

# BLACKWATER VALLEY METHODIST CIRCUIT

## Greetings!

Welcome to the newsletter for the Blackwater Valley Circuit. This is the second edition of the newsletter for our newly merged circuit. In this edition we reflect on the joys and challenges of developing a new circuit. Also: we meet David Burrell, one of our new circuit stewards. And we look forward to special events for Advent and Christmas.

## You are a gift. Made with love.

This is the theme of the Connexion's Advent and Christmas campaign. The idea is to tell people that they are valued, not only in God's eyes, but have the potential to make a difference in other people's lives this Christmas. Christmas is often the time of year that churches receive their biggest attendance, whether that is through schools or community groups performing Christmas shows or in traditional carol and Christingle services. The worship resources focus on three key messages: Firstly, people are a gift – made by God with love. Secondly church community is a gift to others – for inviting individuals in to be blessed and finally Jesus is the ultimate gift – given freely. The challenge is to see, how we are a gift to others and it confronts ideas of poor self perceptions: Am I good enough? How can I be a gift when I lack self worth? But the invitation to us and those unfamiliar to faith, is to find a God and a community that loves them and will help them, firstly, by finding their worth and eventually discovering the joy of being included in a church community and the wonderful love of Jesus.

So, how do we do this? In a world increasingly dominated by social media, churches need to step up and communicate more effectively online. The stats from last year's campaign demonstrated that fact - "Over 5,000 people took a step on a journey of faith as a result of a paid social media advert from the Methodist Church during Advent" Holly Adams, Director of Evangelism Development. Which is why the connexion is supporting circuits and churches through a range of resources, physical and digital.

While "Gifted" will never be a one size fits all; we will find that this approach will not appeal to everyone, but I would hope that by being aware of who steps into our churches at Christmas, it may give us insight into how to communicate and relate well to those who find themselves searching for deeper answers. Let's pray that through "Gifted" and the opportunity for invitation, our circuit churches may be at the heart of our communities throughout December.

Revd Anne Day

## IMPORTANT DATES

Circuit meeting - 19<sup>th</sup> January, venue TBC

District Synod:

Presbyteral Session - Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March, St Andrew's Methodist Church Folkestone

Representative Session - Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April, High Cross Church Camberley

Local Preachers and Worship Leaders

meeting: Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January at High Cross Church, Camberley

## Newsletter EDITION 2

December 2025



## SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES AT CHRISTMAS: NEWS FROM ALTON

The Anna Chaplaincy team (ministry to older people) in Alton hosted their Christmas event with over fifty people enjoying crafts, conversation, hand massages, carols and an afternoon tea.

The monthly lunch club at Alton will welcome over 60 people for a fantastic Christmas meal, followed by carols in mid-December.



## MEET DAVID BURRELL

Hello. I am one of the circuit stewards – having joined the team on 9 July 2025. This is my first role as an office holder at circuit level.

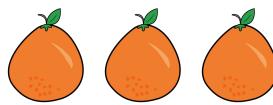
I grew up in the West Midlands and went to university in Leicester. On graduating with a degree in economics, I joined the Inland Revenue, working initially in central Birmingham and then mainly in central London. I retired in 2018 after nearly 40 years' service in various professional and middle management roles for what became HM Revenue & Customs.

Originally an Anglican, I married into Methodism and have worshiped regularly at Fleet Methodist Church (FMC) since 1997. Jackie and I have two adult children. Over the years, all four of us have all undertaken various formal and informal roles in the life of FMC. Most recently, I was Church Council Secretary until 31 August 2025 and I continue to serve as lead steward for a couple of services each quarter. Those of you who have worshiped at North Camp for a while may remember my daughter who was your Families' Worker for three years.

My other interests include reading, watching sport (but rarely football), and trying to keep up with our wider circle of family and friends.



# GROWING THE CIRCUIT



come and  
**join us**

As we continue to bring relationships together across the new circuit, it's quite exciting to think of the possibilities as we bring communities together. With a bigger circuit comes bigger challenges, such as managing a bigger preaching plan, communicating well and making sure that every church feels included. Geographically there may be more miles to travel from one end of the circuit to the other. But there are joys too, with more churches comes a greater number of people who can contribute with a more diverse membership. There are also opportunities for learning from churches who are seeking to reach out in new ways, as other churches now part of the circuit, may have already tried out ideas which can be adapted, helping those who would like to do similar, without repeating the same mistakes. We are stronger together and the hope is that we will learn with one another how to adapt and be a circuit ready to respond to the challenges of helping people to thrive in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain. Where we go from here, is very much in the hands of the members of BVC. Would you like to be more involved in shaping the circuit at this present time? The circuit leadership team are looking for those who feel called to help shape the circuit, provide support to the superintendent and ministerial staff, working in partnership together. Could you be the next circuit steward? Interested? Get in touch with Revd Nick Oborski to find out more.

## EVENTS OVER ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

### Carol Singing, in a pub?!



### CHRISTMAS ANGELS ADVANCE GUARD

Just a few of the 350+ knitted angels for giving away during Churches Together in Crowthorne events during December. Here the advance guard at Crowthorne MC waits to be sent on its mission to bring messages of peace, joy and love!



Go to your local church's website or Facebook Page to find out what's planned for the rest of Advent and Christmas and how you can support services and events

## NEW WEBSITE

Keep an eye out for our new website, which is shaping up nicely, thanks to the technical expertise of Rowan Handford. We hope the big unveiling will be in January 2026.

If you have any photos or news of any events happening at your church, why not let Anne Day know, so it can be included.



### BEING TOGETHER!

What's happening on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December?! Well, most churches are closed and we're joining together as a circuit for this first Sunday of Christmas. You're invited to the Spire at Farnham OR stay cosy at home for the online service - more info to follow.

### GOT SOME GOOD NEWS?

Contact Revd Anne or the administrators to have it included in the next Circuit newsletter. **Deadline 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

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