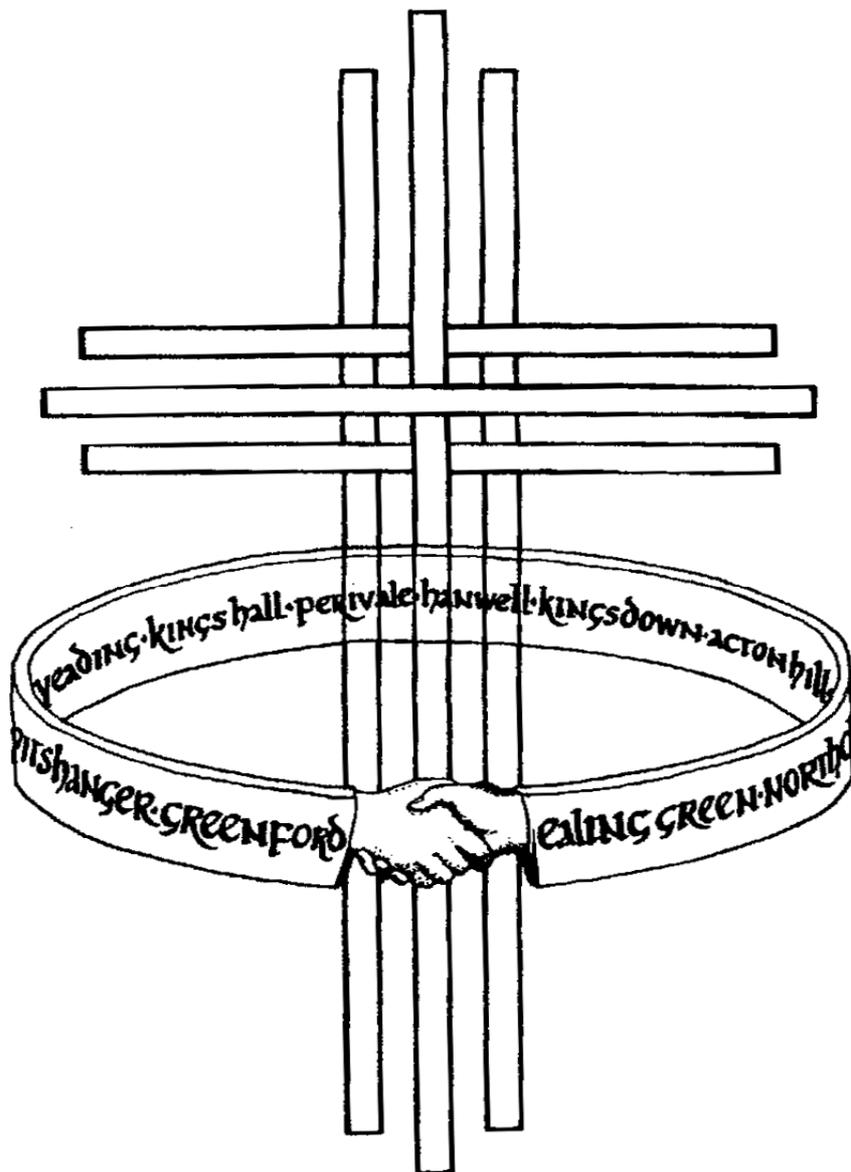


In-touch

No 58

December 2011 – February 2012

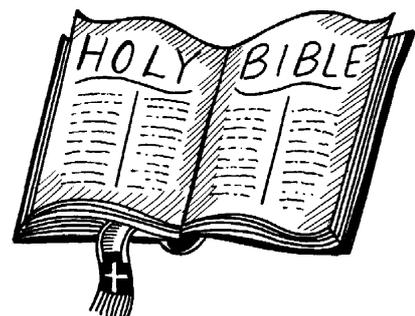


The magazine for *all* the Ealing Trinity Circuit.

IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
• From the Superintendent	3
• Rev Michaela Youngson Sabbatical	4
• New Local Preacher	4
• Moullin House	4
• 'Drop-in' for Students at Ealing Green	5
• Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter 2012 – <i>Mary Blackwell</i>	6
• From the Circuit Meeting	7
• Perceptions of the Methodist Church	8
• Safeguarding – a Reflection – <i>Gerald Barton</i>	10
• No Service this Evening, Circuit Service at..... – <i>Gerald Barton</i>	11
• Methodist Women in Britain – <i>Yvonne Hill</i>	13
• Images of the Holy Trinity – <i>Gerald Barton</i>	14
• Coat Hangers and the Crucifixion in Scotland – <i>Anita Oji</i>	15
• Developing Countries become Aid Donors – <i>Gerald Barton</i>	16
• Christmas Services around the Circuit	19
• Circuit Directory Update	20
• Forthcoming Events around the Circuit	20

**Celebrating 400 years of
the King James version
of the Bible in English**



Front Cover designed by Marion Narain

From the Superintendent

The Methodist Church in Ecuador is very much like Ecuador itself a place of beauty, challenge and inspiration. I was privileged to visit the Church at the beginning of November, leading some workshops about liturgy, preaching and bringing the greetings of the Methodist Church in Britain. Much more importantly – I was there to look, listen and learn.

Quito, the capital city, sits high up in the Andes just on the Equator – my memories of it include sweeping mountain views, homes and businesses clinging to the mountainsides in their thousands, an earthquake, hospitality and a beautiful craft market. I cannot do justice to the visit in this short article so I will highlight what for me was most striking. The congregations that have joined the Methodist Church (only 12 years old as a denomination there) are all actively involved with the needs of their communities. This marks them out as Methodist, the willingness to put the needs of vulnerable, poor and hungry people first. In Quayaquil, a very poor area in the South of Ecuador, the Pastor has run feeding programmes for children who often go to school hungry – his funding has run out for this work, but he and the church members there continue to give what they can.

In Pastacalle, the Methodist School offers a high standard of education to 200 children and provides breakfast for them. A hotchpotch of computers is provided, helping the children prepare for life in the 21st Century. The Government provides teachers for the school, a mark of the partnership between local and national government and the Church. This partnership is bearing fruit in El Quinche, where people with disabilities and vulnerable elderly people are being supported by the Church and Church members are authorised to go into local businesses to check out the facilities offered to people with disabilities and to ensure that employment is available.

In San Domingo De Las Tsachila I saw a new Methodist Church opened amidst much rejoicing. Here many of the local indigenous people have embraced Christianity and are fully part of the life of the Methodist Church. The mission practice of the church is to allow the Gospel of Christ to flourish within the culture and context of the indigenous community, making no demands that people conform to particular dress codes or discard important cultural rituals. This is in contrast to a lot of mission activity from some sources which can be seen as neo-colonialism. It was great to meet the pastor who had translated the Bible into Tsachila, his own language.

There is so much more to tell – another day! Suffice to say that we have much to learn from a new Methodist Church, where very little in terms of finance or buildings, is used to great purpose to bring good news to the poor and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.



Rev Michaela Youngson Sabbatical

Our Superintendent Minister, Rev Micky Youngson will be on sabbatical from 12th December 2011 to 11th March 2012. During that time she will not be available for Circuit business. Rev Dr Jennifer Smith will be covering Micky's duties as superintendent during the period of her sabbatical.

New Local Preacher

Donney Samuel from King's Hall afternoon congregation has started training to become a Local Preacher. At the time of writing Donney is 'On Note' but is doing the London District Local Preachers Training Course which is an intensive 'fast track' course. He was due to do his trial service on 20th November and is expected to be confirmed as 'On Trial' by the next Local Preachers Meeting in early December.

Moullin House

The last residents left Moullin House at the end of July and the house is now closed. Until it is sold, the Circuit has arranged for Camelot Property Management to protect the house. Camelot provide live-in 'guardians' so that the house is not left entirely empty. This reduces the risk of vandalism or the house being taken over by squatters as it is, in effect occupied.

In the meantime, the Circuit continues to work with Cluttons LLP towards selling the site. The strategy is to obtain planning permission to redevelop the site in order to enhance its sale value – the Circuit is obliged by the Charities Act to obtain 'best value' in the sale. A 'pre-application' meeting was held with Ealing Council on 2nd August to outline the proposals for redeveloping the site. The Council's response outlines the hoops the Circuit has to go through in order to justify redevelopment for residential purposes.

Being locally listed and in a conservation area complicates the process of course, but there is also a general planning presumption against the loss of hostel facilities such as Moullin. In order to meet the planning requirements, the site is being marketed and informal tenders invited from people interested in continuing Moullin as a hostel or for some other form of special needs housing, as well as for redevelopment of the site for residential use. This will allow a clear picture to emerge from the market as to the potential future of the site. The scope of this exercise is now being agreed with the Council, in particular the length of the marketing campaign.

As an aside, Bill Cocking has passed on a newspaper clipping from May 1987 about the difficulty Rev Jack Roberts was having finding an assistant warden for Moullin House. Although the job was well-advertised nationally, there had been no applications for the post. However, Colin Pratt, who subsequently became warden, saw the article and expressed interest, much to the relief of Jack Roberts.

‘Drop-in’ for Students at Ealing Green

Rev Dr Jennifer Smith

This September the Circuit began a small partnership with the chaplaincy at the University of West London (formerly TVU), working with the chaplain Revd Dean Ayres. Following the closure of Moullin House, there was a feeling we still wanted to carry on with some ministry to international students, and Dean needed help in welcoming folk from overseas - a good match! Small seeds, but we have begun a weekly drop in cafe Wednesday afternoons, 2.00 – 4.00 pm at Ealing Green offering hot drinks and cakes, orientation and general help, and English conversation.

There was clearly a need, as there has been good uptake and the beginnings of lasting relationships with over a dozen students, mainly from Nepal, Myanmar, and India. Several people from different Circuit churches have been helping out making tea and chatting, and anyone is welcome to drop in - no long term commitment, good fun, immediate benefit to the students, and no committee meetings! It has been so good to continue to offer hospitality in the spirit of the Moullin's vision - and from small seeds who knows what will grow? As one young man from Nepal said, 'This is the only place in London so far where someone has remembered my name.'

Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter 2012

Mary Blackwell, Hanwell

Those of you who volunteered for the Night Shelter last year will be pleased to hear that plans for this year's shelter are gathering momentum. The Shelter now has 13 churches that have offered to host a shelter, including all of last winter's host churches. However, most of the new offers came too late to allow the Shelter to open in November as we had originally hopes. The current plans are for each church to host the Shelter for one night each alternate week with St Anselm's in Southall being open for one night every week for the period the Shelter will operate (3rd January – 31st March).

Project Co-ordinator and Volunteers Evening

A Project Co-ordinator, Jennifer Snelling has been appointed to be responsible for communication, organisation, guest registration and case working with guests. There was a Volunteers Evening at Haven Green Baptist Church on November 17th and another may be planned for January. We hope that lots of you will want to volunteer – if you're not able to help in the shelter itself you may be able to offer to launder bedding or help with transport. The Shelter doesn't run its own vehicle so needs to rely on the goodwill of volunteers with their own transport, so you will need your own vehicle if you want to help with transporting beds.

Bus Pass Appeal

Last winter it was the Shelter's policy to provide daily bus passes for each of the guests. I remember the policy being queried by a fellow church member last Autumn when I found it very difficult to counter his objection that homeless people had plenty of time on their hands and could easily walk to the next shelter. Or anywhere else they needed to go. At the time I could only see that footwear would deteriorate quickly in snow or heavy rain, and that the temptation to ride the bus without a ticket would probably be too much for the guests in bad weather, and that churches needed to be responsible enough to take steps that would avoid this happening as the shelter was moving nightly to different venues.

Now, having seen the Shelter in action, I understand exactly how important those bus passes were. Not only did they give Ealing churches and the Night Shelter the credibility of responsibility, they provided essential transport and shelter for the guests. Because homeless people are on the streets with no shelter a lot of the time, they are frequently in poor health, especially when they first come to the Shelter. Last winter we had one guest who was on dialysis, and another who had to have an operation shortly after joining the shelter.

In inclement weather it was essential that guests should be able to get under cover, either on the buses or by travelling to a public building where they could shelter. One guest was able to travel to a successful job interview out of the immediate area, which enabled him to re-build his life. Guests were able to get to soup kitchens in the Ealing area, to health and accommodation appointments to Job Centres and to offices in London to sort out benefits, identification papers and work visas. On days when they didn't have appointments some of the more adventurous found that they were able to travel to central London to visit museums. This lifted their spirits as they felt themselves joining in 'normal' society again, just as a sense of family within the Shelter gave them a sense of self-worth and encouraged them to communicate and trust and make friends when they had largely withdrawn from society because of their circumstances.

However, the bus passes were costly. Last winter they cost £4,000 – a sum which arrived unexpectedly in the post the day after prayer had been offered about financial provision for the passes (no-one forward plans like God!). So, this is appeal for money to fund the bus passes. £30 (the cost for a modest meal for two?) will provide bus passes for one guest for one week. £360 (a generous sum), but possibly your church could fund-raise it together) would pay for all the bus passes for one week. Please think carefully about this. Without bus passes, the Shelter guests have to suffer the coldest and wettest of the winter weather, with the feeling of dejection and rejection that entails. If you would like to make a donation towards the bus passes, please make cheques payable to 'St Christopher's Church of England Church' and write 'Night Shelter' on the back, and send them to Rev Liz Moody at St Christopher's CE Church, Bordars Rd, Hanwell, London W7 1AG.

There's more about the Winter Night Shelter at www.ecwns.org.uk.

From the Circuit Meeting

The most recent Circuit Meeting was held on 8th September at Pitshanger.

One of the most important items on the agenda was 'stationing', ie the process whereby ministers are appointed to Circuits. The meeting was told by the Circuit's Stationing Committee that at the end of the current connexional year, Rev Roger Dunlop would be moving on from the Circuit, and Rev Kip Bennett would be retiring, or 'sitting down' in the jargon of Methodism. In addition, Rev Michaela Youngson will become one of the London District chairs and will also be leaving the Circuit. In all, three of our four ministers will be moving on.

The Stationing Committee recommended that the Circuit request two ministers and a probationer minister to replace Michaela, Roger and Kip. Rev Dr Jennifer Smith was recommended to take over as superintendent from Rev Michaela Youngson from September 2012 – Jen took over pastoral oversight of Acton Hill in addition to Ealing Green this September. In addition, the committee recommended that the Circuit also request a deacon. This is all in line with plans presented to the Circuit Meeting at its meeting held in March. The meeting unanimously agreed to accept these recommendations. It was hoped that the deacon could be financed by the Circuit and supported by a grant from the London District.

On finance, the Meeting expressed its thanks to those churches who had increased their assessments for the current connexional year. As some readers of In-touch will know, our Circuit Treasurer, Peter Green will be standing down as treasurer shortly as he is moving to Buckinghamshire. The Meeting thanked Peter for all his work as treasurer and particularly in connection with Moullin House, and asked the churches in the Circuit to consider who might be able and willing to take over the role of Circuit Treasurer.

On the property front, Moullin House has now closed (see article elsewhere in this edition of In-touch), and the Post Office site next to King's Hall is up for sale. Feelers were being out via Cluttons LLP, who are working with the Circuit in connection with the sale of Moullin House, to see if potential buyers of the Post Office site might also be interested in the King's Hall site. Potentially, this could open the way to redeveloping King's Hall and providing the church with a building much more suited to its needs.

Rev Jen Smith is working with the Chaplaincy of West London University to develop outreach to students new to London using Ealing Green as a base. The first monthly 'drop-in' meeting was to be held on 8th October.

Finally, the Meeting unanimously agreed to accredit David Street as a fully qualified Local Preacher. His accreditation service was held at Hanwell on 25th September.

The next Circuit Meeting will be held at Acton Hill on 15th March at 8.00pm.

Perceptions of the Methodist Church

From the London District Chair

I discovered a new word recently: 'wordle'. It's a technique that is used to capture different perceptions that people might have about a topic and to represent them as a cloud where the words that occur most frequently are given greatest prominence. On the next page is a 'wordle' produced by some young people when they were invited to say what 'Church' meant to them:

I couldn't help wondering what a 'wordle' of the London Methodist District would look like if we invited each member to send in three words....

Week by week, District Chairs are engaging with people inside and outside the Church and **they all have perceptions of the Methodist Church**. Often we have to challenge those perceptions, as they differ so markedly from the ones that we gather as we travel around the District.

A Church in decline? Well, No; the statistics show that in London the Church is growing. A Church with very few young people? Again, No; around the District we are in touch with thousands of young people each week and I have been involved in a confirmation services where more than twelve young people were brought into membership on a single evening. And so we could go on: in relation to styles of worship; people sensing to a call to preach; people growing in faithfulness and discipleship.

In any 'wordle' of the District's emphases for the coming year, I would hope that certain words would become ever more prominent: **equipping and developing; faithful and fruitful; pastoral and prophetic**. It would be a sign that the words of the District Vision are being translated into action at every level and that really would be good news.

Yours in hoping,
Ermal Kirby

A few comments on the young people's 'wordle' by your Editor.....

The most prominent words are 'welcoming', 'loving', 'love', 'caring', 'diverse', 'unique', 'community', and 'multicultural' which are all nice, warm friendly words. Hmm, 'judgemental' is also pretty big and 'selfish' and 'gossipers' aren't that small either, although they are at least smaller than 'passionate', 'worship' and 'friendly'. Peering at some of the smallest – ones you might not even be able to see in this copy are 'God-centred', 'God-fearing' and 'Christian', although 'prayerful' is at least a big bigger. Now, that gives some pause for thought....

Special Strong
Communion Spiritual Salvation Healer
Peace Beautiful Praying
Vibrant Diverse Talented Sociable
Selfish Unique Life-changing Learning Youthful
Gossipers Community for Multicultural Connected Educational African
Unity Strive Joyful Interesting Multi-cultural Giving challenging
Family Opportunities Endearing Hoping Helpful Multi-cultural
Enjoyable Mental Judgemental Black Together Bad Change Youth Sharing
Safe Musical In Love Fellowship Praise Enthusiastic Understanding Fun
Jealousy Lively Happy Argumentative Peaceful Spiritual Active
Passionate Worship Welcoming
Friendly Loud Supportive Cultural
Inspiring

Safeguarding – a Reflection

Gerald Barton, Editor

Safeguarding is one of ‘those’ issues. Something which many of us wish would simply ‘go away’. With a new Circuit Policy about to be rolled out, a new training course ‘Creating Safer Space’ and whole sets of people having to do the training, ranging from ministers to pastoral visitors, church stewards, local preachers, worship leaders and others, it doesn’t seem to stop. Surely, many of us ask, the likelihood of anyone in any of our churches getting up to no good with children or vulnerable adults is vanishingly small. So why do we need all this?

A digression. Rail transport is the safest way to move people and freight overland, so much so that it’s the natural and much preferred way to move nuclear materials – reactor cores, nuclear fuel rods etc. However, Eurotunnel does not permit nuclear materials through the Channel Tunnel. Why? Not because it isn’t safe, but because the consequences of an accident would be catastrophic – the Tunnel could be closed pretty much for ever. Similarly, salt, a seemingly benign commodity is barred. Wet salt in the electrical systems would make a right mess of the signalling system. The risk might be low, but the consequences are potentially huge.

So, returning to safeguarding. It is doubtless true that the risk of anyone in any of our churches getting up to no good is very very small. But what if someone we thought we knew and could trust turned out not to be so trustworthy after all? What if we missed tell-tale warning signs because we assumed it could ‘never happen here’?. What would our local communities think of us? How would we feel? I can just imagine a feeling of cold horror going right through our churches and Circuit. Perhaps, better safe than sorry.

The truth is that it can and has happened, even in Methodism. The Methodist Recorder recently carried a report about a formal inquiry by the Church into the case of a former Methodist Local Preacher and Church employee, Keith Morton who was convicted of child sexual abuse and given an indeterminate sentence in June 2010. Whilst noting that Morton had ‘groomed’ not just his victims but also youth leaders, parents, ministers and others, it also found shortcomings in the way safeguarding had been approached. These included people finding it difficult to believe that abuse could be occurring (surely, it couldn’t happen here...); a lack of safeguarding training; a failure to follow standard employment procedures; insufficient sharing of information between relevant individuals and so on. As the Chair of the inquiry, Rev Will Morrey put it, “Part of the way forward is a need to recognise that safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church, not just those for whom it is part of their job description.”

So, if you’re apt to groan, as I confess I am, when ‘safeguarding’ heaves into view, think again. The risks may be low, but that doesn’t mean it won’t happen, even here in our Circuit. We do all need to take it seriously.

No Service this Evening, Circuit Service at....

Gerald Barton, Editor, prompted by Graham Preedy

In September there were two Circuit Services on Sunday evenings. When these happen the normal evening services – there are 2 – 3 in our Circuit at Greenford, Kingsdown and monthly at Hanwell are cancelled and people encouraged to go to the Circuit Service instead. Graham Preedy from Greenford spoke to me as he was concerned that not everybody knows exactly what a ‘Circuit Service’ might mean and seeing a sign on the church door like the title of this piece might put people off. To be sure, Methodism, like a lot of churches and other organisations has a language of its own and those not steeped in its structures can be forgiven for being hazy about exactly what is meant by ‘connexion’, ‘society’, ‘district’, ‘circuit’ or ‘conference’, and also for wondering why a perfectly good service gets replaced by something called a ‘Circuit Service’ somewhere else.

These terms all reflect the structure and organisation of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the way it developed from its early days. Back in the beginning, the founder of Methodism, Rev John Wesley sought to breathe new life into the Church of England, which he regarded as being ‘asleep’ as, in many respects it was. Apart from outdoor preaching, which really got up the noses of many of his fellow Anglican clergy, Wesley formed his followers into local ‘societies’ that met in people’s homes for prayer and study whilst encouraging them to be regular attenders of their local parish churches. His intention wasn’t to form a new distinct church outside of the Church of England, but to stay within it and enliven it. However, things didn’t work out like that. As time went by, the Church of England gradually pushed Wesley and his followers out, whilst some of his followers and associates pulled. The end of this process was the formation of the Methodist Church as a distinct entity.

That’s the first word, ‘society’ dealt with. In fact, our local Methodist congregations can still be referred to as ‘societies’ and, as members of the Methodist church, we are, in fact members of our local Methodist ‘society’. This is why, when people move and start attending a Methodist church in another area or part of the country, their membership has to be ‘transferred’ to their new church. The local ‘societies’ were, and still are connected together – hence the term ‘connexion’. In many ways this is another term for the Methodist Church of Great Britain as a whole and underlines the point that the Church is made up of local ‘societies connected together’.

Once a year, the Methodist Church holds an annual ‘conference’ in June or July. The body known as ‘Conference’ is the supreme decision making body of the Methodist Church and is made up of a mixture of ordained ministers and deacons and lay people. The first conference met in 1744 when John Wesley gathered together his assistants (both ordained ministers and itinerant lay preachers) to confer together about *‘what to teach, how to teach, and what to do, i.e. how to regulate our doctrine, discipline and practice.’* Today, the Conference is the body that agrees policy for the Methodist Church nationally. The President of Conference

is elected annually for a one-year term - this year the President is Rev Leo Osborne.

We then come to the 'Districts' and the 'Circuits'. Let's start with the Circuits... They are, in fact a vital part of the structure of the Methodist Church and in many ways one of the most important. Local churches are grouped together into Circuits – ours is the Ealing Trinity Circuit with a total of 10 congregations meeting in nine buildings. Circuits have a team of ministers who have pastoral charge of the local churches. It is the norm for ministers in British Methodism to have pastoral charge of more than one church, so within our Circuits we share our ministers and there are almost always fewer ministers than churches. One of the ministers is designated the 'superintendent minister' – for us that's Rev Michaela Youngson, who presides over the other ministers and people like myself as your humble Circuit Administrator.

Now, a short digression into finance. You may have heard the term 'annual assessment'. This is a sum of money each church is asked to pay to the Circuit each year reflecting very roughly the size of the church in relation to the others in the Circuit. The major portion of this sum goes to pay for our ministers. In this way churches truly support each other in ensuring that we jointly pay for the ministers we share. In addition, Circuits have available certain funds which can be used to support projects or initiatives by local churches – another way in which our churches, through the Circuit, support each other.

The Districts form the level above the Circuit and are composed of groups of Circuits. In many respects the Districts play a supporting role to the Circuits offering pastoral care to ministers and deacons, organising training, encouraging connexional priorities etc. From the point of view of the average Methodist, however the more prominent level is the Circuit.

OK, so having cantered through the structure of Methodist, what is a Circuit Service and why is it so important that it trumps regular local church services? At its simplest they are services at which we come together from across all the churches in the Circuit to worship together. This celebrates the fact that through the Circuit we mutually support each other – we share our Local Preachers and our ministers, pooling our resources via the annual assessment to pay for them, so it's appropriate that from time to time we worship together as a single body. Secondly, from time to time we have something more to celebrate as a Circuit. For example, in September, one of the Circuit services was the 'accreditation service' for David Street as a newly qualified Local Preacher. This gave us the opportunity to celebrate David's calling, his willingness to go through the training and his readiness to serve the churches in our Circuit as a preacher.

So, I hope this gives you some idea what Circuit Services are and why they're important. Next time you hear that there's going to be a Circuit Service, don't vaguely assume it's for someone somewhere else. It's for all of us because we're all part of that Circuit known as Ealing Trinity.

Methodist Women in Britain

Yvonne Hill, Greenford

The Induction Service for Blossom Jackson as Women's Network London District President 2011 – 2013, and the commissioning of new officers was held on Saturday 15th October 2011 at 2.30pm, Wesley's Chapel, London. The theme of the service was 'discipleship' and it was led by Rev. Jennifer Potter and Rev. Roger Dunlop (Blossom's minister) with the welcome being given by Rev. Dr Leslie Griffiths. The Call to Worship and post service praise was led by Leytonstone Methodist Youth Choir and the words and letters of greeting were given by the Chairs of the London District and the President of Methodist Women in Britain, Jill Baker. There were also greetings from the Church of the Open Bible, Fort Lauderdale whose pastor is Blossom's brother, Allan Baugh.

There was a number of musical contributions to the service. The song 'Fear thou not for I am with thee' was sung by Pastor Rudi Pedro of Hornsey Rise Baptist Church, Code of Conduct was presented by the Northolt Methodist Church Jesus kids', the song 'The Books of the Bible' was played by guitarists who were Blossom's relatives, a poem 'Doing Time' was read by E. Degraft. 'Amazing Grace' was played by Lascelles James (ex Boney M saxophonist) and 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' by Blossom's relative, cellist Denise Watson. The organists were Marilyn Hickie and Errol Hui.

A surprise presentation was given to Blossom by our own superintendent Rev. Michaela Youngson.

The address was given by Rev. Jenny Impey one of the London District Chairs, and a presentation to Rev. E. Jackson by Blossom. Blossom's in induction and commissioning was led by Rev. Femi Cole - Njie. The offertory was taken in aid of sending young people to conferences.

A group of women from Zimbabwe were present for part of the service, and the Ealing Trinity Circuit was well represented by its ministers, local preachers, stewards, and church members. The Prayers of Intercession were led by Rev. Michaela Youngson and Rev. Jennifer Smith from our Circuit. Closing remarks were given by Rev. J. Potter and Rev. Roger Dunlop and the benediction by Rev. Rose Hudson, chaplain of the House of Commons.

This service was very well organised. The hymns included 'And Can it Be', 'There is a Redeemer', 'To God be the Glory', 'Forward as One' and 'O Thou who Camest from Above'. The Bible readings were, Hebrews 8: 1- 6, read by Deacon J. Fowler and Psalm 139: 1 – 10 which is Blossom's favourite, read by M. Small- Byam. This was a service which was spiritually and physically fulfilling, as we shared sweet fellowship with families and others in God's house and in God's presence. Congratulations Blossom, your words of inspiration and your produce are very meaningful. We pray God's richest blessings and guidance for you, that together all of us as disciples will assist you and each other on this road of discipleship.

Images of the Holy Trinity

Gerald Barton, Editor

Throughout Christian history people have created images of the Holy Trinity. Trying to express the One-in-Three and Three-in-One is no easy feat. After all, theologians don't find it easy to explain the Trinity in easy, or even difficult to understand terms. Whilst it does try to express something of what we, as Christians believe about God, it might be best to adopt the Orthodox approach of regarding it as a 'holy mystery'.

Travelling around Suffolk recently, we came across two very contrasting depictions of the Holy Trinity. The first is modern, but in many ways conventional. Often the Trinity has been depicted as God the Father seated holding God the Son on the cross whilst a dove as God the Holy Spirit flies above the Father's head. This sculpture is above the south porch at Holy Trinity, Blythburgh. As you can see, God holds the Son whilst the dove representing the Holy Spirit rests between them.



Compare this to a much older image from Holy Trinity, Long Melford. This appears as a small roundel in a window above the north porch and is the only use of this image in glass in Britain. The Holy Trinity is depicted as three hares, or rabbits sharing three ears. Each hare has two ears, but



there are only three in total, forming a triangle. I had never come across this

image before, although I gather that it is relatively common in the Southwest of England. In fact, there is a 'Three Hares Project' run by three Devon-based researchers seeking to identify instances of this image. In an article on the BBC's website from September 2009, they reported that they had identified 23 instances in 17 churches in Devon. Most of these are wooden bosses set into the vaults or ceilings of churches. The earliest use of this

image in these churches dates from around 1450.

The origins of this symbol are unknown, but it is found in a number of different faiths. In Christianity it always symbolises the Holy Trinity. The earliest known example was found in the Magoa caves near Dunhuang in China which date from the 6th Century AD. One theory is that the image spread westwards along the Silk Road. This is supported by the fact it has been found on Mongol metalwork dating from the 13th Century and also on some Islamic caskets. In Europe, most of the images appear in England and Northern Germany although there are some in

France as well. They appear both in churches and synagogues, underscoring the point that the image is not exclusive to any one religion.

There is a view that the use of the three hares motif has an element of humour in it. After all, if you examine medieval carvings in churches you will find an awful lot of humour, whether in grotesque faces appearing as gargoyles or the often humorous and sometimes satirical scenes depicted on misericords (the tip-up seats found in medieval choir stalls which allowed people to rest while standing for long periods). So, maybe that's how the image got adopted in our churches. Personally, I couldn't help but note that Beatrix Potter was a frequent visitor to Long Melford, where she stayed at Melford Hall, close to Holy Trinity church where I first came across this image. As hares look rather like rabbits, was this an image based on St Peter Rabbit, I thought? Clearly not, but it's a nice thought!

Coat Hangers and the Crucifixion in Scotland

Anita Oji, Ealing Green

A crucifix made from 1,000s of coat hangers was the central sculpture for David Mach's exhibition in Edinburgh on 400 years of the King James Bible (July - October 2011). Why coat hangers? It seems that the artist wanted a medium that we are all familiar with, yet he takes the familiar hooks and fashions them into blunt sticks that pierce the whole body of Christ in a way that makes the so called 'crown of thorns' look flowery. Why Edinburgh when Mach is the Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy? - because the King James Bible originated in Scotland. King James was James I of England and also King James VI of Scotland.



However, it was not the sculpture that caught my eye. It was his use of collage on a massive scale; a medium we have used since childhood. To see Noah's Ark being assembled (and more) on the crags of Arthur's Seat with real beasts roaming on the paths I had been walking and 4x4s moving media equipment towards the Ark while all types of birds were flying around in a lightening storm was visionary. Another wall space was covered by St Paul's agony and ecstasy located in front of St Paul's Cathedral. It looked as untidy and dramatic as the tents we now see camped there (October 2011) but if you replace the tents with crosses you can imagine what the collage was like.

Now if you have a few 1,000s of magazines at home, maybe you could tear them up and make biblical story pictures. Better still, to open the Bible and read them; read them to others. The Bible changes the world around us and brings us closer to God whose Son, Jesus, hangs out in our world to save us.

Developing Countries become Aid Donors

Gerald Barton, Editor

In recent years a number of developing countries have seen significant economic growth – China and India are two that spring to mind. I've taken to wondering when some of them might reach the point when, instead of being recipients of development aid, they become donors themselves.

According to a report I read in *The Economist* a little while ago and which provides the basis for this article, India is on the point of setting up an aid-giving body of its own – the India Agency for Partnership and Development (IAPD). This would be the equivalent of the UK's Department for International Development and was expected to have \$11.3 billion to disburse over 3 years. Although this represents a departure from the past – India has received more development aid over the years than any other country, it isn't India's first foray into aiding other countries. For some decades through a programme known as Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC), it has trained poor countries' civil servants. During the course of 2011, ITEC expects to train about 5,500 people from 120 countries – up from 3,400 in 2005.

Brazil is another country considering setting up its own aid agency. It already gives assistance valued at \$4 billion a year. China is also moving to become a major aid donor. Interestingly, Britain wound up its bilateral aid programme with China this year, and the World Food Programme ended shipments of grain to China in 2005 after donating for 25 years. It's hard to know exactly how much China is giving because the line between trade and aid is often blurred - official Chinese government statistics reported aid of \$1.9 billion in 2009, although New York University's Wagner School assesses the total of Chinese aid for 2007 at \$25 billion. Another, non-governmental organisation called Global Humanitarian Assistance using a fairly conservative definition of 'aid', thinks that aid from countries other than established rich-world industrialised countries grew by 143% between 2005 and 2008 to reach \$11.2 billion.

Historically, the vast majority of official development aid has come from about 15 rich industrialised countries that are members of the Development Aid Committee, a grouping set up about 50 years ago. Not surprisingly the USA tops the list for development aid giving out around \$31 billion in 2010. However, with the emergence of China, India, Brazil and others as significant aid donors, the rich world's monopoly of development aid is clearly at an end.

In some ways, it's always been a bit difficult to know to what extent official government aid has been given in a self-interested way – we'll help you develop if you buy the necessary expertise/support/products from companies from our country. However, the general model of aid has been beneficent donor helping poor struggling country. The new donors, however stress that their aid will be different from that provided by the West and they reject this general model. China says that the "first principle" of its development assistance is "equality and mutual benefit in

providing aid.” That sounds good, but does seem to imply “we’ll help you in ways that help us.”

One difference between the new donors and older established Western donors, is that they often give priority to their neighbours. For example, India sees aid as a way of improving its relations with Pakistan. Last year India offered Pakistan \$25m via the United Nations towards flood relief. It has also made huge investments in hydropower in Bhutan. This helped both countries – in return India has a fixed-price guaranteed supply of electricity. India also gives large soft loans to Bangladesh and is paying for reconstruction after the civil war in Sri Lanka. Similarly, Saudi Arabia gives much of its aid to other Arab countries. Russia helps countries in its “near abroad”, including Tajikistan and Armenia. It also supports the autocratic regime of Alexander Lukashenka in Belarus through low energy prices and props up the break-away Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. I suspect, most of us wouldn’t think of that as ‘development aid’.

A lot of new aid is given in support of commercial interest. China is the largest new donor of this kind of aid. Many of its projects are designed to build infrastructure that support Chinese investment. For example, in the 1970’s China built the railway between Tanzania and Zambia linking Zambia’s copper mines, where China has large projects and the port of Dar-es-Salaam which it has modernised. In recent years, however the railway has hit severe financial and operating problems and last year China gave it an interest free loan of \$39m to help revive it. Similarly, in March this year, Reuters reported that Chad had signed a deal worth \$7.5bn with China to build 1,344 km of railway to link the country with the port of Douala in Cameroun and to Sudan. When the deal was signed the Chadian Infrastructure Minister said that they would soon be discussing how payment would be made – “in crude oil, minerals or cash.” The deal will benefit Chad, but is also clearly in China’s interest.

China’s growing economy makes it hungry for minerals and other resources. However, China says that only just under 9% of its concessional loans have been used to support resource extraction. On the other hand, much of the 60% or so of its loans towards transport, communications and power may also support mining efforts.

The big question for the new aid donors is how far they go along the route of blurring the boundary between aid and investment, or whether they begin to adopt the approach of Western aid donors. There are some signs that new donors are adopting the latter, at least some of the time. Recently more aid has been given through multi-lateral channels rather than bi-laterally in direct government to government aid. For the moment, however it seems that new donors regard their model of ‘mutual benefit’ as being better. This may work well, provided the balance of benefit is right. The danger for developing countries is that they may find that the donor reaps the bigger benefit, particularly if concessions are granted for mineral extraction etc that later turn out to be one-sided. What is clear, however, is that the new donors are here to stay and that there is now competition in the way development aid is given.

Kingsdown Methodist Church

proudly presents a Jonathan Cheriyan production

Happily Ever After

*There's trouble in the fairytale land of Fantasia.....
Will the Wicked Witch capture the three princesses?
Can Aladdin escape her evil clutches?
Will Cinderella and Prince Charming get back together?*

There's only one way to find out!!

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th January at 7.30pm
Saturday 7th January at 2.30pm

Tickets £8.00 and £5.00 (16 and under)
Call 020 8810 9983 for reservations

Performances in Kingsdown Church Hall
Kingsdown Avenue, West Ealing, London W13 9PR

Circuit International Evening

Acton Hill Church
Corner of High St and Woodlands Ave

Saturday 11th February 2012
6.00pm – 9.30pm, Doors open at 5.30pm



International food, music, entertainment, fun for all

Come along to our Circuit's bi-annual get together, enjoy food from around the world, be entertained by groups from each church, meet friends and have a great time!

Note: Parking around Acton Hill is limited. You may park in the Morrison's car park on Steyne Rd, but this is limited to 2 hours maximum. Fines apply if you overstay. The church is on bus routes E3, 207, 427, and 440. Routes 70 and 226 also stop nearby.

Christmas Services around the Circuit

Acton Hill	24 th Dec	3.00pm	Christingle Service (Smith)
		11.00pm	Christmas Eve Communion (Jenkins)
	25 th Dec	11.00am	Christmas Morning Worship (Smith)
Ealing Green	24 th Dec	5.00pm	Carols (Smith)
		5.30pm	Holy Communion
	25 th Dec	10.00am	Christmas Morning Worship (Smith)
Greenford	24 th Dec	4.00pm	Carols round the tree
		11.15pm	Midnight Communion
	25 th Dec	10.00am	United Service at Northolt
Hanwell	25 th Dec	11.00am	Christmas Morning Worship (Street)
Kingsdown	24 th Dec	11.15pm	Christmas Eve Communion (Dunlop)
	25 th Dec	11.15am	Christmas Morning Worship (Dunlop)
King's Hall	25 th Dec	9.30am	Christmas Morning Worship (D.Bennett)
		2.00pm	Christmas Afternoon Worship (Zindani)
Northolt	25 th Dec	10.00am	Christmas Morning Worship (Bennett)
Perivale	25 th Dec	10.00am	United Service at Northolt
Pitshanger	24 th Dec	11.15pm	United Service at Kingsdown
	25 th Dec	9.30am	Christmas Morning Worship (Dunlop)

Circuit Watch Night Service

This year's Circuit Watch Night Service will be at **Acton Hill** at 11.30 pm on 31st December.

Circuit Directory Update

Forthcoming Events around the Circuit

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

December

- 10th Sat 1.00pm – 5.00pm **Northolt** – Fundraising Sale
in support of Methodist Women in Britain
- 31st Sat 11.30pm **Acton Hill** – Circuit Watch Night Service

January

- 6th & 7th Fri/Sat 7.30pm **Kingsdown** – ‘Happily ever after’
A new musical by Jonathan Cheriyan
Tickets £8.00 and £5.00 (16 and under)
Matinee Sat 2.30pm

February

- 11th Sat 6.00pm – 9.30pm **Acton Hill** – Circuit International Evening
Bi-annual Circuit get-together with food from around the world and entertainment from each church.
Doors open at 5.30pm for 6.00pm start.

March

- 3rd Sat 10.30am – 4.00pm **Hanwell** – Ealing Animal Welfare Bazaar
Admission free – details 020 8567 6739
www.animalwelfarebazaar.info

Articles for ‘**In-touch**’ **Issue No 59 (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 28th