

2014 NEWS ARCHIVE – Aylesbury Methodist Church and Centre

Please note that these archives were taken from our old website, so links to additional material no longer work.



The Faringdon and Southmoor Action for Children's Children's Centres have said a huge "thank you" on behalf of all their children for the wonderful toys and presents taken their by Pauline Noble after the December 7th Toy Service. Money donations to MASK (Make A Special Kid Smile) came to just over £271 and this has been passed to the charity towards the extras needed for the seat to lower children with special needs into the swimming pool.



Cards for Good Causes open their shop in our church again from **29th October to 17th December**. They will be open each day, Monday to Saturday from 10am to 4pm. Staffed with volunteers from church and many of the charities that benefit, the sales produce 70p in the £ for the charities from which they pay VAT, production and distribution costs. ([...more](#))



Our **Christmas Services** begin with **The Gift & Toy Service on 7th December** (see below). **The Candlelit Carol Service** is on **Sunday 21st December** at 5pm. There are readings and carols led by an augmented choir followed by mince pies in the hall. **The Christingle Service** is on **Christmas Eve** at 4pm, and is a favourite with children and families. **The Midnight Communion Service** starts at 11.30pm and communion is open to everyone. On **Christmas Day**, there is a short service beginning at 10am. for all the family. **The Annual Covenant Service** is on **Sunday 4th January** and is a time when we commit to making a fresh start with God and life.



The Gift and Toy Service this year is on **Sunday 7th December** at 10.30am and will be led by Rev. Helen Kirk. New toys and gifts for all ages will be welcome. Please do not wrap them, as every item will be matched to the child by the staff at the Action for Children family centre. In the past, our gifts have gone to Houghton Regis but this year we have had a special appeal to help the family unit in Faringdon, an area of great deprivation. If you have any spare wrapping paper that will also be very welcome. As last year, we plan giving **money donations** (sealed envelopes please) to **MASKS** (Make A Special Kid Smile). They are a local charity that raises much needed funds for special schools in Aylesbury for children with special health needs or difficult family backgrounds.



The London Whitechapel Mission for the homeless were once again the recipients of the generous offerings brought by members of the church to the harvest thanksgiving service. Peter Watkins (seated) who liaises with the Mission, is seen after loading their van with David Neville (left) and Allan Horne. Whitechapel Mission provides a lifeline to men and women caught in the cycles of poverty, hopelessness and dependencies of many kinds and to see their lives transformed to hope, joy and lasting productivity. ([...more](#))



David Wilderspin and **Albert Odro** have used their professional training skills to run a series of workshops for volunteers running Child Contact Centres in the Chilterns. The centres, including the Aylesbury one that meets on our premises, are where children can safely meet parents with whom they no longer live after a relationship breakdown. Affiliated to the NACCC (the National Association of Child Contact Centres)([...more](#))



Rita McKelvie, after 20 years producing and caring for innumerable beautiful floral displays that have graced the church, has decided to retire. One of the factors is that downsizing her home, means she will no longer have her garden which has provided all the greenery for her displays. Rita said, "I have enjoyed using my skills to decorate the Church (usually!). Janice Matthews has taken on the organisation, with her skills and experience, and I have agreed to be available to help and 'sort of consult'. We are a very small group working in the Church and both Jan and I are seeking to recruit other folk to help out, perhaps once or twice a year." So opportunity exists for men or women who might like to serve the church in this way. Thank you Rita.



Aylesbury Town Centre Chaplaincy has arranged a prayer meeting for the night of Friday 31st October at Granville Street Church. This will coincide with at least one team of street angels being out in Aylesbury. The team have had extensive publicity to promote the work they are doing through both street angels and chaplaincy in the town centre, police station, College and other places. For their newsletter [click here](#).



Too Much Stuff? This is the theme of an Autumn Day retreat at **Weedon Methodist Church on Saturday 4th October from 10am to 5pm** organised by the Aylesbury Methodist Church Women's Study Group. There will be time to reflect on the theme in this peaceful church with its picturesque garden. The event is open to all. There is no charge but donations will be gratefully accepted. You will be amazed how refreshing silence can be. During quiet periods it will be possible to walk in the garden, write in a journal, read the bible, take part in a craft activity or just 'be'. There will coming together for regular tea and coffee, shared sessions and a bring-and-share-lunch. For directions and full details [click here](#).



A part time Office Administrator is required to work 12.5 hours per week over 5 weekdays (some flexibility is available in actual times worked). Based in our Buckingham Street church office the work entails organising bookings on our online diary system and taking care of the many clients of our busy, thriving, town centre meeting venue. Excellent communication and computer skills are required and a willingness to adhere to the values and ethos of The Methodist Church. The **closing date for applications is 30th September 2014**. For more details [click here](#).



The Karibuni Trust are holding a **Charity Golf Day** at Aylesbury Vale Golf Club on Monday 29th September from 1pm. The first tee-time is 1.30pm. The £55 entry fee covers green costs, a two-course meal and prize giving afterwards. Bacon sandwiches and coffee will be available on arrival. Entries can be as an individual or as a team (3 or 4 players), so bring your friends. Register via the website (www.karibuni.org.uk/golf-day) or by sending an email to: office@karibuni.org.uk. The charity helps children from the streets and slums in Kenya and has a new 2 minute video on the home page of their website, seen through the eyes of the Kenyans. See it!



Rev. Helen Kirk was welcomed as the new Superintendent Minister of the Vale of Aylesbury Methodist Circuit by the Chair of the Northants District, **Rev. Peter Hancock** at a welcome service on August 31st led by various members of Helen's Circuit ministerial team. The large congregation included local MP Rt. Hon. David Lidington, other civic dignitaries, representatives of other churches and faiths and the various circuit churches. [\(...more\)](#)



Rev. Helen Kirk will be welcomed as the new minister for Aylesbury and Superintendent of the 18 churches in the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit by the Chair of the Northants District, Rev. Peter Hancock at **3pm, Sunday 31st August** at Buckingham Street. Seen here with husband Andrew and sons Joel and Sam, Helen was asked to write a few words of introduction ([...more](#))



A £15,000 scheme is underway during August to ensure the masonry at the front of the church remains safe. Some pieces fell off last summer and whilst a survey showed no immediate danger, contractors are examining each piece of stone and adding metal pins as well as mortar to ensure it remains firmly in place. Kevin Hardern, the Resources Co-ordinator explained, "The contractors are used to working with churches and aim to be finished for Helen's welcome service."



Rev. David Jenkins retired as our Circuit Superintendent Minister in a busy end-of-July weekend. At their wedding (left) a few years earlier, his wife Paula was asked, "Paula, are you sure?" Just as Paula was sure she had chosen the right man, so too did the circuit feel it had chosen the right man ten years ago, as witnessed by the packed congregation ([...more](#))



Richard Maguire, church member and local preacher has written a book which has been shortlisted for the People's Book Prize. ***I dream in autism*** is about his own life growing up with undiagnosed autism. Richard now uses his experiences to run Autism Life Training which helps parents and autistic people understand what it means to thrive with the condition. In Richard's case, this has involved getting married, having a son, gaining a degree in theology and writing this book which our Good Faith Book Club will discuss in November. **To vote for Richard** go to www.peoplesbookprize.com.



The top 20 hymns voted on by the circuit were revealed at the Circuit Songs of Praise service on July 13th by Rev. David Jenkins. The top 15 were song with great enthusiasm by the congregation, superbly supported by the augmented choir from circuit and other church members. Linked with humour, background information and relevant stories they were revealed in reverse order. For the full list, [click here](#).



A surprise concert for retiring Superintendent Minister **David Jenkins** and his wife **Paula** was given by members from several circuit churches on Saturday 5th July. About 150 people attended, enjoying the specially written songs, sketches, humour and heartfelt appreciation for all David has done during his ten years ministry based in Aylesbury. Feeding the multitude was another triumph for the unflappable Aylesbury church catering team. Pauline Latham co-ordinated the event, whilst Rev. Keith Edward and his camera captured the occasion on film. ([Click here](#) to see the photos.)



Jeremy Hanson spoke to the Sunday morning congregation about the **Alfan Foundation** set up in 2009 by his mum and dad Alfons and Anne. Formed after a family trip to Ghana and the secondary school Alfons attended there, it sends much needed items such as footballs, books and computers to Ghanaian schools and orphanages from donations and fund-raising. The J Team are supporting the charity after Jeremy and brother James spoke to them about it. The first J Team event was a cake and plant stall after morning service which raised £215. For more information [click here](#).



David Jenkins will give a pre-retirement Farewell Concert at Buckingham Street on **Saturday July 26th, beginning at 7pm**. Tickets are £7 and all profits will go to the Wingrave Methodist Church Building Fund. David said, " As well as well known songs, I'm playing some of my own pieces composed during the 10 years I've lived in Aylesbury. I'm looking forward to it lots!"

The concert will be recorded and during the interval, CD's of his composition, *The Salisbury Suite*, will be on sale at £7.



Pentecost, a happy event about the gift of the Holy Spirit experienced by the first and present day followers of Jesus was celebrated at a family service in an unusual way by Aylesbury's minister Rev. Keith Edwards. As seen in the photograph, members of the Brigades, the J Team and a large christening party were especially engaged in blowing up balloons, writing short prayers on them and then patting them to others to read.



A Bereavement Support Group is being explored by **Joy Murphy**, the wife of the late and much loved Rev. Bill Murphy.

She says, "Several people have suggested that they would find it helpful to share with others in a similar situation some of the feelings and challenges they have faced, and continue to face, when bereaved. This isn't only those who have recently lost loved ones; time is not always the great healer and many issues remain after several or even many years. The idea is to meet together informally for an hour or so, over a cup of tea and a biscuit, to participate (or not) in sharing your experience, coping strategies, distress, loneliness, sense of loss, or any other topic. There would be no pressure to say anything at all. To find out more please contact Joy by email by [clicking here](#).



Brian Taylor has been appointed by the Church Council to form and lead a team to source and fund a new set of 150 chairs for the church, many of which are showing their age! A key stipulation is that the chairs will not be bought until funds are in place. So Brian and his team are inviting contributions by means of sponsoring a chair (estimated at £80-£95 each), making a donation, saving a weekly amount, organising a fund-raising event or suggesting other people who may like to contribute as a memorial or thanksgiving. The church office can send you more details ([click here](#)).

Update June 2014



Liam Cartwright, the exceptionally talented young organist of All Saints' Parish Church, High Wycombe presented our 29th annual organ concert on Wednesday 7th May at 7.30pm. **£898.92** was raised for the church property maintenance fund. **[Click here for a review of the concert.](#)**

Liam has won admiration for his masterly and scintillating playing. He has won 'Worcestershire Musician of the Year', studied with distinguished organ teachers in London and Paris and has given recitals in many prominent venues throughout Europe, including St Paul's Cathedral in London. ([...more](#))



Songs of Praise 2014 on 13th July at 6pm will be based on **favourite hymns** voted on by members of churches from across the Circuit. Singing will be led by an augmented choir from Circuit and other churches and the hymns will be introduced by Rev. David Jenkins. Ballot forms are at each church or top three choices can be emailed to [Derrick Matthews](#) by 30th June. He promises great hymns, great tunes and a great sing.



Christian Aid week last year raised £12 million via 20,000 churches. The money this year will once again help to send this message to people living in fear: "You are not alone. We're with you, helping you to rebuild your lives, and working for peace." The need is stark. Currently some 42 million people have been driven from their homes by war. More house-to-house collectors and the generosity of the public can make a real difference.

On Saturday 17th May at 3pm, a special concert will be given in our church in aid of the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Research Trust**. It will be given by the Cathedral Consort and Trinity Camerata. The former is a group of professional, semi-professional and amateur singers from throughout the UK who come together to perform concerts for cancer charities. The Trinity Camerata is a small, high quality amateur orchestra based in north Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

The concert will include Haydn's Nelson Mass with choral and operatic works by well known composers. Prof. Andrew Morrison will conduct and Colin Spinks will play the organ and piano. **Tickets are £15 from the church office or Malcolm Bury** (01296 630169) or email him by [clicking here](#). For the programme and biopics of the artistes, [click here](#).

Pat Starr, who has been a trustee and treasurer for the Karibuni Trust for some 15 years joined the latest work party to visit the charity's projects in Kenya. The party consisted of 16 Karibuni supporters from various places, ranging in age from 50+ to 80! Some had been before, but for many, including Pat, this was their first visit to Kenya with Karibuni. She has written an account of her trip which will be spread over the next two issues of our Link magazine. However, both articles can be read by [clicking here](#). Pat appeals for sponsorship support of Roger Kirk's cycle ride or the Red Kite walk by Sue Kirk, Joy Murphy and herself, all in aid of Karibuni. The charity's mission is helping children from the streets and slums of Kenya. More information is on their website [\(click here\)](#)



Fabulous Fundraiser for Florence Nightingale Hospice!

The 4th annual Caribbean Evening was held at Aylesbury Methodist Church on Saturday 29 March - this year in aid of the Florence Nightingale Hospice. Over 120 people came along to enjoy the entertainment by local performers, including The Queen's Park Centre Jammers, dancers from Barefoot Bellydance, and two saxophone groups, Simply Sax and Ken Cole's Merry Old Souls. This was followed by a wonderful Caribbean meal in the Hall, donated by members of the Church and their friends. **This year they raised £838 – the best ever!**

The Caribbean Evenings were introduced by Beatie Francis, who inspires everyone with her great enthusiasm for helping others and making it fun!



Phillip Dyson, the dynamic International Concert

Pianist gave an electrifying here at Aylesbury Methodist Church on the Wednesday before last writes Music Director Derrick Matthews. The audience were enthralled by the splendour of Phillip's virtuoso performance on our fine piano positioned on the dais. Encompassing popular music of Scott Joplin, Chopin, Beethoven, Gershwin and others, (...more)



The Good Faith Book Club were featured on BBC 3 Counties Radio on Sunday, 16th March. Helen Legh (left) who presents her Sunday morning programme of faith news, local information and discussion on the big issues, from 6 - 9am, spoke to Book Club secretary, Peter Green.

Their six minute discussion covered what the book club is, why it was formed, how it chooses which books and where and when it meets - (see the [Book Club page](#) for full details). Asked about the personal benefits for him, Peter spoke of the 12 faith-based books he has read in the last two years that he wouldn't have read otherwise, a realisation that it was deeds not beliefs that were important and a greater respect for what works for other people, even though their beliefs were quite different from his own. The next meeting is on Saturday 24th May from 2-4pm. the book is Dava Sobel's '*Galileo's Daughter: A drama of science, faith and love.*



Rev. Barrie Heafford, our Superintendent Minister for seven years during the 1980s passed away peacefully in hospital on Tuesday 4th February after a battle with kidney failure. He joins his wife Margaret who died last summer and leaves three sons and their families, Adrian and Joy, Andrew and Ann and Nick and Jacqui and their respective children. Messages of condolence can be sent to Nick Heafford at 21 Walton Way, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP21 7JJ. Following an interment in Aylesbury cemetery there was a **Service of Thanksgiving** for the life of Barrie at **Buckingham Street on Monday 17th February at 2pm**. A packed church donated £988.50 in donations to Macmillan Cancer Support in recognition of the help they had given Barrie's wife Margaret. **For photographs, order of service and tribute** [click here](#).



Rev. Dr. Kenneth Greet, former President of the World Methodist Council from 1976-81, past President and long time of the Methodist Conference died on 12th February aged 96. He was known for the visionary leadership he gave his home church and the global church, particularly through his advocacy of social justice and peace. He said to the World Methodist Council in 1981, "There are certain things to which I am irrevocably committed; to the cause of peace, to justice and goodness and reconciliation, to Christian unity, to the gospel of redeeming love." For the full press release [click here](#).

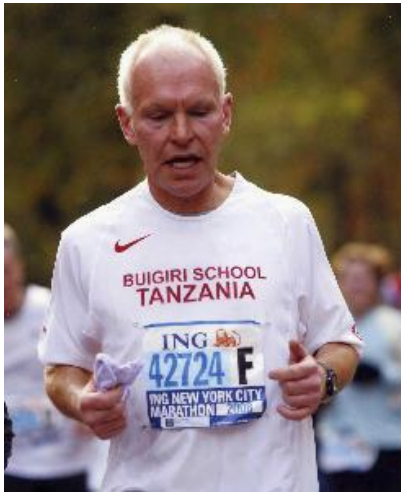


The Good Faith Book Club's next book choice is ***The Heart of Christianity*** by **Marcus Borg** (pictured left). Karen Armstrong, an earlier book club author describes it as "A marvellous book that is both challenging and illuminating and effecting exactly the kind of transformation that Borg so lucidly describes." The book cover describes the book as 'rediscovering a life of faith' and 'how we can be passionate believers today.' The book club itself has changed its meetings from alternated second to alternate fourth Saturdays in the month. So the remaining dates for 2014 are 22nd March, 24th May, 26th July, 27th September and 22nd November. It is open to people from across the Circuit and to people of any or no faith.

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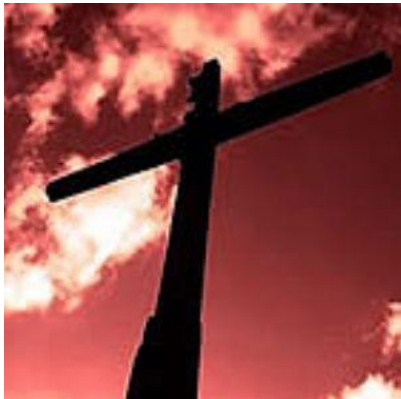


Phillip Dyson, the international concert pianist, will feature popular classics and light music in his piano recital in the church on **Wednesday 26th March at 7.30pm**. Phillip performs at prestigious venues in the UK and other countries as well as broadcasting and recording. Tickets are £12 on the door or £10 in advance (students half price) from various sources ([...more](#))



The Bugiri School for the Blind in Tanzania, East Africa, is a special interest of **Phillip Dyson**. He is seen here competing in the New York marathon to raise funds for them. Proceeds from Phillip's concert in our church will also support the school.

Started by a Church Army Officer from Lancaster in 1950, it caters for 59 totally blind pupils and 11 severely impaired pupils plus 30 fully able bodied children, as Tanzania has a policy of integrating able and disabled in education establishments. Church members **Diane and Brian Atkins** also support the school, with Brian making regular trips out there. The school is led by a remarkable Head teacher who is himself totally blind. ([...more](#))



The Passion of Christ by Arthur Somervell will be the Passiontide Choral service this year. It will be held in our church on **Sunday 6th April starting at 6pm**.

The choir will once more be augmented by voices from other churches in the Circuit as well as friends from other denominations.

Anyone interested in joining rehearsals are asked to contact Brenda Horne on 01296 428520. Music will be provided.



David Jenkins is giving one of his famous concerts at Leighton Buzzard Methodist Church, on **Tuesday, 29th April at 7.30pm**.

This time the theme is 'American Music' and will feature music from West Side Story, songs of Burt Bacharach, Adagio for Strings, The Liberty Bell, To a Wild Rose, Steal Away and more.

Before he retires and moves to Reading, David is also scheduled to give a farewell concert in our church to help raise funds for Wingrave and more details will follow.



Liam Cartwright, the outstanding young organist will present our 29th Annual Organ Concert on **Wednesday 7th May at 7.30pm**. (Doors open at 7pm). Liam is Music Director at All Saints Parish Church in High Wycombe.

The performance will be clearly visible everywhere in the church, aided by video screen projections, thus enabling everyone to enjoy the dexterity of hands and feet. Entrance is £12 on the night or £10 if booked in advance (students half price). They may be obtained from the church office on weekday mornings, the coffee bar on Saturday mornings or from **Derrick Matthews (01296) 488076**.



Noel Richards is one of our best modern day hymn writers ('All Heaven declares', 'My lips shall praise you' and many more). On **Friday 31st January 2014** he and his wife Tricia will be giving a concert in our church.

Tickets are £5 (children free) and can be obtained from the church office (01296) 426526. ([...more](#))



Christmas offertories, as usual, were donated to charities. **Action for Children the Philippines disaster fund and Christian Aid** all benefitted.

Christmas services included a Toy Service, (see the next item) a Candlelit carol service, midnight communion service on Christmas Eve and a Christmas Day service, pictured on the left.



Pauline Noble (pictured left) accompanied by **Sandie Steeden** took the gifts donated at the **December 8th Toy Service** to the Action for Children staff at Houghton Regis. It was a car full of surprises and the staff were absolutely delighted with the gifts and all came out with excitement to unload the car.

All gifts were to be matched to each child individually and many will be given to parents who are unable to purchase any presents, so that they could wrap the gift to give to their child on Christmas Day.

At the Toy Service itself, Pauline gave a brief background to the local work of the Action for Children Charity and the thinking behind the use of this year's gifts. ([...more](#))



Cliff Darlington has now been the manager of **Cards for Good Causes** at our Aylesbury Church for exactly half of the 26 years it has been in operation there. Originally managed by **Gordon Bonham**, the total amount raised for the multi-charities involved now totals a staggering **£573,197**. Over 75% of that figure will have found its way to the charities after production costs and other overheads have been deducted. A key reason for this is the use of volunteer helpers and managers from many of the charities and local churches including our own. Cliff is always keen to thank them each year for making the whole operation possible. He is particularly delighted with the 2013 takings, commenting, "Despite the big increase in postage costs we were over £1,000 up on last year."



The 2013 Annual Report celebrates our youth work. Following on from the Girl Brigades 40th anniversary in 2011, 2013 was the 40th anniversary of the Boys' Brigade and the 50th anniversary of the German youth exchange, the longest such exchange in the country. The report also covers the work and community involvement of the church and centre during the past year. It is a requirement of the Charity Commission for all charities but is also a good opportunity for the church to reflect on what it has done during the year, what it plans doing in the future and to what extent it is meeting its aim of putting the largest number of people in the greatest possible danger of finding the love of Jesus Christ. ([Click here](#) for the report.)

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The Dove Banner shown here is the latest work of art from the Banner Group. It consists primarily of donated white buttons.

Appeals were placed in the church notices and in the local press. Buttons have appeared from all quarters including from other churches and individuals. During the Christmas period, it graced the church lectern.

2013 was meant to be a quiet year for this group. However, after announcing that they were to take a break they had a sudden rush of requests resulting in new banners for the Boys' Brigade, German youth exchange and Women's World Day of Prayer.

To find out more about the Banner Group, when it meets and how you can join, please phone the church office (01296) 426526 or [email by clicking here](#).