



Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit

Newsletter March 2024



**'He set his face towards Jerusalem' Copyright Stella Davis –
used with permission – see back page**

You are a Source of Inspiration.

I felt inspired as I began counting the number of services on the current plan, March-May 2024 - 120 Sunday services (and that's not counting services in Holy Week). I then began to think about all the time that Local Preachers, Worship Leaders, Ministers, and Supernumeraries spend in study, prayer, contemplation, preparation, and planning. This led me to consider those involved at each Circuit church in planning, preparation, and organisation, those who gather the information, notices, newsletters, greeting on the door, Communions, readers, hymns, audio, visual, coffee, counting the offerings, and tidying; then there are those of us in the congregations, getting prepared, travelling, listening, contemplating, responding.

I then began to think wider - for example: the flowers; someone needs to spend time sourcing the flowers at the shops and the markets, and then time to arrange the displays. Someone pays for the flowers, often in memory of a loved one.

Time - lots of time and devotion given – a source of inspiration.

I then perused the Circuit Newsletter and began to count events in the local Circuit churches: the lunches, coffee mornings, children's and youth work and such - and all those who give their time in organising, preparing, planning, and hosting the events.

So inspired, I then began to ask around and gauge within the Circuit the number of Bible Studies and Fellowship Groups; I then added meetings such as Pastoral Groups, Church Councils, Property, Finance, Stewards, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders', Circuit Leadership, Circuit Meetings.

Here's an underestimate - In the Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit Quarter March-May, there are more than 281 services, events, community outreach, and fellowship groups. That is an underestimation. There are the Eco events to add to this, the Pastoral Care and Visiting - and, as you know, there's still so much more; think

of the prayers ascending and descending or The Martins and The Culford School and the presence we offer there daily from within the Circuit.

I wonder if we can begin to imagine the sheer scale of this; *could we even count the hours?* If we then scale that up across the county, country, world - and denominations - I wonder what the numbers would be. I wonder what the hours would be? 24/7 without doubt, while hopefully, we all remember to have that Sabbath day's rest at different times.

I then tried to feel the impact on society, each individual and community, the cohesion, the healing, the inspiration, the meaning of it all; the holiness of these encounters and spaces and places, meeting people amid the whole barrage of what can feel - and be - overwhelming in life yet held and proclaimed within the sheer beauty of life and creation.

Can you take some time to expand on this further? I begin to think about the arts, the music, the poetry; all that has inspired and all that continues to be inspired over millennia, or how, sometimes, one feels that sense of utter peace and contentment, even amid a mindful of fear at the turmoil within the world.

[Jesus said] 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' (from the Gospel of St Mark Ch 4)

We thank God as source, each other for seeds, and for all that is grown and manifest, all that gives shade, all that inspires us, and in the name of Christ. As you ponder this letter - remember that you have been part of my Inspiration. And, I thank you.

The Revd Canon J C Vinyard

NEWS FROM TRINITY

We have the encouraging news that the refurbishment of our kitchen is very near - subject to the official approval of the Church Council we hope to be able to finalise acceptance of estimates and begin work very shortly.

Meanwhile our Wednesday Cafe, from 9.30 till 12, is still thriving so if you happen to be at Bury Wednesday Market do please pop in for a hot drink, home-made goodies with a books and mixed goods stall to browse, not forgetting a friendly chat.

Our fund raising continues with a Quiz Night on Saturday 23rd March at 6.30 for 7. Cost: £6 per head, to include light refreshments and prizes. All details and booking through Lynda Moore on 01359 241534, or John Chambers on 01284 762028.

If music is your thing then Trinity on Sunday 17th March at 3p.m. is the place to be - ladies' choir The Aquarius Singers will present their Spring Concert and tickets are £10 available on the door; and there will be refreshments and a raffle.

Please do also join us for a Maundy Thursday Service on Thursday 28th March at 7pm, led by Revd Canon Jason Vinyard. We look forward to welcoming you.



NEWS FROM STOWMARKET

We are meeting together for bible study during Lent following the Methodist Church Unbounded Love materials. We have our church council in March and Rev Rita is leading Mothering Sunday worship and a Maundy Thursday Service and Communion.

We wish friends around the Circuit a very Happy Easter.



MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

The Mead Singers will be at Bradfield
on **Monday 25th March**
at **7.30pm**

Please make a note in your diaries
We would love to see you there.



TENEBRAE SERVICE
Maundy Thursday
28th March at 7pm
at Stowmarket Methodist Church

Tenebrae is the Latin word for darkness and the service is an adaption from an early 4th Century act of worship of the same name.

The service commences with the sharing of the Last Supper followed by the stripping of the table. During the service we listen to the story of the last hours of Jesus' life and as we do so candles are extinguished to symbolise the enveloping darkness. Then the Christ candle is put out, leaving near total darkness – and near total devastation.

We are trying to understand and to recreate the betrayal, abandonment and agony of the events; and it is left unfinished, because the story isn't over until Easter Day when we relight this candle pointing to the renewal of Hope and the emergence of New Life at Easter.

The service ends in silence, there is no benediction and we ask you to leave the service quietly.

I hope you will want to share in this Holy Night. **You would be most welcome to join us for this service.**

God bless
Rev Rita Carr



IXWORTH METHODIST CHAPEL

EASTER SERVICES



Good Friday
Reflections at
9.30 am
followed by
Hot Cross
Buns and
Coffee/Tea at
10 am on
Friday 29th
March.

Easter Morning Resurrection Service at
10.30 am on **Sunday 31st March.**

Come and celebrate with us!

Tuesday Lunch

Tuesday, 5th March 

12.15 – 1.30

*Do come and join us at Old Newton Chapel
for a good lunch in friendly company.*

*Please note the change of day to avoid a clash
with the World Day of Prayer service.*

MONDAY MEETUP

**Monday 12th March
between 11 and 3
Old Newton Chapel**

**Meet up for coffee and chat, food
and friendship, welcome and warmth.**

contact: Joy Wood 673433

**There will be coffee or tea and biscuits
and a soup and cake lunch.**

Let Joy know if you would like a lift.

COFFEE MORNING

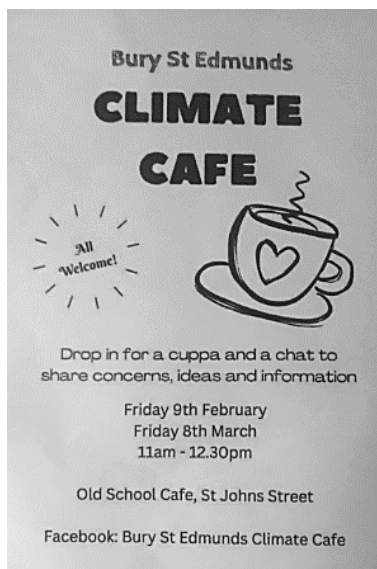


on Tuesday, 19th MARCH

10.45 – 12.00

Old Newton Chapel

Do come and join us in the hall for coffee and nibbles and a chance to meet up with friends old and new. You'll be most welcome.





The Martins MHA Residential & Dementia Care Home

The Martins is a Care Home in Bury St Edmunds and has always been closely associated with the Methodist Church. As a matter of fact, our MHA organisation was founded by a Methodist Minister (Rev. Walter Hall) in 1943 before the creation of Welfare State.

The organisation has grown in the last 80 years, and we are now the largest Care provider in the UK.

In the Martins we have been very fortunate to have had a very good relationship with the Bury St Edmund Circuit. Before Covid, many Local Preachers used to come in on Sunday evening to lead services, whilst the ministers led Holy Communion Services once a month.

After the pandemic we had re-think our prayer times at The Martins. We contacted the local ministers and asked if they could be available to share Holy Communion with the Residents. We now have the Anglican Priests from the Cathedral, The Baptist Minister as well 5 Methodist Ministers agreed to celebrate Holy Communion for our Residents.

The residents, thanks to the generosity of the Ministers, now receive Holy Communion on a Tuesday on a weekly basis (11am). The service was written by the priests from the Cathedral and all ministers use the same service, which we have put on a PowerPoint. Obviously, each minister chooses their own readings and hymns so that there is a good variety for our community. Our Residents always look forward to the ministers visits on Tuesdays.

On Monday Wednesday and Thursday, we have a time of prayer at 10.30am which I tend to lead, although there are Residents who are willing to lead as well. We are most grateful for the time we can spend together in prayer and we hope that all who read this, will hold us all in prayer.

Francis Carr – Local Preacher and Chaplain



Please bring a packed lunch but other refreshments will be provided.

During the day there will be time to relax and enjoy creation as well as sharing in prayers and planning for our future care of it.

Important Invitation

The first of three Circuit days will be held on **Saturday 16th March from 10-4 at Bradfield Methodist Church.**

The commonly shared target of “Net Zero by 2030” applies to the Methodist Church too and as a circuit we are being asked to respond. This will be much better tackled together. This is a day to share together, but also to work, and it would be great if each church could send at least one representative to the day.

RSVP to
artwisestella@gmail.com

The other days to be put in your diary please are Saturday 6th July and Saturday 5th October 2024

Stella's Report from Spiritual Adaptation Course:

Glenthorne Quaker Centre Grassmere Lake District 16-18 February 2024 A course led by Professor Rupert Read . *Rupert has resigned his post as Professor of Philosophy at UEA to work full time on The Climate Majority Project. [Home - Climate Majority Project](#). He is a Quaker with an interest in Buddhist philosophy.*

First of all, thank you to those who prayed for me whilst I was on this weekend. Why was I so apprehensive about going? Because I knew I would be faced with the reality and truth of just what a dire situation our beloved planet is in. There was pre- course reading to do so that we all (25 participants) arrived fully aware of record temperatures, rising sea levels (including the latest news about AMOC ocean currents), melting ice, biodiversity extinction and all the other desperate consequences facing this generation. It was not easy reading – some have said “If you are not afraid, then you are not paying attention”.

So why put myself through it? I was equally intrigued by the spiritual aspect of the course. I have heard Rupert speak before and he is clear and hopeful. There was worship included in the programme and it felt a safe place to work out my own feelings and to gather resources to help lead the Circuit forward. Participants were of several denominations, and I found the Quaker/Christian/Eastern approach a helpful experience in deepening my own faith and understanding. It was a very prayerful weekend.

The question across the weekend was “Why are you here?” As a global community, we can no longer prevent Climate Change, it is already with us. Our job now is to do everything we can practically to reduce or delay the impact and to use our minds to work towards building a

new and good society that can live well with the consequences of change. How do we adapt to being the very best version of humanity that we can?

As you can imagine, it was a deep and thought-provoking weekend and this is not the place to tell you everything about it. I will be processing the ideas for a long while, but there is also much good stuff to share with you in due course.

Roughly speaking the sessions covered

- Adapting to climate change is a practical and material task, and also a spiritual task. We might wish things could be different, but we are where we are.
- Acceptance - How to accept our situation and how to navigate the things that are unacceptable. Accepting that beauty and goodness run in parallel with pain.
- Grief – facing our grief and fears and using them as a source of energy and purpose.
- Cultivating gratitude – we will protect what we love. Our responses are completely bound up in love for creation and each other. This involves our intellect, emotions and actions. We can be calm and strong in the face of adversity. As we witness the end of the familiarity we knew, we need to find and play our part in growing the society we want – it won't be a quick fix, but it could be a good one.

Along the way, there were lots of helpful illustrations and models, ideas for reading and music. There is a huge community of people working for good changes and it was a hopeful and empowering weekend.

The thing that I hadn't anticipated was the stunning environment of Grasmere – the view from my bedroom was beautiful. We made full

use of time outdoors for some of the exercises and also for actual exercise on Saturday afternoon. There was a lot of thinking to take in so we were encouraged to use the physical and emotional space. I walked alone for three hours up to Easedale Tarn and back. (It made carrying my walking boots and poles across London worth it to be in such a beautiful and challenging place.) The steep path on the way up became a stream on the way back – I was completely rain soaked, but such an exhilarating walk.

For now I'll leave you with some photos I took and this very rough "poem" that I wrote in the heavy drizzle as I looked at the Tarn and a story about my return trip – which turned into a metaphor for the weekend. I look forward to sharing more with you. Stella x



View from and to Glenthorne, and a long walk up to the Tarn.



REFLECTION

On this journey you will get

Wet

Muddy

Out of breath, lost at times,

Hungry

Be unsure of the way.

But you will go further and higher than

You ever thought possible.

You will need to stop and rest so take the chance

To look back at where you have come from – see

How far you have already travelled, then

Turn and look at the next challenge.

You are walking alone, but be encouraged by fellow travellers

Go at your own speed, do what's right for you so that

You don't become exhausted. You are needed for the long haul.

Prepare as well as you can for the journey

But know that you can only do so much.

Most of the challenges will need you to make your decisions along the way –

You won't know what they are until you are on the road.

Keep going! You will get there and be amazed

But you will also discover that there are other “there's” beyond it!

So at this place, now, I add my journey stone to yours – unknown fellow traveller –

And I too, journey on.



Journey story - Slow down to get it right

The journey up to Glenthorne was very interesting. I left home at 06:30 hearing the dawn chorus. My train was to London Liverpool Street and across to Euston to catch three different trains to Windermere, then a bus ride to Grasmere – it all went very smoothly. I travelled through contrasts of urban and rural areas, fields, houses, businesses, roads, rivers and reflected on just how much change is needed to equip our society to live in a carbon neutral way.

I looked forward to the journey home, leaving Windermere at 5 o'clock and anticipating being back in Stowmarket just before midnight. The London bound train was packed, running late, and stopped to sort out a problem so we were nearly an hour late arriving at Euston. This left me very short of time to get to Newbury Park for the good old Sunday night bus replacement service!

I knew my stations and the changes I needed to make, but I'd not used the underground out of Euston before and it was a complicated map – 6 possible platforms for the northern line. I couldn't find the station I was looking for – panic ! but no – the lessons of the weekend kicked in – accept the situation, stay calm. I didn't have time to make a mistake so I slow down and make sure you get it right. It all worked fine.

The lesson hasn't been lost on me. Environmentally we need to keep doing everything we can to limit pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss – I know that so many of you have already changed your daily practices to do this. As for the big picture – we haven't got time to get it wrong. We need to slow down, stay calm, so that we can act well and wisely – we need to get it right.

FOXEARTH MEADOWS NATURE RESERVE

By Clive Davis, Stowmarket



Some friends from the circuit visited the reserve last year when the circuit Eco Group (BecoME) had a guided walk around the site .

We have recently welcomed Sarah Leadham as the new reserve manager. She has moved from Hampshire where she worked as Park Ranger for a local authority. She has also previously worked with AROCHA UK and has visited other AROCHA projects around the world. AROCHA UK is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment (ARocha UK runs the Eco Church scheme)

The reserve is situated on the river Stour and is a water meadow. This winter the site has been flooded on 3 occasions. The site is a haven for wildlife and very peaceful. The reserve manager is supported by the Friday Volunteers who help with practical tasks that enhance the site for wildlife and for human visitors. The volunteers come from all walks of life and include among others a local vicar, retired organ builder, teacher, IT professional, a nurse. Many have church connections and others none at all but all have a love for doing their bit for the environment. The reserve has Methodist connections as Rev. Ruth Ridge and I are on the steering group. The Rev. Jason Vineyard has taken part in the open-air service as has Stella Davis (Local Preacher) The reserve welcomes local schools to come and learn about nature. Local community groups also visit. We have a worship/activities area on the bank of the river called Nightingale Corner, which can be used by Churches and others for outdoor worship.

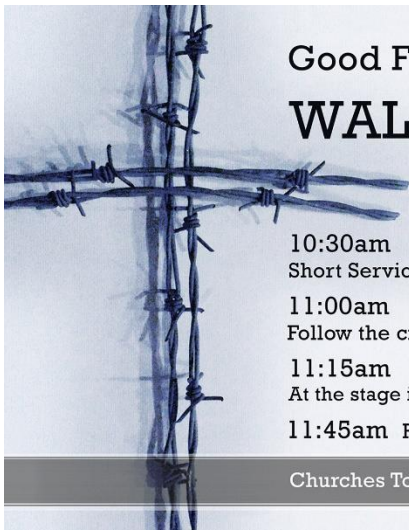
What might you see on a visit to Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve? The site has been developed particularly with enhancing the habitat for Dragonflies and Damselflies which emerge in the late spring and

continue to fly until the autumn. Butterflies and Moths. (Moth Trapping events are held in the summer). Birds are around all year, but many migratory birds can be seen including Reed Warblers, Cetti's Warber, Garden Warbler, Cuckoo and swift, swallow and house martins flying overhead. Woodpeckers, marsh tits, nuthatch, ducks and geese and swans. Occasionally you will hear the 'Pip-pip' and if very lucky see the flash of iridescent blue as Kingfisher flies up the river. Birds of prey include Red Kite, Buzzards, Kestrel and Hobby. Our star bird at the moment is the Kookaburra, a native of Australia, (a short film of it was shown on BBC Look East on Tuesday 20th February). This bird has been seen around the Stour valley for around 8 years and is a bird that has escaped from a private collection. It has only been around the reserve for around the last 6 months. I had only heard it up until Christmas, but I have seen it on 3 occasions since Christmas. Prior to that I had only seen them in Western Australia. We get mammals including deer, foxes and otters (I have not seen the otters yet and I have been volunteering at Foxearth since 2016). We also have common lizards on site.

Various surveys of the wildlife are carried out during the year including dragonflies and damselflies, birds and bird ringing by a BTO licenced bird ringing, moth trapping, bat monitoring, flora recording and monitoring of water levels and water quality.



The reserve sits right in the corner of our Circuit , only 10 minutes from Sudbury and just over 30 minutes from Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket. There is a small car park which is normally open during the day. It may be closed during flooding events. The site has public footpaths running through it. You are welcome to visit.



Good Friday 29th March 2024

WALK OF WITNESS

10:30am

Short Service in St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

11:00am

Follow the cross. Silent procession into town.

11:15am

At the stage in Market Square. Speaker Emma Denton.

11:45am Finish.

Churches Together Bury St Edmunds and District



We welcome you to join us for a
**Spring Choral Evensong Service to
celebrate the ongoing work of Bury Drop In**

**on Sunday 28 April 2024 at 4.30 pm
at St Mary's Church**

Service will be led by members of St Mary's and
Bury Drop In leadership team.

RSVP by email to info@burydropin.org

Refreshments served before the event at 3.30 pm

The Aquarius Singers

Invite you to their

SPRING CONCERT

Conducted by

Nicholas Sheehan

Accompanied by

Jill Garrett

3 p.m.

Sunday 17th March 2024

Trinity Methodist Church
Brentgovel Street,
Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1EB

Tickets: £10.00

Available on the door or from

Balaam's Music, 103 Risbygate Street, Bury St Edmunds

Refreshments

Raffle

Proceeds in aid of
Trinity Methodist Church

Featuring flute soloist, Clare Mellor

WORLD DAY of PRAYER 2024



Friday, 1st March

This year's service will be held
at *Old Newton Methodist Church*
at 2.00 p.m.

*The service has been prepared by
ladies of Palestine and is entitled*
**'I beg you, bear with one another
in love'.**

Tea will be served after the service.

Everyone is most welcome.

Contact Christine Newton (673443)
if you would like a lift.

An illustration of an olive branch with green leaves and black olives, extending across the top of the poster.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024

FRIDAY 1 MARCH

A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!

*I beg you, bear with
one another in love*




Please join us at the Services

**10.30am at Garland Street Baptist Church
Pump Lane, Bury St Edmunds
IP33 1HN**

**7.30pm at Quaker Meeting House
St John's Street, Bury St Edmunds
IP33 1SJ**

All Welcome

An illustration of a garden scene with green foliage, dark purple flowers, and a small orange butterfly. The scene is framed by a dark, textured border at the bottom.

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EASTER SERVICES ACROSS THE CIRCUIT 2024

28th March – Maundy Thursday

- * **St Johns Methodist Church 7pm** – Agape Meal and Holy Communion
- * **Stowmarket Methodist Church 7pm** – Tenebrae Service
- * **Trinity Methodist Church 7pm** – Contemplative Service

29th March – Good Friday

- * **Ixworth Methodist Church 9.30am** – Good Friday Reflections
 - * **St John's Methodist Church 10am** – Reflective Service
 - * **Christchurch Needham Market 10.30am** – Walk of Witness
 - * **Trinity and Northumberland Avenue Methodist Church –**
St Edmundsbury Cathedral at 10.30am, Walk of Witness at 11am
 - * **Glemsford Methodist Church 2.00pm** – Reflective Service
 - * **Old Newton Methodist Church 4.00pm** – Reflective Service

31st March – Easter Sunday

- * **Trinity Methodist Church 10am** – Revd Canon Jason Vinyard
- * **Christchurch Needham Market 10.30am** – Revd Mary Playford
 - * **Ixworth Methodist Church 10.30am** – Jenny Benfield
- * **Northumberland Ave Methodist Church 10.30am** – Revd Val Spencer
 - * **Old Newton Methodist Church 10.30am** – Revd Rita Carr
 - * **St John's Methodist Church 10.30am** – Revd Ruth Ridge
 - * **Stowmarket Methodist Church 10.30am** – Revd Julie Minns
 - * **Bradfield Methodist Church 11.00am** – Revd Vaughan Tong
 - * **Glemsford Methodist Church 6.00pm** – Revd Ruth Ridge



The painting on the front cover this month is by Stella Davis, after one by Janet Brooks Gerloff . She calls hers “He set His face towards Jerusalem “

The original title in German translates as “and walked, strengthened by this food, forty days”



Anyone wishing to submit articles for the April Newsletter please send through to the circuit office circuit.admin@hotmail.com by 16th March, we look forward to hearing your news. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter or information from Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit please ring 01284 731082 or email circuit.admin@hotmail.com

DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the policy or position of The Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit, it's employees or its members.

