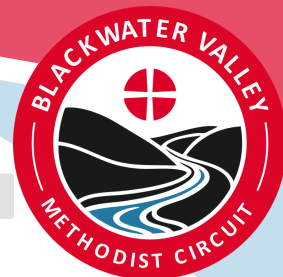


BLACKWATER VALLEY METHODIST CIRCUIT

Newsletter
EDITION 4

September 2026



Greetings!

Welcome to the newsletter for the Blackwater Valley Circuit. This is the fourth edition of the newsletter. As we head into autumn, with the start of the new connexional year well underway, here's a round up of some of the news from our circuit, which is now 1 year old! Happy Birthday!



Artwork from this year's theme by Mary Fleeson

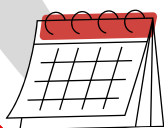


Mrs Caroline Stead Vice President and Revd Mark Slaney President of Conference

Greetings from the circuit. I hope that you are well and that you have had a good start to the new connexional year. This year's theme is Sorrow Joy, and we were pleased to have the company of the new vice president of Conference Mrs Caroline Stead at the representative session of the South East District Synod on Saturday 26th September, where Caroline challenged the churches and circuits in the district to increase their inclusivity, so that more people can find the joy of being a Christian and growing in their faith. If you would like to know more about the training and support available to churches, please speak to a member of the circuit staff or one of our synod representatives.

This quarter, we experienced the sorrow of Philip and Angela Simpkins leaving the circuit, but we are hopeful and joyful that they have found a new calling on the Isle of Wight. Meanwhile this quarter is a significant step in our journey as a circuit, because we will shortly be entering stationing for a new Superintendent. Later on in the year, our profile for a probationer will also be considered, whilst the circuit discerns the direction of travel when Revd Kuyng Mi leaves the circuit at the end of this connexional year. Please hold the circuit officers and reps in prayer, especially the circuit invitation committee and circuit stewards, as they make preparations towards this important process. While nothing is guaranteed, we pray for the national stationing committee who have the task of matching ministers and circuits across the connexion. We pray for this process of discernment, always with hope as God reveals to us the way in which the circuit should be shaped in the future.

Revd Anne Day



IMPORTANT DATES

Circuit meeting - 9th December 2026

District Synod:

Representative Session - Emmanuel Church,
Eastbourne, on 17th April 2027.

Local Preachers and Worship Leaders
meeting: 13th January 2027

SAYING A FOND FAIRWELL

On Sunday 20th September we said a fond farewell to Revd Philip Simpkins and Angela Simpkins as they officially move from our circuit to the Isle of Wight as Philip begins his new post as hospital chaplain at St Mary's Hospital in Newport. Philip began work there at the start of September, whilst Angela is finding her feet, making new connections and adjusting to island life. With their own house outside of Carysbrook (think castle and donkey), we hope and pray that they will settle in quickly and enjoy living on the island.

We were privileged to hear from many people who have benefitted from Philip and Angela's ministry over the last nine years, including Liz George sharing the message with us, and the Anna Chaplain Emily Spencer who forms such an important part of the work in Alton.

We would like to thank Philip and Angela for their many years of faithful service to the Methodist congregations of Alton, Rowledge and Hale and the LEP of the Spire at Farnham. We pray that this new direction will be a great blessing to Philip and Angela. May God bless you richly, love you deeply and help you in the days, weeks, months and years ahead.



YOUR CIRCUIT NEEDS YOU!

Wanted: More Circuit Stewards

Caring and compassionate people who enjoy working with people to get things done. Must enjoy cups of tea and being with a lovely bunch of people on a variety of projects, which may include property management, health and safety, discussing finance and keeping people safe whilst supporting staff through the highs and lows of ministry.

Circuit Safeguarding Officer

Following the stepping down of Liz George, the circuit is looking for another circuit safeguarding officer to share the role with Kim Tame. If you are interested in this voluntary post, please get in touch as soon as possible. All training is given.

WANTED

YOU!

**REWARD: fun,
fellowship and knowing
you made a difference!**

MEET YOUR NEW STEWARD

Sally Press is a member of North Camp Methodist church and the newest member of the circuit team. Sally is no stranger to working for the circuit, as this is the second time in ten years that she has served on the circuit leadership team, although there have been many changes, since she was last a steward. Want to know more? Then read on. Sally says "My career has been in scientific research, mainly aviation medicine and safety, including the benefits of regular sleep, the risks of hypoxia and decompression sickness. I have two lovely god daughters, who keep me up to date with things. In my spare time I love to go walking and sightseeing. Other interests are reading, cross words and various handicrafts." If you see Sally at our circuit meeting, do say hello!



MORE HIGHLIGHTS FROM ACROSS THE CIRCUIT



Interested in theology (talking about God), but don't know where to start? Curious about something to do with faith, but have never had the chance to explore? Surely theology is for theologians? Well,

at Diving Deeper, everyone is a theologian and everyone can learn more about God. It's a chance to explore subjects in more depth, and maybe broaden your horizons beyond just looking at scripture. Curious? Well why don't you come along and have a go? Previous sessions have included looking at the Holy Spirit, divine providence (whatever that is!), the Trinity, popular culture, the creeds and in October we'll be focusing on how our buildings influence the way we worship. So come along, no experience necessary. The dates and venues of the next sessions are below. You can also find them on the circuit website. Revd Anne

Date	Venue	Topic
October 21 st 7.30pm	North Camp Methodist	Church buildings and worship
November 18 th 7.30pm	Fleet Methodist	Queer Theology
January 20 th 7.30pm	tbc	Interfaith dialogue



Over the weekend of 2nd -4th October over 2000 young people aged 8-18 gathered at the NEC for this year's national youth assembly, 3Generate. The theme this year was "On The Way". Young people were encouraged to think about how they were on the way with God. To help them, each young person was invited to collect their very own Adventure Book and 3Gen Bible. Our group of from the circuit enjoyed hanging out together, worshipping, crafting, writing prayers, playing games, asking a theologian tricky questions, climbing walls (literally), and taking the time to soak up everything that 3Gen has to offer. In addition, they voted for next year's youth president, for whom Alex Day from North Camp Methodist was a candidate. Fancy helping out next year? You can volunteer or be a leader for our circuit. Know any young people who you think would like to go? Let Revd Anne know. If you know any of the young people who attended from North Camp or Church@The Pines, why not ask them how it was, they will be only to glad to tell you!



Writing prayers against injustice



Theo asking a theologian!

NEWS FROM THE WEBSITE

Is live! And we'd like you to be part of it.

If you have any photos or news of any events happening at your church, why not let Anne Day or Rowan Handford know by emailing Rowan - digital.bvmcircuit@gmail.com



GOT SOME GOOD NEWS?

Contact Revd Anne or the administrators to have it included in the next Circuit newsletter. Deadline - 5th November



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