

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

Bristol District



October Newsletter 2017

The opening letter is written by Rev David Perkins

LET THE WORD OF GOD DWELL IN YOU RICHLY - COLOSSIANS 3 V 16

Where would you visit if money was no object? Bali, a cruise or a Kenyan safari, the choices are endless. Apparently, ICELAND is 'on trend' with its thermal springs and bleak landscapes. But what if you were a place on the way down? COLOSSAE was such a place – its glory days had come and gone. Once described as the *least* important place that ever had a letter written to it by St Paul, Colossae now lived in the shadow of Laodicea and Heirapolis, its partners in a 3 city province. People had left in droves to seek work and fortune elsewhere, but the letter to the Colossians has held a special place as one of the greatest of Paul's letters which includes one of the greatest understandings of the person of Jesus ch 1 v 15-20. Paul never visited Colossae, yet he sends to them through God's word the precious jewels of Christian thought and faith. I remind you of just a few... chapter 1 v 5 there is a hope laid up for you in heaven, v 6 we have been qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in light, v 13 he has delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son and v 21 and you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him... and this is only part of chapter 1. No wonder Paul passionately encourages the Colossians to let the word of God dwell in you richly.

One critical thing - the Greek word for dwell *enoikeo* is the same word that is used by Paul to speak of the Holy Spirit's dwelling in the believer – Romans 8v 11 & 2 Tim 1 v 14 – therefore the embedding of God's word in our hearts is as essential to the Christian to live the Christian life in the power of the Holy Spirit. Why? It is through God's word that the good news comes to us. It is through God's word that the authentic Jesus story is told, it is through God's word that the privileges and challenges of the Christian life are conveyed. The Word convicts and convinces us of Jesus. The Word is the testimony of God to Himself. All these and more are also ministries of the Holy Spirit. He..... is the one who gifts the preacher to proclaim the word, He reminds of Christ, convinces us of Christ, He is God's testimony to His own love as He sheds it abroad in our hearts. To dwell is to take up residency, to make a home - to do it richly is to allow God's word the access that will enrich the life. It is to love the word, to hunger for it, to allow it to speak, rebuke if necessary, challenge when needed, encourage when longing, reveal truth when wandering.

Never before in the history of Christianity has God's word been so accessible and never has it been more neglected.

Rev Dave

NB Deadline for items for the October Newsletter is Monday 23rd October

Circuit News/Events

Christian Concert on Friday 13th October 7.30pm at St Joseph's College

An Evening with Paul Field & Geraldine Latty

Including performances from our own Gospel Choir

Tickets are now selling fast for this event

Join us for this celebration of God's grace in music and song.

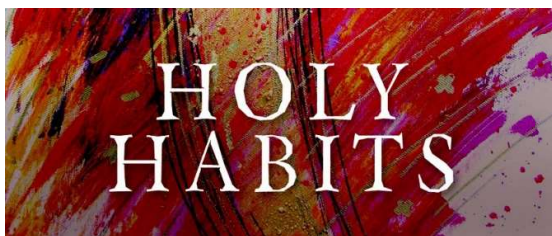
Refreshments will be available and on-site parking is free.

Tickets: £12

Available from: venuehire@stjosephscollege.net [Tel. 01793 714608]

and The Lighthouse Bookshop, Highworth [Tel. 01793 763337]

Holy Habits



with Rev Andrew Roberts

Discipleship specialist in the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network. Previously he was Fresh Expressions' Director of Training

10.00am – 4.00pm, Saturday, 21st October 2017
The Methodist Church
Rope Yard, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4
7BS

Please bring your own packed lunch
Hot drinks available

The Revd Andrew Roberts will be leading a day's seminar to give you an overview of the Holy Habits programme, with suggestions for further reflection and action that can be used individually and by smaller or larger churches in our circuit. Please see attached poster.

Andrew will also be leading worship at Cricklade on Sunday 22nd October at 10.30am.

Ignite! Youth Services

Kevin Magner is starting a worship evening for young people in order to give them a space tailored specifically for them. Anyone is welcome but the focus is on young people. The first one will be on the 8th October at St Mary's Church in Purton and the next one is on the 5th November at RWBMC both at 6pm. Please see attached poster.

Highworth Methodist Church

The Knitted Bible

Highworth Town is going to be transformed during the first week of October. The Methodist Church have managed to borrow **The Knitted Bible Exhibition** but instead of exhibiting it in church it will be going into shop windows to form Town Trail.

Children from the local schools will be taking part in identifying which bible story is in which shop window. Anyone can take part and quiz sheets will be available at the Lighthouse Bookshop.

It is also hoped that alongside the Town Trail we can Yarn Bomb some of the High Street ...so it really will be transformed....in colour and, we pray, in inspiring our children to look at the stories of the bible.

Your prayers for this event are gratefully received and of course you are very welcome to come and take part. Poster attached.

Linda (aka Lou)Ashford

Dates for your diary

Sunday 8 th October	Ignite! Youth Service at St Mary's Purton 6pm
Tuesday 10 th October	LP's & WL's meeting at Highworth 7.30pm
Friday 13 th October	Christian Concert at St Joseph's with Paul Field & Geraldine Latty
Sunday 15 th October	Valedictory Service at Blunsdon 3pm
Saturday 21 st October	Holy Habits introduction with Andrew Roberts at RWBMC

Contact details (Upper Thames Circuit)

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A Mobile Phone – by Adrian German

While the Scripture was being read one Sunday in church, I noticed that the minister was scowling at me. After the service, he said “Adrian, I noticed that, once again, you refused my request for everyone to switch off their mobile ‘phones. Why is that?”

“Well, Reverend, it’s like this,” I said.

“Before the start of a service, and sometimes during, I view my friends list on Facebook and I pray for each of them. On other occasions, I scroll through the contacts on my ‘phone and pray for each of them by name.

I have an app which allows me to access different versions of the Bible – I also use this for my daily Bible reading.

If there is a word I don’t understand in your sermon then I often use Google to discover its meaning.

If God chastises me, as He often does in worship, I make a note using the calendar on my ‘phone so I don’t forget what I have learned. Similarly, if I want to remember a key element of your sermon, I write that too as a calendar note and make sure I read it every Sunday thereafter.

Sometimes I “check in” at a church and occasionally if you say something really noteworthy I post it on Facebook during the service.

On one occasion, a colleague telephoned during the service so I went outside to take the call.¹ He had just returned from holiday and found his house had been ransacked. I told him I was in the middle of a church service so I would go back and pray for him and then drop round immediately the service had finished.

So you see, Reverend, my ‘phone serves me as a Bible, an almanac, a notepad, an ade-mémoire² and a prayer book. And it helps me to evangelise and serve God."

This story is true³ – mostly.

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Please feel free to share this with whoever you wish, provided I am accurately referenced

¹ With thanks to Paul Holloway of Shrivenham Methodist Church for this story.

² The misspelling is intentional – see my memoirs (1970s section)

³ Inspired by Max Bygraves and T. Texas Tyler, the author of “A deck of cards” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Deck_of_Cards