

S.O.F.T.

Sharing Our Faith Together Team

Supporting the East Solent and Downs Methodist Circuit

Do you have a 'Good News Story' to share?

As we have travelled around the Circuit, listening to stories of all going on in the churches, we've been struck by the sheer amount of good news and good ideas that are brewing, developing and being lived out among us. For me, the sharing of stories and ideas, and the enthusiasm that engenders, is one of the best things about being one of the SOFT Team.

Every edition of this newsletter includes a 'Spotlight on...' article where we focus on one specific project event or activity taking place in the life of the Circuit. Sharing good news stories is a worthwhile thing to do, not least because it 'sets the cogs turning' – making us think about how we might adapt the ideas others have had to suit our own communities.

What's going on in the life of your church and community at the moment?

Did you hold a special event for Easter?

Are you planning something for the summer?

Is a regular activity, something you've been doing for years, going particularly well?

It doesn't have to be a 'big' event. It doesn't have to be something new or massive.

If something comes to mind why not write a short piece about it and send it to me for inclusion in the next newsletter? The articles don't have to be long - anything from a couple of sentences to half a page is fine.

You may be reading this and thinking 'Oh they wouldn't want to know about us'; but we do!

As the editor I would love to have so many articles that I have to add more pages to this newsletter in order to get them all in, so don't feel that you have to limit it to one article per church!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Please send any articles for inclusion in the next newsletter to Deacon Laura on laurajevans@me.com by Wednesday 31st July.

Hazel Margaret Bagshaw (Garry)

23rd December 1944 – 7th May 2019

Garry was a remarkable woman. She was a woman of great faith which she took every opportunity to share with others. Whatever she undertook - and there were so many things - Garry used her highly developed intelligence to plan, prepare and engage others in the work.

She was a much appreciated Circuit Steward and she was instrumental in setting up the Fresh Expressions Group, which has become the SOFT group. Garry had a great love of music and developed the Singing Group at Fareham and was a long-time member of the Southampton Choral Society.

Her enthusiasm, open-mindedness and "let's give it a go" attitude, encouraged those around her to achieve. She was full of energy, reliable, competent and inventive and above all, a joy to be with.

Garry had a warm, caring nature and personality. Despite her long battle with cancer, her faith never wavered.

We remember in our prayers Garry's husband, Ian, and their sons, James and Charles, and their families. We too mourn the loss of a very special person, and a good and much loved friend.

See you soon

Very best wishes

Jill and Bob



Café Church Workshop

On Saturday 8th June

At

Drayton United Church

10.30am – 2.30pm

Lunch provided!

The aims of the day are to:

- Network, share ideas and learn from one another
- Talk about what works (and doesn't work!) in our own context
- Support one another through prayer and in practical ways
- Encourage and resource those who are considering starting a new, café-style service
- Rejoice in the diversity of our worship

.....meet together, share ideas, and go away inspired!

***If possible please contact Deacon Laura on (01243) 376786 or
laurajevans@me.com if you wish to attend.***

Also....

There is still **FUNDING AVAILABLE** in the Circuit budget to assist with projects related to mission/evangelism.

1. Grants are available to churches within the East Solent and Downs Methodist Circuit for initiatives/projects based in that circuit.
2. The project should be clearly identifiable under one or more elements of 'Our Calling' and have a 'Sharing our Faith' objective
3. The project should have a clearly identifiable outcome.
4. Other than in exceptional circumstances the local church will be expected to contribute towards the cost of the project from their own funds.
5. If the project includes the employment of personnel all the Methodist requirements with regard to lay employment must be adhered to.
6. Grants can be paid for up to a maximum of 3 years.
7. If the project is ongoing beyond 3 years the application should show how funding to replace the grant is to be secured.
8. The grant application must be approved by the relevant local Church Council.

For further information, or to request an application form, please contact a member of the team.

Have you Identified Training Needs?

Is there any piece of training that the Circuit could provide to assist in your Mission/Evangelism?

Is there a project that you're aching to get going but don't know where to start?

Have you heard about an event happening in another area and wished we could do something similar here?

If so let us know and we'll do our best to help!

***Spotlight on...* Emsworth Explore Easter!**

If you live anywhere near Emsworth, and were out and about on Holy Saturday (20th April) you probably noticed that there were rather more people milling about the Mill Pond (if you'll pardon the pun) than usual.

The idea for 'Explore Easter' came out of a conversation between the Methodist and Anglican clergy, and such was the enthusiasm for holding an event celebrating the last week of Jesus' life out in the open air for all to see that soon it became a project supported by all 5 of the denominations that make up 'Christians Together in Emsworth'.

Thanks to a group of more than 40 volunteers, representing all the churches, we were about to be visible around the Mill Pond from 11am until 3pm that day, with 5 outdoor stations, each of them offering a reflection on one part of the last week of Jesus' life. These stations were packed with fun craft and prayer activities suitable for both children and adults. Of course, although we were looking at events that happened over 2000 years ago many of the issues faced by Jesus and his followers are still relevant today. So the stations will be based on themes such as joy, friendship, social justice. We tried to make it thought-provoking as well as fun.

Both the local primary schools joined in with an art competition and the winners' pictures were on show at the appropriate station. We seem to have a number of budding artists in our midst.

All this was free of charge, and we made the most of the fantastic weather! At the wash-up meeting which was held we all agreed that the event had been a success. Yes, there were a few things we could do differently (tea and coffee at the end of the walk, perhaps more activities specifically designed for children) but the fact that people in the town are still talking about it speaks for itself.

Next year we're hoping to have a donkey!

