

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit 7/23

Bristol District



June Newsletter 2018

*The opening letter is written by Carolyn Harmer
Circuit Administrator*

“What do we mean when we pray ‘Thy Kingdom Come’?”

This was a question posed by Archbishop Justin Welby to many leading Christians for the eleven days of prayer during the Thy Kingdom Come initiative.

For the 11 days between Ascension and Pentecost across the UK and in over 100 countries, people came together in prayer as part of the global movement, Thy Kingdom Come. We were invited to pray for God’s Spirit to move within the church, equipping us to share God’s love with others and to pay attention to how God is speaking to us today.

My husband and I signed up to the daily emails. For each of the 11 days leading up to Pentecost there was at least one inspiring video, a bible text to ponder over and a prayer. A daily podcast was also included provided by Discovering Prayer where we were encouraged to pray daily for 5 people personally known to us.

You can still view any of these on the Thy Kingdom Come website: www.thykingdomcome.global

Here are some of the replies given to the question “What do we mean when we pray Thy Kingdom Come”:

“Go and live out that Kingdom. Go and answer your own prayer by doing what the kingdom would do, in the way you treat your family, the way you treat your employee, the way you treat your community – bring that healing, bring that forgiveness, be Jesus in those places” (Roy Crowne)

“God’s will and God’s dream might be realised in our time and in our lives” (Bishop Michael Curry)

“It’s very much about us getting ourselves to do what God wants us to do and to become who God wants us to become...” (Shane Claiborne)

“If we pray to God to move a mountain – He might just give us a shovel” (Shane Claiborne)



Almighty God
Your ascended Son has sent us into the world
To preach the good news of Your kingdom:
Inspire us with your Spirit
And fill our hearts with the fire of your love,
That all who hear your Word
May be drawn to you,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

NB Deadline for items for the May Newsletter is Monday 25th June

Circuit News/Events

Circuit Service 20th May – Holy Habits Launch

Thank you to everyone who attended the Holy Habits launch. This was a great success with around 200 people attending from both Circuits. The Holy Spirit was with us as we attempted to lift off the roof with our worship! It was also a good opportunity to renew friendships with those we had not seen for many years.

Sabbatical

As many of you will already know, Rachael continues her 3-month's sabbatical. She will not be back to work until Friday 22nd June. If you have any enquiries please contact Ian Robertson on 01793 751166 or ian.w.robertson@btinternet.com. For pastoral emergencies please ring Rev Dave Perkins on 01793 853197.

Bible Month

The Methodist Church are once again encouraging churches to run a **"Bible Month"** during the month of **June 2018**, this year focusing on the **Book of Jonah**, in the same way as we studied the book of James last year.

The Connexion presents this as an opportunity for our churches, in their preaching programme, house groups and Bible Studies (or any one or two of these) to together study a short book of scripture which has import for our life and mission.

This year The Upper Thames Circuit (including the West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Partnership), along with the North Wilts. Circuit and other churches are commencing on a two year period devoted to **"Holy Habits"** from Pentecost 2018. We would therefore wish to do nothing to detract from the impact of this important phase in which we focus on the exciting adventure of Christian discipleship and those habits of Christian living that bring us, as individual and as a people, closer to where God wants us to be in following Jesus.

However, because Jonah is a message of responding to God's call and ministering to others in contexts which we might not feel comfortable or attuned to, the study of God's word through Jonah may well be complementary with Holy Habits rather than a diversion.

There may also be opportunities for such a study to take place by individuals within our churches or by groups alongside the Holy Habits being considered, or for preachers to weave the messages from Jonah into our worship.

For this reason we are encouraging Churches to:

- access the materials being made available for Bible Month via the Methodist website and the view the video explaining the purpose and value of reading scripture: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/introducing-bible-month/>

You will see from this that The Methodist Church is also working with ROOTs to produce the 'Bible Month' resource magazine.

- encourage individuals and groups to study the book of Jonah.

- obtain copies of the Bible Month Magazine on Jonah from the Methodist web-site for distribution: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/bible-month-magazine/>
- Prayer for Bible month 2018 that it might be a blessing to our churches across the land.

As a Circuit we are also:

- Making our Local preachers and Ministers aware of the Bible month and materials associated with it so that they can reflect prayerful on how it might enhance their own studies, preaching and leading of worship.
- Producing a Book of “Jonah”, as we did for our study of “James” last year, copies of which will be made available on sale or return to all our churches with the money raised being sent to support Syrian Christians and Christians in Syria.

We would ask you to be generous in encouraging as many as possible to purchase this for individuals and groups who will undertake this study, and by getting as many in your church as possible to read it.

Further copies of this book may be obtained from the Circuit Office:

Circuitadmin@upperthamescircuit.org.uk Tel. 01793 764544

Turn the Tide Petition

At the beginning of this year **Barnabas Fund**, working with the persecuted Church, produced a publication tracing the Christian heritage of the UK and highlighting the erosion of religious freedoms in this country and highlighting ways in which seven fundamental freedoms in the UK are under threat, thereby diminishing our Christian heritage. These freedoms are:

1. Freedom to read Scripture in public
2. Freedom to interpret Scripture without government interference
3. Freedom of worship
4. Freedom to choose or change your faith or belief
5. Freedom to preach and try to convince others of the truth of your belief
6. Freedom to establish churches, synagogues, mosques etc.
7. Freedom from being required to affirm a particular worldview or set of beliefs in order to hold a public sector job or stand for election, work in professions such as teaching and law or study at university.

A booklet: **“Turning the Tide – Reclaiming Religious Freedom in the UK”** sets out these freedoms with the evidence of their erosion and is available from Barnabas Fund: 9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX. email info@barnabasfund.org Tel: 02476 231923.

The Circuit encourages our Churches to make known to its congregations a campaign which has been started to petition Parliament and consider whether, in conscience before God, members of the church family feel called to sign and support this cause.

The wording of the petition is as follows:

In the light of the British tradition of fair play, tolerance, diversity and equality, we the undersigned call upon the British government to introduce a new law to enshrine fully and permanently our hard-fought-for religious freedoms: the freedom to worship, to read

Scriptures in public; to interpret Scriptures without government interference; to choose or change your faith; to preach and try to convince; to establish places of worship; and the freedom from being required to affirm particular beliefs to study, stand for election, or hold particular jobs.

Please would you draw your Church's attention to this petition for that each person is able to make their own informed decision whether they wish to sign their support of this campaign.

(Please see attached form to use for signing in your churches)

Cricklade

SING A MUSICAL IN A DAY!

On Saturday 29 September 2018 at Cricklade United Church we are offering the opportunity to sing a musical in a day! Led by Christian Music Ministries - Conductor Annie Routley - we are intending to put on Jarius' Daughter composed by Roger Jones. The day starts with tea/coffee at 10am and is followed by workshops culminating in a performance at 6pm. Singers and musicians of all levels are all welcome. The performance is free and all are invited to come and see and hear the finished event.

We ran a similar day last year and it was a great success, much enjoyed by all who participated.

Further details nearer the time or by telephoning 01793 751020 or 01793 750556

Highworth

Reckless Abandon – this is taking place at Highworth Methodist Church on Tuesday 19th June at 7pm.

If you have ever read the book "Through Gates of Splendour" by Elizabeth Ellis you will know of this amazing story of how five young men risked everything to bring the gospel to the Waodani people living deep in the Ecuadorian jungle. A story not to be missed. Tickets from The Lighthouse Bookshop or Lou Ashford (Louashford231@gmail.com)

Organ Celebrations

The 80th birthday celebrations for the pipe organ at Stratton Methodist Church has been re-organised for Saturday 16th June 4-7pm. All are welcome.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 9th June

Bereaved Parents Support Day 10am

Tuesday 19th June

Reckless Abandon at Highworth Methodist Church 7pm

Monday 25th June

Circuit Meeting at Christ The Servant, Abbey Meads 7.30pm

Saturday 29th September

Musical in a Day at Cricklade United Church

Contact details (Upper Thames Circuit)

Circuit Office

circuitadmin@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Superintendent

superintendent@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Senior Circuit Steward:

seniorcircuitsteward@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Circuit Treasurer

treasurer@upperthamescircuit.org.uk

Postal address

**Highworth Methodist Church
Vicarage Lane
Highworth
Swindon
SN6 7AD**

Office Hours

Monday & Wednesday 8.30 – 12 noon

Telephone

01793 764544