

BIDEFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER May 2008 - Issue 73 - Cost 30p

Welcome to Edition Number 73

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

From Rev Jane Ashplant – Superintendent Minister

If you ever look at the job adverts in the Gazette or North Devon Journal you will see that they are divided between paid work and volunteers. We don't make that distinction in the church. Anyone who claims to be a Christian has a responsibility to serve God in whatever capacity they can. Somehow a rumour has been circulating that it is possible to retire from that responsibility. I am glad to inform you that it isn't possible. And I say glad because surely it is a privilege to serve God and nothing that we do can ever match all that has been done for us.

That being said you would think we might have had some volunteers by now for the circuit vacancies that have been advertised for some time. I'm sorry to say that isn't the case. I see people working very hard in their own churches but it is almost as though we all have our heads down and are not looking at the bigger picture. The fact is, individual churches would not survive without the support of the circuit. So please consider seriously what you could offer to the life of the circuit.

1. Circuit Meeting Secretary - speak to Janet Alford about what this involves. The appointment needs to be made at the next Circuit Meeting on 12th June to start on 1st September.
2. Circuit Secretary for Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA). I repeat what I said at the Circuit Meeting - "It is not the job of the superintendent to hand out envelopes and count money! If there isn't a volunteer for this post before MHA Sunday (8th June) then there will be no one to count the money and I will have to inform MHA that the Bideford Circuit are not able to support them any longer."

I know many of you feel that I shouldn't put the needs in this way but being polite about it hasn't worked! Please don't ignore this appeal and make sure that you make the need known to everyone in your church.

Thank you Jane

Prayer & Praise

The May Prayer & Praise will take place on Thursday 1st May at Alverdiscott at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

June 5th	Instow
July 3rd	Clovelly
August 7th	Torrington
September 4th	Bideford
October 2nd	Littleham
November 6th	Alwington
December 4th	Parkham
January 2009	Gammaton.

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

YOUTH WORK NEWS

Stuff, the youth club for Circuit young people, are beginning to fundraise for their visit to Cambodia to experience what it's like to live in a third world country and to work with groups of children out there doing play and recreation with them. They cooked a Cambodian meal at Torrington church which went very well and recently the group really enjoyed the Windy Cross brass band concert in aid of the project. There will be lots of opportunities to support the group coming up so please look out for events and come and join us. Please pray for them as they work so hard to make this happen and for the people we will get to know whilst there.

Schools work continues with us supporting various young people who are working through issues such as bereavement and divorce. We are also doing some small group work with young people who struggle with anger and also a new life skills course that Debs has written. Please pray that young people are able to take these opportunities and make the most of them.

Youth clubs in the villages are going well, we now have a number of volunteers who are adding greatly to the running of the clubs. Buckland Brewer youth club recently completed an extra project to make a bench that now sits proudly in the middle of the village. Please thank god for our volunteers. If you or anyone you know would like to get involved, please do let us know. If you have a particular skill or interest you could share with the young people, or you could just come and make tea for them or play pool! It doesn't have to be regular, just a one off - we'd love to see you.

The DJ project now have a proper DJ working with them (not just Chris with his Witney Houston LP!) and have been on the first of two outward bound weekends, where they

mountain-biked and abseiled and generally had a fantastic time. The second weekend is in May and includes a lot of canoeing and sleeping out - please pray for warm dry weather!

Chris and Debs 01237 424247

Alwington Methodist Church

Our next coffee mornings will be held at Alwington Methodist Church on Tuesday May 6th, 10.30 to 12noon. Coffee & biscuits £1, bring& buy, homemade cakes. A warm welcome to everyone.

From Julie Spencer @Appledore Methodist Church

The United Service for Christian Aid on Sunday 18th May at Bideford High Street will be led by Revd. Paul Martin. The Speaker will be Charlotte Page, The Christian Aid Youth Advocate, based in Exmouth.

Please come, bring your friends and support the work of Christian Aid.

Christian Aid NEED a new secretary for the Bideford area. Contact Julia or Avril Lowe 01237 425 361

Charlotte Page – Youth Advocate for Devon & Dorset

Charlotte grew up in a village just south of Bristol and very much enjoys West Country life. She was involved with her parish church from a very young age and this was where she was first introduced to the work of Christian Aid. As a teenager she was part of a Christian Youth Group and through the friends she made there and experiences of different Church settings her faith grew.

Over the past four years, Charlotte has been studying at the University of Nottingham. She has an undergraduate degree in Theology and an MA in Theology and Religious Studies specialising in Religious Conflict. Faith and Theology are two of Charlotte's real passions and she is particularly interested in how this faith can be put into action. As Youth Advocate for Christian Aid she engages young people in using their faith to make a difference and encourage them to think about global issues. Charlotte is also involved with Nightchurch in Exeter exploring what it means to be Church and how to reach out to new audiences.

Recently, Charlotte went to Kenya with Christian Aid to see the work that they are doing through their partners on the ground. She is eager to share her stories and experiences to encourage and inspire people from all walks of life to be involved with living their lives for justice. She is not only interested in equipping young people for this but is also keen to meet those who have tirelessly campaigned and fundraised for many years to share experiences and learn from them.

Charlotte now lives in Exeter with friends from University and enjoys cycling, particularly training for the London to Paris Bike Ride that she is undertaking in July to raise money for Christian Aid. In her spare time she enjoys seeing friends and spending time with her Goddaughter.

KNOTS

There is something I don't know that I am supposed to know,

I don't know what it is I don't know and yet am supposed to know,

and I feel I look stupid if I seem both not to know it and not to know what it is I don't know.

Therefore I pretend I know it.

That is nerve racking since I don't know what I must pretend to know.

Therefore I pretend to know everything.

I feel you know what I am supposed to know but you can't tell me what it is because you don't know that I don't know what it is.

You may know what I don't know, but not that I don't know it, and I can't tell you.

So you will have to tell me EVERYTHING.

From KNOTS by R.D. Laing

Northam Methodist Church

The Bright Stars Theatre Group present 'SOME ENCHANTED EVENING' – An Evening of Songs from the Shows on Friday & Saturday 20th & 21st June at Northam Methodist Church. Proceeds are towards the planned trip to Cambodia by young people from the Circuit Youth Group 'STUFF' in 2009.

Shows start at 7pm each day with an extra performance on Saturday at 3pm. Admission is adults £5; OAP's £4 & child £3. To book seats contact 01273 408226

Appledore Methodist Church

SMALL LIGHTWEIGHT FLYMO HOVER MOWER. LITTLE USED AND IN VERY GOOD CONDITION. AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION FROM APPLIEDORE. DONATION TO CHURCH APPRECIATED. TELEPHONE JEAN ON 01237 476493.

From Janet Alford @Torrington Methodist Church

Windy Cross Brass group is still very much alive and ongoing with some events lined up for the summer. We have some new members but would welcome anyone who can play a brass instrument to come and join us. We are very friendly and always provide a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits at the end of the rehearsal.

Our rehearsals take place at the Torrington Methodist Church on alternate Fridays and are as follows: 2nd May at 7.30 pm. Please contact Janet Alford for more details.

Windy Cross Singers are presenting 'A Season to Celebrate' by Allen Pote at Torrington Methodist Church on Sunday 11th May at 6.30pm.

Instow Methodist Church

Instow Womens Fellowship met on Wednesday 2nd April when Mrs Elsie Potter gave a most interesting illustrated talk on her guild Holiday in Wales last July. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday May 7th at 2.30pm when our speaker will be Revd Peter Whatton.

The Instow Christian Discussion Group led by Rev Jane Ashplant &/or Rev Geoffrey Calway plan to meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10.30am at the Methodist Church. Do come & join us on Wednesday 14th May

Instow Causeway Group

On Saturday 10th May at Roundswell Community Centre there will be an evening on Christian songs & stories about – 'The Promise of God, the Holy Spirit'. This is for people with learning disabilities, their carers, families & friends. The doors open at 6.30pm for a 7pm start.

Causeway is a Christian organisation for people with learning disabilities. For more information contact 01271 860281

Buckland Brewer Plant Sale & Safari Lunch

The Plant Sale will be held on Saturday & Sunday 10th & 11th May on the Village Green (outside the Chapel). Open from 10am-3pm on Saturday & 11am-3pm on Sunday. Safari Lunch is on the Sunday. Tickets & Details from Dennis Green on 01237 451271

Local Preachers Support Group

Monday 28th April - Elsie will lead our thoughts & lead us in a Bible Study so please bring your Bibles

Monday 19th May - Sheila will share with us resources available

Thursday 26th June - Revd. Peter Bolt will Share his insights into Wesley's Sermons

Tuesday 22nd July - Julia will talk about working together with other denominations

Tuesday 23rd September - an open evening for all who are Leaders of Worship, Readers, Preachers, Music makers, and Singers OR any one who wants to find out more. Come and share your vision of what the preachers support could do for you and your church

Julia will be programme making for our Group and would like to hear from you. We meet about once a month and share together our Hopes and Dreams at 10 Yeo Drive Appledore. 01237 425361

We not only try to support each other in God's work but we would like to know if YOU have a gift to share with us.

Network

Sunday 27th April - Easter Offering service – Bring and share tea at 5.15 pm service at 6.30 pm at our Bideford Church. Speaker is Rev John Peake

On a lovely Spring morning many people from the Plymouth and Exeter district came to Torrington Methodist Church for the Spring Network Day on 16th April. Our Circuit Steward Elsie Potter gave a welcome to everyone, as our minister was away at Synod, Our President Mary Bailey led us in prayer.

Our first speaker this morning was Colin Angus, who showed slides and a talk on the work at Langley House Trust, this being our project for two years. Our Treasurer told us we had so far raised over £7000 to date.

A break for lunch where fellowship with other churches was shared, some took a walk in the town, whilst others a stroll through Rack Park.

Our afternoon speaker was Wendy Hartley, who showed slides and gave a talk on her visit to Ethiopia, and into the Omo Valley, early in 2007. this was well presented.

We thank Torrington for providing the coffee and biscuits, and teas at lunch time, and at the end of the meeting.

It was rather disappointing that there was only a handful of people from our own Circuit

Marjorie Babb.

For Sale

Boys Raleigh 5 speed mountain bike, 24" wheels, in good condition, suitable for someone 9 to 14 years old. Offers around £20, proceeds for the Cambodian Trip Funds
Contact Jim Wood on 01237 473094

THE GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER - LONDON

You are invited to what might be the world's biggest prayer meeting on Pentecost Sunday, May 11, as up to 30,000 people gather at Millwall Stadium, London, where the Methodist Church is supporting the national call to prayer.

This event will unite all ages, denominations and nationalities as people join together in praying for God's transformation and healing in areas such as child trafficking, knife and gun crime, church unity, young people and countries in crisis. Worship will be led by All Souls Orchestra, Graham Kendrick and many other inspirational worship leaders.

Tickets and further information from:<http://www.gdoplondon.com>

WORSHIP - All creatures great and small

From Stockton Heath Methodist Church, Warrington Circuit

All sorts of God's creatures came to be blessed at this year's 'Blessing of the Animals' service. The church was packed with dogs, cats, rabbits and their owners and we had a presentation from the Cheshire Dogs' Home and treats provided by the local pet shop. The theme of the service was taken from Jesus' words – 'Five sparrows are sold for just two pence, but God does not forget one of them' and the purpose was to allow pet owners to thank God for the companionship of their animals and the joy they bring.

The prayers, readings and hymns focussed on the animal kingdom and at the end of the service each animal was given a blessing by the minister and local preacher. In all this activity there was not one growl - just plenty of happy barking... and one little mishap!

Circuit NCH

The sum of £34.91 was sent to NCH from home collecting boxes in Appledore.
Littleham raised £129.13 at the Carol Service & £60 at the April Coffee Morning making a total of £189.13

"CARGO"

"CARGO" is taking place at Plymouth Central Hall on Saturday, 31 May 2008 at 7.30pm.
Tickets for the evening cost £5 per person.

"CARGO" includes words and music by Paul Field, depicting the fight for freedom past and present in contemporary music, words and images. For further details please telephone ☎01752 706239

"Cargo" is a musical, which tells the story of the Abolitionists' campaign to halt the African slave trade 200 years ago. Singer/ songwriter Paul Field, now living in Devon, wrote it.

Paul Field says, "I was inspired by the story of how 220 years ago a few ordinary people made a difference. The Abolitionist movement began with 12 men meeting in the back of a London printer's shop and became the first and probably the most successful human rights campaign of all time. It succeeded in making the public aware of both the cruelty endured by the slaves and the basic injustice of trading in and owning human beings."

"Cargo" doesn't just remind us about the campaign that took place 200 years ago, but it also hopes to promote awareness of the slavery that still takes place today. Organisations such as 'Stop The Traffik', 'Compassion', 'Anti-Slavery International' and 'Fair Trade' are all supporting this project. Paul says: "Around the same time that I was beginning Cargo, unbeknown to me my sister was becoming involved in the campaign of 'Stop the Traffik' who work specifically against people-trafficking, mainly of young women and children for the sex trade, one of the biggest and fastest growing areas of modern slavery worldwide. The more I discover about today's slave trade the more shocking it is to me that in the 21st Century there are more slaves (at least 20 million) than there were 200 years ago. It's also clear that the roots of today's slave trade lie in poverty, ignorance, vulnerability and injustice." Cargo was premiered in Hull on 31 March 2007, and since then it has been performed in other venues all over the country including Bristol, Liverpool and London. Now it's our turn! On Saturday 31 May 2008 Cargo will be performed in the Methodist Central Hall in Plymouth!

If you would like to know more about CARGO in general please visit Paul's website using the attached link: www.paulfield.com/cargo

WORSHIP WORKSHOP AT TAVISTOCK METHODIST CHURCH

Tavistock Methodist Church will be holding a Worship Workshop led by Geraldine Latty on 17 May 2008. The cost is £5 for the whole day - but free for students and those on benefits. Booking is necessary, if you can only make the evening, free tickets are available in advance.

Programme for the day:

- ▶9:00am: Arrival and coffee
- ▶10:00-11:15am: Teaching Bible principles on worship and leading worship
- ▶11:30am-12:45pm: Preparation for leading worship with some practical examples of flow in worship
- ▶LUNCH: Bring your own lunch - drinks provided
- ▶2:00-3:15pm: New songs, and new ways to arrange hymns
- ▶3:30-4:30pm: Question and answer session over tea and cake

▶7:00-8:30pm: Fun gospel singing - all welcome - no experience is necessary! If you sing in the shower you can do this!

Introducing Geraldine Latty:

Geraldine was a teacher for twelve years at a Catholic School in Bristol. In 2000 she left teaching to 'see what God wanted to do with her time' and has found that invitations and opportunities to serve have continued and grown. She heads up the music teams in her church, runs a community gospel choir, and has lead worship at national conferences including New Wine.

For further information and a booking form please visit the Tavistock Methodist Church website.

CIRCUIT MEETING MINUTES

A meeting was held on Thursday, 13th March at Alwington. Rev Jane Ashplant was in the chair and the opening devotions were given by Rev Paul Martin.

It was reported that the following church members within the Circuit had recently died: Mr R Moore, Mr T Watson, Mrs A Tutton, Mrs H Tithecott, Mr G Lee and Miss P Lake. Tributes were paid and a moments silence held in their memory. It was also reported that Daphne Barfoot was not well and would be remembered in prayers.

The Minutes of the last meeting were duly approved and signed.

Matters arising

Rev David Morris has been appointed as the new Superintendent Minister. He came to meet the various stewards with his wife Jackie. They are happy with the current manse at Northam and will be coming again shortly to meet with the Circuit Stewards.

5. Finance

Statements were circulated to the Circuit members. Extra copies are available if needed. There was a surplus of £4,300 for 2006/7. This was helped in some way by the utilities costs being lower before that budget.and interest was up. £4,300 went into General Reserve.

Sold and bought a Manse at Torrington. The net amount left was £73,389 which is now in the Circuit Advance Fund.

Youth Project

Chris and Debs do not wish the Circuit to contribute to their pension scheme but this was provided for. We therefore have a surplus of £6,700 carried forward to the 5 year project. Peter Weeks proposed and Julia Spencer seconded that the accounts should be approved. All agreed.

Circuit Review

Mission Strategy

The Leadership Team are to meet. There are 3 main strategies. Action is needed for each church. It was suggested we might invite Dave Martin to help the Circuit with its strategy. Decided to invite him to the next Circuit Meeting in June. The Circuit agreed to this.

Circuit Stewards/Treasurer

How many stewards do we need and in what particular roles and how long should they serve?

It was suggested that from 1st September next the Circuit Treasurer should also be a Circuit Steward. This is in the rule book but John is not officially a Circuit Steward. It was proposed that as from 1st September 2008 the Treasurer should be a Circuit Steward. Proposed by Rev Jane Ashplant and seconded by Mrs Elsie Potter. All agreed.

Proposed 2 years initially and then 4 years term of office for Circuit Stewards.

The Circuit Stewards are now attending Church Council meetings. Peter Weeks suggested we should have one more Steward. The Stewards usually meet just before a meeting but suggested they meet every other month as they need to meet on a regular basis.

The term of 4 years is under discussion. Peter volunteered to do an extra year. Elsie will be senior steward in September. It was suggested we should accept Peter's offer but not to change 4 years to 5 years. Will discuss that again. Proposed that 4 stewards should be appointed. Proposed by Sheila Babb and seconded by Julia Spencer. All agreed.

The new Circuit Steward to be appointed at the next meeting in June.

Circuit Diary

It was suggested that it might be helpful to have a Circuit Diary to enable people to check the dates of events in the Circuit. We would need to appoint a person to operate the Diary. This would need to be publicised. This needs more discussion.

Events need to be advertised as early as possible. Dave Watson will do a list of events.

Appledore Church

Adrian Male inspected the premises and reported on future possibilities on 14th November 2007. Another meeting was arranged for 10th January 08. Mr Male presented his recommendations as outlined in his letter to Rev Jane Ashplant and Mrs Julia Spencer. This meeting was attended by the Minister, Church officers, members and other interested parties including the Mayor of Northam. The letter and its implications were discussed in detail at the Church Council meeting on 7th February 08. Mr Male's advice was that consideration should be given to leaving the site entirely and relocating to other church or community buildings that might be available.

Options

To stay put until the church is forced to close - possibly after the Quinquennial Survey which is due in May 2009 - and continue to pray for an increased membership. Relocate whilst they still have the will and energy to do so. A new start without the responsibility of deteriorating and difficult to maintain building may bring relief and renewed outreach.

Suggested actions for relocating

Meet for services in Community Hall e.g. Primary School or to meet with another church in the village. Transfer to Northam Methodist Church and maintain a link with Appledore area. If any of the above options are decided upon prayer fellowship could be continued in Appledore in house groups and Women's Fellowship could be held at the Baptist Church or united with the Parish Church.

£250,000 would be needed for basic repairs. There are not enough members to support action. A decision will be taken at the next Church Council meeting as to a date for the closure which will need to be approved by the Policy Committee. The proceeds of sale would then go into the Circuit Advance Fund.

John Dennis said he would be very sad to see the Church close as he has been preaching there for many years and was always made welcome. We need to pray for support.

The sale of the property would have to go to the highest bidder but Rev Graham Slingo asked if the property could still be used for a Christian based organisation such as flats for the elderly but it was thought the property would not be right for that kind of development.

Appointments

Circuit Meeting Secretary

Thanks were conveyed to Mrs Janet Alford for services given. Always efficient and helpful. Janet will carry on until the end of August. Will need to fill the vacancy by then. Is there anyone willing to take this on? Please contact either Jane or Janet.

Circuit MHA Representative

Still need someone to take this on. There will be collection envelopes for every church for MHA Sunday on 8th June 08.

Reports

Local Preachers (Sheila Babb)

New Local Preacher on note - Trevor Johns with Elsie Potters as mentor. Jill Greeland has been appointed as a new Reader. We are desperately in need of Readers and Local Preachers. For details of the Worship Leader Course please contact Sheila Babb.

Network

Elsie Potter has given information at the Stewards meeting to see way forward the next meeting is in May.

Women's Network is part of the Methodist Church. The Recipe Books made £3.00 each

and the Calendars also £3.00 and a sum of £106.52 was raised at Littleham for the Langley House Trust.

A course entitled "Pioneer Discipleship" starts in April. This is to encourage work to do new ventures. Julia, Elsie, Paul Martin and Philip Squire have registered but there are some more spaces. If anyone wishes to go please let Elsie know.

We have a mission based church in the 21st century but do not have an agenda. Support will be given to members from the Circuit Training Fund.

Please let Elsie know if you want her in connection with Network. She will also give us a lead about Fresh Expressions.

Youth Project

A copy of the Youth Report for 2004 - 2007 has been distributed to each church.

Our application for the employment of a Youth Student Trainee has been accepted. We will be advertising in May or June. The Student will start in September and be supervised by Chris and Debs. He or she will work for 14 hours per week and more during school holidays. May like to live with a family. £4000 for each year from the District and £5000 from Manchester for training project. Will still be applying for other funding but no extra funding needed from the Circuit but will still need to maintain present funding.

Vivienne Sheriff has tendered her resignation as Line Manager. Many thanks to Vivienne for her work.

Education and Youth (Rev Paul Martin)

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 29th April 7.30 pm at Bideford.

Games event on Saturday 28th June 08.

Circuit News Letter and Circuit Plan are now on the Website.

Dates

Alverdiscott Centenary 2009 – The Church opened on 23rd June 1909. There will be a Flower Festival on Saturday 20th June & a Service on Sunday 21st June led by Rev John Carne. On Sunday 4th October there will be a Harvest Lunch in hall. Also a Variety Concert in November. A History of Church is being produced by Muriel Reed & Commemorative Mugs will be on sale at £6 each.

Good wishes from the Circuit for celebrations.

Sunday 27th July - 6.30 pm - Farewell Service for Jane at Bideford.

Monday 1st September at Northam - Welcome service for Rev David Morris