

VALE OF AYLESBURY

METHODIST CIRCUIT

MAGAZINE



Training Day—arranged by Cuddington Methodist Church –Story on Page 11

January, February

March

2017

CIRCUIT MINISTERS

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With pastoral care of: Cheddington, North Marston (LEP),
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With pastoral care of: Princes Risborough, Stoke Mandeville,
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Rev Anthony Howells, (Authorised minister),

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With pastoral care of the Ecumenical Church at Fairford Leys

Rev Dr. Romilly Micklem . Tel 01844 202425

minister@rwm32.plus.com With Pastoral care of Thame
(Christchurch) Chinnor, Cuddington and Haddenham

**For a full list of ministers and contact details please
see the Circuit Directory.**



LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT

Rev Helen Kirk

It feels like we are living in a time of great change. The political landscape across the world has shifted with the advent of 'Brexit' & Trump; technology is constantly bringing us new possibilities to transform every aspect of our lives (whether we want them transforming or not) and we are relentlessly bombarded by messages from business, the media and commentators offering us the 'truth' - but it is hard to know what to believe when there are so many competing narratives.

Much seems uncertain and we can feel fearful of the future and so we prefer to look back to the 'good old days' when everything seemed so much surer.

As Methodists we are good at looking back. I have heard many people reminisce about their church's wonderful past: memories of Sunday school anniversaries, large congregations and an abundance of willing office holders to do all the 'jobs'.

Yet perhaps if we are fearful of the future we should look back not just to our immediate past but to our heritage; to who we are as Methodists.

It is worth remembering that when John Wesley was preaching in the 18th Century our nation faced immense instability. Revolution was brewing in America & France; the Scots were seeking independence; innovation was rife in industry but many lived in deep poverty. It was into this social upheaval and unrest that John Wesley and his preachers brought a spiritual and social transformation.

The emphasis of the Methodist movement was (and still is) social justice: that the poorest in the community should be offered practical help and the institutions that denigrated humanity should be reformed. Our Methodist DNA carries a passion for inclusivity as Wesley preached that no one is beyond God's love; all can know God's grace and hope.

This meant that leadership was not the exclusive privilege of the few but an opportunity for all and that church could be church even in a field, a home or a pub. It was this movement of social justice and inclusive grace that offered people a sense of hope and stability. I have to admit I am quite proud of our shared history.

As we end one year and begin another we reflect on the events of the previous 12 months and then look forward to what is to come. As Methodists we have another dimension, for every New Year we remake our covenant with God. This very Methodist practice reminds us of who we are – a people who are known, loved and saved by the grace of God. It also challenges us as to who we will be: compassionate, just, generous, transformative followers of Christ seeking to live not for ourselves but for God and for others.

Maybe in a world that seems uncertain, where many of the loudest narratives are divisive and acrimonious our heritage enables us to offer a different story: one of inclusive community, courageous compassion and selfless service all enabled by a loving and faithful God in whom we can trust for all that is past and all that is to come.

Prayer

Eternal God, in your faithful and enduring love you call us to share in your gracious covenant in Jesus Christ.

In obedience we hear and accept your commands;

in love we seek to do your perfect will;

with joy we offer ourselves anew to you.

We are no longer our own but yours.

(Methodist Covenant Service)

A notice to all Regular Preachers and Church Stewards

Can You Please assist in the preparation of the next Preaching Plan by completing your 'Availability Form' or 'Plan Notes' for your church by 1st February

The Guidance Notes for making your entries can be found in the list of Publications on the Circuit Website which all preachers and stewards have access to. If you can't find them Email Roy!

Reminders will be posted on the Circuit Website and/or sent through the Website Email.

Ministers' Rest Days:

Rev Helen Kirk - Friday
Rev Irena Byron - Monday
Rev Keith Edwards - Wednesday
Rev Anthony Howells - Friday
Rev Romilly Micklem - Monday

Please respect their days off and avoid contacting them except in an emergency.

CIRCUIT PRAYER DIARY

ON THE FOLLOWING DAY EACH MONTH PLEASE PRAY FOR:-

- 1 Aylesbury Church and the community it serves
- 2 Cheddington Church and the community it serves
- 3 Chinnor Church and the community it serves
- 4 Cuddington Church and the community it serves
- 5 Fairford Leys Church and the community it serves
- 6 Haddenham Church and the community it serves
- 7 North Marston Church and the community it serves
- 8 Princes Risborough Church and the community it serves
- 9 Stewkley Church and the community it serves
- 10 Stoke Hammond Church and the community it serves
- 11 Stoke Mandeville Church and the community it serves
- 12 Stone Church and the community it serves
- 13 Swanbourne Church and the community it serves
- 14 Christchurch, Thame and the community it serves
- 15 Waddesdon Church and the community it serves
- 16 Weedon & Hardwick Churches and the communities they serve
- 17 Whitchurch Church and the community it serves
- 18 Wingrave Church and the community it serves
- 19 Our Circuit Leadership Team
- 20 Our Ministerial Team and their families
- 21 Those involved in Hospital, Prison Ministry and Town Centre Chaplaincy
- 22 Our Local Preachers and Worship Leaders
- 23 Youth work around the Circuit
- 24 Relations with local Christians
- 25 Those who have been bereaved
- 26 People who are ill
- 27 People caught up in natural disasters
- 28 People living in conflict situations
- 29 The life of our nation and those who lead
- 30 Action to protect the global environment

Dates For this Quarter:

Sunday Jan 22nd 7pm, Haddenham (CTIH) Agape hosting Churches together.

Wednesday 1st February: Deadline for preachers to add available dates and churches their Plan Notes, into the Chrestos System for the next Plan.

Wednesday 15th February: Deadline for submission of articles for the next Circuit Magazine.

Wednesday 22nd February: Deadline for submitting written reports for the Circuit Meeting.

Friday 3rd March: Women's World day of Prayer; Various Services around the area (see next page)

Thurs. 9th March at 7.45 pm. Circuit Meeting at CHINNOR

Next Quarter:

Sunday 2nd April at 6.00 pm: Circuit Service—Olivet to Calvary at Aylesbury Methodist Church.

Sunday **9th. April at 6.30 pm:** repeat performance of Olivet to Calvary at **Sts. Peter & Paul, Tring**

AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH and COMMUNITY CENTRE

Do you need a venue for your Child's Party?

We offer a significant discount to members for the hire of the halls for these and other Social Events.

For all bookings please contact Carla Barnes or one of the volunteers in the Church Office for

more details at:

**Buckingham Street
Aylesbury HP20 2NQ**

Tel: 01296 426526

Email: office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk

The office hours are 9:30 to 13:30 during weekdays.



Women's World Day of Prayer

FRIDAY 3rd MARCH 2017

The Women's World Day of Prayer

is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service.

Through World Day of Prayer, women around the world affirm their faith in Jesus Christ, share their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their opportunities and needs, affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and both have immeasurable influence in the world.

It is a movement symbolised by an annual day of celebration on the first Friday of March every year.

The Service for the Day of Prayer for 2017 has been written by the **Christian women** of the Philippines and the theme is:

"Am I being unfair to you?" Full resources can be found at: www.wwdp.org.uk/resources/ or by writing to or phoning:

Women's World Day of Prayer Commercial Road Tunbridge Wells Kent, TN1 2RR Tel. 01892 541411 Email: office@wwdp.org.uk

There are usually over 12 Services in our area; those already arranged are shown in the table opposite.

DESPITE THE NAME EVERYONE IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE OR GENDER IS VERY WELCOME TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE SERVICES.

Services within the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit will be held at the following churches:

CHURCH	TIME	SPEAKER
Aylesbury Salvation Army	TBA	
Chinnor: St. Andrew's Church, Church Road	10.45am and again at 7.30pm	Refreshments will be served after each of these services
Haddenham Methodist Church	TBA	
Princes Risborough Baptist Church	TBA	
Stewkley Parish Church	10.30am	
Stoke Mandeville Parish Church St. Mary's	2.00 pm	
Stone	TBA	
Swanbourne		
St. Mary's Thame	10.30 am.	
Wingrave		

If your information is not shown above make sure you contact the editor of the Circuit Website (see page 32)

The Real Santa Claus

(A Christmas after-thought)

Once there was a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home, providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.



St Nicholas lived most of his life in Lycia in Asia Minor, a Hellenic Greek province within the Roman Empire. The area is located on what is now the southern coast of Turkey. He was born in Patara. As a young man he went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he lived for a time. Returning by sea, he came to Myra (now Demre), fifty kilometers east of Patara, where he was elected Bishop. While serving as Bishop, Nicholas travelled to Constantinople (now Istanbul) to plead with the emperor on behalf of the people for lower taxes. In AD 325 he gathered with all the other bishops for the first Ecumenical Council in Nicaea.

CUDDINGTON - COVER STORY



Cuddington Methodist Church

In October 2011 we held the first of our Ellel teaching sessions in Cuddington with David and Denise Cross from Glyndley Manor. The first session was held on a Friday Evening and continued on all day Saturday. This was our first venture to bring to the Vale and surrounding area the teaching about the Healing Ministry of Jesus.

It proved so successful that we decided to hold 3 single Saturdays of teaching in 2012 and in successive years.

As numbers began to increase we found it difficult to cope with the numbers for an all-day event which included providing a snack lunch but with only one loo! We linked in with the Life for Life group and in 2014 moved the venue to the **Clare Foundation Centre in Sauderton**.



The Clare Foundation in Sauderton

The location and facilities are ideal with attendees coming from quite a wide area.

We are planning 3 more days for 2017 on 25th March, 3rd June and 2nd September. If anyone would like a brochure then please contact Colin Watts.

Ellel Ministries is a non-denominational Christian organization with a vision to resource and equip the Church by welcoming people, teaching them about the Kingdom of God and healing those in need. Find them on line at www.ellel.org

Life 4 Life Ministries is a group of people who pray for and promote Biblical Healing and Discipleship based in Aylesbury Vale and are linked with Ellel Ministries.

Colin Watts.

**An Invitation to join the Circuit Choir
for the forthcoming
Circuit Choral Service**

OLIVET TO CALVARY by J H Maunder

Passion Sunday Evening,

2nd April 2017, 6.00 pm

at Aylesbury Methodist Church

and on Palm Sunday Evening,

9th April 2017, 6.30 pm at

Tring Parish Church.

**Singers will be most welcome, music
scores will be provided.**

**Rehearsals will take place on most
Friday evenings at 8.00 pm, mainly at
Aylesbury Methodist Church.**

**A precise schedule will be issued early
January.**

**To confirm your interest and for more
information, please contact
Brenda Horne on 01296 428580,
e-mail: brendaj.horne@gmail.com**

Crazy cryptic questions

1. Why can't a bicycle stand alone?
2. What is the definition of a will?
3. How does a backward poet write?
4. What do you get if a piano falls down a mine shaft?
5. What does a clock do when it is hungry?
6. What happened to the man who fell into an upholstery machine?
7. What happens when you get stuck with debt?
8. Why should you beware of a photographic memory?
9. What do you call a short fortune-teller who escaped from prison?
10. What will marathon runners with poor foot wear suffer?
11. How would you define acupuncture?

See page 22 for answers.

Golden years of Blessing



91 year-old Desmond Ffoulkes has just retired after 61 years as a Methodist Local Preacher. He led his final service at Wingrave Methodist Church on Sunday, October 9th. Welcoming him, Wingrave Church Steward John Cotton said how wonderful it had been over the years to have his ministry and

thanked both Des and his wife Kath, who sometimes played their church organ. Des said, "I have always felt that local preaching was both a great responsibility and a great privilege. I was planned to preach here on the first Sunday of the newly refurbished church and now for my final service." Peter Green, a visitor from Des's Aylesbury Church in Buckingham Street said that, "As ever, each part of the service was inter-linked, spiced with interesting illustrations and relevant to today's world. His preaching will be greatly missed.

Tales from the Pulpit

Sometimes in a dream I have been standing before a congregation in a panic because I am totally unprepared and am lost for words! My nearest experience in reality was when I cycled to my appointment and found on arrival at the church, that all my



preparation notes had fallen out of my saddlebag en-route: worrying! Luckily that wasn't the end of the story. I was sitting in the vestry trying to make some hasty notes from memory when Kath turned up at the church. She had seen me ride off and seen my notes fall out just down the road. She gathered them up and drove after me to safely deliver all my notes – Phew, what a relief!

Another cycling experience was when I had several miles to ride and discovered that, unusually for Cambridgeshire, the last mile was steadily uphill and against a strong headwind. It was also an unusually hot morning and I was wearing the obligatory suit, so when the service started I was hardly cool, calm and collected. More recently my car refused to start one Sunday morning. A panic telephone SOS to the steward brought him from the edge of the circuit to my home and he got me to the church just as the second hymn ended! His colleague had started it most competently and I had hardly been missed! Perhaps less happy was the time I arrived at the chapel to find it locked. The congregation of two arrived five minutes late and did not like my suggestion that we should sit as an informal group, read the set Bible passages and think about them, using my prepared material. They demanded a 'Proper Service'! One of them could play the harmonium, while the other sat at the back and I mounted the pulpit read, sang five hymns, prayed and preached. It felt like 'Playing Church', but hopefully I was mistaken about that! About the same time I was invited to preach at the ecumenical service in the parish Church. It was a bit daunting for a lay preacher to see most of the town's clergy in the large congregation, but was it in essence so different from preaching in the smallest village chapel with a congregation of two?

Some of the old time preachers used to call all the service up to the sermon as 'the preliminaries'. I believe that every part is important, scripture reading, sermon, prayers, music and hymns and, not least, the (usually silent- except for the hymns) contribution of the people. What matters is whether we are brought closer to God and what difference it makes to how we live.

If I have contributed something over the years of preaching, I received more! It has been a privilege to share and lead worship with so many good people.

Desmond Ffoulkes

What is a poor church?

Prominent church leaders and thinkers have issued a call to action for all the UK's churches, echoing Pope Francis' wish to see "a poor church, for the poor". Their reflections and the challenge for the church are collected in a new resource, *A Church of the Poor?* published by the ecumenical charity Church Action on Poverty. It highlights good work being done in many UK churches to respond to the growing problem of UK poverty. But it also shows that much more needs to be done for the Church genuinely to put the poorest and most vulnerable people first. Church Action on Poverty's Director Niall Cooper says: "Pope Francis has said that he wants 'a poor Church, for the poor' – but what does it actually mean to be a Church of and for the poor?"

Here in the UK, are our churches doing enough to stand in solidarity with people in poverty? This is a question which Church Action on Poverty has wrestled with for more than 30 years, but one which we will be pursuing with renewed vigour over the coming months. This call to action is only the start. Our 'Church of the Poor' programme will provide further materials and resources that enable churches to discover together what it means to truly be a church of the poor. We look forward to churches across the UK joining us on this journey!"

The resource includes calls to action from leading figures in nearly all the UK's Christian traditions, including Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, United Reformed Church, Church of Scotland, Quaker, Pentecostal, evangelical, and Lutheran. There are some very sharp challenges for the UK's churches.



Helping children from the
streets and slums in Kenya

Registered UK Charity Number 1044872
www.karibuni.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1044872
Telephone +44(0) 1296 681226
Website: www.karibuni.org.uk



KARIBUNI QUIZ NIGHT 2017

JOIN US ON THE

28TH JANUARY

7pm

Tickets £10

Fairford Leys Community Centre HP19 7HT

**INC. FISH AND CHIP
SUPPER**

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Own Drinks
and Nibbles

SEE YOU THERE!

For Tickets :
rogerwatson775@btinternet.com
01296 641261

Karibuni Children: Transforming Young Kenyan Lives



WHERE and WHEN TO MEET AROUND THE CIRCUIT


For a chat over a Cuppa or even a Meal



Aylesbury	Mon. To Sat. 10.00 am - 12 noon	Tea and Coffee
Cheddington	Open Doors— Fridays 10.00 am	Tea, Coffee , Light Refreshments & Fellowship
Fairford Leys	Saturdays 10.30 am - 12.00 noon	Coffee Morning coffee/tea and biscuits
Haddenham	Tuesdays 10.00 am - 12.00 noon 10.00 am - 12.00 noon	Maisie's Coffee Morning Fairtrade goods, bring and buy items usually on sale. Choirs use church Sun and Wed evenings. Pilates classes on Wednesdays and Thursdays WEA day school in Oct, Nov, Mar and Apr. plus U3A meetings
Stewkley	3rd Saturday each month 12 noon - 1.30 pm	Treat yourself to a 2 course lunch with tea or coffee for £7
Stoke Hammond	Wednesday 10.30 - 11.45 am	Coffee Morning
Stoke Mandeville	Most Fridays 2.00 - 4.00 pm Monthly: First Fridays 12.00 - 2.00 pm	'POP-IN' for a cup of tea/ coffee and a chat. Light lunches £3.00
Thame Christchurch	Tuesdays & Fridays 10.00 am - 12 noon	Coffee Mornings
Waddesdon	Thursdays 10.00 am - 11.30 am Alternate Tuesdays. 11.00 am - 2.00 pm	Coffee Morning Light lunches

Wingrave	Tuesdays 12 noon - 1.30 pm	Nup End Cafe Lunches
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Other Special Gatherings

Cheddington	Mondays 9.30 -11.00 am (except holidays)	The Toast Baby & Toddler Group
Stewkley	Wednesday 10.30 – 11.30 am Friday 7.30 pm - on 13th & 27th Jan. 10th & 24th Feb. 10th& 24th Mar.	Daisy Club for under 3s term time only. Mutual Fellowship Various Speakers Contact John Jones 01525 217795
Swanbourne 	Tuesdays 2.00 pm in the Chapel: stories, songs, prayers & nibbles & play	Pram Service will con- tinue—Next Services: TBA Contact : Frankie Fisher on 720454
Whitchurch	Wednesdays 10 am - 12 noon 'Little Steps' fun for babies, toddlers and parents. 1st Sunday in the Month 4.00 pm 'Stepping Stones' for young people	A mums & toddler group meeting. With toys, crafts music and snacks. Everyone is welcome. This offers an open invitation for worship time for <u>all</u> the family. Just turn up, you will be very welcome.

LEARNING AND GROWING

Aylesbury

- J Team (Sunday School) Sundays 10.30 am
Contact: Mrs. Vivienne Kemp 01296 399315
- Girls Brigade Mondays 6.15 - 7.30 pm
Contact: Sarah Davidge 01296 437852
- Banner Group Tuesdays 2.00 - 4.00 pm
Contact: Mrs. Brenda Horne 01296 428580
- Tuesday Fellowship 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 2.30 - 3.45 pm
Contact: Mrs. Pearl Riley 01296 483547
- Boys Brigade Tuesdays 6.00 - 9.00 pm
Contact: Mrs. Margaret Miskin 01296 422919

Monthly Bible Study:

Dates to be advised on website

Chinnor: Regular Activities

Weekly:

- Activity Club (Youth club for 7-11yr olds)
Thurs 6.30 - 8.00 pm (term time)
- Traidcraft (Fairtrade) sales
- Bring and Buy table for nominated charities (Sunday)

Fortnightly:

- Friday 7.00 - 9.00 pm (fortnightly) Friday Night Club (all ages)
Table Tennis, Scrabble, Pizza etc.

Monthly:

- Exploring Faith. Monday 8.00 - 9.30 pm

Ecumenical Groups/ Activities:

Fortnightly:

- Mothers Bible Study 10.00 am -12.00 noon
on Tues. or Weds. morning for mums
- Mums prayer group: Friday 9 - 9.30 am - for those attending
St Andrew's School
- Ignite - Sunday 7.30 - 9.00 pm for 14yr olds to explore faith
and life issues

Haddenham

Monthly:

Haddenham Fellowship Group— evening meetings, Contact Mrs Mary White 01844 291677

Princes Risborough

Fortnightly:

SALT (Sharing And Learning Together) Meets in homes on Thursdays

Monthly:

"TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP - We meet in homes on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Church at 2.00 pm for a time of Fellowship together with a varied programme, followed by a cup of tea and chat, everyone is welcome to join us. Contact Pam Scott 01844 346857

.—see the **Circuit Website** for details of these meetings

Stoke Mandeville

Fortnightly:

The Open Fellowship meets at 2.30 pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursday in the month

Everyone is welcome to these meetings for an hour of fellowship, followed naturally by a cup of tea.

Table-tennis may normally be played from 7.00 to 9.00 pm in the main hall on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in most months.

Stone

Monthly:

The Fourth Tuesday Fellowship meets at 2.30 pm
Contact Mrs. Sue Spinks 01296 748369

Weedon

Monthly: Monday Bible Study Group

LEARNING AND GROWING

Thame Christchurch.

Weekly.

Bible Study on Thursday at 7.30 pm

Fortnightly.

Church Singers on 2nd and 4th Monday at 7.45 pm

Monthly.

WIT (Women in Thame) on Monday at 7.30 pm Varied programme of talks, activities, and a visit to the theatre.

Crazy cryptic - Answers

1. *Because it is two-tired*
2. *A dead give-away*
3. *Inverse*
4. *A-flat minor*
5. *Goes back four seconds*
6. *He was fully recovered*
7. *You can't budge it*
8. *It might never be developed*
9. *A small medium at large*
10. *The agony of defeat*
11. *A jab well done*

News from Wingrave

For many years Wingrave has supported the Link to Hope Family Shoebox Appeal (previously Shoeboxes/ Link to Romania). Shoeboxes are filled with gifts for the whole family. As well as church members other villagers are involved, including children from the school.



About 3 or 4 years ago one of our members, Sandra Purrett, knitted a teddy with the intention of putting it in a shoebox. However, there wouldn't have been enough room for him with all the other items so she

decided to send him separately and she knitted a few more to go with him. Friends then joined in and last year around 30 were produced.

Sadly, Sandra has not been able to knit recently so a call went out this year to ask for others to do so instead. The result has been amazing and so gratifying; we sent off 130 teddies (plus 81 shoeboxes) to help add a little cheer to the lives of children and/or lonely people overseas.

Before starting their journey the teddies spent a few days enjoying the autumn sunshine in the Church porch. The photograph shows just some of them.

John Cotton

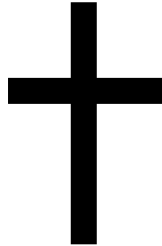


*Vale of Aylesbury
Methodist Circuit*

OLIVET TO CALVARY

by

J H MAUNDER



An act of worship for Congregation and Choir recalling some of the incidents in the last days of the Saviour's life on earth.

Presented by the Circuit Choir together with the Choir of Tring Parish Church and friends from other local churches and choirs under the direction of Cliff Brown

Led by the Rev Helen Kirk

[Aylesbury Methodist Church Sunday 2nd April 2017 @ 6.00 pm](#)

(Repeated at Sts. Peter & Paul, Tring on

Sunday 9th April @ 6.30 pm)

EVERYONE WELCOME

Refreshments will be served in the Hall after the service.

NEW CIRCUIT WEBSITE

www.aylesburyvale.org.uk

The WORLD'S WINDOW on the CIRCUIT

Whilst this describes the primary purpose of the Website, it is also, or should be, a valuable source of information for the Circuit enabling an exchange of information between the churches and between churches and those who are responsible for administration of the Circuit.

There is now a group of Sub-Editors who can update their church information but we could do with more. They are:

Cheddington: Janet Banham. Email:
j.banham@btinternet.com

Princes Risborough: Marilyn Dore. Email:
mjdore@talktalk.net

and Brenda Willet. Email: pandbw@waitrose.com

Stewkley : Lynda Hart. Email: lynda.hart@pacomms.com

Thame: Janet West. Email: janet1970w@btinternet.com

Weedon: Ralph Followell. Email:
ralph.followell@btinternet.com

For articles it is still necessary to contact the main editors listed on the back page.

Many other members can access the cloud where all the detailed information is stored. Regular preachers and some church Officers have access to the CHRESTOS Planning tools that allow them to participate in some important aspects of the development of the Preaching Plan each quarter. Not everyone can see the Website but every church has at least one person who is able to keep their church informed.

It does not take much time particularly when you get familiar with the site.

PLEASE READ, USE, SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEW WEBSITE AS MUCH AS YOU ARE ABLE TO.

Leaders of Worship and Preachers Meeting on tour

In mid-October ten members of the Local Preacher's Meeting visited three non-Christian places of worship in Milton Keynes, all known to Ken Harris through his Interfaith work. We were excited to explore the history, core beliefs, worship structure and practicalities of other religions in the area.



Our three-car expedition first met at the Jewish Reform Synagogue in Giffard Park, North-Eastern MK at 10:30am. A Reform Synagogue seeks to treasure Jewish tradition whilst believing it can be relevant in today's society, welcoming members in mixed faith relationships and championing gender equality. We were greeted by Zvi Friedman who led us into their multipurpose room, unfortunately a bit chilly

as there was no service that day – heating costs are a concern for all faiths! The worship area is dominated by a beautiful wooden ark, inlaid with a symbolic marquetry tree and a large reading desk. Zvi explained that the synagogue is over thirty years old and they have been in this building since 2002. Their membership is drawn from a wide area covering Bucks, Beds and Northants, some members living as much as thirty miles away. These members may not attend many services but understandably feel the need to belong to a congregation. They have a thriving Cheder or Jewish School, teaching Hebrew and religious knowledge to children. Zvi took us through their Siddur or service book, for a typical service. The text is provided in Hebrew and English and also in phonetic Hebrew which allows non-speakers to participate in the responses. He then opened the ark and displayed a Torah scroll on the reading desk. An impressive document, handwritten in special Hebrew script, that requires training to decipher and read. A passage is read at each service, with readers continuing where the reading last finished.



We were due at the Ramgarhia Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) in Kiln Farm, West MK at 12pm and, with the prospect of lunch, we moved on rapidly.



We were warmly greeted by Talvinder Basra who immediately invited us into the dining hall for samosas, bhajis and a welcome mug of tea.

Serving food to anybody who requests it is a big part of the community service element of the Sikh religion (seva) with every temple geared up for serving food on a grand scale. After this so-called 'breakfast' we were invited to join the prayers and music being shared to celebrate a 21st birthday.



In a Sikh temple, everybody must cover their hair so although the ladies in our party were prepared with their own scarves the men needed to use the stock provided for guests. After donning the scarves with varying degrees of success (see photo) we removed our shoes and went upstairs to the prayer hall. Following Ken's lead, we gave respect

to the Guru Granth Sahib (their Holy Scripture) which is revered as their eternal living Guru (following the lineage of the ten human Gurus) and then sat, women on the left and men on the right, to listen to the musicians for a few minutes.

We returned downstairs where Talvinder gave us an introduction to the Sikh religion with key historical events and a guide to their traditions and important symbols including the five 'K's for baptised Sikhs where we were joined by Narinder Ubhi. This was followed by, yes you've guessed it, lunch when we joined the birthday guests. All Sikh food is vegetarian and several of our party were keen to get the recipe for the aubergine curry.

/over

Taking our leave from Talvinder we rushed over to the Zainabiya Islamic Centre in Bletchley (on the southern borders of MK) at 2pm to be met by Arif Masters. Removing our shoes, we went into a multipurpose room surrounded by well-equipped classrooms.



Arif explained that the Moslem community is growing fast in MK with many young professionals moving to the area, some with young families. Fear of the prevalence of radicalisation of Moslems in the UK drove us to ask Arif about this but he has seen no evidence of this in their circle. Their community is passionate about integration and sees no barriers to living

in harmony. The building is not technically a mosque as the prayer rooms are also used for other functions. Arif took us into the main prayer room which sported a carpet woven with two ornate bands showing where to place the knees and forehead for prayer. As Shia Moslems, they place a thick disk of compressed soil between their forehead and carpet to remind them that they are prostrating themselves on the ground before God. The room also contained an alcove with ornate miniatures of key Islamic shrines from around the globe designed to ensure that the congregation always keep their physical and spiritual origins in mind. They have a thriving Sunday school with six classrooms accommodating around 100 children who learn Arabic and study the Koran. The Koran is written in a special Arab script and requires training to read and understand and, although translations have been made into many languages, proper understanding of the original text is important for Moslems. I think we all gained a new understanding of some of the traditions and key beliefs of these faiths and some insight into the challenges and opportunities they face. Many thanks to Ken for organising the tour and his Interfaith MK colleagues for taking the time to make us welcome at all three venues.

Steve Kemp



CHINNOR CHRISTIAN AID



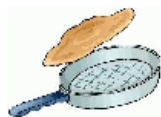
Come to our PANCAKE PARTY

TUESDAY 28th FEBRUARY

**CHINNOR COMMUNITY
PAVILION, OX39 4PU**



2:30pm to 4:30pm



**Children's craft activities
and lots of delicious
pancakes
for everyone**



FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

CHINNOR REFURBISHMENT

The Roof



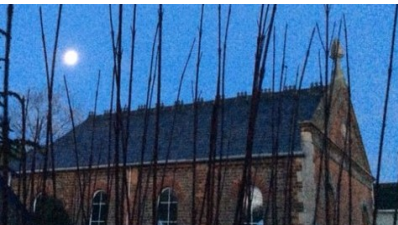
The existing roof was installed in 1873, before the invention of waterproof membranes. There were a few holes where slates were missing or broken.



The first job was to remove the existing roof.



The builder installed a layer of felt to make the roof watertight. He also renewed the battens. Finally the slates were replaced with the addition of a few new slates to cover breakages. New ridge tiles were obtained and fitted.



The last photo proves that the Super Moon came to Chinnor too!

CHINNOR REFURBISHMENT

The Floor



The worship area of our church was on split levels. To make it more versatile we wanted it all one level.

Joists were fitted over the existing floor.



Insulation was inserted between the joists to reduce our carbon footprint.



Finally the floor was sanded and treated.

The entrance porch has been completely renewed, with level access throughout the whole building.

The worship area is now much safer with no split levels

and provides a much more flexible, usable space.

ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE:

Items for the April—June 2017 issue should be forwarded to the following Email addresses:

Solomon Awadzi 01296 489384

Email: solokawadzi@hotmail.com

Items for the Magazine should be copied to Roy Collis see below.

Please submit Magazine Items by the 15th February 2017

AMENDMENTS to CIRCUIT DIRECTORY:

Details of changes to existing information in the **Circuit Directory** should be sent immediately they occur to: Rev Helen Kirk: revhelenkirk@sky.com and to: r.collis245@btinternet.com

ITEMS FOR PUBLISHING ON THE WEBSITES:

WEBSITE ADDRESSES:

Circuit: www.aylesburyvale.org.uk

Aylesbury: www.aylesburymethodists.org.uk

Fairford Leys: www.fairfordleyschurch.org.uk

All enquiries or suggestions should be addressed to::

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Roy Collis for the **Circuit Website:**
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