

February / March 2011

The Ambassador

**The Magazine Of Market Harborough
Methodist Circuit**

www.harboroughmethodistcircuit.org.uk



Image Copyright John R Bell

All of us in Market Harborough, Kibworth, Naseby and
Husbands Bosworth Methodist Churches and Gartree
Christian Fellowship are

Ambassadors for Christ

From The Manse

Dear friends,

Many years ago, when one of our children was 4 years old, we gave him at Christmas time a blank cassette tape, with the promise that he could use it on our portable tape recorder. In the event, this proved a very rash promise! He made what must have been one of the most deadly boring tape recordings of all time, consisting of such delights as breakfast in the Kennard home complete with the crunching of cornflakes, slurping of coffee and the brief grunts which pass for conversation at that time in the morning. Later, and much more worrying, he began to make surreptitious recordings on the lines of, "Anything you say may be taken down and used in evidence against you."

According to the Bible, God not only knows everything that's going on in our homes, workplaces, shops and the rest, He's also got a recording of it. Jesus said, "You can be sure that on Judgement Day everyone will have to give account of every useless word he has ever spoken. Your words will be used to judge you – to declare you either innocent or guilty."

If only our lips had an 'ERASE' button! But they don't, do they? Saying, 'Sorry!' to those we've hurt is part of the answer, but that's not always possible. We can't always repair the damage our hasty and thoughtless words have done. The advice from the Bible is, to paraphrase, 'Engage your brain before you open your mouth.' – that is, LISTEN and THINK before you speak, since God gave us two ears and only one mouth!

There is a positive side to all this, too. We can cultivate using language to convey thankfulness, appreciation, encouragement and praise. Above all, if you believe in Jesus Christ, speak openly about Him to any who will listen, for "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

-Brian Kennard

DIARY DATES

Feb 17th 7.30pm Local Preachers' Meeting at Mkt
Harborough

Mar 9th 7.30pm Circuit Meeting at Husbands Bosworth

OTHER NEWS.

See the note on page 15 from **Jane Gaffney**. Jane has been stationed in the Rugby & Daventry Circuit as from 1st September 2011 – not too far away to visit! Please pray for Jane, Steve and the children as they prepare for the move.

Stuart Cato has recently undergone hip-replacement surgery, and was glad to report immediately after the op that he was having less pain than before.

Youth Funding - breaking news hot off the press!

I have just contacted Peter Candlin at the District, and understand our application for youth work funding has been approved - in full, I believe, but confirmation letter awaited.

-Brian Kennard

I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace he has given you through Christ Jesus. (1 Cor v 4)

Paul is writing here to the Christians in Corinth. But don't forget, this relates to you, too. Notice the words:-"I always give thanks to God **FOR YOU** because of the grace he has given **YOU**....."

And now some of the words from a wonderful hymn by Frances Ridley Havergal:-

"I am listening, Lord for thee; what hast thou to say to me?
Speak to me by name O Master, let me know it is to me.
Master speak! For O thou knowest all the yearning of my heart.
Knowest all its truest need. Speak and make me blest indeed.
I am listening, Lord for thee; Master speak, O speak to me."

Please listen and I'm sure you will hear
Ivan



Market Harborough News

Contact Group.

In December we celebrated Christmas in our time-honoured way, meeting to share our choice of cards, readings and food. Our thanks to Roland who agreed to be an honorary member for the evening to play for us.

In January we were pleased to welcome Rev. Peter Green who entertained and enthralled us with his selection of poetry and music plus a few insights into his life so far. We so enjoyed it, Peter, and we hope that you will come again.

Thanks go, too, to our super-efficient secretary who arranged this before setting off on her globe trotting. We look forward to welcoming you back, Kath, plus enjoying the other treats you have lined up for us over the next few months.

Don't forget, you are welcome to join us - first Wednesday of the month, coffee lounge at 8 p.m.

Marion.

Musicians amongst you please note!

5 March 2011 Sponsored Music Making Day in aid of ugive2uganda



Please put the date in your diary –

I know it's a month or so ahead, but

musicians may need to prepare! You will find more information about this very deserving small Charity at www.ugive2uganda.org. This is an occasion for everyone to share, so come along and join us for what promises to be a super day. Anyone who would like to be involved –music-making, helping in the kitchen, donating cakes/ biscuits ...please contact Eric or Val Sanby (valsanby@hotmail.com) 01858 410827





NEW WORSHIP SERVICES
@ MARKET HARBOROUGH
METHODIST CHURCH

At our **Ignite Services** which are held on the third Sunday in the month between 5.30 and 7.30 p.m. we enjoy food, songs, discussion, prayer, informal worship and discussion around tables - exploring faith and the big issues. All are welcome and we feel certain that you will be able to contribute and gain things of value from our worship.

The theme for 2010/11 has been inspired by Richard Fosters book "Celebration of Discipline". This is the programme for the next 6 months.

- Pathways to Spiritual Growth - exploring spiritual disciplines

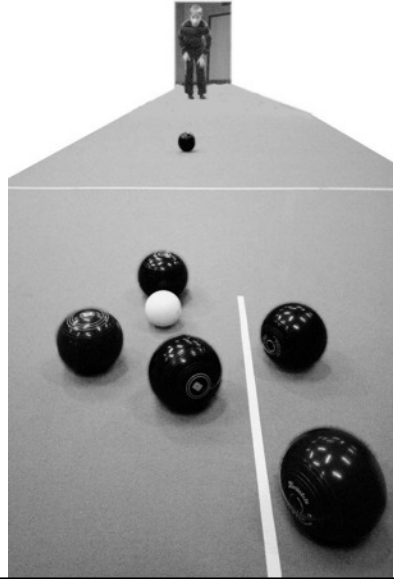
2011

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Feb 20 | Simplicity - Appropriate Smallness in a Bigger-Better World |
| Mar 20 | Secrecy - Finding Security in God & Freedom from Approval |
| April 17 | Sacrifice - Security in God and Freedom from Material Insecurity |
| May 15 | Solitude - Filling the Infinite Void with the Infinite Fullness of God |
| June 19 | Submission - Freedom from the Need to "Have It Your Way" |
| July 17 | Service - Downward mobility in an upwardly mobile world. |
| Aug 21 | Confession - Freedom in transparency. |

Indoor Bowls Monday evenings at 6 p.m.

Our weekly bowls night on Monday evenings continues to provide great pleasure to its participants. The competition between "The boys" and "The girls" continues but, far more importantly we have chatter, a cuppa and lots of laughs.

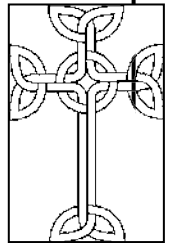
You are all welcome to join us on any Monday evening - we open at 6 but you can come in any time till we finish at 8.



Home and World Mission

Ceilidh (Barn dance plus)

For an evening of great fun and to raise money for Home and World Mission all are invited to a Ceilidh



The place: Methodist Church, Northampton road, Market Harborough.

The time: Saturday 12th February, 7.30 to 10.00pm.

Come and join us - a great evening of fun and fellowship awaits you.

light buffet included.

Cost; £6.50. Children up to 16 £3.00. Family ticket £15.00.

Pay at the door or apply Donald and Doreen Clinton-Smith, 01858 461576, email: berkeley2@btinternet.com



Kibworth News

Kibworth Wednesday Fellowship

We meet on Wednesdays at 2.30 p.m. in the chapel.

All are warmly welcome.

Youth Club for years 6, 7 & 8 - 7.15 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.

1st February – Junk fashion

8th February – Playgroup night

15th February – World cup event

Half Term

1st March - Cooking

8th March - Indoor tennis

15th March - Talent Show

22nd March - Makeover

29th March - Games

5th April - Art stuff

Further details from Jo 0116 279 2803

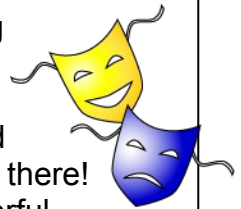
Ladies' Contact Group.

In October the ladies very much enjoyed an interesting and entertaining talk by Ken Day entitled " Amusing aspects of wills". Wills is perhaps not a subject one would necessarily associate with the adjective amusing but Mr Day had a wealth of comical anecdotes and unusual incidents to relate arising from his time working with the Trust and Wills Department of a large bank. He brought along a scrapbook of relevant newspaper cuttings etc from which he drew some of his tales which we were invited to glance through after the talk. One incident he described was on arriving at a large farm (he often went to on personal visits to discuss wills) the farmer practically dragged him into his car

saying "quick let's get on with this before anyone else even knows you are here or overhears any of my business". There were also several cases where money was to be left to much loved pets in large amounts leaving very little for relatives or even the person assigned to take care of the pet!

For our November meeting we had decided on a early Christmas meal to be collected from very nearby takeaway establishments and served in our upper schoolroom at Chapel. Some had Indian food but the majority settled on Chinese and it was all delicious and plentiful - a most enjoyable time was had by all.

In early January we spent our 'December' gathering at the Little Theatre in Leicester having an uproarious time watching their performance of the pantomime Aladdin. There was much joining in and laughter - we competed well with the many children there! Many thanks are due to Anne Bailey for her wonderful organising of this outing and many others.



Barbara



The Well is located at 45 High Street, Kibworth tel: 0116 279 0148 and is a facility for everyone in the community, a place for young and old alike. Situated at the heart of the village opposite the post office you will find a charity shop, coffee shop, and a prayer room where all are welcome. The Well is a registered charity and is run by volunteers.

The Charity Shop – is open Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays 9.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. & Wednesdays 9.30 a.m. – 3 p.m. selling good quality second hand clothes, jewellery, cards and fair trade gifts at reasonable prices.

The Coffee Shop – is open Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays - 9.30 a.m. – 3 p.m. & Wednesdays - 9.30 a.m. – 2.30 p.m. offering a selection of hot and cold drinks, delicious cakes, and light lunches of soup and sandwiches.

Regular Events

- Afternoon cream teas are held for older people on the first Tuesday of each month at 3 p.m. and coffee mornings on the third Tuesday at 10 a.m.. Lifts can be arranged. Contact: Anne Bailey 0116 279 2089.

Youth Drop-in on Wednesday afternoons 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. for years 7 to 9.

Contact: Gill Hollick 0116 279 6153.

Youth Drop-in on Thursday evenings 7.30 p.m. – 9.30 p.m. for years 10+.

Contact: Sarah Collins 07525 491 496.

- Early Thursdays. During term time the café is open from 9 a.m. on Thursdays, so after taking children to school, call in for coffee and a catch up. Toast and croissants will be available for those who didn't have time for breakfast.



- Thursday mornings have traditionally been a craft morning. Come along from around 10 a.m. and try your hand at making cards, patchwork or knitting. Some materials and plenty of encouragement are always available.

Prayer Room

The Prayer Room is a quiet restful place where you can have time to yourself away from the hustle and bustle of life and is available for use whenever the shop is open. Come alone or share your time with a friend.

The Prayer Room - monthly themes.

Each month there will be a different theme in the prayer room. If you would like prayer for a particular person or situation, there are prayer request notes which can be left in the prayer room or speak with one of the volunteers.

On the first Friday in the month there will be 24 hour prayer. Book your hour slots on the sheet on the door of the prayer room. If you think you'll never last an hour in the prayer room, give it a try. There are plenty of ideas in there to help you and after a time of peace and contemplation, you'll probably come away feeling refreshed and surprised that the hour went by so quickly.

Jane Gaffney.

I have received from Jane a note as below. We are all delighted that her training has gone so well and that, as you will see, its' fruition is about to begin. Bless you, Jane, you will remain in our hearts and prayers.

Ivan

"I have been stationed at Rugby from September, where I will be the minister at Rugby Methodist Church Centre, and also at a LEP (Local Ecumenical project, joint with the Anglicans) just outside Rugby. In addition there is an exciting opportunity where there is currently no worshipping community. If I could have drawn up an ideal position for myself this matches! I am thrilled with the opportunity and marvel at the way God works, and the Methodist Church! Of course as a family we have to face the prospect of moving, sorting out schools etc, and all that involves for everyone. I would like to thank you all for your support and prayers, it has made such a difference.

Jane Gaffney"



Husbands Bosworth News

COFFEE MORNINGS



Our Coffee Mornings will be on Wednesday 23 February and Wednesday 23 March, 10.00-11.45 and at 25 High Street, Husbands Bosworth.

A warm welcome is guaranteed at the coffee morning, do come along.

Janet Smith has recently been in hospital and it is hoped that by the time this Ambassador is printed that she will have either transferred to one of the community hospitals or she will be back home. Lloyd Jones continues his convalescence at the home of his daughter in Market Harborough. We miss them and hope it wont be long before they are back with us and meantime pray for their return to full health.

An ecumenical service of prayer for Christian unity will be held at All Saints parish church on Wednesday 16th February, at 7.30 pm.

	Services for February (6.30 p.m. Except where shown)		Services for March (6.30 p.m. Except where shown)
6th Feb	Mr G Herbert	6th Mar	Mr R Stephenson
13th Feb	Rev T Thomas	13th Mar	(Lent 1) Rev B Kennard LS
20th Feb	Rev B Kennard (LS)	20th Mar	(Lent 2) Mrs J Moore
27th Feb	Rev P Green	27th Mar	(Lent 3) Mr S Pointer



Naseby

Naseby News

It's hard to believe we're now well into another New Year. The Christmas activities here at Naseby were their usual success. The disco for the Rock Solid and Fusion youth groups was enjoyed by all. Frances Ballantyne led an excellent Carol Service which involved the children reading and singing. For the second year in a row, the Mums and Tots Christmas party (and Santa's arrival) was appropriately marked by a heavy snowfall. Jeanne Moore led a lovely Christmas Day service, and we were pleased to have a congregation of over thirty. Our daughter Anna (who at Christmas was just over six months) celebrated by eating a large amount of wrapping paper.

We've just been getting back into the swing of things again after the Christmas break, with our Wednesday night Fellowship meeting again. At the beginning of January we enjoyed another lovely Naseby Praise evening, this time led by Clare Kennard, who spoke passionately on healing and ended with a powerful prayer time.

Don't forget Naseby Praise is now every two months. The next one is on Sunday 13th March at 7 p.m., led by Jeanne Moore and Steve Pointer. Do come and join us for a chance to re-charge your spiritual batteries in a time of extended praise and worship.

Praying that 2011 is a year of God's abundant blessing for you all,

Louise Jenkinson



A picture of Anna Jenkinson's first experience of Christmas - I could not resist including it. *Ivan*



Christian Resources Exhibition

EQUIPPING AND EMPOWERING YOUR CHURCH

Thursday 24th - Saturday 26th February 2011

For the first time the Christian Resources Exhibition is coming to the EXEC exhibition hall in Peterborough.

Over 150 exhibitors are expected, showing the best in resources for your Church or Ministry including:

- * Chairs, Table & Furnishings
- * Children & Youth Resources
- * Church Fabric & Building
- * Financial Services & Charities
- * Leadership Training
- * Mission Organisations
- * Music Resources & Sound Systems
- * Vestment & Robes.....

As with all of our exhibitions, there will be an exciting programme of seminars, arts and theatrical performances, and a series of special events including:

- * The first ever Education Zone
- * The Mind & Soul Zone
- * MAF lands in Peterborough with their new state-of-the-art interactive exhibition trailer
- * Spotlight - Entertaining, informative and situated in the Toybox Cafe
- * Clergy on the Catwalk - See the latest designs and styles in ecclesiastical clothing.
- * Messy Church workshop.
- * Act 4 Children's Workshop and Family Show.

- * Downsideup - a new theatrical performance from Riding Lights Roughshod Theatre Company.
- * More than a laugh! - An evening of comedy, magic, food and faith with John Archer.
- * Specialist Workshop on Church Administration.
- * Specialist workshop on Managing your Time.
- * Over 40 seminars from top speakers like Michelle Guinness, Bishop Graham Cray, Jonathan Clark, and Worship leader Chris Bowater

More details online from: <http://www.creonline.co.uk/>
or by 'phone on 01793 418 218



Gartree Christian Fellowship

Quite a few of the "long-term" members of the Christian fellowship at Gartree have been moved to other jails in recent months, but the weekly activities continue and some new faces are in evidence. The Christmas Carol service saw many visitors, and a good number of prisoners attend, such that the worship space was filled. The Salvation Army band from Kettering provided the musical input to their usual high standard, while the prisoners who attended the weekly choir meeting (led by, among others Roger Garratt and Jeanne Moore on the drama side) sang for us and provided an entertaining drama sketch on God's apparent lack of marketing know-how.

“You should write a book!”

“You should write a book,” my son said.

“Huh!” said I

Who would want to read about my life -

Nothing special, just ordinary -

Often not very happy.

No real achievements in material terms.

And yet - and yet -

I remember one grandfather showing me a five shilling piece -

Another, sitting by a shoe-tree -

With a row of tacks in his mouth, a hammer in his hand,

Repairing a shoe with lightning speed.

My father went to a picnic

To celebrate Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee.

My mother, at twelve, went to school every morning

And worked in a factory every afternoon

Wearing her mother’s skirt tucked up under her arms -

At four years old

A steam kettle was the only cure for bronchitis, -

Progressing to a coal tar tasting medicine -

Before the antibiotics.

Monday’s chore was turning the mangle.

Supper was bread and dripping.

What a lot of social history is crammed into my grey head!

Perhaps I will bore you

With that book

- One day!

Anon

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE

Roy Slocombe, newly appointed secretary to the executive, reports for the first time.

The executive met on a cloudy but, fortunately, non-snowy day in December, and at its usual Northampton venue of Bouverie Court.

Paul Taylor, the district's outgoing director of training and development, led our opening devotions based on an Internet project Paul created as part of his current MA studies on the topic of emerging church (for more details, visit: www.the-abbey.org).

The meeting dealt with a long list of items, several of which are reported in more detail elsewhere in this issue of District News.

We considered a report from the Methodist Council, which has increasing concerns about the workload of senior members of the connexional team (in effect the Methodist Church's national secretariat).

It seems that because of the pressure of day-to-day concerns, our officials lack time to think strategically about the challenges facing the church in the world, and how best we can implement the *Our Calling* process and all that it means.

One good piece of local news is the executive's decision to recommend to synod the appointment of Philip Burns from Didcot as the district advocate for carbon reduction. Philip will lead our efforts in this key area.

The executive also gave thanks for Paul Taylor's long record of work in the district, and wished him well in his new connexional appointment.

The executive then spent time considering the shape of the role or roles that will replace the one Paul is leaving, and began the process for achieving that.

Through District News, the executive sends good wishes for 2011 to everyone in the district.

FULL PROGRAMME FOR PRESIDENT'S VISIT

Two local and two district-wide events will figure in the visit of the Revd Alison Tomlin, president of the Methodist Conference, to the Northampton District from Friday 11 to Monday 14 February.

The president is, of course, a former chair of our district, and it will be good to welcome her back. Alison's programme begins with a visit to the Amersham Circuit and its Church in the Community project.

Then, on Saturday 12 February, Alison will be the guest speaker at the Northampton District Biblefresh festival hosted by the High Wycombe Circuit. The venue is All Saints' Parish Church, Church Street, High Wycombe, HP11 2BN. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and admission is free. There is no need to book in advance; just come along on the day.

The Biblefresh festival will include workshops in song writing, Playmobile Bible, a 'disciple' taster, alternative Bible studies, Godly play, banner-making, drama and storytelling. There will also be a Bible labyrinth plus a wealth of other biblical resources to explore. More details at: www.highwycombemethodist.org.uk/biblefresh.php.

On the Sunday of her visit, the President of Conference will preach at Barrow-on-Soar Methodist Church in the Loughborough Circuit.

Finally, on Monday 14 February, Alison Tomlin will lead a district quiet day from 10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the theme, "Love changes everything". The venue is Crossways Retreat Centre, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire, NN7 1EL.

The quiet day is free but booking is required. To do so, please contact the district office: tel. 01604 630128 or oneills.dist23@googlemail.com. Please bring a packed lunch. Soup, tea and coffee will be provided.

REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

By Roy Littlecott, district property secretary

We all know that we are supposed to be taking measures to reduce the amount of carbon we use in our homes and churches. Yet, it is often difficult to know what to do for the best, and in the most economical way. Now, help is at hand.

The Methodist Conference, the church's highest governing body, in 2010 endorsed two reports on this subject: *Hope in God's Future - Christian Discipleship in the Context of Climate Change*, and *Carbon Reduction* (both available on the Methodist Church website: www.methodist.org.uk). All local churches are now asked to sign up to a *Hope in God's Future* policy, and to appoint someone to take responsibility for raising awareness about these matters.

The Northampton District is conscious that in order to become more environmentally friendly, many churches and circuits would appreciate help regarding useful contacts, where grants can be obtained, what new initiatives are forthcoming, etc. We are happy that Philip Burns has agreed to become our district advocate for carbon reduction. Philip is a member at Didcot Methodist Church, which has recently received an Eco- congregation Award (www.ecocongregation.org), and may be contacted at pandbburns@givemail.co.uk, or tel. 01235 813654.

NEW CONNEXIONAL SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

The new Connexional Safeguarding Handbook is now available to buy from Methodist Publishing for £20 plus P&P, or to download for free from: the Methodist Church website:
www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=churchlife.content&cmid=1196.

Why is this new book necessary? Elizabeth Hall, safeguarding advisor for the Methodist Church in Britain, explains, "There is a growing

contd ...

... Safeguarding handbook contd

understanding that protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the core of our faith. Safeguarding is about creating churches that are a safe space for everyone: a space where children can flourish and adults can live up to their potential. It is about enabling everyone to come to Jesus without stumbling blocks of abuse, ignorance, fear, compassion fatigue or the failure to recognise the experiences that so many carry within our communities."

PAUL TAYLOR LEAVES DISTRICT **By the Revd Peter Hancock, district chair**

After more than ten years of highly valued service within the district, the Methodist Church has appointed Paul Taylor, our director of training and development, to be ministries, learning and development officer within the connexional (national) team based in London.

Paul goes with our blessing and good wishes for success in his new post, plus our thanks for the work he has done, first as district training and development officer, and then as director of training and development. As director, he combined the two half-time posts of training officer, and district development enabler. Paul says that he hopes the experience and insight he gained in these roles will enable him in his new job to contribute to good links between the connexion, districts, circuits and local churches.

Paul's last day of working within our district will be Friday, 18 February 2011. We are, of course, working on arrangements for the appointment of successors to both of the part-time posts that Paul will vacate. These are connexionally funded, and the training officer position is integrated in the Midlands Methodist Training Forum, so we will need to consult beyond the district.

This is an exciting time for the Taylor family. In addition to Paul's move, his son Sam has been elected as Methodist youth president for the connexional year beginning in September 2011. Our prayers and support will follow both father and son as they embark on their new ventures.

Competition

The answers to this cryptic quiz are all coastal towns in Great Britain, including the various islands (that is a clue for the first answer).

1. Come off in flakes or remove the skin of fruit.(4)
2. Singe the pig on water (7.2.3)
3. Sounds like a small stream (4)
4. Deface the council. (11)
5. Definitely not north starboard. (9)
6. Spoil the entrance (7)
7. Initially 3 souths, 2 easts, 1 north and ?? Chesterton combined and mixed for this resort. (8)
8. High rocky hill, herb (6)
9. At 180 degrees finish on water (8,2,3).
10. Eric Bartholemew's birthplace and stage name (9).
11. Put away the papers to the penultimate letter of the alphabet (5).
12. Does the fortified wine enter you here? (10).
13. The cove of the friend of the poor (5,5,3).
14. Reorganise so that on the table more hp is available (11).
15. The cattleman has lost a letter (5).
16. X alongside (5).
17. People's rock. (10).
18. Sounds as if it should be on the cat's foot (10).
19. Poirot's Dr Watson (8).
20. Come here to enjoy one of the elements (2,4).
21. Pavilioned in splendour (8).
22. You will find a branch of the Tate here (2,4).
23. Two small facial features (8).
24. Small resort has connections with Charles Kingsley and Rudyard Kipling (8,2).
25. Agreement or transaction (4).

Prizes: I will award small prizes in two categories. For young people aged 15 and under and for those aged over 15. Any entries will be checked and those with the most correct will be put in a hat and one in each category drawn out at random. Entries to me either by email or by letter by 27th February. Address on back page.

Have a go. Even if you don't think you have many correct - let me have your attempt.

Ivan Hodgson

The following is the introduction to “The Buzz”, a resource that anyone can use if you have internet access. I put it in this magazine in case anyone who could use it does not know about it. I have also copied from “The Buzz” one of this month’s ‘good news’ stories relating to Bladon Methodist Church in the Northampton District. It is relatively local to us and shows what can be done with enthusiasm and drive. The ‘good news’ story is on page 22 (next page).

The Methodist Church

January 2011



Hello everyone and welcome to the BUZZ. THE BUZZ is a great resource that brings the whole Methodist Connexion together and allows us to share what's happening in our districts, circuits, churches and church groups. If you have any stories you would like to share, which illustrate how your church is working out the four aspects of Our Calling, then please get in touch.

You can advertise your church, circuit or district events and news on the Connexional Noticeboard on the Methodist Church website. See www.methodist.org.uk/local

After you've held your event, do let me know how it went. Your ideas can encourage and inspire others to try something similar and I'm sure the latest stories below will do just that. The contacts will be pleased to give you more information. The contributors have given permission for their images to be used by Methodist churches and ask only that they are credited in any publication.

You can sign up for your own e-mail copy of The BUZZ at www.methodist.org.uk

**SERVICE - Bladon Junior Church
wows the crowds
From: Bladon Methodist Church,
Northampton District**

Bladon Junior Church has recently completed a week's run of Disney's Beauty and the Beast . This was an extremely ambitious undertaking for an amateur group in a small village. The rights to the show have been released by Disney for a limited period only, however due to the technically complex nature of the show, not to mention the difficult costuming, very few societies have attempted to stage this award winning musical. Our cast numbered 40 children and young people, aged from 4 years upwards and we believe we are the only such group in the county, if not the country, to have undertaken such a demanding production.



Picture Credit: Steve Christie

Bladon Methodist Church was transformed into a magnificent castle for our production of this classical musical love story which included spectacular lighting effects, dazzling production numbers such as Be Our Guest and breathtaking pyrotechnics! The show was great fun to rehearse and perform and the audience loved it. All six performances were sold out and we received excellent reviews and at least one standing ovation!

Humour (sort of!)

I went to the Doctor's the other day and asked him "Have you got anything for the wind?
He gave me a kite!

Next time I went to the doctor's he said "I'd like you to lie on the couch over there." I said "What for?"
He said "I'd like to sweep the floor."

And I remember another occasion when I went to the doctor's and he said "Go over to the window and put your tongue out."
I said "Why?"
He said "I don't like the people who live on the opposite side of the road!"

It's Gardening time again!

I know that as I write this it is still January but **SPRING AND SUMMER ARE ON THEIR WAY!**

Pruning.

If your deciduous trees need pruning you'll have to do it whilst they are still dormant or they will bleed sap. This means they need to be pruned before the end of March at the very latest. However, there are some deciduous trees which still bleed sap when dormant - these include acers, cherries, walnuts etc. These should be pruned in mid-summer after new growth has matured.



Hardwood cuttings.

If you have hardwood bushes you would like more of you can still take cuttings in February. (Bushes such as dogwood, honeysuckle etc.).

Divide bulbs such as snowdrops when they have finished flowering, and plant them in either pots or preferably straight into their new situation - snowdrops should be planted "in the green" (whilst still in growth rather than dormant).



Planning for summer.

The days are already beginning to draw out and the nights are shorter. Now is the time to plan for the summer. The magazines and books used to suggest that it is time to get your seed catalogues and order seeds. There is nothing wrong with this but I find local garden centres and stores have most of the seeds I like to grow. Have a good look round and decide what you fancy then buy them. Packets all have full instructions about when and how to plant so it's time to get planning. Just doing that helps you to look forward to the beauty to come over the next few months.

March..

In March you can plant summer flowering bulbs, such as Dahlia, gladioli, lilies. March is the time to plant tomato seeds indoors (greenhouse or window ledge) Outdoors lettuce, radish, parsley can be sown. **Dogwood (Cornus)**. To make sure you have really colourful summer stems cut your dogwood shrubs back hard in March to encourage new stems to grow. **Weeds** will have started to grow already - keep on top of them from the off so that they don't get out of control. **Roses** should be trimmed in March. Dead or diseased shoots should be cut back to ground level. Cut off any crossing shoots. Leave three to six thick healthy stems, and cut these back to live wood. Spread manure or well rotted compost and your roses will reward you richly with their beautiful blooms.

The President's Visit to Malta.

I have been looking at Rev Alison Tomlin's latest internet "blog" about her visit to Malta. If you have access to the internet you can see it in full at <http://methodist-presandvp.blogspot.com/> .

Alison speaks of her joy and delight in sharing some of the Christmas festival and New Year celebrations with new friends in Malta. Doug, Minister at St Andrews and two church members, Lesley and Paul met her and Dave at the airport. They were invited to meet Malta's President, Dr George Abela and Archbishop Paul Cremona, 11th Archbishop of Malta. They were able to have conversations about both faith and politics.

They shared with the English language class at the Marsa Refugee Open Centre, and attended the Watchnight service. Alison speaks of the joy of being part of the celebration and walking through the streets listening to carols and songs broadcast at every corner.

After a moving Covenant service they spent time with women of a refuge which thrives in part due to the help St Andrew's Church can offer.

Alison speaks of other work and developments she saw in Malta and ends with a picture of a typical street in Malta and the following prayer reminder. Perhaps you will join in her prayer:

For the people who live there; for the people of St Andrew's Church, Malta; for the refugees and those seeking asylum status; for the people who were so kind to us; for those in authority - especially the president and Archbishop; and for all who are seeking to serve God in new ways as Malta, a Roman Catholic community, faces the secularisation which affects every culture in today's world.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

FROM IVAN

To be sure that articles can be included in the April / May edition of Ambassador ,they need to reach me **by Sunday March 13th** to 14 Fairway, Market Harborough or via email to ivan.hodgson1@ntlworld.com.

'Phone 01858 461282. If articles reach me before this date it would be super - it gives me more time in case there are problems. Incidentally, the June / July edition will have to be done either very early or very late because of family commitments. I will let you know in the April / May issue.