



UPDATE 8

Circuit 26/4, Southampton District

Details of meetings:

- **Wed 17 Sept, 7.30 for 7.45pm at Tadley Common – the first Circuit Meeting (CM) of our new circuit!**
- **Safeguarding Foundation Training Sessions -**
 Mon 15 Sept: 7:45pm - 9:45pm
 Oakridge Methodist Church (book with Marianne)
 Sat 25 October @ 10:00am
 Caversham Heights Methodist Church (more details later) booking form on the website.

In this edition we are continuing to answer questions that were raised at the Area Meetings. If you would like to discuss any answers, or you wish to raise a further point, then please contact Terry, Gill or Marianne (below).

Contact: Terry Ayres hatfield.fcj@virgin.net
 Gill Lawson gill@lawson-net.co.uk
 Marianne Sales mariannebunn1610@hotmail.com

Q: Who will be on Circuit Meeting?
 A: For Sept 2014 – Aug 2015, we have agreed to stick with the current membership. The new Circuit Meeting will need to make decisions about future representation. A big challenge will be numbers! A full turnout of current members would give us attendance of approx 135.

Q: How will pastoral care improve?
 A: Perhaps this should be answered with a different question: who is responsible for pastoral care in our churches and around our circuit? We all are! It is not just for the ordained presbyters, or lay appointments, to 'do pastoral care'. Everyone has a shared responsibility for it. Improvement? The Ministers will, we are certain, do all they possibly can. Otherwise, it is up to us! The planned reduction of responsibilities for Circuit Stewards will leave some time for them to offer additional care pastorally for the staff.

Q: Can we have a decent map of where all the churches are, the right name, address & post code?

A: A map based on Google Maps is available on the new circuit web site, and post code information is provided for each of the churches.

THE PILGRIMAGE

At the time of going to print, the Pilgrimage has just finished. The route included all 26 of the Basingstoke and Reading circuit churches. Walking started from Overton, in the Kennett & Test Valley circuit, in recognition of friendship, and of working together in Fourward for many years. On Saturday, there were nearly 20 pilgrims, who – on Sunday – worshipped at Immanuel LEP in Basingstoke. The evening service was at a packed Tadley Common church with both circuits well represented, and led by David Rice, the leader & deviser of the complex route.



Each day the group walked 11-17 miles, but pilgrims were welcome to do only half a day! "It is so inspiring," said one pilgrim, "to be able to have long chats with fellow-Christians, whilst we enjoy the beautiful countryside." There was indeed a moving atmosphere within the group. There was an exciting and very well supported final service at Mortimer on the final Sunday. Well done, everyone who was involved.

Q: Distance pressures.....

Q: Travel time for all people and tasks.....

Q: What are we doing to ensure transport costs are kept under control?

Q: Will people have further to travel for meetings?

A: Locations will be decided with care, and we hope to have fewer meetings. Hopefully, the use of GIDs, SIGs, fewer circuit meetings and having new Circuit Assemblies will help.

Q: How to get people to events.

A: Plan location with care. Encourage churches to maximise car sharing/other transport arrangements, and to consider those who would be prevented from attending meetings without such arrangements being in place.

Q: Who do we contact to volunteer for SIG / GID?

A: Any member of the circuit staff/officers.

Q: How do we form a new SIG if have an interest?

A: Any group of people may form a Special Interest Group, and then bring ideas to Circuit Assembly.

NEW WEBSITE – PLEASE NOTE!

The new circuit website is now available for preview at: <http://www.basingstokereadingmethodists.uk/>
 Please pass any comments, corrections etc to Steve Smith or Gill Lawson by email at:
webmaster@basingstokereadingmethodists.uk

The following Questions were passed to David Shaw who with Robin Gowers and Linda Hoe, our LP secretaries have produced the answers below.

Q Lack of information about preaching plans etc

A Plans will continue to be produced quarterly – Sept – Nov, Dec – Feb, March – May, June – August. They will be made by both Circuit administrators, Linda Hoe & Robin Gowers (LP Secs) and David Shaw (Super). The plan will be available on website, electronic copies to local churches and a very, very small number in hard copy.

Q Will we see more of a mix of preachers?

Q How will the mix of preachers (R&S + B) work out on the plan?

A For many years preachers have put limitations on their availability for all sorts of reasons. In B&R the same will apply. However, some preachers put very little restriction on their availability and none in terms of geography. These preachers will be seen over time across B&R. These preachers will mean there is more of a mix.

Q How 'local' will Local Preachers be?

A Some LPs by indicating their geographical limitations make themselves more local than others. However, there is a case to be made for LPs to be more local to develop an ongoing relationship with particular local churches. This relationship could lead in all sorts of directions – eg. strengthening local ownership of worship, developing a pastoral dynamic for the LP in that church. R&S discussed this at their last LP/WL meeting and is part of a continuing conversation.

Q 'situation with Local Preachers'

A Sadly we're not certain what lies behind this statement/question and consequently feel unable to answer it.

Q Will there be any training for Worship Leaders?

A Training for both LPs and WLs is in a state of transition. The newly developed Connexional course is presently being trialled with a view to running it out in a year or so. This new course has 2 halves – the first half is shared by WLs and LPs alike. The second half is completed by LPs alone. There isn't a WLs training course running in either circuit nor are there plans to organise one for B&R, but when the need arises a course will be made available.

Q How will they (WLs) be used?

A Largely, the present 2 circuits have had the same model. That is - it usual for a Worship Leader to serve the church where they have been authorised. It is true on occasions WLs in Basingstoke have led worship in another church, but this isn't common. B have named WLs on the plan, R&S have not had this pattern.

Linda, Robin and I feel there is little value in imposing uniformity, when both work well in the areas where they operate. Our hope is the conversations that are triggered will be helpful and encourage further thinking about the use of WLs.

Separately, but linked 2 LPs are authorised to preside at communion. This has been part of Basingstoke practice for some years, but not R&S. Our hope again is that differing experience of practice will result in meaningful conversations.

THE CHAPEL BY THE POND

For the last 148 years Oakley Methodist Church has been the "*chapel by the pond*" offering a friendly welcome to all.

We meet together to worship on Sunday mornings; at the lively Wednesday Worship evening sessions and within smaller Bible Study and Fellowship groups. We socialise at the Monday Night at 8 Club and we reach out to the village and wider community via the regular Tuesday coffee mornings and projects throughout the year such as "Soup Saturdays" and our "Star in the Stable" event.

We take an active part in ecumenical activities like, the Good Friday village prayer walk, regular joint worship services and 'Open the Book', at the local infant & junior schools.

The chapel may look quiet on the outside but there is plenty going on in and around it. All Oakley members and friends look forward to continuing its tradition of welcoming all-comers and providing a Christian witness for many more years to come.

Q: How is information going to be communicated?

Q: How are we going to get good communication between all the churches?

Q: How are you going to ensure that all communications are received in a timely manner? This was a concern of many, particularly those without email / access to internet.

Q: Problem of sending to church contacts who are not all able to act promptly.

Q: "We need to promote all events better."

A: Work still in progress, but we will consider using every means of communication that is open to us, including publicising events and information via email, website, church newsletters, magazines and by direct person-to-person conversations. This is a bit like pastoral care – *we all have a part to play* - in this case, to tell others what is happening!

Q: Should there be a GiD for communication?

A: A SiG could be formed if a group of people are interested in solving the problems. There is already one circuit member interested!