



UPDATE

August 2016

Circuit 26/4,
Southampton District

Old Basing Carnival



The Basingstoke Methodist Churches had a craft tent at Old Basing Carnival on Saturday 18th June. Our theme was the parable of the lost sheep. The event was a great success.

Our minister, the Rev Jayne Webb wrote "It was great to see such a team effort between the Methodist churches in Basingstoke at our craft tent which had the theme 'Find the Lost Sheep'.

There were lots of activities such as making sheep cup cakes, colouring, making woolly headbands and not forgetting finding the sheep that had got itself lost somewhere in the carnival with a prize for those who managed to find it."

For some of the time I found myself sitting in an improvised sheep pen with a load of cuddly sheep and a few children telling the Bible story — it was wonderful!

The following morning Gordon was the preacher at Christ Church and the passage he had been asked to focus on was Colossians 4:2-18. Gordon identified three main points in his sermon, the second of which was proclaiming together (Col 4:5) i.e. telling people about Jesus, which is, of course, what I was doing in the sheep pen the previous afternoon.

Linking Gordon's sermon with the carnival made me realise that it doesn't matter who you tell about Jesus, just give it a go and tell someone or some people — anyone you feel comfortable telling, be it adults or children, it really doesn't matter. In the case of the sheep pen the parents/carers were, of course, also in the sheep pen or alternatively standing on the other side looking on.

Marianne Sales

Flying the Flag for Jesus!

Circuit Gathering Sunday 17th July



What a wonderful afternoon! Food, flowers, flags, fellowship, and worship ending with a Love Feast!

Next Circuit Gathering will be **Saturday 5th November** at **St Andrews, Basingstoke**. *Watch this space* !

Messy Church – exciting! Isn't it always? In July I was privileged to be part of the Messy Church Team at Oakridge. The craft activities included doves with beautiful feathers on magnetic cards, footprints in the sand, candles, dove biscuits, painting.



The time of worship included the baptism of two brothers, Daniel & Henry, regular Messy Church attendees.

It was a very memorable occasion, completed by chocolate cake for everyone!



Gill Lawson

Bind Us Together Lord

These days the different Christian Churches try hard to live and work in a spirit of togetherness. We at Bradfield have tried to revive the old tradition of worshipping with the congregation of St Denys at Stanford Dingley Anglican church in the next village on the fifth Sunday in the month whenever this happens. We take it in turns for them to come to us or for us to visit them. Yes, as we enter St Denys we could list many things which are as the Covenant Service puts it “suitable to our natural inclinations and others contrary to both” as we try and find our way round what sheet of paper we are praying from and what book we are reading from or if we are kneeling or standing and how to learn to sing the psalms and responses.

On the other hand, quite a few from St Denys had never been in a Methodist Church before until now. It is just as hard for them to worship in a Methodist church where there seems a lack of papers and books to be held and where they need to watch others to decide when to stand and when to sit down and the preacher could be a lay preacher and not one of the Clergy which is what they are used to.

It has become obvious that the congregations of both churches like to sing. (although the Anglicans say they wonder if we think God is deaf as we sing so loudly) Not long after our first joint service we were invited to sing with the St Denys Choir at evensong once a month. From there our two churches have sent singers to join with a choir from Bradfield College to sing at Douai Abbey.

Members of our congregations meet up socially and are very relaxed in each other's company and so our United Services are very joyful occasions with both Churches being very welcoming to each other. We no longer have to wait to be invited to worship at either church as we all feel free to visit and worship in each other's churches whenever we like.

Our differences are very small now. St Denys finish their services with wine and crisps and we with coffee and biscuits and as we can laugh at these differences so we can together overcome any other difficulties that come along.

God works through congregations to transform lives. We pray that our two congregations working together move us beyond our comfort zone and that we follow Christ into more adventurous encounters with people.

Grace Mercer, Bradfield Methodist Church

Ambition Fulfilled!

We fulfilled an ambition at Wesley this year: we held a street party outside the church. We were going to do it back in 2012 for the Diamond Jubilee. We planned a line of tables full of happy local people 200 feet or so along Watlington Street next to the church. The people came – 300 of them – and so did the rain, and we sought refuge in the church hall. Yes, it was quite full.

Since then we have held an annual Big Lunch in the local public garden, organized with St Andrew's URC, with whom we have a fulfilling partnership.

But this year, with the Queen's 90th birthday, came another opportunity to close the street. We seized the opportunity, and it didn't rain in our bit of Reading. So there was the row of tables just we planned in 2012. The people came again, and we were able to share in food and conversation.



It's all part of a long-term commitment to engagement with the local community, which finds other expression in the annual living nativity, and in our plans for refurbishing the old manse next to Wesley.

Jonathan Brown

Circuit prayer time; on Monday 19th September at Trinity, Basingstoke. Drop in and out between 7pm and midnight. Make a note of the date, more details available later.

Contact Update editor:

update@basingstokereadingmethodists.uk, or send a message to the circuit administrators