

THE LINK'

St Mark's Crescent Methodist Church

Maidenhead

Tel: 01628 631024



December 2017/January 2018

www.stmarksmaidenhead.org.uk

REV JULIE UNDERWOOD



One of the bonuses of a crisp, is that, if we have a mind to it, the sky and see the trillions of galaxy. What a beautiful, amazing sight! However, even as we gaze, we know that we are seeing only a smidge of what is “out there” as scientists discover more and more about the universe. It is rare, if not impossible, for us to ever see the whole picture about anything - whether it be a grand vista, a complex problem or an everyday situation. Usually we have to get by with the little knowledge or understanding we have, and be content for now.

frosty, wintry night we can gaze at stars in our

Perhaps that is why our celebrations of Christmas are SO different to the rest of the year. On the surface we are simply remembering and celebrating the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ - child, and so we have proper birthday festivities, sharing as families and communities, exchanging gifts and greetings in honour of the gift of this child to us all. Here is the clue to why Christmas is so different. It is not because we need something to cheer us up during the long winter months! We celebrate because Christmas offers us the reason and the way to make sense of our existence. It is mind-boggling and brilliant.

Left to our own devices, we make a mess of things – just look at the world today, despite all our knowledge and past history. However, God – the creator of everything – is still at work in this world, and took a decisive action 2000 years ago through the birth of Christ. Yes, that vulnerable baby born in humble surroundings in a Middle-Eastern land enables us now to connect with God and achieve our full potential to bless this world and know we are eternally blest. We simply have to open our hearts and lives to Him – Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Christmas story sounds so simple but it encapsulates the

heart of hope for us all – God entering the world as a person so we can connect forever with our creator. No wonder we celebrate - what a gift to us all!

Charles Wesley précised Christmas in two lines of a hymn:

“our God contracted to a span,
incomprehensibly made man.”

or to put it another way:

“We stretch our minds to understand
the infinity of space and time,
the complex systems that control all forms of life,
the wonder of human relationships,
and we know these will always be beyond our understanding.
Then we see all this reduced to a person
in the pure love of Jesus,
and our thinking and striving are lost
in adoration of that mystery and that love.”

Bless you all,

Julie

PASTORAL VISITORS

We are currently in need of one or two Pastoral Visitors and would welcome any church member who feels able to help in this way. Each pastoral visitor has a number of church members and adherents whom we visit or phone or just chat to at church services or events to keep in touch.

Please see Judith Ridley for more information or to offer your help. Thank you.

GIFT SERVICE ON 3 DECEMBER

This year, St. Mark's is asking for donations to Slough Refugee Support, which is also being given support from the Thames Valley Circuit.

As we enjoy our "Soup & Nibbles" lunch after the service, we might reflect on the work of this support group:-

Slough Refugee Support (SRS) extends a welcome and practical help to refugees and asylum seekers both in Slough and across the Thames Valley.

Refugees are people who are seeking to rebuild their lives in a new country after fleeing from violence and fear. They often need simple help with basic things to help them obtain their rights and to care for themselves and their families in a new country. Because their needs vary, SRS works with them as individuals and families.

Additionally, a Family Support Worker helps families access medical, educational and social support and works closely with women to help them settle into their new communities.

CIRCUIT SERVICES

Sunday, 3 December, 6.30pm

Circuit Healing Service at Windsor Methodist Church

Sunday, 10 December, 5pm

Christian Aid Ecumenical Advent Service at Windsor Methodist Church. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday, 16 December, 6pm

Burnham Methodist Church will be holding a Circuit Service known as 'Blue Christmas' providing space for more reflective worship at Christmas.

Please note that this service is taking place especially for those who have experienced recent bereavements or who just find Christmas a particularly difficult time.

“CAROLS AT CHRISTMAS”

On Tuesday, 19 December, 7.30pm at St Mark’s, Thames Valley Voices will present “Carols at Christmas”, an evening of readings and music with opportunities to join in the singing.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES



Previous years’ use of the Christmas Message Tree was successful as an alternative way of sending Christmas messages to one another and this will be repeated again this year.

In the side foyer, you will find a "Christmas Tree". To send a message to your friends at St. Mark's, collect a paper bauble, write your message and Bluetac it to the tree.

At the same time, you are invited to make a donation to the 2020 Vision project using one of the envelopes that you will find by the notice board. Envelopes may be put in Sunday collections, or handed to one of the Church Stewards.

Keith Machin

DOROTHY HISCOCK

Dorothy sends her best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all her friends at St. Mark's. She has settled well into her new home in Emsworth and her local Methodist Church has made her very welcome.

BSTC

Calling all past members of the Broken Shoestring Theatre Company!

We're celebrating the past 21 years with a special event in January providing a chance to meet up with those 'old faces'.

If you, or someone you know, has been or is part of our amazing company please get in touch with me so I can tell you what is happening.

You can find our page on facebook, or email me or just tell me, or drop a note into the church. I'd love to hear from you.

Eileen Chislett (eileen@chislett.org.uk)

LOST PROPERTY

A purse was handed in at the Christmas Bazaar. If you are, or know, the owner, please call Ed or Christine on 01628 623263



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

QUIZ NIGHT

WITH

FISH N' CHIPS SUPPER

(BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS & GLASSES)

SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 2018

£11 PER PERSON

**7 FOR 7.30PM AT NEWLANDS SCHOOL, FARM ROAD
TEAMS OF 6 OR ASK ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES**

The Broken Shoestring Theatre Company
proudly presents

CINDERELLA

a Pantomime by Eileen Chislett

at St. Mark's Crescent Methodist Church Hall

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26TH - 7.30 PM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27TH - 2PM & 7PM

TICKETS £10 ADULTS, £6 UNDER 18S

Ask about our special group rates!

CHARITY AUCTION

WITH
**WELCOME DRINK, BUFFET MEAL
AND ENTERTAINMENT**

SATURDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2018
7 FOR 7.30PM AT MAIDENHEAD GOLF CLUB

£30PP

Joint organisers of the Auction, Sara Motion and Sarah Shell have said,

“We’re delighted to announce that Kevin Cruise, *Britain’s Got Talent* finalist and regular star of pantomimes at the Theatre Royal, Windsor, has kindly agreed to provide entertainment and act as our Auctioneer for the evening”.

They added, “We’ve already been offered a week’s use of 2 holiday villas (one in France & one in Spain), Home-cooked Dinners for 4, Vouchers for RBWM Sports Facilities, Complimentary Yoga Classes and a Spitfire Simulator flight at the Heritage Centre and we’re now seeking businesses and individuals to lend their support by donating items, large or small, for silent and open auctions at the event”.

Please contact info@stmarksmaidenhead.org.uk if you, or someone you know, could help in this way.

Tickets/bookings for all the above events can be made at bstc.boxoffice@gmail.com or call 01628 671186

**YOU MAY JUST HAVE TIME TO BOOK “SOUP & NIBBLES”
AFTER THE SERVICE ON SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER**

Contact the Filmores 01628623263, chrisfilmore@aol.com)

CHURCH MONEY MATTERS

We are delighted to report that the Methodist Church South East District and Thames Valley Methodist Circuit have recently demonstrated their support for the 2020Vision building project, pledging grants totalling £70,000 and we have received generous donations from individual Circuit churches totalling £8,750 for which we are truly grateful.

Whilst the many other organisations and individuals that have supported the project are too numerous to mention, St Mark's would like to recognise with appreciation 2 other recent grants from The Louis Baylis (Maidenhead Advertiser) Charitable Trust and the Shanly Foundation.

Inclusive of future commitments and interest free loans, the Building Fund has reached £350,000 and continues to occupy much of our fund-raising effort.

As we get closer to that, as yet uncertain, start date for building, perhaps you or someone you know, would like to "Buy-a-Brick" or two to add to the growing number adorning the church wall as your Christmas present to St Mark's.

We are actively pursuing further grants but please continue to support our mission in any way you can through donations, your presence at fund-raising activities and your prayers.

It is particularly appropriate at this time of year not to isolate ourselves from the needs of the wider community both here in Maidenhead and elsewhere in a troubled world.

St Mark's never loses sight of these needs and, during the last financial year, made contributions of £2,761 to Methodist Church activities and charities (at home and overseas), £1,154 to Action for Children and £1,000 (proceeds of the Christmas Bazaar and Spring Fair) to Open Doors.

The 2017 Christmas Bazaar £1,110, half of which has gone to Chatterbox to support local Down Syndrome families.

Thanks go to all those who contribute their time and talents to so many St Mark's activities, helping fulfil our mission to be a welcoming church at the heart of the local community.

And a final reminder, as you click to buy those on-line gifts for Christmas, please make use of "The Giving Machine".

Just click on the link on our website home page to register (www.stmarksmaidenhead.org.uk), make your purchase as normal and you will generate a small gift to St Mark's at no cost to yourselves.

More than £1,000 has been raised to date in this way at no cost to purchasers.

MONTHLY BAZAARS/COFFEE MORNINGS

It won't have escaped your notice that St Mark's monthly "Coffee Mornings" have taken on the new name, "Monthly Bazaars", in order to more closely reflect the nature of the events.

In future, the Book stall will be much smaller, the Bric-a-Brac stall which used to be in the small hall, is being combined with Anything Goes and a "New-to-You" clothes stall is a welcome addition. Other stalls remain the same.

Grateful thanks go to Greta Woodbridge who has stepped down from running Anything Goes after many years of service and to Barbara Fox who is organising the "New to-You" stall and would be pleased to receive items of good-quality unwanted clothing.

Annette Basford is to be congratulated on breathing new life into these fellowship events and she would welcome any suggestions on how they can be made even more enjoyable.

CRAFT WORKSHOPS

Sally Adams' Craft Workshops have now been meeting at St. Mark's for 18 months and Decoupage, Glass Painting, Parchment, Plastic Canvas are just some of the crafts we have tried with more to come in 2018. We have a great time learning, sharing skills and of course there is always Tea & Cake. It's great just to try a craft, learn the technique and share the knowledge with others. The sessions are on the first Saturday of each month from 10am – 1pm in the church hall.

New for 2018 will be a children's crafts club to meet possibly weekly for children 7 and over.

If you would like more information please contact Sally on 07512 860708 or email gift2treasure@yahoo.com

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY

High St Methodist Church is seeking to recruit an Office Secretary on a 12 month fixed term contract, 9.30am-12.30pm, Monday-Friday

Call 01628 638515, e-mail dianahipps@sky.com or download an application pack from www.methodistmaidenhead.org.uk

QUENCH CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOPS

Quench Christian Bookshops is run by a charitable trust and has shops in Wokingham and Maidenhead.

Trustee, Rev Jeremy Hyde, has written to say:

"It will not surprise you that trading conditions are difficult currently and as a registered charity, the trustees have to make sure that the charity is viable on an ongoing basis.

There are several ways that you can help us:

- 1. We wish to increase the number of trustees (currently 4) and expand the expertise of our board. We are seeking trustees with retail, sales and marketing, IT or property experience and a real interest/passion for promoting our resources.*
- 2. Encourage your congregation to use the shops. There is a serious possibility that, if trading deteriorates further, it will not be possible to retain these which provide a considerable ministry to the general public, selling hundreds of bibles each year which would otherwise not be available in Maidenhead or Wokingham.*
- 3. Consider having a book and gift stall on sale or return.*
- 4. If you are looking on-line at prices, we may be able to match or better them, particularly if larger quantities are involved.*
- 5. Pray for the trustees as we seek to listen to God and discern what God is doing in this situation.*

Please contact us at one of our shops, via our website or by email to admin@quenchshops.com. We are happy to post or deliver items to you.

Yours in Christ

Rev Jeremy Hyde (e-mail: jeremy@quenchshops.com, Phone 02089 979380 or mobile 07909 917432)

MAIDENHEAD & DISTRICT TALKING NEWSPAPER

A volunteer (or two working together) would be welcomed to help sort and label postal wallets once every 2 months for Magazine recordings sent to local visually impaired people.

The job is straightforward, takes about 45 minutes, and is carried out in the Wesley Room at the Church at a time to suit the volunteer(s). Very little training is required, initial support from existing volunteers will be given and guidance notes can be sent to anyone interested.

Please contact Diane Hayes on 01628 631259 if you can help.

SERVICES FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

Date	10.30am	6.30pm
3 Dec	Mrs Connie Jeffery (Gift Service)	Circuit Service at Windsor
10	Rev Dr Malcolm White Holy Communion	3.45pm Messy Christmas
17	Rev Richard Cattley	4.00pm Christingle Service Rev Julie Underwood
24	Mr Henry Mensah-Brown Carol Service	11.30pm Joint Midnight Communion held at High Street
25	Rev Richard Cattley	
31	Rev Richard Cattley Joint Service with High Street held at St. Mark's	
7 Jan	Mrs Jean Barnett	Rev Sonia Hicks
14	Rev Richard Cattley Holy Communion	
21	Rev Amy Walters	Rev Mindy Bell
28	Rev Richard Cattley	

FLOWER ROTA

3 Dec	Messrs John and Keith Machin
10	Mr and Mrs N Fox
17	Mr and Mrs R Bennett
24	
31	
7 Jan	Mr and Mrs M Basford
14	Mr and Mrs I Johnson
21	Mr and Mrs D Farrar
28	Mr and Mrs Hogg

The Flower Rota for 2018 will be put on the notice board in December.

LINK DEADLINE

Please note: THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE LINK will be for February/March. The deadline will be Noon on Sunday 21 January. Please hand or e-mail your items to Christine Filmore who would welcome any contributions from readers.

e-mail chrisfilmore@aol.com, or phone 01628 623263.

* * * * *

Finally, something to amuse you:

SOME BABY!

The minister had travelled from Birmingham to London to attend to the details of a new banner that was being made for his church. On his arrival he discovered that he had lost the piece of paper with the details on. He sent his wife a text message asking her to send details by return. When the answer arrived he was amused to read:-

“UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, EIGHT FEET LONG, THREE FEET WIDE, ASSORTED COLOURS”.

LINK Editors, Christine & Ed Filmore (01628 623263, chrisfilmore@aol.com), would welcome your items of news or interest for future LINK issues.

In the meantime, may we wish you all a very relaxed and happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.



ST MARK'S CRESCENT METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES AND REGULAR ACTIVITIES



Day	Time	Activity
Sun	9.45-10.15am	Prayer Meeting
	10.30am	Morning Service
	3.45-6pm	Messy Church (See noticeboard for dates)
	6.30pm	Evening Service (usually 1 st & 3 rd Sundays)
Mon	9am -1pm	Birdwood Nursery (with lunch)
	2.30-3.30pm	Maidenhead Highway Townswomen's Guild Keep Fit Group
	5.30-8.30pm	Slimming World
	5-8.30pm	Elite Academy of Dance
	7.30-9pm	ALL-SORTS Drama Group (Fortnightly)
Tue	9am-1pm	Birdwood Nursery (with lunch)
	10am-12 noon	Tuesday Singers
	5.15-6.45pm	Brownie Guides (11 th Maidenhead)
	7.30-10pm	Maidenhead Musical Comedy Society rehearsals
Wed	9am-1pm	Birdwood Nursery (with lunch)
	1.30-3.30pm	Pilates Group
	2.30-3.30pm	Wednesday Fellowship (Fortnightly)
	5.30-7pm	Brownie Guides (1 st Pinkney's Green)
	7.30-8.45pm	Weightwatchers
	8-9.30pm	Bible Study - Monthly at Audrey Lelliott's
Thur	9am-12noon	Birdwood Nursery
	Morning	Talking Newspaper Association
	10.30-2.30pm	Lunch & Leisure (Age Concern Slough & East Berks)
	2-3pm	Yogatime
	7.30-10pm	Maidenhead Highway Townswomen's Guild (1 st Thursdays)
	8-9.30pm	Elite Academy of Dance
Fri	9am-1pm	Birdwood Nursery (with lunch)
	4.15-5.15pm	Hymn Practice
	6.15-7.45pm	Guides (1 st Pinkneys Green, Miss Baden-Powell's Own)
Sat	10-11.45am	Bazaar/Coffee Morning (3 rd Saturday of month)
	Morning	Talking Newspaper Association

N.B. WEA also run a number of weekday adult educational courses at the church, details of which are on church notice boards