolverhampton at 4.30pm.

If people would like to go to support Graham on this occasion I can organise a Coach for transport. But I would like to know an approximate number of people who would be interested so that I can make arrangements.

I would be grateful if you could phone me on 01805 622949 as soon as possible before I proceed to make a booking with a coach company.

There will be a Circuit Testimony Service for Graham as well, when we can celebrate with him.

Sheila

### Churches Together in Bideford

The week of Prayer for Christian Unity occurs from 18 – 25 January 2009 and the meetings are as follows:

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January - Sacred Heart, Catholic Church at 12 noon

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January – Quakers Meeting House at 12 noon

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January - Westward Ho! Baptist at 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January - Northam Parish Church at 12 Noon

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January - Bideford Baptist at 12 Noon

The Week of Prayer Service will take place at Lavington URC Church on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 11am. Coffee will be served at 10.30. At 11.30 there will be a Christian Aid Meeting. We would be pleased to welcome any one interested in the work of Christian Aid to join us.

There will be a United Service at High Street on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm

Duncan Withall – Chairman, Christians Together in Bideford & District

Tel: 01237 475755 or 07971 222717

### From Julia Spencer

There is an Ecumenical Lent Course for Devon!!! - Responding to God's Word  
For details ring Mrs Lindi Ching, The Old Deanery Exeter EX1 1HS. 01392 294930  
OR email [lindi.ching@exter.anglican.org](mailto:lindi.ching@exter.anglican.org)

Or Ask Julia about it.

### From Chris Turner – Circuit Youth Worker

As most of you will be aware I run a charity called **edukid**.

**edukid** helps children who are living in poverty and suffering from the legacy of war. It enables them to have an education and therefore gain the skills and tools they need to hopefully break out of the poverty they live in.

**edukid** plans to open a charity shop for one month of the year specialising in selling baby and childrens things. This includes anything from cots, buggy's, bikes, etc. If you know of anyone who is looking to dispose of items such as these he would be very grateful if you would put them in touch with him.

Likewise if anyone has space to help store these items Chris would also love to hear from you. Storage space would need to be somewhere dry such as a garage or loft.

Thank you for your support. Please feel free to contact me at any time about this.

Very kind regards - Chris Turner

### Network – Elsie Potter

Around ninety people gathered at Sidholme Christian Guild Hotel in Sidmouth, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November mostly women a few men, for the District Annual Women's Event (formerly known as conference). The speaker was Margaret Sawyer the Connexial women's Network Secretary. Her Subject was "We are the People of God" Throughout the two days of the event she read from the poems of Edwina Gately which were very inspirational.

One of the Bible studies, which she took, came from Luke 10 vv 38 – 42 (the account of Jesus at the Home of Mary and Martha) and Luke 1 vv 39 – 56 (The Magnificat). We were encouraged in the first instance to think about our own skills and abilities and the to look at the skills and abilities which were evident in the Luke 10 passage – you try it – we discovered that the skills which we listed were very nearly the same as those recorded – hospitality, learning, listening, cooking, teaching, patience, concern, friendship and also irritation.

In the Magnificat section we discovered it was all about what God had done for us.

During one of the sessions Margaret updated us with the changes going on in the Methodist Church and how it affects us as Network. In order that we are not to be made a laughing stock the changes are being made in order to make the church more relevant.

The Methodist Church will have four strategic leaders Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, John Ellis, Mark Wakelin, and Christine Elliot they will not have specific responsibilities or departments. Then there will be four heads of clusters Janet Morley Evangelism Advocacy and Communication, Doug Swaney Discipleship and Ministry, Nick Moore Finance and IT

– Team Operations, Trevor Durston projects. Network will come in the Project Cluster and Margaret Sawyer has become the Project Officer.

Magnet has become an independent ecumenical publication and will continue with the high standard we have become used to.

As far as Network is concerned we have two years in which to make it work – after that we do not know. We at grass roots level must continue with the good work that we have always done.

Dates for your Diaries: Spring District Day - Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2009 at St Thomas Exeter

Plymouth and Exeter District have produced a calendar for 2009 with selected photographs and a recipe book which came out of our conference last year “Not all Pip and Peal” both of which retail at £3.00. Proceeds to go to Langley House Trust and Action Aid until September when it will go to Hospice Care.

#### CIRCUIT Meetings

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Circuit Youth Worker Meeting at 7pm at High Street, Bideford

#### Christians & the Environment – Jean Wright

The correct number for Jean is 01237 451071

#### SING A NEW SONG

The Methodist Music Resources Group is asking people to offer their opinions on a new collection of hymns and songs. The aim is to produce a music resource that combines the best of the old with the best of the new, as well as reflecting a diversity of theological and musical traditions.

The draft collection contains over 700 hymns and songs, including international and previously unpublished material. At this stage the list is incomplete and there will be additions and deletions in response to the survey.

The consultation runs until 31 January 2009. The full list of hymns (arranged thematically and alphabetically), together with an online response form, at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openogod.content&cmid=2493#help>.

The list also appeared in The Methodist Recorder on Thursday 4 December.

### SARAH MALIK NAMED FIRST SALARIED YOUTH PRESIDENT

Sarah Malik was elected Methodist Youth President at this year's Methodist Youth Conference. From January until September 2009 Sarah will work full-time to serve as an advocate and spokesperson for young people in the Church.

This new role is the first to be appointed in the Church's new Youth Participation Strategy, launched at the Youth Conference in Northampton last month. The Youth Participation Strategy will also see 32 young people employed in new, part-time salaried posts as District Youth Enablers across the Methodist Church in Britain. It is the first time salaried positions have been specifically targeted at 16 to 23-year-olds in order that young people help guide the direction of the Church.

### SERVICE - Knit one, purl one to save the children

From South Wigston Methodist Church, Leicester

The click-clack of knitting needles could be heard all over South Wigston throughout October and November as members of our local Methodist church knitted up hundreds of hats to help children all over the world.

Worshippers at the South Wigston Methodist Church in Leicester, stitched together over 1500 woolly offerings in aid of children's charity , Save the Children's 'Knit one, save one' campaign. Knitters were in good company with celebrities such as Gwyneth Paltrow and Mischa Barton casting on and off for the excellent cause.

Save the Children, which campaigns to ensure that children receive proper health care, food, education and protection, collected a whopping 700,000 hats from 50,000 knitters to send to needy children across the globe. David Harrison of the Methodist Church, South Wigston, said that he was very pleased with the church's knitting endeavours. He said: "I just thought that this was a very good cause worth taking up and that anyone who could knit could get involved with very little expense and help save a life."

### EVANGELISM - Church laps up Hamilton's Formula 1 victory

From Burton Road Methodist Church, Lincoln

Families at the Burton Road Methodist Church in Lincoln were treated to a thrilling evening last month as they watched Lewis Hamilton's historic Formula 1 victory in Brazil on a giant screen in the church hall. A mixture of tension and delight, along with some badly chewed nails, accompanied the clinching of the championship title by the youngest world champion in Formula 1's history.

"The final lap was the most nerve-racking", said Mark Thompson from the church, adding: "The atmosphere was very tense in the final laps and even tenser on the last lap, but there was great relief and joy when Lewis clinched the title."

Buoyed by the success of this event, and a previous showing of the FA Cup final, we are thinking of

turning our attentions to matters musical with a Mamma Mia charity sing-along pencilled in for the new year. So, watch this space!

### AN EVENING WITH JIMMY CRICKET

Palace Avenue Methodist Church, Paignton is co-ordinating this special event to take place at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 14 May 2009 at the Palace Theatre, Paignton.

With his special brand of family humour, Jimmy has enjoyed great success on stage, TV and radio, over many years. Having produced and written many of his own shows, Jimmy is famed for his catchphrase, '...and there's more...'. However there really is more to Jimmy than meets the eye.

Jimmy was born into a large Irish family, with four brothers and one sister. His father was an undertaker by trade. Most people felt that the whole family must have been extremely miserable at home, because of their father's trade. But Jimmy remembers that it was completely the opposite. Their father had a wonderful sense of humour and the house was always filled with laughter. Their house was also filled with the reality of God. Very much a God-fearing family, they would attend church each Sunday on a regular basis, and Jimmy realises that this is where his faith first took root.

Jimmy literally became 'an overnight star', reaching the finals of ITV's Search for a Star and has never looked back. Summer seasons, pantos and tours still take up a huge chunk of his diary. For a comic to look funny, even before opening his mouth, is a real bonus and Jimmy quickly found that he had this edge over his contemporaries. "The 'wellies' and stage gear came from experimenting," explains Jimmy. "I picked up the hat in a jumble sale. I looked daft, so audiences expected my act to be daft," he grins, "and I'm pleased to say that I have never disappointed them!"

Jimmy spends as much of his free time as possible with his wife, May and their four children. His favourite hobby is surrounding himself with happiness and contentment, and as much laughter as possible. Jimmy sees laughter as a very important release valve, and his job is to open it, as wide as possible.

In 'An Evening with Jimmy Cricket', Jimmy relishes the opportunity to spend the first thirty minutes raising the laughter gauge as high as he can, "There are enough long faces in the world, and I don't plan to become one of them!" he says. Chris Gidney from Christians in Entertainment then spends the following half-hour finding out how God and laughter fit together in Jimmy's professional and personal life.

It's an ideal, light-hearted evening of fun that will get them rolling in the aisles, but with a message of God's love and laughter-medicine right at its heart.

It is expected tickets will be available from the Palace Theatre Box Office ☎01803 665800, in March. It is, however, possible to pre-book now through Palace Avenue Methodist Church. Please contact the Torbay Circuit for full details, .