

## DISTRICT STAFF

If you know who to contact please get in touch with the relevant member of staff. If you're not sure please begin by contacting Sheila. Thanks.

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PA to Chair of District

*(Mon-Thur, 9:15am-2:45pm)*

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The Northampton District Newsletter is published twice a year, with hard copies being distributed at each Synod and electronic copies available on the district website [www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk](http://www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk). If you would like to contribute to the Spring 2011 newsletter, please send articles to Paul Taylor (contact details above) before Easter 2011. Thanks.

# DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

## AUTUMN 2010

The **Methodist Church**  
**Northampton District**  
enabling supporting challenging 

## THE USE OF TIME

The webcam is perched on top of the open laptop like a matchstick man peering over a wall. The picture and sound are pretty good considering the thousands of miles in between me and my daughter in Central America. During our conversation she brings me up to date with events in the life of her sister in Leeds – because she's talking to her on-line at the same time. Then she breaks off for a word with a friend who has just called her mobile phone and, by the amount of news I'm getting about other people in her social circle, its clear she's also dipping in and out of facebook.

Why do one thing at a time when you can do four? – at least! A recent survey claimed that 15 to 24 year olds compress 5 hours' worth of communications media usage into 2 hours each day. Multitasking – it's a way of life and perfectly natural to the majority of younger people. It's a way of compressing time.

Can we go the other way and expand time? Here's a quote from "Generation A", the latest book by Douglas Coupland (author of Generation X and other modern, culture-observing novels).

"Praying is funny. When you pray, you leave the day-to-day time stream and enter a quieter place that uses different clocks and values things that can't be seen"

The character speaking is not a Christian. He is actually just the sort of multi-tasking young person described above. But he notices something different about prayer. He's quite right. When we pray we approach the eternal and the confines of time can sometimes seem to expand.

So often we feel we are 'pressed' for time. In a way that is hard to explain but nonetheless real, praying helps us to resist that pressure or, as someone put it some time ago ...

"Take from our souls the strain and stress and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of thy peace".

With warm greetings and best wishes,

*Peter*

Rev Peter Hancock  
Chair of Northampton District

## DISTRICT VOCATIONS DAY

Do you feel God is calling you to something more?  
Got that nagging feeling but don't know what to do?  
Know God wants more ... but not sure what?  
Just need some space to listen?

If your answer is **YES** then this day is for **YOU!**

**Saturday 18 June 2011**

The day will include: time to listen to God; workshops exploring presbyteral ministry, diaconal ministry and lay work in the church; a variety of people to talk to including ...  
Rev Peter Hancock (Chair of Northampton District),  
Rev Tim Woolley (Director of Mission),  
Paul Taylor (Director of Training & Development);  
and a selection of resources to explore

For more details contact Paul Taylor

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ecumenically. It is able to bring together people of diverse background, those with much education and those with little, working for anyone who is motivated. It works better with a group which is big enough to split into smaller groupings, because the exercises are geared up to enable each person to have the opportunity cumulatively to grow in confidence in articulating their experience and listening at depth to others.

Disciple would be a useful potential tool for engaging with the Learning Church in the 'Extending Discipleship, Exploring Vocation' process (see page ?).

The course is designed to be led by scholars and lay people alike and there is a requirement to attend a Disciple Leaders Training course before embarking on a course. Access the following web address to download a leaflet <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.content&cmid=2713>

For more information contact

Nigel Cox

✉ [nigel@coxclan.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:nigel@coxclan.fsnet.co.uk)

## STATIONING BRIEFING

*launching the stationing process for Sept 2012*

If you or anyone in your circuit is seeking re-invitation or is moving appointments in September 2012 ... this is for you.

**Saturday 11th June 2011**

Road Methodist Church, Northants

Superintendents, Ministers, Circuit Stewards ...  
... book the date now!

## ... a Biblical resource for the Year of the Bible 2011

Disciple is a Bible study course extending over 34 weeks of a year, which gives a comprehensive tool for developing skills of bible knowledge and practical application or to use the Disciple phase **‘not just information – but transformation.’**

Participants commit themselves to six days of personal Bible study and prayer. Five of these days they immerse themselves in the text of the Bible. In this part of the process the text will speak directly to them, and each day they write down in the student manual any reflections or questions sparked from the day’s reading. The sixth day they read background material in the student manual.

They then meet in a group meeting once a week (or fortnight) for a two and a half hour meeting. This begins with a professional scholarly presentation on DVD for about 12 minutes, and then engages in inter-active exercises, sometimes individually, sometimes in pairs, sometimes in 3 and 4s to share reflections and engage in greater depth, or from different angles with the week’s reading. The final part of the meeting is a challenge to embrace the meaning of what has been learnt and apply it to the daily context. The exercise in this part of the process is a conscious application of what has been learnt to the daily life of working out what it is to be a disciple.

At the end of the course 70% of the Bible is studied, half of this is Old Testament, half New Testament. It gives an overall framework to the Biblical narrative. The group sessions follow a process, which means that fellowship gradually develops between the participants, and integrates the knowledge of head and heart. The course consciously balances information and transformation.

Those experienced in the course, say that it can work well

## The Big Story Labyrinth ... a resource to share

*‘Focuses the mind on God and refreshes. Forgot it was a busy Saturday and centred on Christ and how much I need him. A fantastic help to prayer’*

Leicester North Circuit have developed a contemporary prayer labyrinth which we are happy for other Circuits to borrow. Along the route of the labyrinth are nine interactive prayer stations linked to the “big themes” of the Bible, such as creation, incarnation and resurrection. This may make it an option for Circuits wanting to do something different for the *Biblefresh* initiative in 2011.

People can walk the labyrinth and simply read the printed texts at each prayer station (a popular option with older users). Alternatively you can take an audio-tour using original compositions by students of the Soar Valley Music Centre available on mp3 players. Even Primary School aged children can be given a guided tour, since the prayer stations appeal across all ages. It is a resource which has the potential to appeal across the generations, but especially including young people and young adults.

From a practical point of view you will need a space at least 8m by 6m for the labyrinth cloth and someone on hand to supervise it, especially use of the mp3 players. Up to 9 people can be on the journey at any one time and it takes between 15 and 25 minutes to walk it. All materials are included. Circuits are invited to make a small contribution to cover consumables and need to arrange pick up and delivery. The Oxford Circuit have already had it on loan.

If you would like more information please contact:  
Laurie Rowell, Leicester North Circuit Administrator

✉ [birstall-methodist-church@btconnect.com](mailto:birstall-methodist-church@btconnect.com)

## Breakout 2010

*Feedback from nine young people from the Leicester Trinity and West Circuits:*



What I liked about Breakout 2010:

- Gospel Urban Praise (rap, singing, street dance, prayer with Guvna B, Tunday, True Cause and Jesus Freaks)
- I enjoyed every single bit of it – especially “Oggy Bear”
- the live bands were all good
- worship sessions and sports activities were really good
- seeing Nathan and Nk dancing
- the worship was really good and the music was lively
- the Hub activities (multi-media, Wii, interactive games, computer workshops) were really fun
- worship was immense – you could feel really close to God
- Guvna B and Tunday were awesome
- loved all the people, loved the live music, loved the Disco
- LZ7 performance (how we look at the Bible) was amazing
- the worship with Guvna B & Tunday was really good
- loved the music

What I didn't like about Breakout 2010 ...

- the showers
- nothing at all
- don't like tents
- need more food choice

Kudzai, Alistair, Nikolei, Nathan, Gene, Thowani, Chima, Yolisa and Zahne

So there it is – the thoughts of nine, out of the 800+, young people within the Methodist Church who were challenged, inspired and loved in their faith journey at **Breakout at Cliff College in July**. The

- **read** the Bible
- be **trained** in handling the Bible well
- give to **translate** the Bible in Burkina Faso
- provide the opportunity for people to **experience** the Bible in new and creative ways

Tim Woolley

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## ‘Living as a Disciple’

Extending Discipleship, Exploring Vocation (EDEV) is, at its core, a discipleship programme with four strands:

- **discerning** ... recognising your own story and calling, seeing where God has called you and is calling you
- **reflecting** ... what you already do as a follower of Christ, sharing the daily Christian experience of others, reflecting on this experience
- **rooting** ... exploring what it means to be Methodist within these experiences
- **learning** ... taking the opportunity to learn more about your faith

In the Northampton District we are developing discipleship resources under the heading ‘Living as a Disciple’ ... which will include: material for house groups; a database of opportunities for training and learning; better support for those candidating for the ministry; local ‘enthusiasts’ for discipleship.

We also want to encourage people to share material that they have used in their housegroup and found particularly helpful - we hope to publish this on the website. If you have any examples please get in touch. Thanks.

Paul Taylor

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## Biblefesh 2011



2011 is the 400th anniversary since the publication of the King James Version of the Bible and therefore presents a unique opportunity for the Church to focus its attention on the Word of God. Biblefresh is a movement of churches, agencies, organisations, colleges and festivals which has a vision to reignite and re-enthuse the church in its passion for the Bible. The Methodist Conference meeting in Wolverhampton in 2010 was one of the first denominations to commit to supporting *Biblefresh*. For many in our churches the Bible has become tedious and toxic, rather than treasured, trusted and true, and the aim of the *Biblefresh* initiative to encourage a greater confidence and passion for Scripture across the Church is one we in Northampton District are delighted to support:

A **District Biblefresh Day** is being planned in the High Wycombe Circuit on **Saturday 12 February 2011**, with Rev Alison Tomlin President of Conference for 2010/11. Alison has *Biblefresh* as one of the priorities for her year of office and we're delighted to welcome her back to the District for what should be a great day. Put the date in your diaries and church and circuit calendars now!

***Biblefresh, Sharing Faith*** is a half day event developed to help the churches, circuits and Methodist Christians of our District use the Bible appropriately as a resource in sharing our faith in our world today. This uses a mixture of teaching, discussion, multimedia presentations, and culminating in a video Bible study on America's first family. Contact Tim for details.

See [www.biblefresh.com](http://www.biblefresh.com) for how to get the *Biblefresh* book, leaders guide and e-letters full of creative ideas to help your church and circuit to make practical steps towards fulfilling the four ***Biblefresh pledges*** to ...

Methodist Church is making this the last one of its kind (after 65 years of MAYC London Weekend and Breakout). We were all given the chance to write our comments about this on a Graffiti Wall and guess what?

*Everyone commented and said that it is too good to do away with – looking at what YOUR young people said we must all lobby our Church Councils, Circuit Meetings, District Synods, Methodist Council and Methodist Conference to make sure it's NOT the last one. If you agree with this, please do what you can to change our Methodist Mind!*

The four leaders from Leicester West and Trinity Circuits (along with the four from Leicester North Circuit) who went along will be looking at ways to build on this weekend – if you want to be part of this or want to know how to ensure Breakout does not stop, please contact me.

Finally thank you to The Northampton District who subsidised the cost of the 3 Leicester groups mentioned above along with another group from the Wellingborough Youth Project, in the Nene Valley Circuit – **money well spent!!**

John Ogleby

✉ [jrogleby@talktalk.net](mailto:jrogleby@talktalk.net)

### Methodist Youth Assembly

... enabling the Church to hear from young people, and for young people to hear from each other, have fun, find support, learn and make a contribution.

Friday 19 - Sunday 21 November 2010

<http://methodistyouthassembly.eventbrite.com>

## A Way Forward for Mission

*A Way Forward for Mission* is the Northampton District's version of the *Regrouping for Mission* process which encourages us to explore the role of the circuit in the Methodist Church today.

A year ago we launched a consultation, across the district, that explored the role of the circuit in the 21st century and led to a description of a 'healthy circuit' ...

**A Healthy Circuit** takes an holistic approach to *Our Calling*, with discipleship and mission at its heart. It seeks to enable, support and challenge churches as it endeavours to make the best use of available resources (people, property and finance), being both distinctively Methodist and appropriately ecumenical.

A series of statements, under the headings worship, learning + caring, service, evangelism and interconnexion, give more detail about the characteristics of a healthy circuit - see the district website [www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk](http://www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk).

Each of the 23 circuits in the district is now using these statements to assess their health and this will be followed by a number of get togethers, around the district, to share these results. The aim of this process is to become a more mission focussed church, through the circuit structure that is central to the structure of Methodism. We aim to complete this process before our Spring 2011 Synod, where we will be reporting on progress and proposed next steps.

If you would like more information about this process please get in touch.

Paul Taylor

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New **Methodist and Church of England liaison groups** are in the process of being formed with appropriate representation. This will facilitate communication with districts and diocese and a greater sense of partnership and ownership. These groups will develop policy, advice and guidance for consideration by both churches for approval at their relevant governance bodies with the aim of improving the overall safety and well being of children, young people and adults in the church community.

## Go!

Safeguarding is still about the **Mission** of the Church.

**New CRB forms** are available from Methodist Publishing, ☎ 01733 235962. Guidance for completion of forms available from Gill.

New Northampton **District Safeguarding Group**: I will continue to work with Paul Taylor and Keith Hiscock, and the group has now been enhanced by Jenny Brooks, David Sparks, Ian Wass and Adam Wells. The group will be meeting for the first time in September and will be looking at rolling out training, policy writing and exploring ways of supporting the circuits.

**Circuit Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Trainers Day Conference** will be held on Saturday 29th January 2011 at Roade Methodist Church. More details to follow but please ensure that the date is in the diary and if Co-ordinators cannot attend then an alternate is available.

**Elizabeth Hall** has become Head of Safeguarding, and will continue to hold the role for both the Methodist Church and the Church of England. We have effectively got a half time post at the Connexion. Gill Crippen is the liaison link for Safeguarding to the connexion and should always be contacted in the first instance.

Gill Crippen

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## Stop ... Get Ready ... Go!

*safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults*

### Stop!

The **old CRB forms** need to be shredded they are no longer valid!

The Coalition Government have **halted the new ISA registration** scheme which includes children, young people and vulnerable adults. Theresa May, Home Secretary, issued a statement to the on 15th June 2010 which stated that the Vetting & Barring and criminal records regimes will be reviewed to ensure that they are scaled back to common sense levels.

**Pearl Luxon**, former Head of Safeguarding in the Methodist Church, has moved on from her post at the Connexion.

### Get Ready!

From September 2011 it will be necessary for all those in posts to complete the various modules of **Creating Safer Space**. During 2010/11 work is being done across the connexion to look at practice in the districts and the NSPCC has been appointed as a consultant to look at all the various training packages being delivered. Gill and Paul are liaising with the connexion regarding these matters.

We should have the updated **Methodist Safeguarding Book** this year! The last edition 2003 is still available but out of date.

**Worth Doing Well** (Guidance and Good Practice for Church) is now out of print. There is, however, a link on the connexional web site if you want a copy. Contact Sheila O'Neill for more details.

There is a link on the Methodist Church web site to **Working with Vulnerable Adults** Pastoral Care and Safeguarding 2005. A new policy and practice document for working with vulnerable adults is in development. Watch this space.

## Dresden Kirchentag

This is to let you know that plans are now well under way for the German Protestant Kirchentag (Church Assembly) in Dresden next June. Its theme is "there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Preliminary information is available in English on the website: [www.kirchentag.de/english](http://www.kirchentag.de/english) (or go to the German home page [www.kirchentag.de](http://www.kirchentag.de) and click on the union flag symbol at the top left). Further information is available from me, wearing my hat as a member of the Kirchentag's British Committee. I should be very grateful if you would publicise this. I am available to talk to local groups who are interested in attending this great international celebration of Christian faith.

The dates of the Dresden Kirchentag are 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2011, which means that it falls within the Spring Bank Holiday week for people in the UK, enabling teachers and senior school pupils (among others) to take advantage of the holiday.

The section on the website 'be involved' has a sub-section 'contribution' which gives details about how to apply to take part in the 'Marketplace of Possibilities' (imagine a massively scaled-up version of the Christian Resources Exhibition) or to offer music/theatre/worship sessions etc. Applications for this have to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> September, so if any groups in your area are interested, they need to start thinking about it fairly soon. There are a number of people locally who can offer guidance. Please contact me if you would like to know more.

Canon Tony Dickinson

☎ 01494 520676

✉ [tony.dickinson@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:tony.dickinson@oxford.anglican.org)

## District Day Conferences

Last year we held a number of very successful District Day Conferences for different groups of people in the local church and circuit. These Days offered opportunities to worship, share experiences, eat together, learn together and from each other. The feedback has been very positive, particularly opportunities to meet people with similar roles in different churches and circuits. One of the criticisms we have received is that the range of learning opportunities we have been able to offer at each Conference has been limited and so in May 2011 we are planning one big District Day Conference, aimed at those undertaking a wide range of roles in the local church and circuit, still providing the opportunity to share with those in similar roles but also offering a wide range of learning opportunities.

For Circuit Stewards, Circuit Safeguarding Reps, Circuit Treasurers and Circuit Property Stewards we are still holding individual Day Conferences because of the specialist nature of their roles but also because these are groups with which we need to consult.

The dates and venues for this year's District Day Conferences are below ... please book the dates now. You can get more details from Paul Taylor (contact details on page 16) or on the district website [www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk](http://www.methodistdistrict23.org.uk)

### ... for Children's & Youth Workers

Saturday 21 May 2011 in Wellingborough

### ... for Circuit Safeguarding Reps

Saturday 29 January 2011 in Roade

### ... for Circuit Stewards

Saturday 12 March 2011 in Daventry

### ... for Circuit Treasurers & Circuit Property Stewards

Saturday 27 November 2010 in Roade

### ... for Lay Employees

Saturday 21 May 2011 in Wellingborough

### ... for Pastoral Visitors

Saturday 21 May 2011 in Wellingborough

### ... for Preachers

Saturday 21 May 2011 in Wellingborough

### ... for Worship Leaders

Saturday 21 May 2011 in Wellingborough

For more details or to book a place please contact Paul Taylor.

## Northampton District Day Conference

Saturday 21 May 2011

in Wellingborough

A day to worship, share experiences, eat together,  
learn together and from each other.

Particularly for those who work with children and young people,  
for lay employees, for pastoral visitors,  
for preachers and worship leaders

10:00am	arrivals + drinks
10:15am	welcome + worship
11:00am	sharing with those in similar roles
12:15pm	lunch
1:30pm	workshops
2:45pm	workshops
4:00pm	closing gathering
4:30pm	departures

For more details contact Paul Taylor

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