

Harvest 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.

To Christ the seed, to Christ the sheaves:
So into God's barns may we all be brought.
To Christ the sea, to Christ the fish:
So into God's nets may we all be caught.
From birth to growth, from growth to age
May your two arms, O Christ, fold us around.
From age to death, from death to new birth
In the palace of grace may we be found.



Nick Sissons our Superintendent Minister reflects on his first month in our Circuit. Many of you will have had a chance to meet Nick face to face now and Nick is planning to meet lots more of you in the coming weeks and months.

One more step.

It was well into the meeting when somebody stood up and objected: "We've been here now for over an hour and we haven't mentioned God once." To which a voice from the back was heard to mutter: "Name dropper."

That story was told to me years ago by a rabbi as a handy reminder that it is not about how holy your language is that is important - how often you drop God into the conversation - but about how holy your life is, how often people see God at work in the causes you fight for, the values you hold, and the way you treat other people. It's an old debate of course, Faith v Works, but I hope none of us would assume that just because God's name is not constantly invoked that God is somehow not present. The existence in the Bible of two books that do not even mention God (*do you know which two they are?*) is also a warning that God's activity in the world is not restricted to events that are described in language that uses God's name.

There are also hymns that don't mention God and people can get very worked up about whether they should be included in hymn books or not, or sung in church or not; Jerusalem is perhaps the most controversial hymn in this category, but think also of the lovely song 'One more Step,' which is so versatile that it can be sung on almost any occasion. Indeed is it not precisely because it is so unspecific in its language that people feel more comfortable about choosing it in such a variety of settings? The 'you' of the lyrics has to refer to God, of course – the final verse makes that clear - and yet not spelling it out, not dropping the Name, I believe, gives the song greater power.

When I was a school chaplain we began every new term with 'One more step' and ended every term with it. In fact it was written for just such an occasion by Sydney Carter, to mark the end of the summer term at Southwark Cathedral School in 1971, making it just over 50 years old now, and it continues to be one of the most popular hymns for schoolchildren to sing. But I've heard the same song sung at weddings and at funerals, and not just because it's something people remember from childhood days: as with many simple songs it contains profound meanings. Many of you will know the words to this song but if you're not sure look them up before you read on (it's No. 476 in Singing the Faith).

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I have now been working faithfully as the Superintendent of this Circuit of churches for just over a month ('from the old things to the new keep me travelling along with you'); it's been a steep learning curve for me but I press on in trust ('all the new things that I see you'll be looking at along with me'); at times I've not been quite sure what the best thing to do or say has been but I've stayed hopeful ('where I see no way to go you'll be telling me the way, I know'); sometimes I've had to be with people in difficult and delicate situations ('give me courage when the world is rough'), but I've tried to do it with care and sensitivity ('keep me loving though the world is tough') and in all things I've tried to remain upbeat and positive ('leap and sing in all I do keep me travelling along with you'). Now, there aren't many hymns that could capture so many of life's experiences in such simple verses. I hope the words of this song speak as powerfully to you as they do to me and I hope you continue to enjoy singing them for many times to come.

Sydney Carter called it an 'Amen song' meaning that it's not just about the words, good as they are, it's also about when and where you sing them. I'm happy to be singing them in this Circuit at the end of a fulfilling first month in post. Thank you for helping me to keep travelling on.

Nick Sissons, Superintendent

Members of Cytun Bangor ready to worship and witness near Bangor Pier.



Future editions of the Newsletter.

We are planning to produce the newsletter about 5 times this next year, and we are aiming to send them out to co-inside with our festivals.

We still want your articles and photos as these are what make the newsletter interesting.



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Its always good to say thank you and the Circuit leadership Team are all aware of the huge amount of work that is going on around the circuit, and the efforts being made to keep everything going and also re-open buildings and start activities again. However as we reflect on the last year, Sue Hardy our Senior Circuit Steward has written to thank a few people in the circuit.

As we are well into September now, we would like to say a very big thank you to David Jones for volunteering to act as our Superintendent when John Hughes left on his Sabbatical. David has done an excellent job, keeping up with all the expectations of Methodism, chairing our meetings in such a patient and low key way.

Thanks too, to Liz and Lucy for the delightful afternoon teas they put on over many weeks raising £900 for All We Can.

We would also like to thank Izzy Middleton for all she has done for the students. She has held them together through a very difficult time by coming up with many activities which, as she said herself "mostly involved food." Thanks too, come from St Johns as she volunteered to take on the weekly flushing water through the systems in the church and hall. We wish her well in whatever she does in the future!

Finally we would like to thank, very sincerely, Martyn , Sally Boyce, Barbara Bullivant and other very generous folk, involved in the buying, selling and all the preparing of the manses, ready for the selling of Hafod, and the arrival of Nick and Amanda at Coed y Maes.

We would finally, like to thank Heather for the hours she puts into her job. We had no idea at her interview with John Howard how much her "previous experience" would benefit the Circuit!

Sue Hardy Senior Circuit Steward



Over recent weeks its been good to get together and see friends and family that we have not met up with during the pandemic. Here are a few things that have been going on in the circuit.



Back in Action. Flexercise—exercise to music group for over 50's. Meets on a Tuesday afternoon. At the moment they are meeting at Spintrails Fitness Studio in Llanfairfechan but are hoping to move back to the Chapel Zinc as soon as they can as that is their home and the ladies are missing the atmosphere of the church. They enjoy plenty of wigglin and giggling as they move to different types of music hoping to improve fitness levels, balance, co-ordination and mental wellbeing but mostly they just have fun and hope to share the good news of Jesus in music.

Flexercise has been closed during August so they opened up in September by enjoying Helens garden. The Lord gave them a glorious afternoon as the sun shone from a bright blue sky. This last week its been back to business and we have a great time putting on our dancing shoes again.



Holyhead Methodist Church Fellowship meeting went out to lunch to the Anchorage to thank Dorothy and Bernice for everything they do for Holyhead Church. Dorothy is retiring as chief steward after 30 years and Bernice has finished her term as Circuit Steward. . They took the opportunity to invite Nick our new Superintendent along as well so everyone could meet him. Nick is slowly making arrangements to meet everyone in the circuit, so don't worry if you haven't had a chance to meet him yet



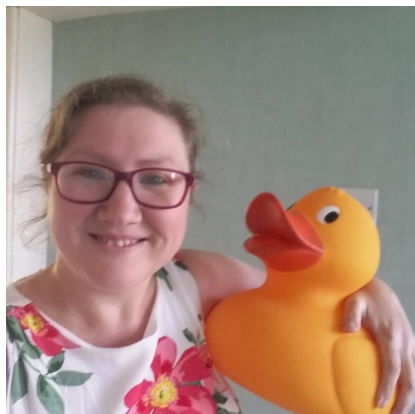
The pandemic has been difficult for all of us, but children and young people have had to face their own difficulties during this time. Here Becky Sefton who runs Guides and Rainbows in Penmaenmawr reflects on her experiences and looks to the new term which will hopefully see them back together.

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Rainbows, Guides, Rangers, and volunteers are looking forward to returning to face-to-face Girlguiding meetings this September. There are not enough words to describe how exciting this next step is for us after 18 months of ZOOM and watching the weather to see if a Guide Unit Meeting can happen face-to-face or if I need to scramble to send out log in information and find a last-minute activity for online.

Guides and Rangers have been back face-to-face Guiding since June, but this has been weather permitting as the risk assessment was only for outdoor Guiding. I have since spent a few hours doing the indoor Guiding risk assessments for both Rainbows and Guides so that we don't have to cancel any meetings due to the weather as we approach the dark, cold, and wet nights. Whilst ZOOM has been amazing at keeping us connected, I think the girls and other volunteers would agree with me that ZOOM is not a sustainable long-term approach to Girlguiding. We need to be in person to do a lot of our activities and it is incredibly difficult to help a Young Member through a computer screen if they are struggling with an activity.

COVID has been a miserable time for us all, especially as someone who has shielded for a vast majority of this pandemic. Girlguiding has, as it always has been, a continuum in my world. As a volunteer, and as an adult, Girlguiding has been a constant, and I am so, so grateful for the technology that has been able to keep us together from the safety of our homes. Our Internet connections have kept us (volunteers) in touch with each other, and it has kept us in touch with the Young Members who have decided to continue Guiding throughout this time. For some of our Young Members, it has been one of the few ways in which they have been able to connect with others, too.



One of the guides favourite activities is lighting fires and toasting marshmallows (they basically enjoy anything related to food!!). It was so good that during the summer they could spend time together in the church garden after so many months meeting online.



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COVID has been the good excuse to “reset” the Guide Unit. Some of our previous Guides have moved on because they have lost interest in Girlguiding, and some have moved up to Rangers where they have a bit more independence with their own Programme and are helping at Rainbows. We have a very small number of Guides who are in the Unit now but hopefully our numbers will grow as Brownies move up to us and as other local girls join the Unit. It is almost like starting with a blank canvas. The Rainbow Unit is re-starting almost like a “brand new” Unit in a way; it will be a group of girls who have not been in Girlguiding previously. Girlguiding announced that four-year-olds will be able to start Rainbows from October, so I immediately signed our Rainbow Unit up for it so that local young girls can join in at a younger age.

This term the Rainbows will be doing the “Camp” Skills Builder, where they will be cooking on the fire pit (heavily supervised by adults), putting up a tent (because that’s better than making yet another den) and packing. They also have two sessions run by our Young Leaders – one session involves dancing and singing! The Guides will be doing the “Feel Good” Skills Builder and they will also be playing Litter Lotto (and hopefully litter picking), making space food, and having a games night. I felt that the “Camp” Skills Builder would be a great introduction to Girlguiding for the Rainbows, and Carmel felt that the “Feel Good” Skills Builder would be great especially as a few of our Guides have moved onto secondary school this September and the activities might help them with that transition.

I hope that I have sold this term as being fun packed for both Units that I run. Sitting here now, if I could be granted three wishes, one of them would be that COVID doesn’t interfere with our ability to meet as a Unit but if it does, there is a document in my computer which will help me to organise the parents for a

We have quite a few uniformed groups meeting across the circuit, and they do need our encouragement, prayers and support at the moment. We are looking for new leaders in both Girlguiding and Scouting, this will help us expand our groups and include more young people. St Paul’s has Rainbows and Guides with the Brownies starting to meet at Llanfairfechan Methodist Church in September. St Johns has both Girlguiding and Scouting groups meeting.

Jacqueline and children from St John’s Wonderzone holiday club ready to share their teaching and sing their theme song.

St Johns ran a weekly holiday club for children during the holidays, the children did lots of activities and had lots of fun during their time together.



A couple of Afternoon Teas

How many things had shut down – here we were- May 2021 and still couldn't meet more than four people outside. another year without our ALL WE CAN Garden Party! Then Royce Warner came up with a good idea -“ How about a couple of afternoon teas,” he said .

So, thirteen afternoon teas later we have entertained over sixty people from all round the Circuit. Looking back at the Garden Parties, David and I never left the kitchen and by the end of the afternoon didn't even know who had attended.

Along with the money collected at our Tuesday Fellowship, 3Ts, we sent between £ 500-650 a year.

This year, thanks to your generosity, we have sent **£ 950** to ALL WE CAN! and got to know many people whom we only knew “above-waist- level “on ZOOM.

Apart from one afternoon we have been blessed with warm sunny weather.

As we have felt really blessed by meeting you all, you have blessed the people of Ethiopia with their many projects.



Green Fair at St Johns Bangor



On Saturday 25th September St Johns held a “Green Fair”.

This was part of a weekend focusing on issues related to climate change and how we must care for our environment.

This was part of the

“Great Big Green Week”

During the day as well as opportunities to meet up and chat with friends there was lots to do including making a bat box or a bird box or collecting spiders and blowing bubbles. Some of the people had made a special cross out of recycled materials.

Over lunch time everyone was entertained by the Ukulele group from Anglesey.

There week ended with the celebration of their harvest festival on Sunday morning.



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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.

NOTICE from the Inclusivity Action Group

Advanced Warning of important date to put in your diary

We have arranged for Circuit training to be undertaken on the very important area of Unconscious Bias. This will take the form of a 90-minute interactive session by zoom on Tuesday 16 November 2021 at 7.15pm led by Amy Adams and Delyth Davies, District Learning and Development officers from the Learning Network.

Everyone is encouraged to attend, including those who may have undertaken some training before, as this will be a bespoke session tailored to the needs of our circuit with new material. So please put this date in your diary. We see this is an important step in our Missional aspiration to be an inclusive and welcoming church in line with the Methodist way of life.

The next edition of the Newsletter will be published at the beginning of December in time for Christmas.

Articles/photos etc to Heather by November 15th.

Just for fun - Can you solve these Dingbats?

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