



UPDATE

March 2016

Circuit 26/4,
Southampton District

Flying the Flag for Jesus!

Circuit Gathering

Sunday 17th July

at Tadley Common Methodist



Create a flag to represent your church *from any material, any size from A1 (Flipchart size) to 1 metre square.*

Bring it to Circuit Gathering *on a pole.*

Display it with an explanation *written on an A5 or A4 sheet.*

These flags will be used during the concluding worship and there will be an opportunity during the afternoon to design your own mini paper flag.

The theme of Flying the Flag for Jesus will run through various activities during the afternoon.

News from around the District

Our District Chair has a new title: now Reverend Canon Dr Andrew Wood.

Café style church in a Dorset market town!

In the market!

In Christchurch, on the south coast, a Methodist Minister has a pitch between two cafés where he leads worship with a difference.



This work of art was created by members of the public, painting using twists of paper!

At 9.30 on a cold, wet and windy morning

26 of us set out on a coach from Tadley. It was Easter Saturday and we were going on a trip, organised by our minister Ruth, to see the Passion of Christ in Staines. This is a dramatic re-enactment of the Easter story and is performed in the open air on the banks of the Thames. There were to be two performances, 12.00 and 2pm, we could go to either or both. When we arrived the weather was not too bad and the forecast for later was not good so we opted for the first one. As it turned out this was a good decision!

After a coffee we made our way to the Riverside Gardens complete with picnic chairs, hats, gloves and plastic sacks to cover our legs (no umbrellas as this would impede the view of those behind).

The Easter story, depicting the events that lie at the heart of our Christian faith, was performed in full costume. It moves through the whole of Holy Week, from Palm Sunday, complete with a donkey, to Easter Day. This amazing performance is acted out by members of the churches around Staines in association with Wintershall.

The shocking scene of Jesus being hauled up onto the cross between two criminals, His last words and His death, were special moments. Over the wind and the rain the silence of the large crowd was deafening! Other moments in this magnificent production which will stay with me are the sight of His mother kneeling over the body weeping when the soldiers take Him down from the cross, the sound of the soldiers marching to arrest Jesus, the sound of Him being flogged, Jesus overturning the tables in the Temple and releasing the sacrificial “doves” the costumes, hammering of the nails, even the donkey braying in the background- so many special moments.

This was a truly moving re-enactment making the events very real for us. We felt for the actors in costume, their legs and feet must have been frozen and Jesus and the thieves, stripped to the waist, were turning blue!

If the opportunity to see this arises next year don't miss it!

Kathy Evans

Contact Update editor:

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

Have you heard about Open the Book?



Open the Book is an ecumenical project backed by the Bible Society which offers bible stories as part of school life.

The vision of Open the Book is for every child to hear the story of the Bible at school in their primary years.

In Basingstoke Open the Book assemblies began in Oakley several years ago. At Great Binfields Primary in Chineham they are now in their third year and at nearby Four Lanes Infant School they are happening for the second year. Open the Book assemblies are also happening in Tadley, Bramley and Hook and, on a smaller scale, in Brighton Hill.

The second week in February was Open the Book awareness week and so a group of us which included Debbie Veel, Marlene Skuce, Maggie Chiverton and Marianne Sales hijacked Marlene's assembly slot at King's Furlong Infant School and, with the Head Teacher's approval, presented an Open the Book assembly. The story we used was David and Goliath and the presentation was very powerful. As a result of this assembly we have been given the okay to start weekly Open the Book assemblies in this school from September. We just need to get a team together now!

So who can take part in Open the Book assemblies and what is the commitment?

The answer is 'anyone can take part' – young, old, male, female ... and you can do as much or as little as you like – every week, once a month. What does an Open the Book assembly consist of? Everything is written down and each assembly begins with an introduction, then there is the story and this is followed by a conclusion, a reflection, a prayer introduction and a prayer. The story is read from The Lion Storyteller Bible. We make the presentation our own by the way in which we dramatise it and the costumes and props we use.

You can learn more about Open the Book by going to www.openthebook.net

If this is something you might like to get involved with please speak to any of the following:

Maggie Chiverton (01256 476106) or Marianne Sales (01256 474865) in Basingstoke, Brian Rich (01256 783111) in Oakley or Angela Slark (01189 814900) in Tadley.

You would be welcome to come and watch an assembly before making a decision.



Church Action on Poverty

building partnerships of hope and transformation

'Bread Broken for All'

This prayer was written for Church Action on poverty –

Creator God,
you made this good earth and gave us
enough
that all could delight in bread and wine, milk
and honey, story and song.
As Jesus sat by lakeside and table and
shared bread, and said that his body was
broken for all,
he showed us a glimpse of your Kingdom.
Inspire us with a vision of a society beyond
the scandal of poverty where bread is the
birthright of all your children.
Give us hearts that yearn for it, voices to call
for it, strong hands to build it together.
Amen

For more information on this organisation visit
<http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/>

Circuit Family Fun Day at Tilehurst

When I arrived at Tilehurst Methodist Church at just after 10am on Friday 8th April with my five year old granddaughter, the church was already full of young children and their carers and buzzing with noise and activity.

Abi Ord welcomed us and signed us in, then we were free to explore all the different activities that were set up and manned by various members of Tilehurst Church.

Children, with or without help as required, were (amongst other things) able to decorate their own bag, make their own badge, colour in their own cross-shaped windchime or Easter activity wheel and/or make a chick or a sparkly mosaic.

There were toys and free play for the youngest of the children, and at intervals everyone was called to attention and there was a hunt for paper Easter eggs or chicks.

As far as I could tell most people stayed for about 2 hours, and there were refreshments available during that time, again prepared and served by church members.

All the children left with a small bag of sweets as well as the things they had made, and the whole morning seemed extremely well organised and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

Abi tells me that a total of 96 people signed in that day, so thanks and congratulations to all involved!

Marion Young