

TORRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

October 2023 - Issue 140

Welcome to Edition Number 140

Contact e-mail address is newsletter@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk or
bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com

Any comments or items you wish to share, please contact the editor, Dave Watson by e-mail; phone 01237 451437 or to 6 Greenings Road, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, EX39 5LU.

Circuit Contact details: -

Superintendent Minister – Rev Rob Blackhall – 01805 628041 – robertjblackhall@gmail.com

Minister – Rev Andrew Vidamour – 01237 478453 – vidamour@mybroadbandmail.com

Lay Pastoral Assistant – Frank Watson – 07446 157329 -: pastoral.torridgecircuit@outlook.com

Circuit Administrator – Sarah Richards – 01237 472649 – sarahrichards185@gmail.com

Circuit Safeguarding Officer – Jacqui Watson – safeguarding@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk

As well as the Circuit Facebook page – **Torridge Methodist Circuit**, we have a private Facebook Group where we care share thoughts, prayers & other material on **Torridge Methodist Circuit Group**. If you wish to join please push the Join button & I can add you.

Please pray for our Ministers, Rob Blackhall & Andrew Vidamour, for Frank Watson & Sarah Richards and all involved in the varied life of the Circuit; for those connected to the various Chapels & the communities in which they live & work.

CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICES

The Circuit Services continue to take place ON VARIOUS Sunday's on Zoom using the Services that are printed in the Circuit Newsletter. The Services are on Sunday Evenings starting at 6.30pm – but the 'doors will be open' at about 6.15pm. The contact/entry details will be send out during the preceding week & the Service can be accessed via a computer/laptop with camera/microphone, I Pad/Phone or using a 'normal' phone. Even if you have a device with camera/microphone & do not wish to be seen – you can join in without the camera on.

If you do not receive an email or want further information – please contact Sarah Richards, Circuit Administrator on 01237 472649 or sarahrichards185@gmail.com

FROM REV ROB BLACKHALL – SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER

Dear Friends,

One of the joys of being a Methodist Minister is being alongside the people of God in our Chapels; sharing with the saints, the term that the New Testament uses when refereeing to God's people. I appreciate your generosity, in practice and in thought. A caring and loving attitude; displaying discernment and wisdom. In short being the light and salt that Jesus refers to in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:13-16), putting the love of Jesus into reality. Later, Jesus compares the Kingdom of heaven to being yeast (Matthew 13:33); and I will testify to the way in which so many of our folk make a quiet difference to their communities. So much goes on, which is not seen; but is very much part of the Christian way. Thank you.

One of the sadness of being a Methodist Minister is being alongside some of the people of God in our Chapels and beyond. Locally, around our District and indeed nationally I have witnessed

words, both written and spoken; as well as in actions, done and not done; which I am afraid do not reflect well upon us. Words of a self-righteous nature; often judgmental in character; which suggest that someone hasn't been near their New Testament recently. Lacking discernment; and having the affect of undermining and devaluing the contribution of others. To paraphrase the words of St Paul, more resounding gong and clanging cymbal than the language of love (1 Cor 13).

We can all get it wrong; and indeed, it seems so on most days. The need to say our confessions to Almighty God and say sorry to others remains.

Jesus observed, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25). The Church today, in every shape and form, needs friends; not the back-biting. It needs the positives of the Kingdom of God; not the negatives.

My mother, now there was a wise woman; would say to her four waring children, "If you cannot say anything nice, then don't say anything at all". You see, I did listen.

We are all to face in the coming months, a General Election. I fear for the public discourse; for the way that politicians speak to each other is quite frankly unedifying and unhelpful. A general election of mud slinging is not what the country needs. There are serious issues to discuss and debate. As there are in the Church; but before we can comment don't we need to put our own house in order?

Barnabas, a fellow traveler with Saint Paul, is lauded for being an encourager. That is a good label to have; and to have that said of you.

In Romans 16, a chapter, that reads a bit like an appendix, Paul mentions a whole series of names; some of whom we know from other places; but others that make the briefest of brief appearances in our scriptures. They are thanked and praised for their work for the sake of the Gospel. These are people, in ways we don't really know, who built up and supported the work of Christ Jesus. You know it is a joy to be a Methodist Minister and to be around the saints; well, most of the time.

Every blessing - Rob

PASTORAL COMMITTEES AND CHURCH COUNCILS

Please pray for this autumn round of meetings. These are times to meet in fellowship to think, pray and discuss the work of God among us.

Wednesday 4th October

10-12.30 TIME FOR GOD at Bideford.

I will be leading a guided meditation from 11am.

COVID

1.If you are feeling unwell, particularly with respiratory infections, you should think seriously about keeping away from others, and not going to Church events; especially if you test positive for Covid. Tests are still available.

2. Continue to be vigilant with regards to hygiene, especially where food is concerned.

3. Ventilation remains something to consider and keep under review.

Revd Andrew Vidamour

After months of discussion and soul searching it has been decided that the Revd Andrew Vidamour will become part time. This will be 80% of a full time Presbyterian.

This will not mean that Andrew has an extra time off each week, but his additional time off will be in blocks.

We all face a variety of callings; Andrew is called to be a son and to be a presbyter. This new way of working will enable him to make the most of the time with his father in Guernsey; but also give himself adequate space for rest, re-creation and recuperation.

It means that not all of Andrew's time away will be spent with his father, but give himself space and time.

We greatly value Andrew's ministry among us; and he feels called to continue to contribute among us.

We wish Andrew all the best in this new way of serving. God Bless you Andrew.

Obviously there will be some practical issues around this. Andrew will not be preaching as often. We anticipate that the normal rounds of meetings will fall in the time he is here; as will major Church festivals.

During Andrew's times away, those will be published, Frank Watson will be the first port of call for Pastoral issues for Bideford, Littleham, Northam and Parkham. I shall assume Pastoral Charge during that time. Other things, will come to me or to the Circuit stewards.

More details will be discussed at the Church Councils.

At the same time we are looking again at the roles that the staff play so we can equalize up work loads and enable us to move forward as a circuit to fulfil OUR CALLING; to be the people of God in this place.

If anyone wishes to speak with me about this, or anything else, then please do.

With every blessing
Rob Blackhall

DATES 2023/24

CIRCUIT MEETING

Wednesday 22nd November 2pm

Wednesday 20th March 2pm

Tuesday 18th June 7.30pm

CHURCH COUNCILS

Oct 9-20

Mar 5-16

May 20-25, June 3-7

LOCAL PREACHERS 7pm

Tuesday 28th November

Tuesday 19th March

Wednesday 25th June

CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING 7pm

Thursday 14th March

PASTORAL MEETINGS

Sept 25-Oct 6

April 8-19

ENCIRCLED IN CARE

NORTHAM

Tuesdays 2pm

12th September

Connecting Care and Discipleship

18th October

Children, Young People and Pastoral Care

14th November

Across The Generations

12th December

Health, Healing & Well-being

9th January

Mental Health Issues

6th February

Loss and Bereavement

12th March

Domestic Abuse

TORRINGTON

Wednesdays 7pm

13th September

19th October

15th November

13th December

10th January

7th February

13th March

WAYS OF WORSHIP (TBC)

CIRCUIT CONVERSATIONS (Sunday 3-5)

Once a Quarter

22nd Oct at 3pm at Torrington

ZOOM SERVICES

2 a month (TBC)

THY KINGDOM COME

May 9 Ascension Day to

May 19 Pentecost, 2024

BIBLE MONTH

June 2024

SYNODS

Sat 27th April TBC

HOLY WEEK

Sunday 24th March Palm Sunday

Sunday 31st March EASTER DAY

LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

2pm Kendor

Sept 5

April 23

Oct 31

June 4

Jan 23

(July 9)

March 5

ADVENT STUDY

Wednesday 2pm

Nov 29th

Dec 6th

Dec 13th

Dec 20th

LENT STUDY

Thursdays 2pm

Feb

15th, 22nd, 29th

March

7th, Wed 13th, Tues

19th

QUIET MORNING / TIME FOR GOD

Time for Quiet and for
reading 10-12.30

11-12 Guided Meditation

Wed 4th Oct Bideford

Wed 1st Nov Alverdiscott

Wed 6th Dec Torrington

Thurs 4th Jan Buckland

Thurs 8th Feb Langtree

Wed 6th March Lake

Thurs 11th April Northam

Wed 1st May Black Torr

Wed 5th June Milton D

Thurs 4th July

Circuit prayer Diary

There are copies of the Circuit Prayer Diary for 2023/24 now available. These will be distributed to Chapels via the Pastoral Meetings and/ or Church Councils.

This also incorporates the District Prayer Diary. For each day of the month there is a subject for the Circuit and the District; some at the same. There is also a column for "My Prayer" for you to add your own prayer reminder for the month.

I commend this to you.

God Bless - Rob Blackhall

FROM REVD ANDREW VIDAMOUR

Dear friends,

In 1913, one of my great-grandfathers was a founder member of the West United Agricultural and Horticultural Show in Guernsey. He served on the Show Committee for some years, as did my grandfather, later on, so I have a strong family connection to the event, which is thankfully still going strong.

This year, I have been fortunate to attend the hundredth West Show (several had to be cancelled due to the World Wars and foot-and-mouth disease). This was a great success, with fine weather and large crowds. I was both interested and moved to see an Exhibition of the history of the Show, as well as enjoying the usual features of the event. Unusually, too, I visited the North Show in Guernsey this year.

Afterwards, I reflected that such events share some common features with the Kingdom of God (or the Kingdom of Heaven, as it is sometimes called). Both are diverse: they include people of all ages, nationalities, personalities and so on. Also, people's gifts and talents are welcomed and nurtured: at the Shows, in the produce and handicraft classes, for example, there is a celebration of people's skills and creativities, and, while some prizes are awarded, all the entries are displayed and effort is as highly valued as attainment.

Likewise, as we consider the parables of Jesus about the Kingdom of God, for instance, we often find themes of growth, nurture, welcome and hospitality – in such parables as the Mustard Tree (e.g. Mark 4: 30-32) and the Great Feast (e.g. Matthew 22: 1-13). There is a radical equality and a focus on human flourishing here. And partly as a result of all this, there may come great joy: how good it was, to see so many people enjoying the Shows in Guernsey, in bright sunshine, and this may echo the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives, in the Church, in our communities and in our world as we rejoice in the mercy and generosity of God in Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God.
Andrew Vidamour

EDI TRAINING

- If you wish to do the EDI course online, can you let Sarah Richards know.

To do the training online please take the following steps:-

1. Go to <https://mcb.theologyx.com/> If you have already used Theology X (probably for the Advanced safeguarding module) use the same username and password to sign into MCBX (the new Methodist online training platform).
2. If you do not have a Theology X account, just go straight to the MCBX and register there to create an account.
3. There you will find the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Module
4. You do not need to do it all at once but can do as little or as much as your time allows.
5. At the end you will be given a certificate (via email). Please could you let Sarah Richards have a copy of that so we can keep a record.

FRANK WATSON – LAY PASTORAL WORKER

As I sit down to write this, the rain is pouring and I have already had to get the winter coats out! As the days get shorter and the nights get longer we can soon begin to feel a bit low in ourselves. We may start to see less people because we don't want to venture out in the bad weather. It can very easily become a situation where we haven't spoken or seen anyone in a few days.

So, over the next few months, I will be suggesting a few ideas on things we can do to keep us occupied as we travel through these seasons together.

My first idea, is for any knitters amongst us. As I have been chairing the latest round of Pastoral Committees, I have given each church a few knitting pattern booklets from The Mission to Seafarers.

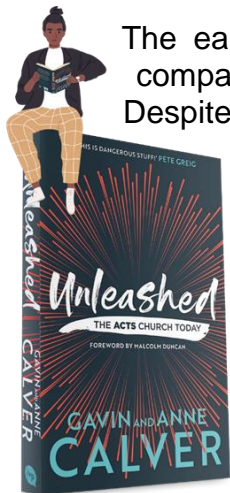
There are three hat patterns and a pattern for fingerless mittens. Within the booklet it says "Knitted items made by you, with love helps seafarers arriving in the UK and around the world during the long, cold days and nights spent on the open seas. From woolly hats to fingerless mittens, each item of knitted clothing finds a home and the seafarers they're matched to are extremely grateful for the extra warmth!"

If you think you would like to make any of the items then please feel free and once they are finished just let one of your church stewards have them and they will make sure the items get to me to be collected and sent off to the Mission. Happy Knitting!

Circuit Book Club

The first book we are reading to kick start our Circuit Book Club is...

Unleashed: The Acts Church Today



The early church spread with remarkable speed, impelled by joy, urgency, profound compassion, and the day-to-day experience of working in the power of the Holy Spirit. Despite opposition at all levels, the first Christians expressed their love and wonder in acts of kindness, worship, and their eagerness to share the good news of the risen Jesus.

Gavin and Anne Calver explore what this extraordinary historical account means for believers today, including: The Holy Spirit in the life of the church; taking risks; living together in the power of the Spirit; works and wonders; hearing from God; responding to the call of God; miracles then and now.

If you signed up for this first book, we will be delivering your book and supporting material to you as soon as it arrives. If you did not make the deadline for signing up and would like to join in, I have two spare copies so it is not too late! But once they are gone they are gone... so contact me quick!

A reminder to the group that Discussion Sessions will be held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday's of the month held on Zoom at 7.00pm. **Starting on Wednesday 18th October 2023.** The Zoom link will be sent out before the first discussion session.

Encircled in Care Course

The Encircled in Care Course continues, a reminder that the course is designed as stand alone sessions and therefore gives you the option of attending some or all of the topic sessions. Below is a short description of what is contained within each session.

After a conversation with different people, because we are heading into autumn and winter it has been decided that the Wednesday (Torrington) session will now (from October) move to 2.00pm and not be held in the evening.

Therefore, both Tuesday at Northam and Wednesday at Torrington, will both start at 2.00pm. The dates of each session are listed below and will continue to be advertised in the Circuit Dates List.

Session 5: Children, Young People and Pastoral Care			
In this session we... explore how we offer pastoral care to children and young people, and consider how best to listen to children and young people.	Tuesday 18 th October	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 19 th October	Torrington	14:00
Session 6: Across The Generations			

In this session we... explore the idea that the Christian community is multi-generational, and caring takes place both from younger to older and from older to younger, increase our understanding of issues of spirituality and ageing, and provide information about the challenges of dementia.	Tuesday 14 th November	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 15 th November	Torrington	14:00
Session 7: Health, Healing and Well-being			
In this session we... explore how issues of health and wholeness are part of pastoral ministry, and offer guidelines for the ministry of healing and reconciliation.	Tuesday 12 th December	Northam	14:00
	TBC	Torrington	14:00
Session 8: Mental Health Issues			
In this session we... increase our awareness of mental health issues, and consider how churches might support people affected by mental health problems, and their families and friends.	Tuesday 9 th January	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 10 th January	Torrington	14:00
Session 9: Loss and Bereavement			
In this session we... increase the confidence of all in working through issues of loss with people, consider how churches might help people 'return' following the loss of a loved one, and explore the stages of grief.	Tuesday 6 th February	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 7 th February	Torrington	14:00
Session 10: Domestic Abuse			
In this session we.. recognise that Domestic abuse affects people within the life of the Church as well as in the wider community, reflect on the issues of domestic abuse, and consider what appropriate responses we might make.	Tuesday 12 th March	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 13 th March	Torrington	14:00

TALKING ABOUT CHRISTIAN FAITH

Just want to give the Circuit heads up about a new series of conversations Frank and I will be leading this September. The discussions are aimed at people on the fringe of our chapels. Maybe people who support our coffee mornings or fundraisers, people we meet through Toddler groups, Sunday Breakfast, Youth groups or Messy Church. Anyone really who is faith aware but maybe not regular church attenders. Personal invitation always works best but towards September we will be issuing posters and advertising on social media. If you know of anyone who might want to come please give Frank or I a ring and we can explain more. The groups will be informal and limited to about 6-8 people.

Here's a flavour of the subjects for discussion....
 Week 1 - What does Christian Faith mean today?

Week 2 - Does climate change impact our faith?

Week 3 - Does knowing Jesus really change peoples lives?

Week 4 - What does the word 'Church' signify today?

Week 5 - What does our Christian faith offer to those suffering in our world?

Week 6 - Has this series of conversations impacted you in any way?

More details to follow ...Rev. Lynne Burgon

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Online Training Programme 2023

This training will now be only delivered in person in the Circuit.

CIRCUIT IN-PERSON FOUNDATION TRAINING

CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING FOUNDATION TRAINING SESSION – Dates for this will be announced later so people who need to do the training again as a 'Refresher' can be accommodated.

Advanced Module

The Advanced course is being delivered Online and Onsite across the region. So if you are just waiting to do the Gathering Signing Off Session please contact Jacqui for details. If you think that you do need to do the Online Advanced Course, please speak to Jacqui, who will confirm whether you need to do this Course.

Online Advanced is to be booked through your Circuit Safeguarding Officer, the course is an e:learning exercise through an online platform which delegates progress through at their own speed. On registration, delegates will be given the booking link to sign off your learning journey at the relevant gathered session.

After registering, the Gathered Session date will be given - **note you cannot attend a gathered session until you have completed all of the online modules;**

CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICE

Sunday 8th October – Elsie Potter

Call to Worship

Come, taste what God has to offer.

O Lord, we come.

Come, hear what Christ has to say.

O Lord, we come.

Come, see what we are called to.

O Lord, we come.

StF 134 Christ Whose Glory Fills The Sky

Prayers

God of all creation, thank you

for calling us to be stewards of your earth and your treasures, for calling us to tend your Gospel, to share the fruit of your Spirit,

to encourage your disciples in their daily lives,

and to work together for the good of all –

joyfully, humbly and urgently, in Jesus' name. Amen.

A Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

*God our father,
gracious in your loving,
merciful in your judgements,
steadfast in your faithfulness to us,
compassionate to all:
may we always be thankful for all you have done,
from creation to the end of time,
and into the eternity of your rest;
may we always sing your praises,
speak of your greatness,
and bring glory to you by our actions.
Gracious, merciful, steadfast, compassionate, loving God. **Amen.***

Assurance of forgiveness

*Patient God, you give us another chance
to hear your message of hope, challenge and grace,
through the words of Scripture and of others,
through the silence of prayer, through the beauty of creation; a chance to act and react with hearts
in tune with yours, and with that freedom to give our all in your service, rejoicing that it is never too
late to begin again.
Thank you, Lord. **Amen.***

StF 351 In Christ Alone

Scripture Isaiah 5 vv 1 -7

StF 677 Christ is Made the Sure Foundation

Scripture Matthew 21 vv 33 - 46

Sermon

Meditation

StF 258 You are the Vine

Prayers of Intercession

*Let us pray to the Lord.
For people whose lives have been turned upside down as a result of conflict at home, in the
community, between neighbours and nations...
For people whose lives could have been very different had they grown up knowing love and
compassion, knowing boundaries and respect...
For people who have been traumatised by sudden change, who have lost those close to them
through illness or accident, and for those affected by natural or avoidable disaster...
For people who find it hard to make changes in their own lives, through fear of stepping out into
the unknown, or fear of going within and confronting the past...
For people who seek the courage to make a difference in the world, those who challenge
structures and systems to work for the greater good, those working alongside people in need...
Amen*

StF 566 Take My Life and Let it be

Prayer

Go in Jesus' name, restored and renewed.

May you know God's face shining on you,

and God's Spirit flowing through you,

So that your life may be fertile ground for good news. Amen

BIDEFORD METHODIST CHURCH



Free Concert!

Bideford Methodist Church
Friday October 20th 7:30 pm
With the Applecorers Shanty group
& Bideford Town Band



Contact Dianne on ☎ 07765130403

Donations to the Foodbank and Harbour Community

BUCKLAND BREWER

We continue to Live Stream Services on the Buckland Brewer Methodist Church You-Tube Channel on the 3rd & 4th Sunday in the Month & the 5th Sunday if there is one.

The Weekly '**Time Together' Toddler Group** continues on Mondays, during Term Time at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** with both Methodist & Anglican volunteers being present. We meet on Monday's from 9.30am to about 12noon, The cost is £1.50 per family & the numbers have been steadily increasing – families do not just come from Buckland but from neighbouring communities – they often come as friendship groups – so if anyone is aware of any Babies & Toddlers, who with their parents, grandparents or carers are looking for a 'chilled out' session of play & chat with tea/coffee/biscuits – just point them in the direction of Buckland Chapel – Dave Watson 07484 223515 or bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com

The **Wednesday Weekly Coffee Morning** also continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** from 10am-12noon – this is for **ALL** but especially for those who have moved into the parish/village since lockdown or anyone who would like to meet others in the community over a mug of tea/coffee with Biscuits & possibly Cake!!

The **Monthly 'Mini Market'**, raising funds for Community Groups in Buckland continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church**. The next one will be on Saturday 14th October from 10am to 1pm with many items on sale – Tea/Coffee/Biscuits will be available for Chapel Funds.

The **Community Choir**, based in the Chapel is having a couple of months off & return to practice in September.

TORRINGTON METHODIST CHAPEL

Torrington Methodist Church welcome all to their Coffee Mornings where delicious Bacon Butties are served and where cakes and bric-a-brac are sold. The next Coffee Morning is on Saturday 21st October from 10am till 12noon.

NORTHAM AND BIDEFORD BIBLE STUDIES UPDATE

We have started again on Tuesday Afternoons at 2pm

At the home of Diana Yendall.
Led by Julia Spencer.

01237 477836 or 01237 425361
01237 425361

This group is open to all: If YOU would like to join us you would be VERY WELCOME, even if you can only come now and then.

We are very much a discussion group where we all learn from each other.

We will be Studying: The Book of Revelation

Andrew says: *One important distinction: I suggested that Revelation was written for a pre-Christendom Church (i.e. before the Constantinian Settlement around 320 CE), under persecution, and we may consider the Church in Western Europe now to be in a post-Christendom situation, which may be relevant.*

Dates: The Church in the World Rev 1:9-3:22

- | | | |
|---------|---|----------------------------------|
| October | 3 rd | Bible Study |
| 1. | Suffering for the Church Rev 4: 1- 8:1 | |
| | 10 th | Frank's Encircled in Care Course |
| | 17 th | Bible Study |
| 2. | Warning for the World Rev 8:2 -11: 18 | |
| | 24 th | Bible Study |
| 3. | The Drama of History Rev 11:19-15:4 | |
| | 31 st | Bible Study |
| 4. | Punishment for the World Rev 15:5-16:21 | |
| | November 7 th | Bible Study |
| 5. | Babylon the whore Rev 17:1- 19:10 | |
| | 14 th | Frank's Encircled in Care Course |
| | 21 st | Bible Study |
| 6. | The Drama behind the History Rev 19:11-21:8 | |
| | 28 th | Bible Study |
| 7. | Jerusalem the Bride Rev 21:9-22:21 | |
| | December 5 th | NO Bible Study |
| | 12 th | Frank's Encircled in Care Course |
| | January 9 th | Frank's Encircled in Care Course |

Do we want to start again on 16th January or February - depending on the weather?

MILTON DAMEREL NEWS

We are announcing a new **BIBLE STUDY** starting on Tuesday 31st October at 10.30am in the Schoolroom at **Milton Damerel Chapel**. This is an Ecumenical 'venture' with Thornbury St Peter's Church, but a warm welcome to those interested in joining us. The leader is Revd Stephen Skinner and has asked for suggestions for topics/books people would like to cover.

LANGTREE METHODIST CHURCH

Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal

Packing Party Saturday 21st October 10am – 1pm at Langtree Chapel Sunday School Room

We decided earlier in the year to support Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal as in previous years. We have made a start by making some pencil cases, bracelets and knitted items to put in the boxes.

Our packing party will be on Saturday October 21st 10am – 1pm. There will be coffee, tea and cake. Come along if you can, to help pack a box or just for the company and cake! We have some flat-pack boxes available (saves time wrapping) and some leaflets with packing instructions and ideas. If you would like a box/leaflet, please let me know and I will make sure you get one. The filled boxes will be taken to our local distribution centre at Grosvenor Church in Barnstaple in November. More details are available on the Samaritans Purse website with options to pack a box online, stories, craft ideas, resources etc.

<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

Gift ideas that can be included in boxes are stationery items (some children can only attend school if they have the necessary pencils, pens and notepads etc), soap, flannel, soft toy, small game/musical instrument, comb, hat and gloves. You can also include a Christmas card or photo to make the box more personal. We have been given over 100 toothbrushes this year so have a plentiful supply!

Many thanks -

Cathy Ley 01805 601247 withacott@btconnect.com or home@withacott.co.uk

FAITH IN POLITICS

At The Mint, Exeter on Saturday 7th October 2023, from 10-4pm

Keynote Speakers:

Sir Gary Streeter MP

Andy Flannagan, Executive Director of Christians in Politics

Steve Hucklesby, Policy Advisor of Joint Public Issues Team

A development day primarily designed for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, but open to all.

Join us for conversation, bible study and theological input.

Bring your own lunch, refreshments provided.

To book a place please email admin@pemd.org.uk

The event will also be accessible via Zoom.

Livestream - to join the event via Zoom - please use the details below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92723088874?pwd=cXMxd1pSL0JPS2t5WHV2WGU3WmxvUT09>

Meeting ID: 927 2308 8874

Passcode: 833685

REFLECTING ON THE LIFE OF THE REVD LEO OSBORN

By the Revd Martin Turner

Monday mornings at Wesley College, 1975, were liturgy with the formidable Raymond George. "Leo, you seem to be reading something under the table" "Oh Mr George, it's the Birmingham

football paper, I brought it in to ask if you think it is appropriate to have a thanksgiving service for Villa winning the League Cup!"

There were always two sides to Leo. He was one of the wisest leaders in Methodism, ministering at large and lively churches, a much loved and respected Chair of the Newcastle District, President of Conference and latterly Chair of the Resignations Panel, lead in Methodist - Roman Catholic discussions, valued member of the Faith and Order Committee and mentor to many.

His ministry was threaded through with pastoral care, which was the theme of his 2011 Presidential year. Without formal academic qualifications he was scholarly, reflective, well read and a fine preacher. He offered deep wisdom and prayerful insight into the leadership of Methodism, many were grateful for a discreet and timely word in times of trouble.

He never forget his evangelical roots, in later years adding to that richness the treasures of pilgrimage and contemplative Celtic spirituality. He faithfully served the Lord he loved all his life, the mind of Christ his Saviour ruled his life in everything.

The other side of Leo wider Methodism may not always have seen. He was hilariously funny, with an acerbic wit aimed at all and sundry, but especially towards friends who were in his view unfortunate enough not to support Aston Villa!

In all his ministry Leo was wonderfully supported by Charlotte. Theirs was a marriage marked by individuality, mutuality and love. Charlotte's support to Leo throughout his various ministries was returned as he supported her late call to Anglican ministry. Leo was a friend to so many, he was my best friend. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

The Revd Martin Turner is a retired minister who has served across 38 years in Yorkshire, Hertfordshire and Westminster and who now cares for St Michael's Whaddon LEP.

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON NET ZERO POLICIES

A joint statement by
The Baptist Union of Great Britain
The Methodist Church
The United Reformed Church

We are dismayed that the Prime Minister is delaying the implementation of policies to achieve net zero. As Christian leaders we are deeply committed to encouraging all within our sphere of influence to be ambitious in reaching net zero as we seek to care for God's creation. This transition must be rapid, equitable and just.

At a time when so many people are struggling financially, the government has a crucial role to play in ensuring the cost of transition to net zero does not fall most heavily on those least able to afford it. Delaying measures to insulate homes will have the opposite effect, and slowing efforts to reduce fossil fuel use will increase climate impacts on vulnerable communities around the globe.

Extreme weather events this year have demonstrated the urgency of the situation. The independent Climate Change Committee have assessed that even current policy measures are insufficient to meet the UK's climate targets. The government needs to urgently demonstrate how it will get the UK back on track to reach net zero before 2050.

The commitments made at COP26 were instrumental in providing confidence to industry, investors and civil society that the UK was serious about rising to the climate challenge. It is a source of

extreme disappointment that the Prime Minister's announcement will damage that confidence and undermine our collective efforts. As a country, we have moral and legal responsibilities to show leadership in tackling the climate emergency together.

Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain
Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, Moderator of General Assembly, United Reformed Church
Revd Gill Newton, President of the Methodist Conference
Deacon Kerry Scarlett, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

The following is the Plan for October & November

HC= Holy Communion PC= At Parish Church
MC= Methodist Church C& F= Coffee and Fellowship
Café= Café Worship SB=Sunday Breakfast
T = Transport

Post codes of Chapels

Alverdiscott – EX31 3PT	Bideford (High Street) – EX39 2AN
Black Torrington – EX21 5QF	Buckland Brewer – EX39 5LP
Langtree – EX38 8NF	Littleham – EX39 5HW
Milton Damerel – EX22 7DJ	Northam – EX39 1BS
Parkham – EX39 5PG	Shebbear – EX21 5SJ
Sheepwash – EX21 5NA	Torrington – EX38 8AL

Lectionary Readings for October

1 Oct – 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4,12-16; Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32
8 Oct – 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20; Psalm 19; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46
15 Oct – 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 32:1-14; Psalm 106:1-6,19-23; Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14
22 Oct – 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 33:12-23; Psalm 99; I Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22
29 Oct – 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90:1-6,13-17; I Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46

Lectionary Readings for November

5 Nov – 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time
Joshua 3:7-17; Psalm 107:1-7,33-37; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12
12 Nov – 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Joshua 24:1-3a,14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13
12 Nov – Remembrance Sunday
Isaiah 25:1-9 or Isaiah 52:7-12 or Micah 4:1-8; Psalm 9:9-20 or Psalm 46; Romans 8:31-35,37-39
or Revelations 22:1-5; Matthew 5:1-12 or Matthew 5:43-48 or John 15:9-17
19 Nov – 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30
26 Nov – Sunday before Advent
Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24; Psalm 95:1-7a or Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

	Oct 1	Oct 8	Oct 15	Oct 22	Oct 29
	Ord 26	Ord 27	Ord 28	Ord 29	Ord 30
At Home Worship	X	Potter Zoom 6.30pm	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am	X
Bideford 10.30am	D Watson	Macbeth	Vidamour HC	Harris	Spencer 11am at URC
Northam 10.30am	Booth Harvest	Spencer T Messy Church 4pm	Bate Fellowship 4pm Vidamour	Burgon HC	Price
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Vidamour on 6th Oct	D Watson on 20th Oct	@Lake	X
Langtree 11am	Bate	@Parish Church Harvest	Blackhall HC	@Lake	LA
Milton Damerel 11am	X	Blackhall Harvest	Cafe	@Lake	X
Shebbear 10.30am	US @Parish Church Harvest	C&F	United @Parish Church	Ley United	X
Sheepwash 11am	Harris Harvest	@Baptist Church	@Parish Church	Village	X
	TORRINGTON	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST CHURCH	
Alverdiscott 11am	Blackhall Harvest	X	Hill HC	X	United @Parish Church
Torrington 10.30am	C Biggs	Harding	Hall-Tomkin	Blackhall HC	Booth
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Alwington	Vidamour @Parish Church	X	X	X	
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC) 10am (MC)	HC @Parish Church @9.30am	Price	Anglican	Booth	D Watson/LA
Littleham 10.30am	X	Vidamour Harvest United	X	Withall	X
Parkham 11am	Harvest @Parish Church	SB	@Parish Church	HC @Parish Church	Alternative Worship

	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
	Ord 31	Ord 32 Remembrance	Ord 33 Safeguarding	Sunday before Advent
At Home Worship	X	Blackhall Zoom 6.30pm	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am
Bideford 10.30am	Ley	Booth	Burgon HC	Vidamour
Northam 10.30am	Potter	Parish Church 10am Messy Church 4pm	Vidamour HC	Withall
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Blackhall HC on 10th Nov	Vidamour on 24th Nov	@Lake
Langtree 11am	Hall-Tomkin	@Parish Church	Blackhall HC	@Lake
Milton Damerel 11am	X	D Watson AAW	Cafe	@Lake
Shebbear 10.30am	C&F	Parish Church Remembrance	United @Parish Church	Hill United
Sheepwash 11am	Withall	@Baptist Church	@Parish Church	Village
	TORRINGTO N	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST CHURCH
Alverdiscott 11am	Blackhall HC	X	Potter	X
Torrington 10.30am	Harris	Blackhall Remembrance	Macbeth HC	F Watson & Sheriff
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH
Alwington	@ Torrington	X	X	X
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC) 10am (MC)	HC @Parish Church @9.30am	Anglican at 10.45am @Chapel	Anglican	Blackhall HC
Littleham 10.30am	X	United @Parish Church	X	Harris HC
Parkham 11am	SB	United @Parish Church	Spencer T	HC @Parish Church

Activities, Events and Meetings - October 2023

Sun 01	Black History Month (until Tue 31) Silver Sunday*		
	Harvest Festival with Shared Lunch	10:30	Northam
	Harvest Festival	11:00	Alverdiscott
	Harvest Festival	11:00	Sheepwash
Mon 02	Good Money Week** (until Sun 08) 'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 03	Toddlers' Tune Time	09:15-10:15	Northam
	Torrington with Alverdiscott Pastoral Committee	14:30	Torrington
	Shebbear Pastoral Committee	19:00	Milton Damerel
Wed 04	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	'Time for God' Quiet Morning	10:00-12:30	Bideford
	Coffee Morning	10:30-12:00	Shebbear Village Hall
	Worship and Community Lunch (<i>Booking for Lunch required</i>)	11:30	Northam
Thu 05	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Alverdiscott
	Thursday Fellowship	14:15	Northam
	Bible Study	19:30	Langtree
Fri 06	Talking about Christian Faith – Session 2: How does climate change impact our Christian faith?	19:30-21:00	TBC
Sat 07	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 08	Good Money Sunday** Homeless Sunday Prisons Sunday Prisons Week (until Sat 14)		
	Coffee and Fellowship	10:30	Shebbear (Lake)
	United Harvest Festival followed by Bring and Share Lunch	10:30	Littleham
	Harvest Festival	11:00	Milton Damerel
	Sunday Breakfast	11:00	St James's, Parkham
	Messy Church	16:00-17:30	Northam
	Circuit Evening Worship	18:30	Zoom
Mon 09	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Shebbear Church Council	19:00	Langtree
Tue 10	World Homeless Day Toddlers' Tune Time	09:15-10:15	Northam
	West Torridge Church Council	19:00	Buckland Brewer
Wed 11	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 12	Bideford Church Council	10:00	Bideford
	Bible Study	19:30	Langtree
Fri 13	Talking about Christian Faith – Session 3: How does knowing Jesus change people's lives?	19:30-21:00	TBC
Sat 14	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 15	Week of Prayer for World Peace (until Sun 22) Annual Commissioning of Pastoral	10:30	Bideford

	Visitors Service with Holy Communion		
	Café Worship	11:00	Milton Damerel
	Sunday Fellowship	16:00	Northam
Mon 16	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 17	Challenge Poverty Week (until Mon 23)		
	Toddlers' Tune Time	09:15-10:15	Northam
	Encircled in Care Course (Children, Young People and Pastoral Care)	14:00	Northam
	Torrington with Alverdiscott Church Council	19:00	Torrington
Wed 18	Anti-Slavery Day		
	Luke the Evangelist		
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Coffee Morning	10:30-12:00	Shebbear Village Hall
	Encircled in Care Course (Children, Young People and Pastoral Care)	14:00	Torrington
	Northam Church Council	14:00	Northam
	Circuit Book Club Discussion Session	19:00	Zoom
Thu 19	Thursday Fellowship	14:15	Northam
	Bible Study	19:30	Langtree
Fri 20	Talking about Christian Faith – Session 4: What does the word 'church' mean to us?	19:30-21:00	TBC
Sat 21	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Torrington
Sun 22	Annual Commissioning of Pastoral		
	Visitors Service with Holy Communion	10:30	Torrington
	Circuit Conversations	15:00	Torrington
Mon 23	One World Week (until Sun 29)		
Tue 24	United Nations Day		
Wed 25	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 26	Bible Study	19:30	Langtree
Fri 27	Talking about Christian Faith – Session 5: What does our Christian faith offer to those suffering in our world?	19:30-21:00	TBC
Sat 28	Simon and Jude, Apostles		
	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Bideford
Sun 29	Bible Sunday		
Mon 30	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 31	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting	14:00	Torrington Manse

* Initially launched by the Sir Simon Milton Foundation as a local campaign to tackle loneliness and isolation, **Silver Sunday** is now a national day where people of all generations can come together by hosting fun and free activities for older people. It is a day where older people can meet new people, visit new places, try new activities and connect with their local communities and the generations around them.

** **Good Money Sunday** is part of UKSIF's **Good Money Week** which aims to help people make better choices with their pensions, savings and investments, and better understand the positive impact they can have on the environment and wider society when it comes to their financial decisions

FROM MANUALS TO HANDBOOKS – PRAYING FOR METHODIST MISSION

Over the past ten years, more than 280,000 copies of the Methodist Prayer Handbook provided Methodists around the world with prayers to support God's work. These are crucial for helping all Methodist people pray for what God is doing with, and through, fellow Methodists across the world and in Great Britain.

Every year, a new edition offers the Church prayers by and for Methodists in local churches, districts and partner churches in other countries. By submitting and praying these prayers, we, as Methodist people, are living out Our Calling.

Our Calling is responding to the gospel of God's love in Christ. So, when we write a prayer for, or pray a prayer in, the Handbook, we are part of God's big gospel plan. That's why it is inspiring to use the Handbook – a global publication having at its heart God's global purposes.

This is the story of the Handbook: how it developed, and how it continues to develop. As an annual publication it changes according to changes across the Church, because these require new prayers for new situations. Both local and global.

All the world

John Wesley wrote in 1739 that "I look on all the world as my parish". And so as Methodists engaged in God's mission we pray. But it was not until 1813 that members of Leeds Wesleyan Methodist Circuit gathered to consider "all the world". The meeting resulted in The Methodist Missionary Society for the Leeds District.

Similar societies formed in Halifax, York, Sheffield, Cornwall and Newcastle. But Leeds was the foundation for the connexional Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, established in 1818.

Past prayers for Methodist mission

Not everyone could go abroad as a Methodist missionary, but everyone could pray. During the nineteenth century, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society supported "intelligent" daily prayer requests for specific mission work or places where the Society was engaged. Around the 1890s, a "fellowship of missionary intercession", the Wesleyan Helpers' Union, used a guide called *What to Pray For*.

This offered "a compendium of missionary information in a cycle of a month", organised not by geography, but by missionary fields: for example, education, and medicine. *What to Pray For* was a product of its time with directive imperialist, language; neither inclusive nor ecumenical.

Later called a Manual, published by the Missionary Society and then the Methodist Church Overseas Division, it contained prayers from day 1 to 28 for the Methodist Church worldwide, while day 29 was for the Methodist Church in Ireland, day 30 for the Methodist Church in Britain, and finally day 31 for the World Council of Churches. When the Church's structures changed in 1996, the Prayer Handbook's scope broadened to add the Methodist Church in Britain's districts opposite worldwide church partners.

Connected for modern mission

Today, the Methodist Prayer Handbook is still arranged as a monthly cycle. Each day's prayers continue to guide Methodists in praying for our church partners in other countries, alongside British districts and programmes for living out Our Calling.