


The Methodist Church
Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit
Registered Charity Number 1150295
Circuit Bulletin April 2021



To mark the National Day of Reflection on Tuesday 23rd March, Watley's End invited the community to tie daffodils to the gates.

The Circuit Holy Week Service 'The Cross of Christ' is now available on our YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2pB6FHbxlw>

Easter 2021 - Superintendents Pastoral Letter



Dear Friends

Who could imagine this time last year when we were approaching Holy Week and the joy of Easter, that a year on we would still be living under Covid-19 restrictions. As someone recently commented to me, this must be the longest period of “lent” in history. I understood what they meant, during the past year as individuals, as communities, as global village we have given up so much, and yet the hope of Easter has also been both obvious and real:

And the people stayed home, and read books and listened, and rested and exercised and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still and listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.

Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently. And the people healed.

And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully as they had healed.

These words written by Kathleen O Meara, not during the past year, but in 1869 as a response to the Irish Famine, still ring true today as we look to the future.

More recently the poet, priest, Malcolm Guite penned these words:

And where is Jesus, this strange Easter day?
Not lost in our locked churches, anymore
Than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre.
The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away,
And he is up and risen, long before,
Alive, at large, and making his strong way
Into the world he gave his life to save,
No need to seek him in his empty grave.

He might have been a wafer in the hands
Of priests this day, or music from the lips
Of red-robed choristers, instead he slips
Away from church, shakes off our linen bands

To don his apron with a nurse: he grips
And lifts a stretcher, soothes with gentle hands
The frail flesh of the dying, gives them hope,
Breathes with the breathless, lends them strength to cope.

On Thursdays we applauded, for he came
And served us in a thousand names and faces
Mopping our sickroom floors and catching traces
Of that virus which was death to him:
Good Friday happened in a thousand places
Where Jesus held the helpless, died with them
That they might share his Easter in their need,
Now they are risen with him, **risen indeed.**

Guite's poem reminds us that during the past year whether we felt it or not, amidst the all the pain, hurt, sorrows and anxieties, we have not been alone, God has been with us, and as we look to the future, the God of yesterday, and today journeys with us – *Behold I am making all things new.* (Revelations 21: 5)

We rejoice that some of our churches will be reopening for worship from Easter Sunday, others will continue online for a while longer. I urge caution as people start to go out over the coming months, please follow the rules as the pandemic is far from being over.

Special Circuit services are being arranged each day during Holy Week and for Easter Sunday (4pm) on the Circuit YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/bristolsouthglosmethodistcircuit>).

Please join us as we remember and celebrate those remarkable events and look with hope to the future.

However, you prepare for and celebrate Easter,
may the risen Lord bless you and your loved ones.

David

For current information and resources:

www.bsgc.org.uk

Please continue to pray for the circuit staff team, the staff of The Methodist Centre as they continue to reach out to the vulnerable and all in our communities who are supporting others at this time.

Loving God, in Jesus Christ,
who died and rose again for
our salvation,
cast out the darkness of our
anxiety,
fear and mourning,
enfold us in your love
and give us joy and hope this
Easter. **Amen.**

Partnering with Christian Aid to give thanks for Covid vaccinations

Many of us are feeling a deep sense of relief as loved ones receive their vaccines and finally have some protection against coronavirus.

To enable people to act on that sense of thanksgiving and pass the blessing on, the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit has partnered with aid and development charity Christian Aid in a new scheme that helps others in crisis who have little protection from the pandemic.

Funds from the appeal are helping vulnerable communities around the world access soap, water, food and vital health information as Covid-19 continues to destroy lives and livelihoods. Many communities around the world face an uncertain wait for a vaccine as questions remain around the cost, timing and extent of a global vaccination roll-out.

A donation page has been set up where people can leave messages of thanks for their vaccination and give to Christian Aid's Coronavirus Appeal. The Circuit, launching its campaign on Tuesday 16th March, has set a target of £2,000. With just over 40 churches and 2,000 members it is very confident of reaching and hopefully exceeding that target.

Adam Biddlestone, Communication and Engagement Officer for the Methodist Circuit said, 'Donating to this appeal provides us all with the opportunity to give thanks for the dedicated work of medical teams in research, manufacture and roll-out of Vaccinations and the direct benefit this has to each of our members and the communities in which they live and worship. This Christian Aid appeal gives us an opportunity to express that thanks in a real way and extend protection from COVID and the safe roll out of vaccinations, that we can easily take for granted, to our neighbours in some of the world's poorest communities.'

Going forwards, Christian Aid will support vaccination programmes in communities by working with trusted community figures to challenge misleading information about the virus and vaccination as well as any stigma faced by those who contract Covid-19.

Donations can be made to the appeal through its TapSimple on-line fundraising page,

<https://giving.tapsimple.org/online/christian-aid/giving-thanks-for-our-vaccines-across-bristol-south-gloucestershire-methodist-circuit>

The **Methodist** Church 

Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit



Circuit Diary 2020/2021

Note : Staff Meetings will continue each Thursday morning 9.30 – 10.30, those listed are where a fuller day is planned.

Information about venue or access in formation for Zoom meetings will be available nearer the date.

2021	DATE	MEETING	PLACE	TIME
April	Friday 16 th	Reports for Resources Group		
	Friday 16 th	Plan dates for June to August 2021		
	Tuesday 20 th	Plan Making	Circuit Office	10.00 am
	Thursday 22 nd	Circuit Staff Meeting		10.00 - 3.00
	Monday 26 th	Circuit Stewards		7.30 pm
May	Tuesday 4 th	Resources Group		7.30 pm
	Thursday 6 th	Ministers and Lay Staff Study Day		10.00 am – 3.00 pm
	Sunday 16 th	Ordinand's Testimony Service for Rev. Leigh Maydew		4.00 pm
	Monday 17 th	Reports for Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Sunday 23 rd	Circuit Pentecost Celebration	YouTube Channel	4.00 pm
	Tuesday 25 th	Training & Oversight Group		7.30 pm
	Sunday 30 th	Final Service at Fishponds		
June	Monday 7 th	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm
	Wednesday 9 th	Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Friday 11 th	Plan dates for September to October 2021 due		
	Friday 11 th	Reports for Circuit Meeting		
	Monday 14 th	LWPT Meeting		7.30
	Thursday 17 th	Plan Making	Circuit Office	10.00 am
	Thursday 17 th	Circuit Meeting		7.30 pm
	Friday 18 th	Resources Group Reports		
	Tuesday 29 th	Resources Group		7.30 pm
July	Monday 5 th	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm
	Monday 5 th	Reports for Circuit Council		
	Thursday 8 th	Circuit Staff Meeting		10am – 3pm
	Thursday 15 th	Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Sunday 18 th	Circuit Farewell Service		4.00 pm

Circuit Diary 2021/2022

Note : Details of whether meetings will be virtual of in person will be confirmed.

2021	DATE	MEETING	PLACE	TIME
Sept	Wednesday 1 st	Circuit Induction		
	Thursday 2 nd	Circuit Induction		
	Sunday 5 th	Circuit Welcome Service	Parkway	4.00 pm
	Monday 6 th	Reports for Circuit Meeting deadline		
	Monday 6 th	Circuit Stewards Meet		7.30 pm
	Thursday 9 th	Circuit Full Staff Meeting		9.30 -
	Saturday 11 th	District Synod Representative Session		
	Thursday 16 th	Circuit Meeting		7.30 pm
	Friday 24 th	Resources Group reports due		
October	Friday 1 st	Plan Dates Due (Dec 2021 – February 2022)		
	Monday 4 th	Circuit Stewards Meet		7.30 pm
	Tuesday 5 th	Resources Group	Horfield	7.30 pm
	Monday 11 th	Reports due for Circuit Council		
	Thursday 14 th	Circuit Staff Study Day		9.30 – 2.30
	Tuesday 19 th	Plan Making (December 2021 – February 2022)	Circuit Office	All Day
	Thursday 21 st	Circuit Council Meeting		7.30 pm
Nov	Monday 1 st	Circuit Stewards Meet		7.30 pm
	Monday 8 th	LWPT Training & Oversight Group		7.30 pm
	Thursday 25 th	Staff Quiet Day preparing for Advent		9.30 – 2.30
Dec	Thursday 2 nd	Leaders of Worship and Preachers Meeting		7.30 pm
	Monday 6 th	Circuit Stewards Meet		7.30 pm
	Thursday 23 rd	Circuit Office closes		

2022	DATE	MEETING	PLACE	TIME
Jan	Tuesday 4 th	Circuit Office re-opens		
	Monday 10 th	Reports for Circuit Meeting		
	Friday 7 th	Plan dates for March – May 2022 due		
	Thursday 13 th	Circuit Staff and Stewards Meeting		10.00 am – 3.00 pm
	Monday 24 th	Circuit Meeting		7.30 pm
	Tuesday 25 th	Plan Making	Circuit Office	All day
	Friday 28 th	Reports for Resources Group		
	Monday 31 st	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm
Feb	Tuesday 8 th	Circuit Resources Group	Horfield	7.30 pm
	Monday 21 st	Reports for Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Thursday 24 th	Staff Quiet Day for Lent		9.30 – 2.30
	Monday 28 th	LWPT Training and Oversight Group		7.30 pm
March	Thursday 3 rd	Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Monday 7 th	Circuit Stewards		7.30 pm
	Friday 11 th	Reports for Circuit Meeting deadline		
	Monday 14 th	Leaders of Worship and Preachers Meeting		7.30 pm
	Tuesday 22 nd	Circuit Meeting		7.30 pm
April	Monday 4 th	Circuit Stewards		7.30 pm
	Thursday 7 th	Circuit Staff Meeting		
	Friday 8 th	Reports for Resources Group deadline		
	Friday 8 th	Plan dates deadline June to August 2022		
	Monday 25 th	Circuit Stewards		7.30 pm
	Tuesday 26 th	Plan Making	Circuit Office	10.00 am
May	Thursday 5 th	Resources Group	Horfield	7.30 pm
	Thursday 12 th	Ministers and Lay Staff Study Day		10.00 am – 3.00 pm
	Monday 16 th	Reports for Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Monday 23 rd	LWPT Training & Oversight Group		7.30 pm
2022	DATE	MEETING	VENUE	TIME

June	Sunday 5 th	Circuit Event for Pentecost		4.00
	Monday 6 th	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm
	Thursday 9 th	Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Friday 10 th	Plan dates for September to October 2022 due		
	Friday 10 th	Reports for Circuit Meeting deadline		
	Monday 13 th	Leaders of Worship & Preachers Meeting		7.30
	Tuesday 14 th	Plan Making (September – November 2022)	Circuit Office	10.00 am
	Thursday 16 th	Circuit Meeting		7.30 pm
	Friday 17 th	Reports for Resources Group		
	Tuesday 28 th	Resources Group	Horfield	7.30 pm
July	Monday 4 th	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm
	Monday 4 th	Reports for Circuit Council		
	Tuesday 12 th	Circuit Council		7.30 pm
	Thursday 14 th	Circuit Staff and Stewards Meeting		10am – 3pm
August	Monday 1 st	Circuit Stewards Meeting		7.30 pm

These items of information come from the Circuit Meeting, held on Tuesday 23rd March. The record of the Circuit Meeting is the Minutes which will be authorised at our Circuit Meeting on Thursday 17th June.

The Meeting voted to support Fishpond's request to cease to meet and the building be sold. Their final service will be on Sunday 30th May and live streamed for the Circuit to join.

The Meeting voted on the deferred Special Resolution. The votes in all Church Councils, except one, had taken place and returned to the Office. 50 / 58 members voted in support of changing the wording in the Saynding Orders. The result will be forwarded to Synod.

Stephen Holliday was appointed as a Circuit Steward. A further two vacancies remain.

There is a Vacancy for a Methodist Foundation Governor at St. Peter's, Pilning and Holy Trinity, Brdley Stoke. Thanks were expressed to Chris Sledge for his 12 years service at Holy Trinity.

A name will be brought to the June Circuit Meeting for a Circuit Meeting Secretary.

The meeting voted that on the recommendation of the LWPT Meeting the following be given a 'Note to Preach' Loice Maiskwadzo (Kingswood), Evelyn Govera (Westbury – on – Trym) and Jimmy Tariq (SBMC, Knowle).

A service of Accreditation needs to be arranged for Forward Maiskwadzo.

Finances : Church Assessments are still coming in our reserves are where they were budgeted to be. Any churches anticipating problems paying their full assessment due to a shortfall in income due to COVID should contact Rev. Patrick Stonehewer or Rev. David Alderman.

The Meeting agreed to the application process for the COVID Recovery Fund as outlined in the Agenda.

The Meeting delegated proceeding with the project at the Kings Drive Manse to the Circuit Council with a final recommendation to be brought to the June Circuit Meeting.

The Meeting approved the Circuit Risk Management and Home Working policies.

Date of next meeting : Thursday 17th June 7.30 via Zoom

Reminders :

Church questionnaire deadline Tuesday 6th April

GDPR returns deadline Friday 23rd April

Both to be returned to Adam Biddlestone circuitengagement@bsgc.org.uk

Places of Worship come under one of the very few legal exemptions that allow larger numbers of people to gather. It is therefore crucial that churches and those attending comply with both law and the COVID-19 Secure guidance, including not mingling with other households.

The Government announced on Friday 26th March changes to the guidance for places of worship these include:

- Indoor communal singing **should not take place** and strict physical distancing must be observed.
- **From the 29th March outdoors:** Communal worship can take place in the grounds or the outside space of a place of worship. The congregation may join in with singing, but should follow the principles set out in the government Performing Arts guidance. This includes:
 - Ensuring that congregation members follow physical 2m distancing rules.
 - Social contact limits apply, meaning the Rule of 6 applies unless all involved are from the same household or 2 linked households.
 - Refreshments are not permitted to be served in places of worship
 - Track & Trace guidance needs to be followed for both indoor and outdoor Acts of Worship
 - Good hygiene practice must be observed
 - Wearing of face coverings is required by all those attending, including Preachers, Worship Leaders and worshippers, Stewards etc. There are exemptions to this, including for those with exemptions and those speaking whilst leading a service from the front.
- Public worship guidance includes surrounding grounds (including churchyards, car parks and courtyards)
- Communal singing in other public open spaces should not take place.
- For outside Acts of Worship risk assessments are required and should consider the security and safety of Worshippers. (*see below for an example*)
- For communal worship, including led prayers and devotions, limits should be decided locally on the basis of the capacity of the place of worship or outdoor space available, following a risk assessment. There is a legal maximum number of 30 attendees for funerals and 6 for weddings (15 from 12th April, 30 from 17th May). Because of these restrictions and to avoid confusion, we strongly recommend numbers attending "Acts of Worship" should not exceed 30, either indoors or outside.
- Toilets may be opened for use for attendees of outside Acts of Worship.

The Outdoor Worship Risk Assessment guidelines can be found on the homepage of the Circuit Website www.bsgc.org.uk

Forthcoming Events

Target Audience : Church Membership, those responsible for weekly notice sheets, Church Magazines, internal noticeboards and websites.

Purpose : to publicise dates using weekly notice sheets, church magazines, notice boards and websites.



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Ordinand's Testimony Service

for Rev. Leigh Maydew

Sunday 16th May 4.00 pm

Zoom details to be confirmed

Leigh will be received into Full Connexion at 10.45 on Sunday 27th June and the Ordained at 4.00 at Walsall Central Hall.



The Methodist Church

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Fishponds Methodist Church

Final Service

Sunday 30th May

This service will be live streamed from Fishponds during the afternoon. Full details of the time and how to access the service to mark this occasions with our friends at Fishponds will be confirmed nearer the time.



The **Methodist Church**
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Circuit Farewell Service

for Rev. David Alderman

Sunday 18th July 4.00 pm

Venue or Zoom to be confirmed

Circuit Welcome Service

for Rev. Novette Headley (Superintendent)
and Rev. Samuel Uwimana

Sunday 5th September 4.00 pm

@ Parkway Methodist Church
More details to follow

