

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

Bristol District



April Newsletter 2018

*The opening letter is written by Rev David Perkins,
Acting Superintendent*

The Main Thing is to Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

So, I read a notice in the window of a car I was stuck behind in a traffic jam. Obviously, it got me pondering. What is the main thing, I asked myself and obviously the answer shifted depending on the situation. Giving someone my attention, meeting a deadline, determining and acting on priorities. One thing church life has taught me is that it is very rare for members of a Christian community to agree on what is important at any given moment. We operate on different agendas, with different prejudices, attitudes, so how can we ever agree? Most of the time we frustrate one another when one person's trivia is another person's priority.

Paul had a clear mission priority – “I was determined to know nothing among you save Christ and him crucified” 1 Cor 2:2. Clearly for him, despite the myriad of issues in Corinth that he writes to address, there is but one “main thing”.

Easter presents us very clearly with such a MAIN THING that everything we think, say and do as Christians must be subject to its power, its meaning and its glory. In practice, test your stance on any issue which you hold to be important and seriously ask yourself whether your position has been subject to death and resurrection on YOUR part. Are you expressing a position where you have died to self and been raised to walk in newness of life with Him? Will the consequences of the position you hold bring glory to Christ and further the work of the Kingdom or simply give you a sense of personal satisfaction – not that those are contradictory but if I'm honest I have found that most of the time they are!

CHRIST HAS DIED, CHRIST IS RISEN.

Rev Dave

NB Deadline for items for the May Newsletter is Friday 27th April

Devastating Beauty

On Friday my hope died.
The sky wept itself dark
The ground broke apart
And all creation cried
For the bloodied innocence
Hammered into a tree.

There were whispers of a torn curtain,
But they didn't reach my ears
Or mend my mangled heart
Or stem the bitter tears
As we took
the body
down.

On Saturday we grieved,
Hiding from the troops
Whom we'd once believed
Would be overthrown
By the carpenter's boy,
Who had preached and fed
And healed,
And was now dead.

But then on Sunday –
The devastating beauty of that Sunday –
When time and space
Were blown out of shape
And angels wrapped in electric grace
Rolled the impossible away.

'He is not here'
They proclaimed
For glory had risen
Our failings were forgiven
And the rules of life
And death were rewritten
As an empty tomb declared
'Love is alive'.

(Poem by Gideon Heugh, Tearfund)

Circuit News/Events

Rev Rachael Wilson

As many of you will already know, Rachael has now started her 3-month's sabbatical. She will not be back to work until Friday 22nd June. If you have any enquiries please contact Ian Robertson on 01793 751166 or ian.w.robertson@btinternet.com. For pastoral emergencies please ring Rev Dave Perkins on 01793 853197. We would like to wish Rachael and Graham well as they set out on their adventure and to assure them of our prayers.

Circuit Service 20th May

There will be a circuit service on Sunday 20th May at St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon to launch Holy Habits. Please save the date in your diaries. This will be a joint event with North Wilts and will start with tea at 4.30pm followed by the Holy Habits launch service at 5.30pm. There will be car parking on site. More details will be available shortly.

Thy Kingdom Come 10th – 20th May 2018



Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that began in the Church of England in 2016. The Archbishop of Canterbury is inviting people around the world to join the movement, and the Methodist Church of Britain has become a partner in the initiative. The World Methodist Council is encouraging Methodists across the world to take part. The aim of Thy Kingdom Come is that Christians pray that people might know Jesus Christ during a focused time between Ascension and Pentecost from 10 – 20th May 2018. To take part you can sign up and 'pledge to pray' on the Thy Kingdom Come website; www.thykingdomcome.global

Geraldine Latty in concert

Geraldine Latty will be in concert on Saturday 28th April at Sheldon Road Methodist Church, Chippenham. Posters and flyers are attached - if you would like some for your church, please contact Adrian Foster, his details are below.

Details are also available at:

www.northwilts.me/events.htm

Bereaved Parents Support Day

Saturday 9th June CARE for the Family are running a **Bereaved Parents Support Day** at Highworth Community Centre from 10am to 5pm.

The death of a son or daughter at any age is one of the most heart-breaking things a parent ever has to face. These events offer the opportunity to meet others who have been in similar situations and to talk things through, gaining reassurance and hope for the journey ahead.

The link to the event is <http://careforthefamily.cmail20.com/t/r-l-jrdliia-jhidhyujk-n/>

The Greatest Story Ever Toured – at the Bible Society

Join in an entertaining evening of comedy, discovery and music as you journey through the Bible. Hosted by Paul Kerensa (stand-up comedian and scriptwriter for *Miranda* and *Top Gear*) and Andrew Ollerton (author and presenter of *The Bible Course*) with music provided by Sound of Wales.

Tickets will go on sale from mid-April for 'The Greatest Story Ever Toured'. The Swindon event will be at Bible Society HQ on **Friday 25 May**, with doors opening at 7 pm.

Tickets are £6 – (£4.50 for concessions) and include interval refreshments.

Please **save the date** and come and share our passion for the Bible with laughter and learning along the way.

Methodist Women in Britain – Leeds Forum – Bristol District Forum Report

Please see 3 items attached relating to the latest meeting of the forum held in Leeds in February.

Shrivenham

Paul Holloway is hoping to arrange a trip to Oberammergau to see the Passion Play in 2020. He will be giving a talk to the Shrivenham house groups on Wednesday 4th April at Shrivenham Methodist Church at 7.45pm. If you would like to know more about the trip or you are interested in going, then you are very welcome to attend the meeting.

(In 1633 the Oberammergau villagers promised to perform the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ every tenth year, in so far as no one was to die of the plague anymore. The villagers were answered by God and therefore in 1634 the first Passion Play took place. The promise has been kept until today. From May 16th to October 4th 2020 the 42nd Passion Play will take place in Oberammergau.)

Highworth

Highworth Methodist Church are showing The Shack on Good Friday at 7pm. All welcome. No charge.

Dates for your diary

Friday 30 th March	The Shack at Highworth 7pm
Wednesday 4 th April	Oberammergau meeting 7.45pm at Shrivenham
Wednesday 11 th April	LP's and WL's meeting 7.30pm at Braydon
Saturday 28 th April	Geraldine Latty Concert in Chippenham
10 th – 20 th May	Thy Kingdom Come
Sunday 20 th May	Circuit Service at St Joseph's Catholic College 4.30pm
Friday 25 th May	Bible Society entertainment evening
Saturday 9 th June	Bereaved Parents Support Day 10am
Sunday 4 th March	Circuit Service at Highworth 6pm led by Rev D Perkins

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