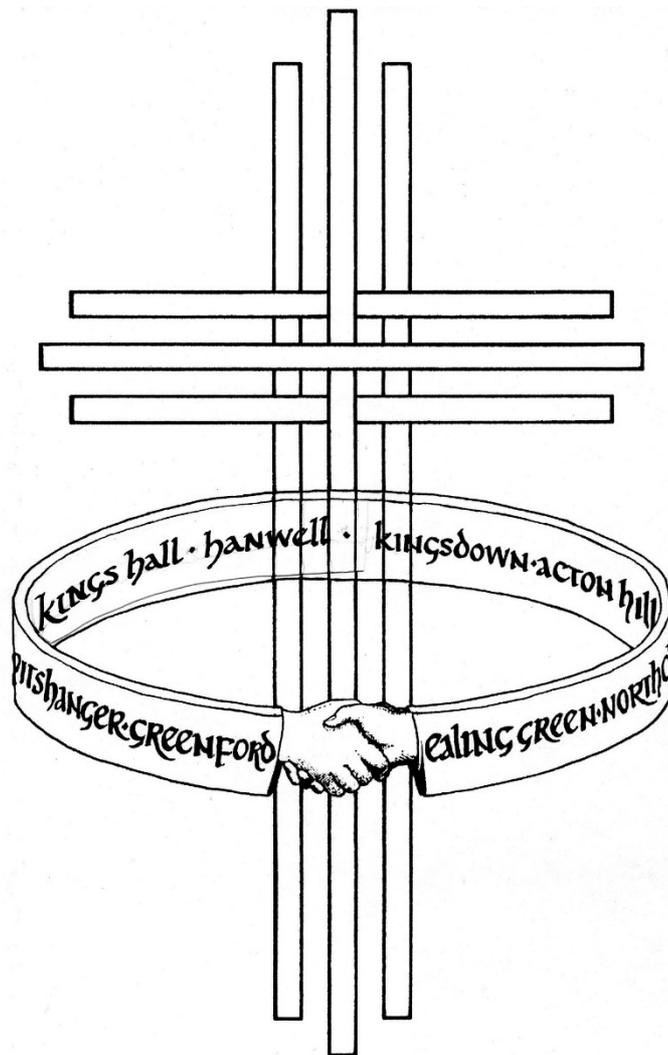


In-touch

No 92

December 2021 – February 2022



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

Dear Friends,

Wow, it's been a long time since we had a print edition of In-touch! In the meantime much has happened. The Covid pandemic has brought changes we never imagined from mask wearing and regular lateral flow tests, to mass vaccinations. Our churches moved online and then returned to buildings with infection control measures in place. Some of us have been out working throughout this period, others have found themselves furloughed, made redundant or unable to find work, still others have been shielding at home unable to see others. The rhythms of our lives may have changed and changed again through this period. For some of us this has led us to re-examine what is important and to change how we live, for others it has led to a wish to get back to how things were. While living through the same situation in the same place our experiences and lives have been very different and so are our responses and so we have needed and will continue to need compassion, care and understanding as we move forwards together.

Many other changes have happened in the world and our churches over the months that In-touch has been online rather than in print:

- The climate crisis has become more pressing, COP 26 has met in Glasgow and it is even clearer than ever that we can't leave caring for our world to our political leaders. We each need to take responsibility. Where we go on holiday, how we heat our houses and churches, what clothes we buy and wear, how much waste we create, what we eat and so much more besides can help.
- In our Circuit three ministers have left and we've been joined by two new ministers: Ajay this September and Theresa in September 2020. There's an introduction to each of them later in this edition of In-touch. Marcia Pinnock-Roye has also joined our team as part-time pastoral assistant for Greenford and Northolt.
- Kathleen Loveridge who did a tremendous job as Circuit Steward has now retired from the role. Thank you, Kathleen, for all you have done for the Circuit. We have 3 fantastic Circuit Stewards - Jane Horwich, Fleur Hatherall and Stephen Sears (Treasurer). But we'd love to add to the team. Are you feeling called to get more involved in Circuit life and to help us discern God's vision for the future? Talk to me or to one of the Circuit Stewards to find out how you could get involved. We're looking for new Circuit Stewards but also for some people who could offer expertise in various practical areas to support our Circuit Leadership Team.
- Sadly, over the past months a number of our members have died. They leave holes in our lives and our churches and we mourn their passing. Later in this edition of In-touch you will find tributes to some of them. Feel free to send in more for later editions. Surrounded by this great crowd of witnesses and inspired by their example we continue to live and work for God's kingdom.

Throughout the changes of the past months I've been thrilled at the ways you have all supported each other. I've admired the ways you have stepped up to the challenge of making our churches safe and welcoming places as buildings reopened and with each change in the situation. I've been heartened by the ways you have encouraged each other to return to worship in our buildings and supported those who aren't able to do so. I've been excited by the new ways you've found to reach out to others - stars given away last Christmas outside Greenford and Northolt, Greenford's Tea and Talk on Saturdays over the summer, the vaccine hub at Greenford, concerts at Acton Hill, and a new coffee, cake and chat each week which is thriving at Hanwell. I've been inspired by the ways you have taken to new technology and developed in ways we never thought possible - online Bible Studies full of laughter, deep and heartfelt exploration and care; churches carefully thinking about how to use technology and balance needs now so that no one is excluded. You have achieved so much and we have so many gifts as a Circuit.

We now need to think deeply together about where we are and where God is calling us in the future. We need to consider what brings life and what is sapping our energy. We need to work out how we can simplify our structures and work together so we can release energy and enthusiasm for things that bring growth and work towards God's kingdom. What could we do together rather than each church working separately? What feels too much at the moment? What do you long to do as a church or for the community that feels impossible?

This Advent, I invite you to make some commitments

- Take time each day to pause, light a candle and pray, to review, giving thanks and wondering what could be different.
- Make a commitment to change at least one thing to help the climate crisis (a more sustainable Christmas with less waste, recycled wrapping paper etc, or maybe less food waste or less meat - the possibilities are endless)
- There are various opportunities to meet together for Bible Study and prayer through Advent. Why not join us for one of them?

In the watching, waiting and wondering God is with us.

May you have a blessed Advent, and Christmas and a New Year filled with hope and possibility

Blessings,

Rachel

10 Minute Revitaliser

*Light a candle every day during Advent.
Take time to give thanks for the day and to
remember God's presence.
Wonder about what could be different.
Recognise what's wrong, know God's
forgiveness and commit to change.*



From the Editor

It's been quite some time since the last print edition of In-touch... In fact, the last edition was No 91 March – May 2020. Every so often I receive a letter from the British Library, with whom copies of all printed publications should by law be deposited, asking me to send them copies of In-touch produced since then. I have written back several times explaining that we haven't produced any and that as soon as we do I will send them copies. But still they persist. Maybe they are missing In-touch.....

To fill the gap during the pandemic, In-touch went online with a special page on the Circuit website. I hope you've been able to take a look from time to time and read the articles! Of course, not everyone has online access, so some of you won't have seen what's there.

The pandemic has been a strange time. For a time life as we knew it came to a juddering halt and we had to adapt and quickly learn new ways of doing things. Our services, groups and meetings had to move online, a learning process in itself. Much credit is due to our Circuit staff, Rachel and Sue in particular for their efforts to provide us with regular worship. It's been a hard time for them as ministers and, of course we often don't see and perhaps don't appreciate how much they've had to do one way and another.

Now our churches have re-opened we've started reverting to "normal", not that things can feel very "normal" as we continue with our Covid-19 precautions. Some of the things we started to do online may continue. Rev Sue has been continuing the Friday online worship and Rev Rachel with online Bible studies and we may opt to keep some of our meetings online.

As our churches have been reopening people have gradually started to return. Not everyone, of course. Some are no longer able to come. Maybe some have got out of the habit. I have to admit, in many ways services online made things easier – sit back in your own home, coffee in hand, no need to go out, more time to spare on a Sunday and so on. It's quite understandable. I felt it myself. However, our churches are worshipping communities and that means needing to come together. Without people being physically present participating and doing things, our churches will quietly fade away. We're not alone in struggling with that – other churches are finding the same problem.

So, maybe now is the time to think about returning to church if you haven't already.

Well, maybe now is also the time to re-start the In-touch print edition so we can reach everyone in the Circuit again. So here we are! This edition contains a mixture of material, some of it new and some of it previously published on the In-touch Online page on the website. I hope you enjoy it!

Welcome to 'Deacon's Corner' Online and in 'In-touch'

Deacon Theresa Simons-Sam, Circuit Minister

www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/deacons-corner

The "Deacon's Corner" page on the Circuit website is a work in progress and provides the Circuit and the community with valuable information and opportunities to connect with each other through:

- Complementary and alternative worship such as the monthly Examen (see below)
- Volunteering in the Circuit or with other charitable organisations in Ealing such as Foodbank, Crosslight and Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter.

I will be adding you more about Methodist deacons living by a Rule of Life, in community as a dispersed order at the end of January 2022. But for now, keep an eye on Deacon's Corner as there will be changes but more importantly, events coming up!

Examen

I have been running monthly 'Examen' sessions online on the first Monday evening of each month.

The Prayer of Examen is a form of prayer developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) as part of his work on "spiritual exercises." It is often a prayer at the end of the day but is also used at other times. It is a way of reviewing the day with God with the intention of examining our need for forgiveness and healing, reconciliation and recommitment.

Each Examen session gives the opportunity to look back over the month just passed and review it in the light of God's love and plan for us.

If you'd like to join the Examen sessions, please contact me – e-mail me at simons.samt@gmail.com or call me on 07484 542878.

The next sessions will be on **29th November and 27th December both at 7.30pm.** Dates of future Examen sessions will be posted on the Deacon's Corner page of the Circuit website – www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/deacons-corner.

God's blessings for you all.

Theresa



Rev Ajay Singh Introduces Himself

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you all!

Christmas is coming and it's time when the Church gets quite busy. I wish you all the best for your planning, preparation and pray that you would be able to bring many souls to Christ rather than just celebrating the festivity. It is about the sharing the Good News which is for the people of the world.



It's over three months now since I joined the Ealing Trinity Circuit in September 2021. I hardly get chance to see the churches other than my pastoral section where I have the pastoral oversight of Acton Hill, Hanwell and King's Hall, Southall which is up and running at the hall of Hambrough Primary School for last nine years.

It would be good for you to know about me through this letter: I was born and brought up in a place called Gaya in the state of Bihar in India which is quite popular worldwide for Buddhism where Buddha (Sidhartha) got enlightenment under a Banyan Tree. It's also a renowned place for Hindu pilgrimage where millions of Hindu devotees come to offer their prayer with a ritual called 'Pind-Daan' (praying for their ancestors).

Most of my studies I did in India, like - BA in History, English and Political Science before coming to Church ministry, and Bachelor of Divinity (BD) in Theology which is helping me in my ministry. I served five years in Diocese of Patna and seven years in Diocese of Lucknow in India. It gave me quite wide learning of working with various churches and people of interfaith.

I moved from India to the UK in July 2004 as a World Church Partner. A link between Church of North India and British Methodist Church and stationed at Swindon (Wiltshire), one of the oldest ecumenical partnerships in England between the Church of England, URC and Methodist in 'Swindon and Marlborough Circuit' (currently known as 'East Wiltshire Circuit') under Bristol District on a contract of five years. After completion of my contract and with the permission from my home Church in India, I was received into Methodist Connexion at the Methodist Conference held at Wolverhampton in 2009. I moved to Bristol in the 'Bristol & South Gloucestershire Circuit' as an Authorised Minister in 2009 and served there for six years where I also served for three years as an Assistant Synod Secretary and as a member of the District Council.

In 2015 I was stationed at Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District at Stourbridge in Dudley, West Midlands which is also known as Black Country. There I was

assigned the role of superintendent for a year after the death of our dear superintendent. In my fifth year at Stourbridge, I opted for curtailment because after my wife finished her theological training from Queen's Foundation Birmingham she was looking for stationing to complete her period of probation. So she got stationed at Bromsgrove & Redditch Circuit, and I got the neighbouring circuit, 'Oldbury and West Birmingham Circuit in the Birmingham District. After serving there for nearly two years of serving only, I was picked up by the connexion to respond to the call to serve an Asian Church (Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi speaking Church) in Southall. That's how I came to Ealing Trinity Circuit and discerned my calling from September 2021 in this circuit. I believe that it's God who leads us to do his ministry. However, I have a passion to preach the Gospel and working along the people in the community. So, I am here with you all to give all glory and honour to God and be blessed.

Every blessing!

Rev Ajay Singh
Methodist Minister, Ealing Trinity Circuit

One Minute Revitaliser

*Try to pause for at least
one minute every hour.*

Focus on your breathing

*Think of one thing to give thanks
for.*

Change Begins with a Bike

Kathleen Loveridge, Kingsdown

Being faced with a choice between sending your daughter to school, or receiving the gift of a cow, isn't a problem that many in the UK are faced with.

But it's a very real challenge for poor farming families in Eastern Uganda.

And I was surprised – to say the least – that a solution for their dilemma could be a bicycle!

But that was the message from an interesting recent Zoom gathering that I was invited to share. Organised by our Methodist international aid organisation 'All We Can' (AWC), I listened to Najgiba and Joy talk about the difference that I and other AWC donors are making to their lives, and the lives of such families in Uganda. When we talk about aid to poorer countries most of us think about food aid and medical supplies, temporary shelters and so on – things needed in the wake of some natural or climate-change induced disaster. All We Can does contribute to emergency situations when needed, but most of its work is more low-key, small-scale, very community-focussed, and always in partnership with and under the direction of local people who have experienced the situation first-hand and thus really know what will help them best.

Najgiba and Joy are community leaders of the **First African Bicycle Information Organisation** (FABIO), and they talked to us of their partnership with AWC in the '**Change Begins with a Bike**' scheme. Sugarcane farming is all that is available to

many families in their locality and many boys have to contribute to that work and girls to the domestic chores of cooking, bringing up younger children, and fetching and carrying water and firewood for cooking. With schools as much as 2 hours walk from home, getting an education as well as working for the family becomes impossible. FABIO buys up second-hand bicycles, provides workshops where they are renovated, and donates them to villages where the village elders determine who needs them most.

At first sight, that doesn't suggest it can be doing a lot of good, and what happens when the bikes finally get beyond repair, or are stolen? Najgiba and Joy, with the help of a short video, showed us that there is much more benefit than appears at first. Firstly, the whole village owns the bike, and at least one young man has to have been trained (and is paid) to keep it in good repair; the bike can be used to fetch water for the whole village, or take produce to market to be sold, generating a fund for improvements (including buying an additional bike) agreed by everyone. The bike can be used for women to go to antenatal clinics which reduces the number of neonatal deaths – some villages construct trailers that turn the bikes into ambulances! It's in everyone's interest that the bike is kept safe and well-maintained.

And the schoolgirls and the cows? There has been a high incidence of teenage pregnancies amongst unmarried girls – particularly at risk during those long walks to and from school. In the past, it was usual for these girls to drop out of school, losing the opportunity that education can bring. In other cases poor families might be offered a cow or a goat in exchange for a marriageable young girl, and be tempted by the immediate relief from poverty, and one less mouth to feed! But it isn't a long-term solution, especially as world-wide sugar prices fall rapidly.

Access to a bicycle can mean the difference between everyone subsisting on just enough, or having a little money over in the village to purchase more land, invest in different crops, or build their own well; to take their produce to larger, more distant, markets to obtain better prices, to send a bright student for further education. And because all the village is involved in setting the conditions for the use of the bike, they can ensure that the better outcomes are shared across the village population.

I've always been impressed by the principles behind 'All We Can' (perhaps still more familiar to many of us under its former name – the Methodist Relief and Development Fund). But hearing from the Ugandan partners in Change Begins with a Bike, really brought home to me how much better it is to provide small amounts of funding and expertise to local communities to further schemes that they know can work best for them. Joy and Najgiba referred over and over again to the difference made by working in partnership with a charity that doesn't set their own conditions for how their money is spent, but agrees the rules in negotiation with those who are to be benefitted. It was clear that All We Can was making a big difference!

You can find out more about the **First African Bicycle Information Organisation** by going to fabio.or.ug and about **All We Can** at www.allwecan.org.uk.

The Joy of Being a Local Preacher - Alex Anteyi

Alex Anteyi joined our Circuit fairly recently and worships at Ealing Green Church. He is a Local Preacher and is now taking services around our Circuit. Here is his reflection on being a Local Preacher.

For me, this reflection involves looking back and evaluating my actions and experiences in the light of the life of Jesus Christ and His charge to all believers. Further, I am aware that we reflect with a view to improve and be the blessed man exemplified in Psalms 1:1-3.

To discern my own personal call to preach took me a few years. At the initial stages of my 'on note to preach' (local preacher's training), elements of the study materials challenged my commitment because the entire material on the 'Human Condition' did not mention God or Jesus. Accredited to preach the word of God and lead His people in worship, I have moved around and beyond 'local' to several circuits including Shepherds Bush, Fulham Broadway & Hammersmith; Croydon; Forest Circuit and now Ealing Trinity Circuit.

Preaching the word and leading worship can be challenging but do-able. The focus must be Jesus Christ because the Christian Bible points to Him as the divine revelation. I love the ministry of Jesus Christ and like my Master, His instruction lives within me – "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart." - Psalm 40:8 (NKJV). It is a joy to explore, discover and understand for myself what the bible passages say. This helps me to look at the setting, where and when a particular bible passage was written, why was it written, the context, the words etc. I discovered that Jesus Christ preached and taught but left Paul, Peter, and others down the line to continue the ministry with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. With prayer and worship, I seek the help of His Spirit to explain the scripture passage to me and challenge listeners to consider the specific teaching about God, man, woman, the Church, and the world. From my perspective, the passages often lead one to ask whether there is an example, promise, warning and if yes there may be action to take like prayer and praise.

My experience in working alongside the community of ministers and preachers has strengthened my faith. In truth, words are inadequate to describe how and when people you prayed with/for surrender their life to Christ. Over the years I have seen how the power of the word of God transformed many lives spiritually. The privilege of seeing the younger ones grow in favour with God, family, the church and move on to universities and further afield are great sources of joy too. My greatest memorable moments of joy are the encounters I have with Christ through the words of Jesus and proclaiming /declaring the Word of God to the congregation.

Advent Bible Studies Songs of God's Kingdom

The beginning of Luke's Gospel echoes with songs and silence of priests, a young unmarried pregnant woman, an old man longing for God's Kingdom, angels and shepherds as God's Spirit moves, inspires and challenges.

Come along and take time to read, to share, to wonder and to find your own space for silence and for song.

Wednesdays 2.30 - 4.00pm Greenford Methodist Church
(tea & cake provided)

Thursdays 2.00 - 3.00pm or 8.00 - 9.30pm on Zoom
(bring your own tea & cake!)

My Journey So Far

Martin Kingsnorth Hanwell Methodist Church

In past editions of In-touch both Rev. Rachel and Gerald Barton have written - and challenged others to write - something about their Christian beliefs and faith. For no obvious reason I've felt led to pick up the gauntlet - maybe because I'd like to read other folks' thoughts if I can help encourage them by sharing mine!

Well, here goes. With my 3 younger brothers I was brought up in a Christian home, my parents being active members of firstly Presbyterian (Greenwich) and later Methodist (Sanderstead) churches. So, through Sunday School/Junior Church, eventually progressing to being received into membership in my teens, my thinking being greatly influenced by one particular teacher - who often found himself with a class of one when he'd probably rather have been in church - and Grandma K - like all good Grandmothers a very wise and perceptive lady.

However, in adult life, I just didn't quite seem to bond with church life, and, coincident with my first living away from home (by then Southampton, but seconded to work in London for a year) just "dropped out". Eight years later, a change of job, and now living in Hanwell, one Saturday morning I was walking past the Methodist Church and stopped to talk with a gentleman who was on the premises (the late George Jones).

That was meant to happen! We had a chat, and within a few days Rev. John Newton contacted me, and my membership - which hadn't formally lapsed - transferred from Southampton. "Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet". That was 1978 and the rest, as they say, is history - been there ever since, and hope I may have made some modest contribution over the years.

To backtrack a little, I think my belief in God strengthened when it at last dawned on me that he wasn't a benign old gentleman living somewhere above the clouds. But who, or what, is God? I just don't know the answer, but can't accept our complex universe just materialising out of nothing - there must surely be an architect/creator/driving force of some sort?

However, I confess great difficulty in accepting a lot of biblical content, and have pondered long in attempts to sort fact from fiction. I don't think I will ever be much of an evangelist. The example of Christ, the Church's ethos and its role in the world are far more important to me than theology, and I'm ever conscious there's so much that I don't understand. A blasphemous thought came to me once - on arriving at St Peter's Gate there will be a big notice saying "you all got it wrong, but the Buddhists (or Sikhs, or JW's) were nearest".

More positively, I've long felt strongly - though never experiencing visions or "callings in the night" - that I've been guided on my way through life. A good example was my first job - with my headmaster's farewell words (" - - - better than you have done here") ringing in my ears, and little realistic prospect of higher education, a despairing careers adviser thrust a sheaf of papers into my hand. One struck me as attractive - the Gas Board were looking for "Supplies Trainees". I went for it, got it, and in due course worked for many years as a Buyer for Southern Gas, and then London Transport. All just coincidence? I don't think so!

Incidentally, fulfilling jobs with plenty of opportunity for "bribery and corruption", and/or acting unethically - adopting Christian values were important in avoiding temptation. Later, redundancy led to my working at a number of British Rail and London Underground ticket offices - and again, in a cash handling and customer service environment, Christian teaching helped. Not though, that I'm going to claim that I never, not even once, rose to the bait when dealing with an overly demanding or abusive passenger!

Like everyone else I've had my ups and downs, made good and bad choices, and I have experienced a few wonderful God-given moments. Generally one thing has seemed to lead to another, and I've had no cause to regret any major decision. I know that I have much to be thankful for.

One "thread" that has run through my life since it was introduced 50 years ago is the E3 bus - and not just my home-to-church journeys. I kid you not! - but too long to explain here (the story that is, not the bus route).

What of faith in the current crisis? Perhaps irreverently I have wondered whether God has decided mankind needs a "wake up call" to save us from ourselves ("You reckon you're all so clever - I'll give you something to think about"). There are precedents - the Flood, for example. Maybe we shall have some golden opportunities to really think about and sort out many issues. Will we?

Tributes to Some of the People who have died during Recent Months

Since the start of the pandemic a number of long-standing members of our churches have died. Here are some selected tributes to some of those people. Some have already been published in local church magazines, others not.

George Oliver, Greenford

From Angela Barnes, Greenford

The recent passing of George Oliver on 9th October was a sad day for many people.

We have been friends with Helen and George for over 45 years and have spent many happy hours working together especially doing plant stalls and fairs at church meetings and social events. George took a full part in church activities being on Church Council, Circuit committees and treasurer of the Wesley Guild.

His wisdom and clear thinking guided others in making important decisions about how the church developed regarding property and financial matters. George became treasurer in March 2004 when he took over from Phyllis Shepherd who had been doing the work for 12 years. With help from Ann Preedy, Ron Mann and myself, he looked after the accounts until we needed to change the signatories in February 2020 to add more people to the list – he continued to be a signatory when I became treasurer.

Margaret and I will miss the fun we had at social events with plant stalls at church anniversary – Helen and I doing conifer arrangements while George cooked the dinner to which we were invited. I could go on!

An organisation can only be successful if a good team is working together for the benefit of the whole and George's contribution to the life of the church was outstanding.

Thank you George for being an important part of our lives. Rest in peace.

From Juliet Edwards at Kingsdown

I first met George at my first sitting as a Magistrate. Having completed all the initial training I felt as prepared as I would ever be. George was the Friday Chairman and that was my elected day to sit, so I realised I was going to be working with this man for some time.

Nothing prepares you for that very first sitting, when it is all for real. I felt so anxious. What if I said or did the wrong thing, made a fool of myself? But how lucky I was to have George as my Chairman. He was considerate, encouraging, reassuring, knowledgeable and so kind, quietly explaining when things were complicated or new to me. In the courtroom he showed me what delivering justice really meant. In court he was courteous to all, but certainly in control, so that court business always moved on well.

George became my unofficial mentor and trainer. He believed passionately in Local Justice. I learned more from him than I can explain. And I was fortunate enough also for him to become my friend. We soon discovered we worshipped in the same circuit, George at Greenford, me at Kingsdown.

There were inevitably lulls in proceedings and magistrates had to retire to wait patiently in the Magistrate's room. And when we didn't need to talk about court business, there was always family, rugby, Cornwall, and trains - all subjects so close to his heart.

When I first took the Chair, four years later, there was one person in my mind. And at the end of the sitting, the same. Did I meet the standard George had set?

George was the best of men. He was a man of unshakeable Christian belief and integrity. The principles he led his life by, remained the same in every part of his life. Unfailingly courteous and always ready to listen to others. A good friend indeed - how lucky I was to have known him. And to believe he is at peace now and safe with God.

Elizabeth Sherman, Northolt

From Gerald Barton, Circuit Administrator

Quite some years ago, Elizabeth served the Circuit as secretary to the Circuit Meeting and the former Circuit Policy Meeting. I worked quite closely with her drafting agendas for the meetings before putting them to the Superintendent of the day and on sorting out the minutes after the meetings. Elizabeth had an 'interesting' relationship with computers. She was not internet connected and didn't want to be. In fact she tended to regard computers as suspicious beasts that needed to be treated carefully. So, minutes of meetings in particular came to me on paper but with scanning and optical character recognition software, files were soon created. It was good fun working with Elizabeth, idiosyncratic, yes, but very enjoyable and in any case, that's all part of my job.

I was saddened to hear that Elizabeth had died as the pandemic took hold. I know she was deeply involved at Northolt and I'm sure her friends there will remember her with fondness, as do I.

Graham Preedy, Greenford and Local Preacher

From Joyce and Errol Scott and family, Greenford

Graham was a long-standing member at Greenford Methodist Church and a local preacher in our Circuit. Graham was one of nature's gentleman. A true man of God. Graham was often found at the front of Greenford Methodist Church, remarkably dressed, with a big smile on his face and a firm handshake, welcoming the parishioners. He was always interested in how you were doing. His love and humility made a tremendous impact. Graham was great because he cared for and served the needs of others.

Graham loved his Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart, mind and strength. He was viewed by many as a leading figurehead of the Christian faith. He was thoughtful, gentle and caring. Graham was always willing to go the extra mile. He was the prominent figure in the Sunday school and the Superintendent for several years. Lots of those he taught as children continue to have faith and follow the Lord our Saviour.

Graham's warm and loving personality, his graciousness, his generosity and his love for the church shone through the stained-glass window. He intentionally would bring people together and along. Because he was so good at relationship building, things got done. It would have been easy for him to slip into an authoritative power-mode but Graham's humility was the real power he had in the relationships he cultivated.

His humanity extended to his family, friends and anyone else who knew him. People liked him. Graham was easy to know, an open book. I was seen as 'The Tea Lady' in Graham's eyes. It was a real honour for me. Graham would often say, "Joyce... nobody makes tea/coffee the way you do, you were going to heaven to make the tea!" He would echo the same sentiment when he knew that I was scheduled to be with him at the Foodbank. I will really miss you Graham.

To God be the glory for Graham's life and all the years of service at Greenford Methodist Church. He was an inspiration to so many of us. Many people are mourning his death, but we are rejoicing that he is in Heaven with the Lord.

From John Arhin, Northolt

I came to know Graham Preedy through his visits to Northolt Methodist Church as a local preacher. Graham found his Hope in God. He answered Jesus Christ's call and carried his cross and followed on. He trusted and obeyed. Christ was his life, his song, his strength, his faith.

Graham used his God-given gifts and talents to share the good news of God's kingdom. He always had a story to illustrate a point. The young people at Northolt

Methodist still remember how he used a pencil, a sheet of paper and an eraser to illustrate how God cleanses our errors and gives us second chances.

Graham was bold and uncompromising in his Christian life. He fought the good fight, he finished the race, he kept the faith. Dearly, dearly did he love, and we loved him too.

May the Eternal Father keep him in everlasting peace.

From Lyn Sallows, Northolt

My memory of Graham, apart from his preaching, is of him acting as the car parking attendant at Greenford. He was very definite about who could and who couldn't use their car park when they held events.

From Yvonne Hill, Greenford

Graham Preedy has left us a legacy in humanity and Christianity. His stature and voice represented his faith and manner. An emblem for Greenford Methodist Church and its long history. A role model for all ages in his contributions and roles he played along with his dear wife Ann and their family. For example – Sunday School, Junior Church etc. All areas of church life.

Also, thanks to God for Graham's life. The Prayer and Healing Services at Greenford were started through his testimony. As a local preacher my Christian life's journey has been abundantly blessed and shared through his spiritual inspiration and faith.

"...Well done thou good and faithful servant..."

Scotley Malcolm, Greenford

From Elizabeth Burke, Greenford

I have known Scotley since first coming to Greenford Methodist Church back in 1984. I will always remember on a Sunday morning the lovely, colourful ties he would wear to accompany a brilliant white shirt! I soon became friends with him and his wife, Veda. It was a joy to see them receive an award from Ealing Council in connection with their years as foster parents.

Scotley was a true Christian; helping out at church, using his skills as a carpenter. When he became a Church Steward, he would attend meetings such as the Family, Mission and Service committee. I shall always remember his kindness.

From Errol and Joyce Scott, Greenford

Scotley was such a quiet, humble man.

Scotley was a fixer ..!

Whenever anything needed repairing at the church, who would you call? Scotley! More often than not, he was already on the case before being asked.

Scotley and his late wife Veda, were generous people, opening up their home to a number of foster children, all of whom benefitted from being part of a loving family. He was a traditionalist in the sense that he wanted his children to be educated and to follow Christian principles.

Scotley was a person that understood the meaning of, and lived the words from, Micah Chapter 6 verse 8

..’ the Lord has told you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right,
to love with mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God ‘.. .

Scotley’s commitment to his faith never wavered. Having experienced the heartache of losing his daughter Valerie at such a young age, he continued to give years of service to Greenford Methodist Church.

Simply, the world is a little sadder because we have lost a truly humble, decent and caring man and in today’s times that is a great loss. Grace to you Scotley, and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

From Olive Fearon and family

Scotley, thank you for all you have done within the church surroundings. You were truly blessed and committed to the church life.

We shall miss you. You will never be forgotten, especially your late night painting of the outside foyer.

Hi..! also your favourite words: ‘ Count your blessings ’

May you find perfect peace.

’To God be the glory.’

The Prodigal Son in Stained Glass

Gerald Barton, Editor

During a recent weekend break in Ely, we visited the Stained Glass Museum which is to be found above the south aisle of the nave in Ely Cathedral. Spanning a period of about 800 years from the Middle Ages to the present day, the museum displays over 125 original stained glass windows from the UK and Europe. Amongst these was a lovely gem of a window by Moira Forsyth telling the story of the Prodigal Son.

Moira Forsyth (1905 – 1991) originally studied ceramics at the Burslem School of Art in Stoke-on Trent and set up a successful studio for ceramics design. However, the general strike of 1926 caused her to close her kilns. She then took up further studies at the Royal College of Art after having won a scholarship in a national competition. While at the college she became interested in stained glass which then became the focus of her professional career. She was subsequently commissioned to provide stained glass windows for, amongst others, Eton College Chapel, Guildford Cathedral and Norwich Cathedral.

This is her delightfully playful interpretation of the parable of the Prodigal Son.



This is the story of the Prodigal Son

Who left home and wasted his inheritance in riotous living and all his companions helped him spend it.



After which he was very sorry and hungry

And wanted to eat the pig food



So he came back and his father was very pleased.

But his elder brother was not pleased

Neither was the fatted calf.....



You can find out more about the Stained Glass Museum in Ely by going to <https://stainedglassmuseum.com>

What is a Minister in the Methodist Church UK

A simple guide

Deacon Lemia Nkwelah

The Methodist Church recognises two equal offices of ordained ministries: presbyters and deacons. A presbyter is a minister who holds pastoral charge of one or more Methodist Churches. Their focus is inside the church and theirs is a ministry of Word and Sacrament. Examples of presbyters in the Ealing Trinity Circuit are Revd Rachel, Revd Sue and Revd Ajay.

A deacon is a minister with an equal office to that of a presbyter. Deacons do not usually have pastoral charge of churches but still have pastoral relationships in the areas they serve. The call of a deacon focuses on the people of God outside of our church walls and theirs is a call to a ministry of service. Whilst deacons hold the title 'Deacon', ordination of every minister, deacon and presbyter confers the title 'Reverend' so that a deacon's title can be 'the Reverend' or 'Deacon' or both.

A deacon's ministry enables and facilitates circuit engagement in work with those who are vulnerable and living at the margins of our communities. Some deacons may also take 'inward facing' appointments that may focus on pastoral relationships and work within the church itself. On the other hand, presbyters do also participate in work that focuses outside the walls of the church. Therefore, these two equal ministries may have different emphases but sometimes the focus of their responsibilities may overlap.

It is easy to confuse a deacon's ministry with the position of an outreach worker yet, like every minister, a deacon enables and facilitates members of Methodist circuits to engage in outreach work. Deacons enable churches to respond to their call to ministry and facilitate the whole people called Methodists to engage with God's work outside of church walls. It is not solely a deacon's or presbyter's duty to do the work. The call of God on a presbyter or deacon is the call of God on the church to be Christ's hands and feet. Examples of deacons known to Ealing Trinity Circuit are Deacon Lemia, Deacon Richard and Deacon Ramona. The incoming minister who replaced me in September 2020 is Deacon Theresa Simons-Sam.

Presbyters and deacons are selected to become ordained ministers on the basis of the same criteria and are trained in the same classes for the same duration of ministerial formation. In addition, student deacons do an extra module at university which helps them to articulate their call to being members of a religious order - the Methodist Diaconal Order. Probationer Deacons must go through an extra panel of interviews with the ROAC - Religious Order Advisory Committee, which continues to support the deacons to reflect on and articulate their call to being members of a religious order.

While Methodist Deacons are members of both a religious order and an Order of ministry, Methodist Presbyters are members of an Order of ministry within the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Both Methodist deacons and presbyters are equally ordained by prayer and laying on of hands and both ordination ceremonies take place within the context of Holy Communion. The laying on of hands is done for each ordinand, *'and God is asked to send the Holy Spirit upon the ordinand for the office and work of a presbyter or deacon'*. (***Methodist Worship Book, p297,8***)

It is also important to recognise that deacons are based at one chosen Methodist Church in each circuit from where they run their ministry. However, the ministry of a deacon based at any given church is independent of the ministry of the presbyter with pastoral charge in that church. Both have no authority over each other. The work and ministries of the deacon and the presbyter working from the same church building are different, distinct and equal offices running under the authority of the Superintendent. In our case, Revd Rachel Bending is the minister with authority over presbyters and deacons equally in Ealing Trinity Circuit.

Deacons do not usually preside at Communion (unless there is need), and they are not always on the preaching plan even if they may be accredited Local Preachers. This is not because deacons are lesser ministers than presbyters, but a deacon's time in the week is devoted to work in the community so much that there is usually little time to plan for Sunday services. The presence of the ministry of presbyters inside the walls of the church, allows deacons to focus outside while presbyters take charge of presiding in Communion and pastoral responsibilities/charge. Holy Communion is therefore a presbyter's responsibility and it marks the distinct difference between the two equal ministries.

The Methodist Worship Book states that, *'in the Methodist Church UK, diaconal ministry is an office in its own right rather than a step towards the office of presbyter. For both presbyters and deacons, ordination is to a permanent lifelong office of ministry.'* (p297). Deacons and presbyters preside in marriages/weddings, baptisms and funerals. During training, both deacons and presbyters together are trained on how to preside at Communion, and where there is need, a deacon will be granted dispensation to preside.

To find out more about the ministry and theology of deacons in the Methodist Church via follow this link:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2019-25-Theology-and-Ecclesiology-Underpinning-the-Diaconate.pdf>

Deacon Lemia Nkwelah joined us in the Ealing Trinity Circuit in September 2014 and left us in August 2020

Those Communion 'Pods'

Gerald Barton, Editor



Queer little things, ain't they....?

Over the last year or so, many of us have been receiving Holy Communion in the form of communion 'pods'. Fiddly little things that look a bit like the individual milk portions you sometimes get given in cafés. As anyone who has been given one will know, there are two layers. Under the first cover is a small piece of a bread-like substance and under the second some juice - the 'wine'. The first time I was given one, I got it all wrong. I peeled back the cover to reveal the communion wine not realising I needed to peel back the cover over the bread first. I managed to sort it out in the end but it was a bit of a muddle.

Having communion in that form has, however led me to reflect a little on how I relate to receiving communion. Over the years I have received communion in many different churches. My first experience was with the common cup and a small piece of bread. In more recent years, I've become accustomed to the individual glasses our churches normally use. When we were living in Connecticut, sometimes we dipped the bread into the wine instead of having them separately. Added to that there have been services with small groups and others with large numbers of people. Every type feels different and I respond differently to each.

I find the experience in large settings the least satisfactory. Sometimes on holiday we have gone to cathedrals for their main Sunday communion service. To be true, it can feel a bit like a production line. You queue up, receive the wafer and struggle to swallow it before the communion cup is upon you, a quick sip and the cup moves on. Then back to your seat. All done quickly, no time to savour it.

Our normal services of Holy Communion are much slower and, for me much more satisfactory. There's a little time to contemplate the bread when it's placed into your hands and then the little glass of communion wine before you drink it. Typically, I pause a little and look up before drinking the wine. It gives me a greater sense of the meaning and significance of it all.

It's different again, with the 'pods'. I go up, one is dropped into my hands and I return to my seat. For a few moments during the quiet I contemplate it, then peel back the first cover to reveal the bread. Taking it out I slowly eat it, no rush. Then peel back the second cover to reveal the 'wine'. The fragrance of the juice rises up and I smell it just for a moment. Then looking up I recall a line of a poem - 'when heaven touched earth', God reaching out to us, 'body and blood', making an intimate connection. Finally, I drink it.

In a way, I almost prefer it like that, having those few moments of quiet to contemplate what it's all about. Queer and fiddly though they may be, perhaps those little communion 'pods' can open up a new appreciation of Holy Communion.

Christmas Services around the Circuit



Online

24th Dec 12.00am Midnight with Rev Sue Male
26th Dec Video Circuit Service

Acton Hill

19th Dec 11.00am Carol Service
24th Dec 7.00pm Worship for Christmas Eve
25th Dec 9.45am Worship for Christmas Morning

Ealing Green

19th Dec 6.30pm Carol Service
24th Dec 12.00pm Holy Communion for Christmas Eve (*service at noon*)
25th Dec 11.00am Worship for Christmas Morning

Greenford

19th Dec 6.30pm Carol Service
24th Dec 5.00pm Worship for Christmas Eve
24th Dec 11.15pm Midnight Holy Communion (*United Service with Northolt*)

Hanwell

12th Dec 6.00pm Carol Service
24th Dec 11.30pm Worship for Christmas Eve
25th Dec 11.00am Worship for Christmas Morning

King's Hall

25th Dec 1.00pm Worship for Christmas Day

Kingsdown

19th Dec 4.00pm Carol Service
24th Dec 6.00pm Holy Communion for Christmas Eve
25th Dec 9.45am Worship for Christmas Morning

Northolt

11th Dec 4.00pm Carol Service (*note service is on Saturday*)
25th Dec 10.00am Worship for Christmas Morning
(*United Service with Greenford*)

Pitshanger

19th Dec 2.00pm Carol Service
25th Dec 10.00am Worship for Christmas Morning

Note:

19th Dec – no morning service at Ealing Green or Kingsdown
26th Dec – services in churches replaced by online video Circuit Service

Circuit Finance Office – Change to Working Days

Please note that from 6th December 2021 the Circuit Finance Office will be open on Thursdays and Fridays 10.00 – 16.00 (instead of Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Will Quansah, Circuit Finance Officer
07484 542875 finance@ealingtrinity.org.uk

Forthcoming Events around the Circuit

[as notified to, or discovered by, the Editor]

December

5th Sun 4.00pm **Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill**
Poppy Bedoe, clarinet
£5.00 concessions, £6.00 adults, £2.00 children

27th Mon 7.30pm **Examen** with DeaconTheresa Simons-Sam
Contact Deacon Theresa for the Zoom link

January

February

6th Sun 4.00pm **Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill**
Catherine Underhill, oboe
£5.00 concessions, £6.00 adults, £2.00 children

23rd Wed 7.30pm **Circuit Meeting**

March

5th Sat 10.30am **Ealing Animals Fair at Hanwell**
4.00pm
43rd year - Guest speakers – live music - lots of stalls
Admission free

Articles for 'In-touch' Issue No 93 (March - May) should be sent by e-mail headed 'In-touch' to the Editor, **Gerald Barton**, or as hard copy to the Circuit Office.

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Office hours: Tues & Thurs 09.00 – 14.00

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