

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER SPRING 2009

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



Welcome ...

... to our first District Newsletter which we hope to produce at each Synod. This is a further addition to the variety of ways in which District Staff can share both the work they are involved in and the events and activities they offer. It replaces the individual newsletters that have been produced in previous years.

We are very conscious that it is important to have effective methods of communication in place if we are to support and enable the work of circuits and local churches. To that end we are always looking for ways in which this can be improved so please let us know if you have any thoughts or suggestions. We would also welcome your feedback on the contents of this publication and any suggestions you have as to what it would be helpful to include.

Many thanks,

Paul

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!**

Date: Saturday 13 June 2009
Time: 10am to 3pm (lunch provided)
Venue: Great Park Street Methodist Church
Wellingborough NN8 4PH

The programme for the day will include:

- time to listen to God - led by Rev Alison Tomlin
- workshops exploring presbyteral ministry, diaconal ministry and lay work in the church
- a variety of people to talk to including:
 - Rev Alison Tomlin (Chair of Northampton District)
 - Rev Tim Woolley (Director of Mission)
 - Paul Taylor (Director of Training & Development)
- a selection of resources to explore

Change!

'MAWFing' is not the only challenge facing us all in the days ahead. As Methodism has been undergoing structural shifts, it has been easy to lose sight of the reason.

The District exists to support, enable and challenge because that is a pale reflection of what God does. The Methodist Church still exists to "spread scriptural holiness" - to listen for God's voice; speak God's word; stand for justice and peace; and enable growing personal and community relationships with the Living God.

We are therefore engaged in how we work better with children and young people; how we make sure all Christ's disciples are nurtured in their faith; how we maintain best practice and safe spaces; and how we do the work of God in every place.

The District Staff are there to help you, by the grace of God, and in God's name.

Alison

*Rev Alison Tomlin
Chair of the Northampton District*

For more information about 'MAWFing' see the article on the MAWF Group on page 7.

Revds Dave & Alison Tomlin

During the stationing process, Dave was asked to come out of retirement and take on the Superintendency of the Thames Valley Circuit for a year. He agreed, but after further reflection, suggested we job share the task. So, appropriate permissions having been received, we shall move to Slough this summer.

Revd Alison Tomlin
Chair Northampton District

MISSION . . MISSION . . MISSION . . MISSION

Enabling

For those interested in exploring the challenges of Fresh Expressions of Church, the District now has a variety of opportunities for training.

Mission Shaped Intro (MSI)

The six week MSI course has now been completed by the Kettering and Corby, Northampton, Nene Valley, Amersham, High Wycombe and Oxford Circuits and a course for the Market Harborough, Stamford and Rutland and Melton Mowbray Circuits at Oakham commences on May 12th, with Loughborough being the next circuit to arrange one for 2010. To book one for your circuit please get in touch with Tim.

In addition an ecumenical MSI course, supported by the District, is running in Milton Keynes from April 20th For further details contact:

Peter Ballantine

☎ 01908 605892

✉ pballarev@yahoo.com.

Mission Shaped Ministry Course (MSM)

The more in depth year-long MSM Course, which has been running at Rugby Methodist Church for the past 12 months, will also be running ecumenically in Milton Keynes in 2009-2010.



mission shaped ministry course

The aim of this course is to prepare individuals and teams for pioneer ministry in fresh expressions of church within a mixed economy church.

- it is hoped people will come as individuals and teams
- it is hoped that many will begin the course as they are preparing to embark on a fresh expression of church, but that others would come at a later or earlier stage
- it is hoped that many ministers will take part in the course alongside many lay people

Dates
Wed 16, 23, 30 Sep, 7 Oct 2009 (evenings)
Fri 4 – Sun 6 Dec 2009 (residential)
Sat 6 Feb, 6 Mar 2010 (all day)
Wed 28 Apr, 5, 12, 19 May 2010 (evenings)

Speakers
Baptist Stuart Murray Williams
Anglican Bishop Graham Cray
Methodist Spirituality & Discipleship Officer, Jenny Ellis

Further details
Tim or www.webjam.com/femk

Supporting



The Northampton District is keen to identify locations where projects could be located and supported by the local circuit, the District and Connexion as part of the Methodist Church's new pioneer ministry scheme, **venture FX**.

Whilst fresh expressions of church are needed for all ages and types of people, this scheme is focused on young adults between the age of 18 and 35. Of all the people presently outside the sphere of church life, this age group is the least likely to be familiar with the Christian story, and therefore one of the most difficult to reach. The hope is to create new Christian communities where young adults can explore faith and become mature disciples of Jesus Christ. The projects will seek to develop into 'churches' in their own right, characterised by worship, prayer, fellowship, witness and service. Some of these projects may have a specific focus, eg. concern with issues of peace and justice, arts-based, urban mission, or working with common-interest groups.

We'd also like to hear from those who feel they may be called to the role of a pioneer. Pioneers can be lay or ordained (presbyters and deacons). They will have the necessary gifts to enable them to relate to unchurched young adults and create fresh expressions of church with them. Potential pioneers will have a track record demonstrating that they have the gifts and entrepreneurial skills required for this type of ministry. They will be in sympathy with the aims and ethos of the Methodist Church and will recognise the value of the mixed economy where fresh expressions of church live alongside more traditional models.

If you feel there is a potential in your circuit for establishing a Christian community amongst young adults between the age of 18 and 35 with the help of a pioneer, or you want to explore the role of pioneering ministry, then please get in touch!

For more information about the venturefx initiative of the Methodist Church, have a look at the Methodist Church website

[www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?](http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentoworld.content&cmid=2539)

[fuseaction=opentoworld.content&cmid=2539](http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentoworld.content&cmid=2539)

MISSION . . MISSION . . MISSION . . MISSION

Supporting



Back to Church Sunday Sunday 27th September 2009

While there are many young adults for whom the traditional church is a strange land, what about those people who have had contact with the faith in the past but are no longer involved with Christian communities? In 2008, 37,000 people came back to church through the ecumenical initiative '**Back to Church Sunday**'

This year, on Sunday 27th September, the theme for the day is '*Come As You Are*'. The emphasis is on individual Christians prayerfully handing personal invitations to appropriate people in their circle of contacts. It offers an opportunity for those who have got out of the habit of going to church, or those who have thought it something they should look into, to find an entry point. It is about offering a 'regular' service of worship on the day, and being especially welcoming and user friendly to returnees and newcomers. Get in touch for further details or visit backtochurch.co.uk

There is also a video on *You Tube* that can be used as an advertising tool for Back to Church Sunday ... have a look at ...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mLpUdQdHFI

Comment from one lady on entering church - "It only needed something like this to get me through the door! "

St Peter, Darby End - Dudley

Challenging

How do you respond to these challenges?

- ➔ would your church or circuit benefit from help with its mission statement or strategy?
- ➔ would training in faith-sharing be useful?
- ➔ are there ecumenical opportunities for a Street Pastors scheme, such as the ones in which Methodists are taking a lead in Leicester, Loughborough and now Blaby, that you could explore?
- ➔ would a Sunday service or a church/circuit away day with a mission theme help to get some creative thinking started?

If the answer to any of these challenges is YES, then please get in contact with Tim.

Tim also offers to the District ...

- ... dates to circuits when he can be invited to preach
- ... representation on a variety of ecumenical bodies
- ... training and support, to both ministers and lay people, with faith sharing and evangelism
- ... accompaniment to churches and circuits as they explore their mission
- ... a variety of methods of review for churches and circuits
- ... support for funding applications to District and Connexion for property projects
- ... membership of the District Property Panel who help churches explore how to get the best from their buildings
- ... the management of a fund that gives start up grants for FX projects
- ... a variety of training courses that support the development of fresh expressions

Rev Tim Woolley

District Director of Mission

☎ 01604 784424

✉ t.r.woolley.00@cantabgold.uk

. . . SAFEGUARDING . . . SAFEGUARDING . . .

ISA Launch Delayed

The ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) launch, which was expected in October 2009, has now been staggered so that complete implementation will not be achieved until November 2010. The information below outlines how this implementation will take place.

What will change on 12th October 2009?

From this date, the ISA will come into operation. Those appointing/line managing children's and youth workers will have a duty to refer to the ISA any information about individuals who may pose a risk. *[The Northampton District Safeguarding Group will send further information to circuits on those who pose a 'risk']*

There will be criminal penalties for barred individuals who seek or undertake work with vulnerable groups and for recruiters who knowingly take them on. Standard certificates will no longer be issued for work with children or other vulnerable people. However, the criminal records application form and process will remain unchanged.

What will change in July 2010?

A new criminal records application form will be introduced enabling people to register with the ISA if they intend to work or currently work with children and/or vulnerable adults in England and Wales. The existing forms will no longer be usable. There will be a 5 year phased roll-out for ISA registration of those individuals who currently work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

What will happen in November 2010?

It will be a legal requirement for individuals to register with the ISA if they intend to work or currently work with children and/or vulnerable adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Enhanced criminal records checks will continue to be needed as well for church roles of this kind.

Information supplied by the Methodist Church; 20.03.09

More information about the Independent Safeguarding Authority can be found on their website www.isa.gov.org.uk

Circuit Verifiers for CRB's ACTION NOW!

The Methodist Council on 3rd April 2009 endorsed the scheme for registering new verifiers of criminal record disclosure applications [CRB'S] for each church, circuit and district. New verifiers may *only* be safeguarding contacts/representatives and/or administrators at church, circuit or district levels who are *also* registered on the Connexional database.

Churches, Circuits and Districts are asked to approve and register new verifiers. In the Northampton District, we are asked to implement this new arrangement during June/July 2009.

From September 2009 the Methodist Church and CAS will then be able to use these roles *in addition* to Presbyters and Deacons for verifying Disclosure applications and CAS signing forms.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Circuits and Churches, Presbyters and Deacons are asked to ensure:

- any new verifiers are trained in verifying CRB forms
- new administrators understand that this may be one of their duties; the church/circuit must negotiate any modification in any existing administrator's job description
- administrators should agree to being entered on the national database for the purpose of being a verifier
- Safeguarding Coordinators understand that their names will be on the Connexional database for the purposes of verifying forms and receiving communications about safeguarding

In *all* cases the minister's name should be entered on the CAS form (in the box named Alternative Contacts) as the one to receive any Disclosure information or Barring information.

If forms are sent in and the verifier is not registered on the Connexional database, this may count as an error with CAS as it will involve additional staff time to sort it out. This can be checked by referring to the Church, Circuit or District profiles at data.methodist.org.uk

. . . SAFEGUARDING . . . SAFEGUARDING . . .

Circuit Safeguarding

It is important that every circuit has a robust structure in place to oversee safeguarding at both circuit and local church level. This should include the following:

- circuits should appoint a Safeguarding Co-ordinator who has a link into both the Circuit staff team/stewards group and to each of the churches
- churches should appoint a Safeguarding Co-ordinator for each church who will relate to the Circuit Co-ordinator
- each church should have a Safeguarding policy which is agreed and updated yearly and also held by the Circuit co-ordinator.
- the Circuit should have a Safeguarding policy which is updated and agreed yearly at the Circuit meeting and a copy held by the District Safeguarding Office

Circuit Reps

Each Circuit needs to appoint a Safeguarding Co-ordinator to oversee the work of Safeguarding in the circuit. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will meet regularly with Gill Crippen [DSO, District Safeguarding Officer] for support and advice.

Dates for meetings:

- Wednesday 6th May 10-12noon
- Tuesday 9th June 7-9pm
- Saturday 4th July 10-12 noon

Venues will be finalised when attendance is confirmed.

Contact Gill for more information.

Guidance Notes

The Methodist Church offers guidance notes for those planning camping and residential trips, for those working in residential settings and for those running youth meetings in their home. A copy of these notes are available at:

www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/ch_tripsguidance_1105.pdf

Guidance for sharing information within the Methodist Church can also be found here.

District Safeguarding Group

Gill Crippen is available to meet with churches, circuits and related groups to discuss Safeguarding matters, to offer training and support.

Paul Taylor and other members of the District Safeguarding Group also have some availability to assist Churches and Circuits in the area of Safeguarding.

The District Safeguarding Group will be undergoing changes this summer and would welcome suggestions of others who could join the group. It currently meets 6 times per year in the evenings to discuss matters related to safeguarding and also acts as a support group for the DSO. Please contact Gill for further information.

Thanks

Since the District Safeguarding Group came into existence in 2002, three people have been central to its work: Chris Bolas, from the Leicester West Circuit; Keith Hiscock, from the Rugby & Daventry Circuit; Mary Jackson, from the Nene valley Circuit. They have brought their experience, expertise and wisdom to the group and without them much of what has been achieved would not have been possible. In September Chris and Mary leave the group, whilst Keith remains. We thank them all.

Gill and Paul

Gill also offers to the District ...

... experience of safeguarding and justice issues as they relate to the church and individuals

... an understanding of safeguarding as a key to mission and evangelism with children and young people

... membership of the District Safeguarding Group; offering advice and training in safeguarding and child protection

Gill Crippen

District Safeguarding Officer

☎ 07967 362885

✉ northamptondso@btinternet.com

DEVELOPMENT . . TRAINING . . DEVELOPMENT

EDEV extending discipleship ... exploring vocation

As we have explored how the District can best support churches and circuits in the development of EDEV we offer three suggestions ... we would welcome your feedback.

1. Living as a Disciple ... food for the journey

A series of roadshows taking place across the district with the following aims:

- to support circuits as they encourage people to explore discipleship
- to encourage and support development of EDEV across the District – in particular through development of theological reflection skills
- to provide a more localised 'Vocation Day' experience
- to offer information about candidating, including portfolios

This will include an exhibition including information about training opportunities and institutions, according to location, and resources and will be led by District Staff, hopefully supported by some local people. It will be open to all but will be particularly targeted at housegroups, with preparation material being made available to them.

2. District Exploration Group

This is a group of people from across the District, although geography may make the group self-selecting, who will be invited to come together once a month to visit and reflect on specific aspects of Methodism in the District. These visits might include, for example, a Street Pastors project, a fresh expression of worship, an academic lecture, etc.

The aim of this group is to take them out of their normal church environment and challenge people to reflect on what it means to be church.

3. District Vocations Day

An annual day, for those exploring ministry, to examine their call away from their local church/circuit – this has proved a valuable day for those who have attended over the last few years.

If we are going to offer these events we would hope to begin in 2010, but before then we would welcome your thoughts as to whether you feel they would meet the needs of individuals as they explore their discipleship and vocation. Please let Paul have your thoughts and comments.

YOUNG LEADERS OF WORSHIP COURSE

A course designed for those in their teens and twenties who are exploring leading worship; suitable for both those looking for a basic introduction to leading worship and those looking to train as Worship Leaders

Date: 26-28 June 2009

Time: Friday dinner to Sunday lunch

Venue: Crossways, Yardley Hastings, Northants

Cost: £55 (*subsidised cost from District funds*)

This course will include a basic introduction to worship leading, for those who have not explored that before, and some more focused workshops for those who have already completed a worship leading course.

The course will be led by Paul Taylor and Pam Lewis, both Local Preachers with a passion for involving young people in leading worship.

Your church or circuit may be able to support you with the cost ... why not ask?

More details from Paul Taylor ☎ 07779 241087 ✉ northamptontdo@btinternet.com

TRAINING . . DEVELOPMENT . . TRAINING

MAWF GROUP

MAWF, pronounced 'morph', takes its name from the plasticine character, created by Tony Hart, who could reshape himself according to the need of the time. MAWF (Mapping a Way Forward) has a similar aim, that is, re-moulding circuit for the beginning of the 21st century.

For many people MAWF is about amalgamating circuits, coping with reducing finances and fewer Presbyters ... it's all very negative! However, this is not what is at the heart of MAWF because the task is as follows:

Over the coming 5 years or so, each District is to encourage holistic and wide-ranging circuit reviews, in the light of *Our Calling* and *Priorities for The Methodist Church*, with a focus on discerning and developing:

sustainable and relevant circuit structures which will serve and oversee the mission-obligations of the Church in the early decades of the 21st century;

new ways for Circuits to fulfil their responsibilities and purposes in line with Standing Order 500: 'The Circuit is the primary unit in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help'.

Such circuit reviews are to include strategic consideration of the availability and use of personnel, finance and buildings.

Methodist Conference 2007

The initial questions, therefore, revolve around what is the circuit's mission? What is its function and how does it undertake this? What are the ecumenical implications? Only when we have answered these questions can we begin to explore what the resulting 'circuits' might look like ... missionally, organisationally, financially and geographically.

A District MAWF group has been established to enable this task to be undertaken, with a remit:

- to explore the role of circuit
- to enabling and encouraging dialogue between circuits
- to make recommendations regarding circuit boundaries

This group is working on some proposals to bring to the District in September as to how we can begin to answer some of these questions. If you have any reflections or comments to add to these conversations please contact Paul.

enliven

an ecumenical training programme for youth leaders in northants

Small Groups: working with small numbers

led by Pam Lewis

Catholic Youth Worker for Training & Formation
Monday 11 May 2009 @ 7:30pm

Worship Ideas for Young People

led by the *enliven* team

Wednesday 10 June 2009 @ 7:30pm

all *enliven* events take place at:
Bouverie Court, 6 The Lakes,
Northampton NN4 7YD

to book your place on one of these training sessions, visit www.nymo.org/enliven

Paul also offers to the District ...

- ... support to those who are seeking to become ministers and those who are Probationers Ministers in the District
- ... the compilation of the District Prayer Diary
- ... of developing and sustaining new acts of worship
- ... experience of establishing a community based youth project
- ... a member of the Crossways Management Committee - the URC's retreat and conference centre in Yardley Hastings
- ... *enliven* - the ecumenical youth work training programme in northamptonshire
- ... membership of the management groups for the Leicester City Centre Missioner and the Fountainhead Community
- ... membership of the District Safeguarding Group; offering advice and training in safeguarding and child protection
- ... a variety of methods of review for churches and circuits
- ... support for funding applications to District and Connexion, for ministry projects
- ... membership of the three Methodist Training Forums of which the District is a part
- ... oversight of District News and the District website

Paul Taylor

District Director of Training & Development

☎ 07779 241087

✉ northamptontdo@btinternet.com

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.

Sheila O'Neill

PA to Chair of District

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

☎ 01604 630128

✉ alison.tomlin@methodistchurch.org.uk

Rev Alison Tomlin

Chair of Northampton District

☎ 01604 630128 (Office)

☎ 01604 622124 (Home)

✉ alison.tomlin@methodist.org.uk

Gill Crippen

District Safeguarding Officer

☎ 07967 362885

✉ northamptondso@btinternet.com

Paul Taylor

District Director of Training & Development

☎ 07779 241087

✉ northamptontdo@btinternet.com

Rev Tim Woolley

District Director of Mission

☎ 01604 784424

✉ t.r.woolley.00@cantabgold.uk

Welcome for Revd Peter Hancock new Chair of Northampton District

This will be held on Saturday 15th August at 7:30pm at Christ the Cornerstone in Milton Keynes (Directions can be found on their website www.cornerstonemk.org.uk)

This may seem rather early to welcome our new Chair but this needs to take place in the middle of August, even though some people will be on holiday, as Peter needs to be able to welcome all the other new Presbyters and Deacons in the District, who take up their appointments in September.

We hope that you will be able to attend this District celebration and welcome Peter as he becomes the Chair of the Northampton District.

Methodist Youth Conference

In November 2008 over 150 young people, from around the country, met together in Northampton for the last Methodist Youth Conference - the first arrivals came from the Isle of Man and the last from Cornwall. Young people from across the District were involved in the organisation and leading the worship, as well as on the conference itself. On the Saturday a lot of Conference business took place, the results of which will be presented by some of the young people to the Methodist Conference in July. In the afternoon there was chance to engage in some workshops or, for the more energetic, some sport - the football competition being won by the President of Conference's team! In the evening the conference was entertained by 'Toozacrowd', who brought their own brand of Christian improvised comedy.

On Sunday the Conference had invited the District to join them for worship and over 300 gathered for worship in the sports hall next door. The worship was led by some of the young people who had attended the District young leaders of worship course earlier in the year and it was a fantastic event to be a part of - thanks to all those who came and supported the event (especially the Nene Valley Circuit who cancelled all their morning services!). After dinner it was time for the young people to return home - the first to leave were going to Cornwall and the last ... to the Isle of Man!

Next year the first Methodist Youth Assembly takes place in Newcastle. This replaces the Youth Conference and is part of the new Youth Participation Strategy that the church is rolling out over the next nine months - for more details have a look at ...

[www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/
conf08_ypsbooklet270808.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf08_ypsbooklet270808.pdf)

A great weekend. Many, many thanks to all those who helped in any way.

*Paul Taylor
District Director of Training & Development*

Methodist Youth Assembly 2009

13th-15th November in Durham

Theme: 'Why I? Go do something beautiful!'

Interested? Talk to Paul for more details