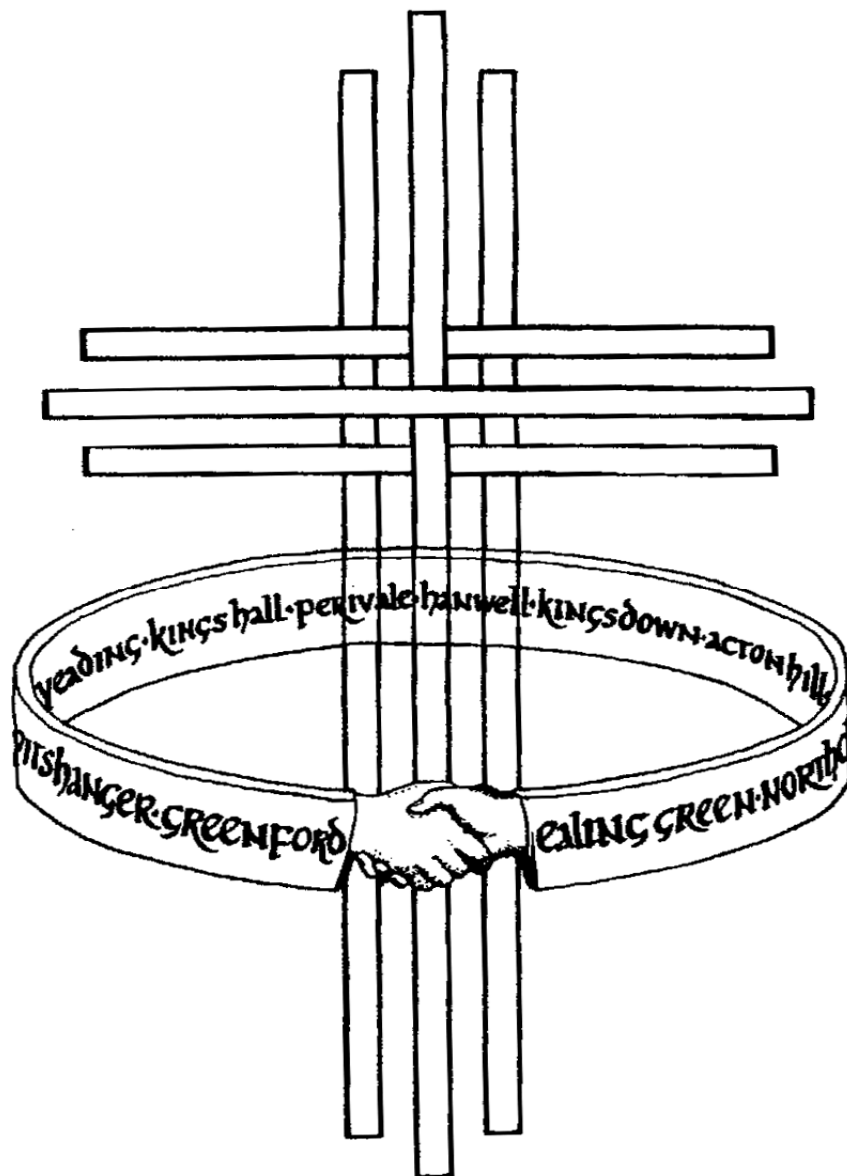


In-touch

No 62

December 2012 – February 2013



The magazine for *all* the Ealing Trinity Circuit.

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Circuit website

www.ealingtrinity.org.uk

Front Cover designed by Marion Narain

From the Superintendent

Welcome to In Touch, the magazine for the Ealing Trinity Circuit. Over last summer we had a six-week worship series, 'Keep Calm and Carry On: Leaders in times of Change.' Thank you for doing just that, as we have begun this new phase of Christian life and witness together.

In September we welcomed Deacon Richard Goldstraw, Presbyters Peter Catford and Chrissie Howe, and Probationer Presbyter Suva Catford. Also in September I became Superintendent, as Michaela Youngson was inducted Chair of London District for our area. In addition, the Circuit welcomed new stewards - Barbara Quartey of Acton Hill, and Mike Brown of Greenford. They joined our lay leadership team of David Street of Hanwell, our new treasurer, and Peter Chadburn of Ealing Green, who is carrying on as Senior Steward for the first part of this year to see in the new folk. We are seeking more Circuit Stewards, as we shape the future and use of resources - if you can think of someone who would be good, please let me or another steward or minister know.

Over the summer a number of people worked very hard to get the manses ready and prepare the Autumn round of meetings and worship; you have done very well together as we have begun. It has been a time of behind the scenes preparation, of getting Circuit policies and finances up to date and setting a mission agenda with new staff and new lay leaders. We're hopeful of having each member of staff lead a particular strand of mission, in partnership with a lay person: thus far strands include health and well-being, worship development, Ealing Street Pastors, and a growing partnership with the University of West London to support international students. They may well include work with London Citizens, or with the Pioneer organisation. Watch this space - we believe the Gospel changes lives, and look for slow and durable church growth through quality worship and consistent hospitality.

Remember that the 'keep calm and carry on' theme was not just about internal church life, but a consideration of the 'leadership' churches might offer in their communities as well. In recent months members of our churches have been instrumental in the fight to keep Ealing Hospital open, have been preparing the Ealing Churches' Winter Night Shelter Project, have extended our work with international students through the chaplaincy of the University of West London, have walked as Street Pastors, worked as debt counsellors, fed the hungry, and offered much interesting and provocative weekly worship, among other things! Well done, all of you.

At the same time, two of our churches have been facing massive change on a timetable they did not choose. In mid September the two churches at the King's Hall in Southall had news that their building would not be insured beyond 31st October. A quinquennial report reinforced the Methodist Insurance Risk Assessment that the building, though structurally sound for the moment, has become unsafe. Methodist Insurance extended cover to 31st January after down-to-the-wire negotiation; this extension allowed the churches to give notice to their licensed tenants in a timely way, and to plan to make the best of closing the

building if emergency repairs cannot be made in time. There is much strong emotion about these legal necessities, and it is impossible to work on such a short timetable without conflict. Sadly, that conflict has made it less likely that the building will remain in use after 31st January, taking energy away from development agendas.

Please pray for the faithful folk of both churches at Southall who love the building, have worshipped there over generations, and seek to carry the Gospel in the future. And pray for Chrissie and Richard, the new ministers of those two churches (and myself as Superintendent) who have had to begin pastoral life with churches in this difficulty. It has not been an easy road, and none of us would start from here: we have had good support from the District and Connexional legal advisors in the choices the trustees have in front of them, so we are not alone.

Thus comes the Advent of a new year. We look with expectant eyes to see where Christ is coming - we are confident a way will emerge. In the wider Circuit, we look forward to getting our local and Circuit-wide discipleship and training programmes up and running, and being ever more involved in the lives of our communities. Why not come along to the Circuit Quiet evening on 13th December, at Ealing Green, to consider where God is leading you, as we look at the example of Mary? See the notice below. Why not make time to pray, or read again the birth story of Jesus in Luke and Matthew from beginning to end.

You carry Good News: walk with confidence. Every Blessing,

Jennifer

Saying Yes to God: A Quiet Evening exploring the story of Mary, in Advent

Short reflections, space for prayer and self consideration in a busy season

**Thursday 13th December, Ealing Green Church,
7.30-9.30pm**

Please RSVP to Jennifer Smith on 020 8579 8114 or jennifer.methodist@yahoo.co.uk so materials can be prepared – no charge.

No experience necessary: all welcome.

Part of the discipleship programme of the Ealing Trinity Circuit of the Methodist church

Pictured: the patronal banner of St. Mary's Cathedral, Lincoln - contemporary tapestry



From the Circuit Meeting

The most recent Circuit Meeting was held on 25th September at Hanwell.

Some outline ideas were presented to the meeting about Circuit Mission Strategy. This is something which the Circuit Policy Committee is considering and which will be developed in the coming months. The aim is to have a strategy geared towards mission and church growth linked with a number of partnerships. These will include a partnership with the University of West London led by Rev Chrissie Howe, a partnership with Ealing Street Pastors led by Rev Suva Catford and on health and well-being led by Deacon Richard Goldstraw. There will also be a focus on training led by Suva with the aim of nurturing quality discipleship.

Perhaps linking with this last point, Rev Brian Thornton, who is National Advocate the Leaders of Worship & Preachers Trust (LWPT), will lead a training weekend on 13th-14th April 2013. The weekend will be open to all members of our Circuit who are interested in leading worship and there are plans to invite neighbouring Circuits. The 13th will be a study day and the 14th will start with an early breakfast followed by a workshop then worship.

On safeguarding, Christina Tom-Johnson reported that about 90% of the office holders in the Circuit who are required by Conference to undertake Safeguarding Foundation training had done so. A further training sessions was being arranged for October to 'sweep up' people who hadn't been able to do the training to date.

The meeting took a number of decisions on property issues. Firstly, it voted to refurbish the manse at 91 Elers Rd (Roger Dunlop's former manse) so that it can be let and to carry out re-wiring at Havelock House. This property, which consists of 7 flats was acquired in the 1960's as an adjunct to Moullin House. Subsequently, some of the flats were sold on long leases, whilst the remainder are let. With the closure of Moullin, Havelock has passed to the Circuit.

The way the Circuit manages its property is also changing. Whereas until now management has been in the hands of unpaid volunteers (Circuit Property Secretary, Manse Secretary etc), it was decided to appoint professional agents to manage the Circuit's property on its behalf. It was agreed that John Martin Estates (based near Pitshanger) would be appointed to act for the Circuit with effect from 1st November. Contracts have been drawn up detailing the services John Martin Estates will provide. This arrangement will be reviewed after 12 months of operation.

Finally, the meeting heard that an offer for Moullin House had been accepted from Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College. The College will refurbish Moullin for continued use as a residence for students. This means that Moullin will live on as a hostel continuing along the lines of the original donors, Thomas and Ada Moullin.

Hanwell Ceilidh Goes with a Swing

Ray Garnett, Hanwell

At our recent Harvest Ceilidh and welcome social for our new Minister, Rev Peter Catford and his family, Hanwell Methodist had an attendance of almost 70 people from various Churches (not all within our Circuit and some people from other denominations). The event made a profit of £290 which will be evenly split between Hanwell's two charitable projects -

The Ghanaian School Mission project and
Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelters

An enormous thanks to all those that played a part in making the event such a success.



Rebecca Catford
entertaining with
'Jack'

Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter: News and Training

Mary Blackwell, Hanwell

Volunteer Training: The first session was on 8th November at Haven Green Baptist Church and the next session will be on 8th January 2013 at 8pm at St George's Church, Southall

Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter has extended its season this year, opening its doors on Saturday 1st December at St George's Church, Southall - a new venue this winter. All the venues from last year are again hosting the shelter and there are other new ones in Acton, Hanwell and Norwood Green. The season is split into three shifts; December, January to mid February and mid February to the end of March. The December shift will run up to 'Crisis at Christmas', who will take our guests for the Christmas period, after which they will be accommodated by St Mary's in Norwood Green until the New Year when the second shift starts at St Dunstan's Church in East Acton.

The Shelter is an ecumenical venture providing overnight shelter, company and food for 14 guests over the cold winter months. It is hosted at a different church each day of the week, the venues changing with the shifts. Although the shelter has a paid co-ordinator it is otherwise staffed by a pool of volunteers drawn mostly from the churches in the Borough of Ealing. Volunteers do not necessarily volunteer to help in their own church, and frequently volunteer for more than one venue as the venues change throughout the season. Subsequently, people from a rich mix of denominations staff the venues and one of the blessings volunteers experience through the shelter is the contact and spiritual fellowship they share with people from other areas and churches.

Each night is divided into three shifts; an evening shift where the shelter is set up, the guests welcomed, fed and befriended, an overnight shift where half the staff will be awake at any one time in case of problems, and the breakfast shift when the guests are fed, the shelter packed away ready for transportation to the next venue and the venue cleaned. Guests at previous shelters have all agreed that companionship in a secure, caring, family atmosphere is what they have valued most, more even than food and a roof over their heads, and it is uplifting to see the change that comes over guests after they have been in the shelter for three or four days. It makes you realise how vulnerable their life is on the streets.

The aim of the shelter is to accommodate the guests for up to 28 days while they find accommodation and/or employment, although sometimes guests remain in the shelter for longer because of identity problems. Acton Homeless Action at Berrymead Gardens, who are one of our referral agencies, help the guests to find new accommodation and sort out problems to do with benefits, nationality and identification papers. Our other referral agencies are St Mungo's at Griffin House in Hammersmith Road, and Ealing Soup Kitchen at St John's Church in West Ealing in case anyone should need to refer a homeless person for help. Homeless people under 18 and over 65 should initially be referred to the local council instead who have a burden of care to minors and the elderly. Although the shelter does sometimes take guests over the age of 65 it does not take guests under 18. Nor is anyone under the age of 18 allowed to help in the shelter while the guests are in attendance although they are allowed to help with setting up in the early evening before the guests arrive.

If you would like to help at the shelter or are prepared to offer to help with the transport (you need your own wheels for this) you need to attend one of the training and registration evenings. The times of these are at the top of this article and you are able to specify how, when and where you would be able to help on the registration form. No one is expected to do more than one shift per night.

There is also an opportunity to raise money for the Shelter carol singing at the craft market in West Ealing on 22nd December between 12.00 and 1.00pm.

Winter Night Shelter Venues

December

Sunday nights	St Mary's, The Mount, Acton
Monday nights	London Network Church, 131 East Acton Lane, Acton
Tuesday nights	St Anslem's, The Green, Southall
Wednesday Nights	All Saints, Elm Grove Rd, Ealing
Thursday nights	St Mellitus, Church Rd, Hanwell
Friday nights	Hanwell Methodist, Church Rd, Hanwell
Saturday nights	St George's, Lancaster Rd, Southall
30/31 December	St Mary the Virgin, Tentelow Lane, Norwood Green

January – February

Sunday nights	St Mary's, The Mount, Acton
Monday nights	St Mary's Church Hall, Church Rd, Hanwell
Tuesday nights	St Dunstan's, Friars Place Lane, Acton
Wednesday Nights	St Anselm's, The Green, Southall
Thursday nights	St John's, Church Ave., Southall
Friday nights	St Stephen's, St Stephen's Rd, West Ealing
Saturday nights	St Christopher's, Bordars Rd, Hanwell

February – March

Sunday nights	St Barnabas, Pitshanger Lane, Ealing
Monday nights	Holy Trinity, Uxbridge Rd, Southall
Tuesday nights	South Hanwell Baptist, Boston Rd, Hanwell
Wednesday Nights	St Anselm's, The Green, Southall
Thursday nights	St Mellitus, Church Rd, Hanwell
Friday nights	Int'l Presbyterian Church, Drayton Green, West Ealing
Saturday nights	Haven Green Baptist, Castlebar Rd, Ealing

If you'd like to support the Winter Night Shelter by sending a donation, you can do so by sending cheques made payable to "St Christopher's PCC (Night Shelter)" to St Christopher's Church, Bordars Rd, Hanwell, London W7 1AG. If you are a UK tax payer please Gift Aid your donation as the Night Shelter will receive an extra 25% as a result.

You can find out more about the Winter Night Shelters at www.ecwns.org.uk.

Moullin House – Offer Accepted

The Circuit has accepted an offer from Ealing Hammersmith & West London College for Moullin House. At the time of writing the necessary legal processes were well in hand and it is hoped to complete the sale before Christmas. The college will use Moullin as a residence for students. This means that Moullin will have a continued life as a hostel broadly in line with the intentions of the Thomas and Ada Moullin who donated Moullin to the former Ealing Broadway Methodist Church in 1950.

You might like to note that as with all Methodist property, the ultimate ownership of Moullin House lies with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) based in Manchester, who hold it on what is known as the 'Model Deed'. One of the implications of this is that a slice of the proceeds of sale (in this case roughly 40%) will go to TMCP to support the Methodist Church nationally.

Why I am a Minister: Rev Peter Catford

A little while ago I asked all our then ministers to write a piece for In-touch describing what had drawn them to their ministry. As we now have a new set of ministers I've asked each of them to submit similar articles which will be published in coming editions. We start with Rev Peter Catford, minister at Hanwell and Kingsdown..

From a very early age I have been part of the Methodist church. My early years were in Plymouth Methodist Central Hall part of the Sunday school morning and afternoon and then the Boys Brigade. When my parents 'emigrated' to Saltash in Cornwall when I was 12, I experienced chapel Methodism as part of a small Junior Church and male voice choir. A whole new world I can assure you.

I tried church politics when I was 18, when I was elected a steward, and decided that church was not for me when I heard an elder in the church forcefully say that no way would things change as *"if it was good enough for my grandfather and my father, then it's good enough for me"*.

It was when I was 26 that things changed, and I can say that I heard a voice calling me to "a job" - no more than that. This led me to say to the new minister that I felt God was calling me to be a Local Preacher. Following my training and a Lay Witness Movement weekend at the chapel, I felt compelled to explore ministry as an ordained presbyter (we didn't have such terms in Cornish Methodism in those days - just a Methodist Minister).

Following much prayer I went to Wesley College "Is the Ministry for You?" day and came back with nothing more than it could be. The publicity said candidating was a chance to explore a call and feeling that this would be a good way to settle things once and for all, allowing others to help in the discernment, I began the process. The journey included two assessed acts of worship, two written examination papers, visits to a psychologist and doctors before the dreaded appearance before the District Candidates Committee which was then followed very quickly by Ministerial Synod. I can remember standing before a church filled with grey haired men wearing mostly black and looking very sombre, and wondering if this really was for me. The giving of my testimony went well until the follow-up questions which were allowed from the floor. My Aunt, who was a deaconess until her ordination as one of the first women presbyters, put me on the spot and I can remember wondering whether the rather vague ramble I began would ever end. However, with affirmation from the District, the Connexional candidates panel in Bristol gave me a chance to explore ministry one to one and in small groups and I came away affirmed that whatever was decided I had been heard and had heard from God as well.

It was a surprise when I received the letter inviting me to Wesley College, Bristol to train for ministry where I ended up for four years. The story of my formation as a presbyter took off in earnest from this point but I acknowledge that God has been very present throughout my journey, although I have not always been as aware of

this as I would have hoped. Looking back over the years, my family have been the main ministers of God's presence supporting, encouraging, and challenging me in countless ways. The churches and the people within them have been Jesus' prompters to ensure I don't get too set in my ways. The communities of which I have been privileged to be a part have awakened me to the movement of the Holy Spirit and not to get too exclusive, inviting me to consider creative and relevant ways to recognise the presence of God within creation.

Presbyteral ministry is a case of always becoming and so I am looking forward to what God has in store next.

Christians Against Poverty

Vera Marston, Ealing Green

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a charity which aims to help people in debt, not by giving them money but by helping them to budget and by negotiating with their creditors. CAP headquarters is in Bradford and has staff trained to negotiate with creditors on behalf of the clients but the rest of the work is done locally. The local centre is set up with the help of a local church which provides accommodation for a debt counsellor who is trained by CAP. The debt counsellor visits clients in their home and obtains all the details and papers which are sent to CAP headquarters in Bradford. The debt counsellor will then visit again to discuss the proposed budget and the amount to be paid by the debtor into a CAP account which is then distributed among the creditors. Once the negotiations are undertaken with the creditors the debtor will usually cease to receive threatening letters and phone calls. CAP stays in touch with the clients until they can become free of debt but, if it is unlikely that they will be able to pay off their debts within five years CAP will help them through insolvency or bankruptcy procedures.

Ealing CAP centre is at St Paul's Church in Ridley Avenue, West Ealing. It is managed by Soul in Ealing which helped establish the Centre and seeks to raise funds. The charity gives help to anyone who asks for help irrespective of their ethnic origin or religious beliefs.

It has only recently come to my attention that although CAP trains debt counsellors, the finances to run a Debt Advice Centre have to come from the local area where the centre is established. It is expected that churches, individuals and local charities, once they are aware of the work, will give to the local centre. It costs about £25,000 per year to run a local centre. The Ealing Centre has in the past received a grant from a local charity but that grant cannot be renewed. In addition a monthly payment of £1,250 comes to an end this December. We desperately need to find new sources of funding for 2013 onwards. Will you please consider making a contribution to finance our CAP Debt Advice Centre in Ealing? Cheques should be made payable to "Soul in Ealing Debt Centre" and sent to Soul in Ealing Debt Centre, St Paul's Church, Ridley Avenue, West Ealing, London W13 9XW.

Our Ministers

A poem by Margaret McCarthy, Northolt

Lord God we thank you for the ministers
Who've responded to your call.
Humbly your work they're here to do
It's hard to please us all.

So many meetings they must all attend
With church business they are dealing.
Morning , afternoon and evening too
Property, finance and healing.

On Sunday morning in praise of you
New hymns they introduce.
We have to practice well before
A glorious sound we all produce.

Each week we hear God's message
Through them to us is given.
We learn that through God's Grace
Our sins have been forgiven.

To bring your love to us they call
When we are sick and ailing,
At home or in hospital wards
They bring your special healing.

Lord help us to show your love to them.
Help us to share their load.
To praise and thank them everyone
For all the seeds they've sowed.

We thank you Lord for ministers,
Your servants here on earth.
They make mistakes like all of us.
Please bless them Lord for all their worth.

Christ has No Hands

Gerald Barton, Editor

Wandering around the old part of Genoa on holiday in October, looking into as many churches as we happened to find open, we came across S Pietro alla Porta built over a set of shops in a bustling piazza in the medieval part of the city. Whilst looking around the church, I picked up a card with a picture of a statue of Christ with no hands along with the following prayer, said to be anonymous and to date from the 15th century.

*Cristo non ha mani,
Ha soltanto le nostre mani
Per fare oggi le sue opere.*

Christ has no hands,
He has only our hands
To do his work today.

*Cristo non ha piedi,
Ha soltanto i nostri piedi
Per andare oggi agli uomini.*

Christ has no feet,
He has only our feet
To go to people today.

*Cristo non ha voce,
Ha soltanto la nostra voce
Per parlare oggi di sé.*

Christ has no voice,
He has only our voice
To speak of Him today.

*Cristo non ha forze,
Ha soltanto le nostre forze
Per guidare gli uomini a sé.*

Christ has no strength,
He has only what we can do
To guide people to Him.

*Noi siamo l'unica Bibbia
Che i popoli leggono ancora.
Siamo l'unico Vangelo
Scritto in opere e parole*

We are the only Bible
That the peoples still read.
We are the only evangelist
Written in deeds and words.



Nativity (detail) by Joos van Cleve, 15th century

The Olympics and Human Trafficking

This article was circulated in August as part of the Methodist Church's 2012 Olympic Games News. That there might be a link between human trafficking and major sporting events such as the Olympics came as a complete surprise to me, so I thought I would include the article in In-touch. Slavery in the UK has been illegal for centuries, although it's only 200 years or so since the slave trade with the southern USA was abolished. It is hideous to think that slavery continues in parts of the world and is now going on in our country albeit illegally, for that is what human trafficking is all about - Editor.

Greece was the first to flag the problem of human trafficking relating to the Olympic Games, in Athens in 2004, when statistics measuring sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, forced street crime, and forced marriage doubled over the Olympic period. Behind these figures are real people - people who left their homes with promises of a better job, a better education or a better life than the one they left behind. When those promises were shown to be empty, the reality of their situations set in and they found themselves in what can only be described as modern-day slavery.

Since those statistics were published, further studies have shown that human trafficking at major sporting events such as the Olympics and the soccer World Cup escalates. The escalation in trafficking is the ugly issue that hides behind the spectacle of big sporting events, and can fade into the background behind the shiny medals.

Europe is the principal destination for human traffickers. This reality means London's hosting of the 2012 Olympics has raised concern. A documentary film produced by Bournemouth University about this subject stated that women can be sold for between £500 and £8,000, then forced to work 16 hours a day, servicing up to 60 men in that time.

"Although it is unknown if the London 2012 Olympics will show the same statistics of human trafficking as other major sporting events, the reality is that there is evidence of continuous human trafficking in London and across the entire UK, and that's a problem," Lucie Barnsdale, YWAM Forever Team Social Justice Coordinator, explains. "It is clear that prestigious sporting events do not have to play [only] a negative role in human trafficking, but [can also play] a positive role by raising awareness and bringing attention to the issue. The more exposure the better."

During this period of extraordinary busyness, advocates against human trafficking have set out to provide just this sort of exposure to visitors to London. Various social justice organisations have been working towards the same goal, such as Stop the Traffik, Esther's House, Not for Sale, Justice for Youth and the Salvation Army.

Many Forever/YWAM outreach teams have partnered with Stop the Traffik to help make the most of this awareness-raising opportunity. Stop the Traffik has been manning oversized gift boxes positioned in public places all over London, and engaging with the public around the hook of “Things are not always what they seem”. Volunteers invite passers-by to step inside the box, to view displays featuring statistics and stories of those being exploited, whether through forced labour, domestic or sexual servitude. On the outside these boxes look inviting, but on the inside is a terrible reality, reflecting the contrast between the promises made to vulnerable people and the reality they later experience when enslaved in a foreign country.

Giulis Testa, a student in International Human Rights Law, talked to us about her experience of working with Stop the Traffik: “Sometimes when hearing about the 12.3 million people trafficked every year, or the shocking things that happen to children, many people feel powerless to do anything, and get overwhelmed by all the graphic stories. It has been cool to talk with people about practical things they can do right now [by teaching them to] look out for signs of trafficked victims and [by informing] the public that humans are being bought and sold against their will.”

The YWAM teams have been using the Olympic Games not only to inform the public about these issues, but also to help jump-start ministries aimed at reaching out to vulnerable women. Esther’s House is one such initiative, a long-term project Lucie Barnsdale has launched in Stratford, the area playing host to much of the action of the London 2012 Games.

Teams have been helping Lucie progress her vision for the East London-based work by working in the local hostel for vulnerable women, offering them art classes, and by building relationships with the churches and local residents. They have also been praying for women in prostitution, and for victims of trafficking.

Lucie spoke about advocacy and its role in bringing an end to human trafficking: “After these Games are over and gone the issue still remains. It’s great to know that these teams have helped bring awareness and [have] built relationships with the churches and local ministries that will continue to fight against the injustices that are happening around us.” To find out how you can get involved please go to www.stophettraffik.org

Advance Date for your Diaries!

Circuit International Evening

Saturday 11th May 2013

at Acton Hill

Further details nearer the time

LWPT Fellowship Conference:

'The Power of Praise and Worship'

5th - 7th October 2012, Willersley Castle.

Christina Tom-Johnson, Northolt

"Worship and the Spirit" - this was the title of a weekend workshop for worship leaders organised by the Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust (LWPT) in October 2012. It was held at Willersley Castle near Matlock, one of the hotels run by the Christian Guild (i.e. Methodist Guild Holidays). The house was originally built for Sir Richard Arkwright who was famous for his cotton mills on the river Derwent which was close by.

The weekend was led by Roger Jones and his team and started with thoughts on leaving space for God to come as Spirit and Truth; particularly remembering that God rested on the seventh day He had created. We sang 'Come Holy Spirit'. Then in the story of Adam and Eve we heard that God played hide and seek – us hiding fearfully, and God seeking. Perhaps you have forgotten one of the earliest games we play with babies – peekaboo! – but this time it is for adults and God keeps wanting us to see Him.

'Being a Worshipper' was the title of the first session. The word 'worship' attributes worth to an activity and God demands our full attention (Romans 12 v 12 'never stop praying'). However, we may consider that at the beginning of worship e.g. first thing on a Sunday morning, we are not quite in tune with God. Roger described this as a 'cold start'. He expected, though that as worship progressed, the worshipper would be open to God and change from thoughts about breakfast to responses to God's love. For example, lives will receive blessings, power will be released and lies repelled leading to deliverance (Ephesians 5 verse 18 'let the Spirit fill your life').

We learnt what a 'Praise Block' was and how to make it happen. As a worshipper you may miss all the signs the musicians use to bring songs together. Again we were encouraged to 'let God come' – and not give Satan a chance. The group struggled with some of the words in the songs e.g. 'beautiful Jesus'. We heard a number of catchy phrases such as 'we can either be a part of what God is doing or apart from it'.

The third session was on psalms, hymns and songs. Somehow this led to considering body language during worship. In the Old Testament we heard that the most common approach to God was prostration, with hands raised or kneeling closely following. Psalm 100 'Shout praises to the Lord everyone on this earth, be joyful and sing as you come to worship the Lord' was an introduction to words used to praise God in the Bible. Most were unpronounceable – but the list was long! In this session we also moved from the Old Testament with worship in Jerusalem at the temple to Jesus' death and Matthew 27 verse 51 where the temple curtain – hiding God – back to the game of hide and seek – was torn when Jesus died i.e. nothing now separates us from God.

We finished the weekend with a service of communion. If you need any further information about the weekend or LWPT do get in touch with Christina Tom-Johnson (Circuit Leaders of Worship and Preachers Co-ordinator), or Anita Oji (a Trustee of LWPT) or visit the LWPT website at www.lwpt.org.uk.

Extracts from the Leaders of Worship, and Preachers Trust Newsletter for September 2012

Christina Tom-Johnson, LWPT Co-ordinator

The National LWPT Co-ordinator, John Witt begin this Newsletter praying that it finds all leaders of worship and preachers able to regain new energy for the beginning of the Methodist new year.

Best in Time of Need

The LWPT operates the Local Preachers Necessities Fund: which is helpful for many people. John Witt writes 'I have just literally received an email this morning from one of our local preacher secretaries who tells me how we have been able to help someone in great need, and what a difference we have been able to make to their lives. So please continue to seek these people out'

LWPT also serves the needs of older people in a Christian environment and the charity is always looking for new residents in their Westerley Christian Homes. These are Christian homes with regular devotional opportunities each day and they have a special atmosphere. They also offer respite care and carers can use it to have a break, providing there is a room free. Please contact the LWPT office for more information (see below).

The twin slogans of the LWPT are 'Enabling the Best for Worship' and 'Enabling the Best in Time of Need'. Of course, LWPT can only give this help if they are supported by their friends. LWPT is dependent on our generosity and donations. LWPT encourages congregations to give their prayers and become part of the answer by becoming a Friend of the LWPT, and donating money so that they can continue to help everyone involved in leading worship. Churches are asked to set up a grant or make a collection for LWPT work. Remember that 3 out of 4 services each Sunday are conducted by Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.

LWPT Diaries for 2013

LWPT Diaries can be ordered at £5.50 each. They are well designed with Christian dates and festivals and other religious festivals, and anniversaries separately listed. In addition to the usual travel information, there is a page for sunrise and sunset. The calendar for the years 2013 – 2014, 2015, and 2016, are shown, and the weekly diary extends to June 2014, thus giving 18 months of planning. Please contact the LWPT Office to order one.

LWPT National Advocates

Joyce Pipet completed her year of office in June 2012. She has been a wonderful advocate and has visited many districts for the first time. We do thank her most sincerely for all that she has accomplished and for being feedback of ideas and hopes to the LWPT Board. She has been invited to become part of the Board of Trustees.

Brian Thornton was commissioned at the National Assembly in June 2012 by Rev Wayne Grewcock (of Twelve Baskets) as the new LWPT National Advocate for 2012 -2013. Brian is a former Vice President of Conference and has been involved with Methodist Publishing. We are delighted to report that he has accepted an invitation to visit Ealing Trinity Circuit in April 2013, and will conduct worship and a workshop during the weekend of April 13/14 2013.

LWPT Sunday

It has been traditional to hold service by Local Preachers called Local Preachers Sunday, the Sunday after Easter, to give ministers a break but more recently this has lapsed. LWPT advocates its re-introduction, as a LWPT Sunday because of the twin benefits of being able to present our congregations with a 'Call to lead worship' and a 'Call to Preach'. Joyce Pipet is developing a theme for use for 2013, with ideas for a service based on her year as National Advocate.

Dates for your diaries: Ealing Trinity Circuit

Local Preachers Sunday: 7th April 2013

Leaders of Worship and Preachers Continuing Education: Study Day: 'Passion for Praise', Saturday 13th April 2013, 10am – 4pm at Greenford Church - further details to follow.

LWPT can be contacted at:-

LWPT, PO Box 2352, Watford, WD18 1PY
tel: 01923 231811.
lwptoffice@lwpt.org.uk

St Ethelburga Centre

Gerald Barton, Editor

The weekend of 22nd – 23rd September was, if you weren't aware of it Open House London weekend. This annual event sees many buildings not normally open to the public open their doors to let the curious in. This year, like last year we took the opportunity to go on a 'church crawl' to see some of the churches in the City of London (including the Bevis Marks synagogue for good measure). Of course, many of these churches are open at various times during the week, but many are closed at weekends so we don't normally have any opportunity to see them.

This year we started off with St Helen's Bishopsgate and gradually worked through a dozen or so churches ending up at St Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate (with very welcome tea and cake). This tiny church was one of the best preserved small city churches until 24th April 1993 when it was pretty much destroyed by an IRA bomb. That could have been the end of the story, but the decision was taken to rebuild the church using the few elements left standing and what materials could be recovered.

Appropriately, the church now stands as a Centre for Peace and Reconciliation. The main body of the church is very simple with the 13th century arcade of the original building forming one side. The east window, by Helen Whittaker shows St Ethelburga gathering up pieces of broken glass left after the bombing. At the rear of the church is a delightful garden in rather Moorish style with a second garden behind now largely filled by a Bedouin tent. I picked up a prayer for peace here –



The garden at St Ethelburga

*God of Life, Every act of violence in our world,
Between myself and another, Destroys a part of your creation.*

*Stir within my heart a renewed sense of reverence for all life
Give me the vision to recognise your spirit
In every human being, however they behave towards me.*

*Make possible the impossible by cultivating in me
The fertile seed of healing love.*

*May I play my part in breaking the cycle of violence
By realising that peace begins with me.*

This reminded me of a song we used to sing at Norwalk United Methodist – 'Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me....' Always worth remembering!

Etty Hillesum – a Life Transformed

Gerald Barton, Editor

There is an awful fascination about the Holocaust. In part, I think this reflects the sheer scale of the horror and brutality of it all. For me though, what I find doubly fascinating is the fact that some people caught up in this were somehow able to rise above these horrific circumstances and reveal extraordinary levels of humanity. Browsing in the bookshop at St Martin in the Fields a while ago, I came across a book with the same title as this article by Patrick Woodhouse who is Canon Precentor at Wells Cathedral about the short life of a young Dutch Jewish girl named Etty Hillesum who died in Auschwitz in late 1943. Etty became one of those people who, despite the horror of Nazi persecution, found a deep spirituality within herself and whose humanity shone through it all. How she developed that way is a deeply fascinating story, but first a little of her history.

Etty Hillesum was born on 15th January 1914 in the Netherlands. Her parents were Jewish – her father was a quiet, bookish Dutchman and her mother a Russian who had fled to the Netherlands to escape pogroms in her homeland. These two were highly contrasted characters – Etty's mother was passionate and tempestuous compared to her bookish father. The family was dysfunctional and her parents were unable to give Etty and her two younger brothers the stability and warmth they needed. Both the brothers, Jacob and Mischa were highly gifted – the first in medicine and the second in music, but both suffered periods of mental illness requiring hospitalisation.

In 1932, Etty left the family home in Deventer to go to university in Amsterdam where she studied law followed by Slavic studies. As a student she was involved in left-wing anti-fascist circles and lived a rather chaotic life. In 1937 she took a position as housekeeper to a widower, Hendrik Wegerif, 39 years her senior. Despite the difference in ages and the fact that Wegerif had a 21 year old son, Etty began an affair with him. She remained in Wegerif's household until her departure in 1943.

During this period Etty became a member of a circle of students gathered around a charismatic psychotherapist, Julius Spier who had been influenced by Jung and who had gained permission from the Nazis to move from Berlin to settle in Amsterdam in 1939. In early 1941 Etty entered psychotherapy with Spier and it was he who encouraged her to keep the diaries which have given us the record of her life.

In July 1942, Etty obtained a secretarial post with the Jewish Council. This had been set up by the Nazis to handle Jewish affairs although its members hoped that they could work to ameliorate the restrictions being placed on Jews. Within a few weeks, Etty was transferred to the Department of Social Welfare for People in Transit. This took her to Camp Westerbork, which was a transit camp for Jews who were being deported to the concentration camps in the east. As a member of the Jewish Council, Etty was able to travel back and forth between Westerbork and

Amsterdam, but ultimately was deported herself. She left the camp for the last time in September 1943 en route for Auschwitz where she died in November of that year.

Etty's letters vividly describe the desperate conditions in Westerbork – a half kilometre square patch of heathland crammed with barrack huts, watchtowers, barbed wire and misery. People lived in dread of the weekly trains of freight wagons that took them to the extermination camps in the east. Here, Etty spent the last three months of her life caring for the sick and vulnerable and writing letters to friends. Her warmth, vitality and compassionate care became an inspiration to others. Despite the hell in which she found herself, she could still write 'life is glorious and magnificent'.

How was it that Etty went from being an emotionally disturbed, chaotic young woman to one who could show deep compassion and who could still see life as essentially good despite the terror surrounding her? Not surprisingly, the process started with her psychotherapist friend, Julius Spier. However, this was not just the effect of good psychotherapy, but of finding a deep spirituality within herself. Etty's family was not religious. Her father was interested in Judaism in an academic way, but the family was not observant and did not keep Jewish family rituals. Spier, however had religious sentiments and encouraged Etty to read the Psalms, the New Testament – the gospel of St Matthew became very dear to her, St Augustine and the works of Rainer Maria Rilke (1875 – 1926), a German-Austrian poet and writer.

Throughout 1941 Etty worked with Spier to start the process of understanding the chaos within herself and to move beyond where she was psychologically. Her relationship with Spier became very close and, in today's terms would almost certainly be considered unprofessional – in many respects it was too close and too intimate. However, the relationship was multi-dimensional. At times it was teacher – pupil, at others parent – child. She could be attracted to him erotically at the same time as being repelled. In the later stages, he became the practitioner of wisdom and she the apprentice as she started offering therapy to others herself. Whichever way, it was through Spier's influence that she began to piece herself together. Crucially, he was the first person to whom she was able to relate inwardly and this made a fundamental difference to her.

After about a year of working with Spier, Etty began to discern a depth within herself, an inner spaciousness. She also began to appreciate the joy of 'the present moment' – by letting go of her inner despair she could experience the present as something full of opportunity. At the same time she discovered the value of solitude, something which subsequently became fundamental to her.

Thus far, Etty's tale could be one of fruitful, if unconventional psychotherapy. However, throughout this journey, something else had also been happening. About a month after she started therapy with Spier, she was sat in the back yard of her home in the sunshine looking at a chestnut tree, when she experienced her surroundings in a new way. In her own words *'I just let it happen to me.... Suddenly*

I knew how someone can sink impetuously to his knees and find peace there... Up to that point she had always tried to understand life with her mind and intellect. However, to paraphrase words spoken by Tolstoy's freemason character Osip Bazdeyev in War and Peace, *'The mind can only understand what it suits the mind to understand. Some things cannot be understood by the mind alone, these things can only be understood by the heart'*.

From this small beginning, Etty gradually developed a deep contemplative faculty. This was encouraged by Spier who believed that it was important to take time every morning for withdrawal, for reflection, for listening, for what Etty called a 'Buddhist quarter of an hour'. She realised that this was not easy and would take learning and practice, but she also recognised that only by allowing all her distracting thoughts and emotions to recede could she allow something of 'God' and something of 'Love' to enter her. At this point she hedged words such as 'God' and 'Love' with inverted commas as she was not yet sure what this meant. However, through this process of, for want of a better word, meditation she began to discover her own spiritual depth and what was *'deepest and best'* in her. This she referred to as 'God'. This was not just about herself, however. She also began to feel an inter-connectedness, not just with Spier, her mentor and therapist, but also all other human beings. This growing sense of inter-connectedness was vital to her future, and ultimate fate. Because of this she felt she had to share the suffering of 'her' people and do what she could for them, even though that would lead to her own eventual deportation.

In September 1941, Etty was suddenly overcome by an irresistible urge to kneel and to pray. At first, she was embarrassed by this – her 'critical, rational, atheistic' part wanted to reject this simple act. However, kneeling combined with her developing contemplative faculty became vital to her. Through this means, which she found intimate, in fact *'more intimate than being with a man'* she learnt the art of prayer, finding God within herself. She later wrote that there was a deep well within her and in the depths of that well was God. However, the well was full of grit and stones which she had to keep digging out.

Through the course of 1941 and into 1942, Etty moved from her emotional chaos to become a young woman of deep spirituality. What is the more remarkable is the fact that this took place against the background of increasing Nazi persecution and restrictions on Jews. Despite this, she refused to hate. She was critical of the reaction of many of her fellow Jews in hating the Nazis. She came to feel that, at root, there is goodness and love in all human beings however much it may be overlaid by malice and hard-heartedness. Hating, she felt, blinded people to this essential goodness and, to a degree robbed them of their own humanity. Even in the Westerbork transit camp she refused to hate, looking into the faces of the guards for traces of their humanity.

As her faith grew against the background of the Nazi persecution, Etty came to the realisation that God *'could not help them'*. This is startling, but is linked to something else – the realisation that her task was not to abandon this God in bitterness at the suffering of her people, but to *'look after him and care for him'*, for

she knew that without God they would lose everything, their humanity, their integrity, their beauty as people. What mattered was not preserving their lives at any cost, but *how* their lives were preserved. For Etty, God was a 'vulnerable presence', to be looked after and cherished in the human heart.

Working for the Jewish Council, Etty had a degree of protection from the persecution – her papers bore a stamp giving her 'exemption' from deportation. Nonetheless, she spent time in the Westerbork camp trying to help and succour people sent there prior to deportation to the camps in the east. Eventually, all such 'exemptions' were cancelled leaving Etty at risk of deportation herself. Various of her friends had urged her to go into hiding – something like 25,000 Dutch Jews went into hiding during the war of whom about 18,000 survived, so hiding did hold out the very real prospect of survival. Etty, however, refused. Because of her sense of inter-connectedness she could not abandon her people, but felt that she had to embrace and share their fate, doing what she could for them while she could. The end finally came in September 1943 when she too was listed for deportation to Auschwitz.

Etty's story is remarkable. From being a chaotic young woman, she developed a deep faith and spirituality, guided by Julius Spier until his death from cancer in 1942. In finding this faith and spirituality, she also found her true humanity and her true self. It is undeniable that in this she found God, although it has to be noted that this happened outside of any religious institution. Her background was secular, and Spier encouraged her in the reading of texts from a variety of religions, so it is not possible to link the development of her faith with any one religion. God made man in his own image. By delving into herself, Etty was able to find something of that image in herself.

Etty's life poses a number of challenges to us, not least her refusal to hate even though the enemy she refused to hate ultimately destroyed her. We do not face the kind of terror faced by the Jews in wartime Europe, but we can feel threatened by terrorism from the likes of al-Qaeda, by wayward bankers and other groups who wield power irresponsibly. It is easy to develop hatred for such people, more difficult to see through the mask to the vulnerable human beings within. Equally, in our secular age she challenges us to have faith and belief. Etty was a secular person, but nonetheless found a deep spiritual dimension inside herself.

Etty's route to faith challenges the church, and all other institutionalised religions, because she came to faith outside of any organised religion. Her starting point was herself, which can seem very individualistic if not egotistical, but as she found her spiritual depth, this spun round on itself and she became a compassionate caring person who was willing to risk her life for others. Patrick Woodhouse, who wrote the book on which I've based this article, argues that the church seeks to answer the question 'who is God'. Etty asked 'who am I' and in struggling with that question found God. Perhaps, he suggests, one of the reasons why the church fails to connect with so many people could be that it is not answering the questions that people really want to ask.

Iris Axon Concert Series

2012/13

Acton Hill Church
Woodlands Ave, Acton W3 9BU

First Sunday of each month 4.00pm – 5.15pm

2 nd December	Kaleidoscope Wind <i>Double wind quintet</i>
6 th January	Colin Scobie (Violin) <i>member of the Fitzwilliam Quartet</i>
3 rd February	The Stadler Quintet
3 rd March	Andrada Brisc (piano)
7 th April	James Fisher (bass)
5 th May	Marc Naylor (bassett horn)
2 nd June	Karen Newby (piano)

Programmes at the door: £6.00 (£5.00 cons), £2.00 children

This concert series is named after the late Iris Axon, a long-time member of Acton Hill Church. All the performers are young professional musicians giving their time to help raise funds for Acton Hill Church.

Circuit Directory Update

Forthcoming Events around the Circuit [as notified to, or discovered by, the Editor]

December

- 6th Thurs 8.00pm **Local Preachers Meeting**
Training Subgroup meets at 7.15pm
- 13th Thurs 7.30pm **'Saying Yes to God' - Circuit Quiet Evening**
9.30pm Ealing Green Church – see p4 for details
- 31st Mon 11.30pm **Circuit Watch Night Service** at Acton Hill

February

- 9th Sat 10.00am **Kingsdown Book Fair** with stalls
12.30pm *Proceeds to JMA and MWiB*
- 27th Wed 8.00pm **Circuit Policy Committee** at Kingsdown

March

- 2nd Sat 10.30am **Animal Welfare Bazaar** at Hanwell
4.00pm *Admission free*
- 9th Sat 10.00am **Kingsdown Book Fair** with stalls
12.30pm *Proceeds to Kingsdown Charity of the Year*
Ealing Street Pastors
- 13th Wed 8.00pm **Circuit Meeting** at Ealing Green

Articles for '**In-touch**' **Issue No 63 (March - May)** should be sent by e-mail headed '**In-touch**' to the Editor, **Gerald Barton**, or as hard copy to the Circuit Office.

Ealing Trinity Circuit Office
Kingsdown Methodist Church, Kingsdown Ave, West Ealing, London W13 9PR
office@ealingtrinity.org.uk

Office hours: Tues & Thurs 09.00 – 14.00

Deadline for next issue: January 25th