

April 2021

CIRCUIT NEWS

CIRCUIT NEWS AND VIEWS FOR BANGOR & HOLYHEAD METHODIST CIRCUIT

THE MISSION OF THE BANGOR & HOLYHEAD CIRCUIT IS TO LIVE OUT GOD'S WORD AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS CHRIST BY LOVING AND CARING WHOLEHEARTEDLY THROUGH SERVICE AND WORSHIP WITH FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND JOY FOR ALL THE CHURCH FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY.

If you scan your favourite newspapers or news websites on the 1st of April, chances are that you'll see some headlines that look suspicious. Read further, and you'll probably find that some of those stories are complete hoaxes. After all, it's April Fools' Day!

It has become tradition on the first of April to play a joke (of the harmless variety) on those near and dear to us. We plot and we scheme, and often the jokes are funnier in our imaginings than how they play out in reality, but that doesn't stop us from sending the little kid in us out on a rampage. Even the staidest among us have been known to indulge in a practical joke or two, so beware of trusting anyone on that day... unless you stay in bed until after noon when tradition has it that anyone playing a joke after then is themselves the April Fool.

There is an 18th century folk rhyme that says:

The first of April some do say,
Is set apart for All Fools' Day;
But why the people call it so
Nor I, nor they themselves, do know...

How the custom of pranking on April 1st came about remains shrouded in mystery. There are many theories, one even suggesting it goes back to Noah who sent out a dove to look for dry land too early - on the 1st of April.

As we move inexorably towards Easter during April this year (Easter Sunday is on Sunday 4th April) we remember that many thought Jesus to be a fool. Not necessarily for the things he did or said but because he refused to listen to the voices of those who warned him of the inevitable consequences of the popularity of the message he proclaimed. This was not the Good News that those in power and authority wanted to hear – it destabilised their position as leaders and offered hope to a bruised and battered people who craved the radical change his teaching proclaimed.

Jesus said, as recorded in John's Gospel (John 13:34-35), **"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**

As we journey towards Easter, and beyond, can I commend Jesus' words to you. No joke, no fooling, just plain honest advice – **'love one another'!**



Rev. John G Hughes. Superintendent Minister

M:APS - look on *The Back Page*



COVID 19 in Malawi, a personal insight from Professor Melita Gordon

Following on from the information about the Covid Vaccines **Circuit News** has been in touch with Professor Melita Gordon at the hospital in Malawi and asked her some questions

In the UK we have a whole range of Oxygen Equipment available within our Intensive Care Units this includes ventilators and oxygen masks I asked her what sort of equipment they have in Malawi?

We just have masks with non-rebreathing bags and nasal prongs. We are tremendously blessed to have been given a large oxygen plant for the hospital during the first wave a truly miraculous gift without it this wave would have been unspeakable. So we don't have to rely on expensive cylinders and can deliver 15 litres of Oxygen per minute (this is a reasonably high dose of Oxygen but still requires the patient to breath for themselves unlike a ventilator which does the work for the patient). The Oxygen plant was paid for as an extraordinary provision by the Welcome Trust.

Have you had any of the Covid Vaccines yet?

A UNICEF / WHO plane arrived yesterday with syringes and safety boxes, in readiness for when our first vaccines actually get here. We hope to have some actual vaccines this month through CO-VAX. It will only be a tiny proportion of the population at first, a few hundred thousand for a population of 18m and will be aimed at HCW's and vulnerable, and there probably won't be many more until ALL African counties have had a least some vaccine, they are strict about equality and fairness and the idea that no-one is safe until everyone is safe. So it will be very slow to roll out fully and we'll be living with COVID here for a long time yet. But it's a start and so encouraging to see the stage being set for the vaccines themselves. It will feel absolutely amazing the day any vaccines arrive, even if its only a small start.

A lot of staff in the NHS are under great pressure what is life like for you on the wards?

I am just coming to the end of a week on call on the COVID wards. We are past the top of the second wave but cases are still coming and it looks like it will have a long tail and won't come down as fast as it is in the UK. We're still seeing as many as we had in our first wave. So we keep going... and are hugely grateful for being protected by peoples generosity in **Bring it Forward**.



The 2 patients in the photos have now recovered from COVID. The team are all wearing PPE that was provided her by the BIF campaign and that is making a real difference.



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Liz Jones from Amlwch tells us how her family celebrates at Easter time.

I have always thought that as Christians we don't make enough fuss about Easter.

At Christmas we cook, cook, cook! Buy presents and decorate our homes. So , in our home we cook, cook, cook and decorate at Easter.

David finds a piece of tree, the one in the photograph is flowering cherry ,we stand it in a bottle of water and tie it to the banister (the dogs would soon have it knocked over) then decorate. As with Christmas decorations we have slowly collected or made some new ones each year.

Last year in lockdown it was a great blessing to us all. Why don't you have a try?

Have a very blessed Easter Day. God Bless. Liz Jones

Songs of Praise

Llanfairfechan Church are holding Songs of Praise via ZOOM on the 8th May and the first Sunday of each month following that.

Everyone is welcome to join in for an informal time of worship and sharing.

If you have any hymns you would like including please email Heather Bonnebaigt with the details.

heather.bangormeth@gmail.com



M:APS - look on *The Back Page*

Stationing: Comings & Goings

September is the traditional time in the Methodist Church when Ministers take up their new appointments following the Stationing Matching Process. Our Circuit has been involved in this process.

As a Circuit we are delighted to be able to welcome Rev. Nick Sissons, his wife Amanda and their sons Jack and William. Nick will be our new Superintendent Minister as from 1st September 2021. Nick has kindly provided a few words about himself and his family for **Circuit News**.

Nick and Amanda met in Oxford back in the 1980s when they were students. They have been married for 30 years. They both come from strong Methodist families – Nick's from Rushden in Northamptonshire and Amanda's from Wolverhampton.



Their first home was in Wesley House, Cambridge, whilst Nick was training for the ministry and afterwards they moved to Southampton where Nick was a full-time chaplain at the University. In 1997 they moved to East Sussex where Nick served three rural chapels and was chaplain at HMP Lewes.

Their son Jack was born in November 1998 and William was born in September 2000 just before Nick accepted an invitation to move to North Wales to become minister at St David's in Craig-y-Don and St John's in Conwy where he stayed for 8 years. Jack and William both went to school at Rydal Penrhos, the Methodist independent school in Colwyn Bay. Their boys are now both at University: Jack is completing a four year Engineering course at Durham and will begin work for Atkins Global in Epsom this September as a civil engineer; William is finishing his second year of three, reading History at Nottingham and hopes to convert to a Law degree after he has completed his course.

In 2008 Amanda became an Inclusion Teacher working for Conwy Local Authority in the Primary sector; she now heads up that service. In 2009 Nick became the school chaplain at Rydal Penrhos and has spent the past 12 years working there.

Nick added that as a family they are thrilled to be moving to the Bangor & Holyhead Circuit and very much look forward to sharing in the life of the Circuit.

As Nick arrives, we will be **saying farewell to Rev John Hughes and his wife Christine** who are moving to Hedge End in Southampton where John has been appointed as the Superintendent Minister of the Southampton Circuit alongside acting as the titular Superintendent of the neighbouring Meon Valley Circuit.

Prior to his departure John will be obliged to undertake a period of Sabbatical, which is compulsory for all Methodist Ministers every 7 years as part of their covenantal relationship with the Methodist Conference, so will hand over the care of the Circuit into the capable hands of Rev. David Jones from 3rd May 2021.



Competition:

Write a hymn of Celebration!



In first edition of Circuit News, back in March 2020, a competition was launched to write a hymn that could be sung at the re-opening of St. John's, Bangor.

Well, due to Covid 19 St. John's have re-opened and closed again. However, as we learn more about how best to manage and engage safely with the global pandemic that has closed our Churches the prospect of a Celebration Service at St. John's is once again back on our agenda!

The competition was to write a hymn, suitable for congregational singing, that can be sung to any of the tunes found in the Singing the Faith hymnbook. Unfortunately, only two of the entries received met this criterion.

The Competition Judges – Rev. Clare Stainsby and Heather Noel-Smith – from the Singing the Faith Plus Team, decided that the two hymns, which were judged anonymously (and are reproduced below) that did meet the criteria were of equal merit and should consequently be considered as joint winners!

Tune: Cwm Rhondda [StF.465]

Words: Heather Bonnebaigt

Thank you Lord for boundless blessings,
Glorious views and sun filled days.
Soaring birds and rippling rivers,
Mountain heights and sandy shores.
Thank you father, thank you father.
Ever thankful for your love.
Ever thankful for your love.

Thank you for the Church, your people
All united by your love
In our homes alone and separated
Yet one church together be.
Thank you father, thank you father.
Ever thankful for your love.
Ever thankful for your love

Thank you lord for sending Jesus
Ever present, constant friend.
In the depths of separation
Never leaving us alone.
Thank you Father, thank you Father.
Ever thankful for your love.
Ever thankful for your love.

Tune: Hyfrydol [StF.103]

Words: John G Hughes

Gracious God, we come rejoicing
to proclaim your glorious name,
excitedly anticipating
power to set cold hearts aflame;
through this place of faith and friendship
focus for the community
landmark building on the High Street:
help us mould its destiny.

Grant us courage to establish
through our focused, prayerful deeds,
here a church that all will cherish
empathising people's needs;
mission springboard, epicentre
helping hand and listening ear
haven place for all who enter:
this must be our vision here!

Church is more than bricks and mortar,
it's a living entity:
walls that sing of our endeavour
to engage wholeheartedly
with the task of sharing Jesus'
love and peace and justice call,
to all people, in all places:
Kingdom values here for all.

Although no date has yet been set for the Celebratory Reopening and Rededication Service of St. John's, Bangor – watch this space - our thanks and congratulations go to Heather and John for their hymnody for that joyous occasion.

Thanks to Lorna Sykes for putting together a hymn based quiz for Easter

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Easter Hymn Quiz

These are all lines from Easter hymns found in *Singing the Faith* or are the initials of the first line.

Answers are on *The Back Page*.



1. He lives, my everlasting Head!
2. No sin too slight to overlook, no crime too great to carry
3. W.K.O.L.I.T.
4. Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won
5. He only could unlock the gate of heaven, and let us in
6. M.S.I.L.U.
7. Come see His hands and His feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice
8. Love so amazing, so divine
demands my soul, my life, my all
9. He tore the bars away, Jesus, my Lord
10. T.H.T.O.W.C.W.T
11. There in the ground his body lay,
light of the world by darkness slain
12. How pale art thou with anguish,
with sore abuse and scorn!
13. L.H.T.C.
14. Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain
15. See God's salvation plan, wrought in love,
borne in pain, paid in sacrifice
16. W.Y.T.W.T.C.M.L
17. I'm humbled by your mercy and I'm broken inside
18. H.T.O.D.J.
19. Made like him, like him we rise; *Alleluia!* Ours the cross, the grave, the skies: *Alleluia!*
20. T.J.E.

Easter Offering 2021

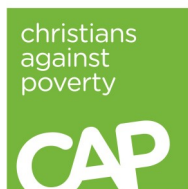
Due to the pandemic the arrangements for the Easter Offering Collection and the Easter Offering Service are different this year.

The event is put together by the Methodist Women in Britain and the money goes to support World Mission .

As we are not meeting in church to collect the envelopes donations can either be sent by cheque to Martyn Boyce our Circuit Treasurer (cheques made payable to Methodist Church World Mission Fund) or you can give directly by Bank Transfer (BACS) please visit: www.justgiving.Com/mcfworldmission/donate. and reference your donation with EOService.2021 Please make sure to state the gift from Bangor and Holyhead Circuit.

Our Easter Offering Service will be held on ZOOM at 18:00 on Sunday 25th April and is an opportunity to find out more about World Mission and the projects supported by the Easter Offering within the Methodist Church.

Jean Owen (Circuit Methodist Women in Britain Rep)



CAP is a Christian charity which works in partnership with local churches and St John's has recently become a partner church. The CAP Money Course is the pro-active educational arm of the charity. It is sometimes run by the centres that do debt counselling but mostly the courses are run by churches where congregations want to do something to empower people to fight poverty *before* it hits.

The CAP Money Course isn't for people with debts (though they can be catered for). It's for everyone – students to the newly retired, single people and for families because CAP has seen that learning how to set a budget and stick to it helps to debt-proof people in the long term. There are more than 1,000 churches in the UK delivering the CAP Money Course in their locality. Read more about the course here www.capmoneycourse.org

We see this very much as a circuit wide initiative and hope in time to be able to run courses across the circuit.

I write this shortly after the first of three sessions making up our first attempt at the CAP Money course held over zoom. We have had three people sign up and although we did not go out of our way to market the course too much, it is clear that getting bums on seats is going to be the hardest part for us. Over all, despite one or two technical issues, Sue and I were pleased at how delivery went and feel that once we get a clear marketing strategy going and have been through everything for real for the remaining sessions that we will be well placed to press on with this new mission venture.

We would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support. We have also been greatly encouraged by two others putting themselves forward for training as Money Coaches. The more of us able to do run the courses, the more options we have. It would be really good if we could have a few more, perhaps from some of the other circuit churches. The training is on-line and costs only £15. Anyone interested please contact me.

John Hay

Action for Children – A message from Norma Caughter— St. Johns Bangor



Action for Children have asked me to take part in their '30 miles in 30 days challenge' to raise much needed funds for the charity which has been decimated this year, as have all other charities, due to the pandemic. Approximately 30% of children live in poverty and neglect.

The challenge would involve me walking at least 30 miles in 30 days as the title of the challenge states. **This starts on the 1st April.** I usually walk much further than this and I am sure that I will during the month of April. I would tell everyone where I had been walking and how far it was.

If anyone feels that they can support the charity by sponsoring me at the end of the challenge, I would be very grateful. Donations could be sent to me via cheque made payable to **Action for Children**, for the amount they would like to give. Thank you very much.

Cheques can be sent via Heather Bonnebaigt, Circuit Administrator,
15 St David's Terrace Penmaenmawr LL34 6LN

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Easter Hymn Quiz Answers

1. StF.303. I know that my Redeemer lives
2. StF.269. To see the King of heaven fall
3. StF.286. What kind of love is this
4. StF.313. Thine be the glory
5. StF.284. There is a green hill far away
6. StF.277. My song is love unknown
7. StF.272. From heaven you came (The Servant King)
8. StF.287. When I survey the wondrous cross
9. StF.305. Low in the grave he lay
10. StF.312. The head that once was crowned with thorns
11. StF.351 In Christ alone
12. StF.280. O sacred head, sore wounded
13. StF.276. *Lift high the Cross*
14. StF.306. Now the green blade rises
15. StF.309. See, what a morning, gloriously bright
16. StF.285. Were you there when they crucified my Lord
17. StF.274. Jesus Christ, I think upon your sacrifice
18. StF.301. Hail, thou once despised Jesus
19. StF.298. Christ the Lord is risen today
20. StF.314. This joyful Eastertide

CIRCUIT NEWS

We need you to help us to fill future editions of Circuit News. If you have any words of wisdom, jokes, pictures, stories you would like to share please send them to us.

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Starting on Sunday 18th April we are going to be holding an on-line prayer time with a focus on Mission. We are calling it M:APS—Mission:Active Prayer Support.

It will be from 10am to 10.10am on ZOOM.

The link will follow nearer the time and everyone is welcome.

You can join in with spoken prayers or simply sit and pray quietly.

We are hoping this time suits a lot of folk, however, we are open to suggestions for doing something similar at different times through the week to allow more people to join in.

M:APS

MISSION

Active Prayer Support

Each Sunday morning

10 Minutes at 10