

"But let justice and fairness flow like a river that never runs dry" Amos Ch. 4 vs 24

FAIRTRADE DISTRICT



Guarantees
a **better deal**
for Third World
Producers

Hello from your new Fairtrade coordinators!

Wilma Gibson (Doncaster circuit) and myself, Alison Trezise (Ecclesall circuit) have been asked by District Policy Committee to enable the Sheffield District to become a Fairtrade district. This means that at least 50% of our churches need to be officially Fairtrade churches.

We have carried out an audit of the current position and, at the moment, 66 of the 224 churches in the district have gained FT status so we need **at least** another 48 churches to do so – but, of course, we hope all churches will want to become a Fairtrade church! Becoming a Fairtrade church is not actually very difficult; in fact many of you are probably fulfilling the criteria already and only need to actually apply to the Fairtrade foundation for the certificate. To summarise briefly, the Church council needs to:

1. Agree that only Fairtrade tea and coffee will be served at all events for which you have responsibility and after services.
2. Move forward on using other Fairtrade products eg sugar, biscuits, fruit juice etc...
3. Promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade fortnight and during the year through events, worship and other activities whenever possible.

It is also possible for circuits to apply to become Fairtrade circuits, so if you are a circuit superintendent, administrator or on the Social Responsibility team then you might want to consider whether, as a circuit, you could:-

- Support and promote Fairtrade, further encourage the use and sale of Fairtrade products and to serve only Fairtrade tea and coffee at events which you organise.
- Ensure that at least half of your churches are Fairtrade churches and encourage those who are not yet a Fairtrade church to become one.
- Encourage other local circuits to adopt a Fairtrade policy.
- Publicise that we are a Fairtrade circuit on your website.
- Promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade fortnight and at other times whenever possible.

We are here to help so please get in touch. Contact details are
Alison Trezise 0114 236 5938 ; jonathan.trezise@sky.com
Wilma Gibson 01302 770503 ; wilmagibson@googlemail.com.

For more information on Fairtrade go to www.fairtrade.org.uk

District News is produced quarterly by the Sheffield Methodist District. Please feel free to copy, or cut and paste articles in your magazines as you wish. It is also available on the District web-site - www.sheffieldmethodist.org

For the next issue please direct any contributions and comments by 15th July to:
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The Sheffield District of the Methodist Church
Summer 2008

District NEWS

Also available electronically on www.sheffieldmethodist.org

REFLECTIONS OF A DEE

As I write this article, it is rather earlier in the morning than I would like, (my children have inherited the dairy farmers' gene apparently), and the sky is promising a beautiful day to us. It's the kind of morning that makes sitting and reflecting an easy thing to want to do. So I am.

As I cast my mind back over nearly 7 years of being the District Evangelism Enabler, there are many memories that flood into my mind (and probably many more I have forgotten).

- I remember the couple in Doncaster who attended the first 'Lost for Words' course I ran - tentative and slightly nervous, who I have since watched grow and who have helped me to lead others in that same course.
- I remember the Good News Roadshows, (tons of work) so rewarding to see so many stories of Good News in all areas of church life from across the District. I remember the many staff meetings which I have been privileged to have been invited to, talking praying and working with people who have so much love for the churches and communities they serve.
- I remember the day spent shadowing a minister in (what is now) the Pilgrim Circuit.
- I remember the many training events which I have loved being a part of. I remember lots of individuals from all over the District who have shared stories of how God has worked in their lives, and started to share those with others too. But of course
- I remember how much God has worked in me too, to challenge and change. I will always remember this role with fondness, not just because during my time here I went from being young(ish) free and single to being (7 years) older, and married with 2 beautiful children, but because I have really appreciated the variety of my work, the people I have worked with and the places that I have been to in this wide and varied District.

But what reflection will I leave? I pray that I reflect Christ, but know that I fall very short of this mark. However, I know that I have seen Christ reflected in those I have met - I pray that you, no we, will continue to reflect Christ in word and deed to all we meet.

"The Gen inside this issue"

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A view from the chair's chair

Looking to the future

I want to take this opportunity to make sure that people know about some of the things that are happening in the District. I apologise to readers who will already know much if not all of what follows.

First of all, ***Mapping a Way Forward – Regrouping for Mission (MaWF)***:

The Methodist Conference, in July 2007, issues the following challenge to Districts:

“Over the coming 5 years or so, each District is to encourage holistic and wide-ranging circuit reviews, in the light of *Our Calling and Priorities for The Methodist Church*, with a focus on discerning and developing:

- Sustainable and relevant circuit structures which will serve and oversee the mission
- obligations of the Church in the early decades of the 21st century;
- new ways for Circuits to fulfil their responsibilities and purposes in line with Standing Order 500: ‘The Circuit is the primary unit in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help’.

Such circuit reviews are to include strategic consideration of the availability and use of personnel, finance and buildings.”

In response to the challenge from Conference, the District Policy Committee (DPC) has formed a MaWF review group, chaired by Tim Bradshaw, which has begun to consult with Circuit Leadership Teams. That process of consultation will continue throughout the remainder of 2008 and the group hopes to bring a report to the District Policy Committee in February 2009.

The intention is that this process will focus first on mission and then on structure: what is it we are called by God to be and do in the years to come and what structures (including the shape of our Circuits) will best release us for that?

I believe that it is very important that the process is one in which we listen carefully to everyone who has something to say about the future of the Methodist Church in this part of the world. It will also be vital that, where there are hard decisions ahead, we face them together trusting in God in whom we seek our future.

Second, District Personnel:

Susanna Brookes is leaving her job as **District Evangelism Enabler** and we thank her for all that she has done to encourage and equip us to share the gospel. I believe that it is important that we take time to think carefully, over the coming months, how to use the resources we have allocated to this work. Should we recruit another Evangelism Enabler, or would a different way forward now be best?

The Connexional Training and Development Officer scheme comes to an end on 31st August this year. Caroline Riley and Viv Morrissey have served the Sheffield, West

REACHING OUT WITH ALFOMBRA

Inspired by one of our minister's experiences in Guatemala last year and to assist with her sabbatical preparations to walk the Way of St James to Santiago de Compestela, the Circuit organised a walk around all the eleven churches.

Outside each church there was an alfombra – a picture made of flowers, sand, seeds, or at one church chalk – which members of the congregations had made that morning, and a short act of worship took place when the walkers arrived. Three people and a dog walked all the route which took them eleven hours, and others joined for part of the route.

Some churches used the occasion as an opportunity for outreach by giving out hot cross buns and details of what Good Friday is all about, one had activities for children including creating an Easter garden in the church entrance, while others opened their churches for prayer and meditation. Some churches were initially reluctant to join in, but afterwards all have said about doing it again next year.

Thank you to Revd Beverley Barclay for introducing us to alfombras and we pray that she is given the strength to complete her 500 mile pilgrimage which she started on 20 April and hopefully will complete on 29 May.

Heather Rotherham - Circuit Administrator Sheffield South Circuit

Ed note – we were sent a number of really great photos to use with this story but unfortunately we know they don't print well. Contact the Circuit if you want to see them.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Mind your money: for new Church Treasurers Friday 11th July from 19.00 – 21.30 St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church, Sheffield S11 8YL. This course, led by the District Treasurer, Russell Blackwell, is for Church or Circuit Treasurers who are in or about to start their first financial year. It has advice on how to keep church books, present simple accounts to the Church Council and what Methodist and Charity regulations require.

Healing Ministry – NB Short Notice

Rita and Peter Edwards are leading a day course on healing ministry at Wath Trinity church on **Saturday 31 May** 10.00 to 16.00, and would welcome anyone from around the District to join in. The course looks at the scriptural background to healing ministry in the church; deals with key issues surrounding healing such as healing but no cure, the role of faith and the apparent arbitrary nature of "unanswered" prayer; and offers practical guidance in praying with others for healing and in establishing healing ministry in a local context.

If interested contact Peter on 01709 382306 or at revpeteredwards@hotmail.com

Editorial Note

I have now built up a regular group of Circuits within the District who regularly offer me material for the District Newsletter. Strangely, though, despite regular reminders to all Circuits (usually via the Superintendent Ministers and Circuit Offices (where these exist)) there are still some Circuits which I have never received anything from – maybe yours is one! So don't be shy, don't hold back, if something has worked well in your Church or Circuit please let me have something to include so others can share the idea too!

FRESH EXPRESSIONS - INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

mission shaped intro launches

mission shaped intro – our new short course for churches – was launched at the turn of the year last week: six weeks to rediscover mission and re-imagine church. The course can be downloaded free of charge from the Fresh Expressions website. It can be run for a whole church on midweek evenings or in existing housegroups and would be an ideal Lent course. You will find presentations, games, worship ideas, film clips and teaching content.

The material has been in development for two years and was originally written by two of our Associate Missioners, Tony Hardy and Sally Thornton. It's been piloted in four different centres and we've had an excellent response. *mission shaped intro* helps congregations understand why fresh expressions of church are so vital. The course is an ideal follow on to a *vision day* and a very good preparation for the one year course, *mission shaped ministry*, which focuses on how to plant and sustain fresh expressions. Use it well. (www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedintro)

Costa community

Christchurch – a Baptist church in St. Alban's – has established a 70 strong monthly gathering in the local branch of Costa. Christchurch has reached an agreement with the national Costa chain to extend this kind of scheme to other branches. Read the story at www.freshexpressions.org.uk/cafechurch.

Messy Church website live

The Messy Church movement continues to expand. If you are exploring Messy Church then take a look at the new website just launched to support local ventures. Read Lucy's blog, join the Messy Community, share ideas and inspiration. www.messychurch.org.uk

More information about Fresh Expressions are available from two regular sources:

e-xpressions – a monthly e-mail bulletin (we'll endeavour to include them in the District Weekly mailings which go out to all Ministers and Circuit Offices for the next few months,) and

expressions – an occasional tabloid newspaper which is available (free but charge to cover postage)

More info: tel 01865 311838 or www.freshexpressions.org.uk

Methodism; Fit for Purpose?

An intriguing title for a morning with Martyn Atkins as he completes his Presidential Year. He will share some of his experiences of the year and explore the above question.

This District Seminar will take place at St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield S11 8YL on Saturday 21st June from 10.00 until 13.00 and will be followed by a Bring and Share lunch. Tea and Coffee will be available from 09.30

This is open to anyone in the District and is free. However, to help with planning it would be good to have an idea of who will be there, so please can you let Anne in the District office how many will be coming from your church.

Please display the enclosed poster.

Yorkshire, Leeds and York and Hull Districts and we are grateful to them for all that they have contributed to our life. From September 1st, they will both be redeployed as **Training Officers** in our region, with Caroline concentrating on Sheffield and West Yorkshire: we look forward very much to continuing to work with them.

The District is currently recruiting a **District Mission and Development Enabler**. This post will be part-funded by the Connexion (who are funding a half-time Development Enabler in each District). The person recruited will begin work on 1st September and will be a key person in facilitating the development of our mission, life and patterns of working across the District.

Anne Hutton and Val Higgins (who has, up to now been Caroline's PA) will form an **administrative team** to support all the District staff.

Finally, in all of this, we now have a **District Mission Policy**, agreed by the Spring Synod, which sets out priorities and criteria to guide our life together. A copy of this can be obtained from the District Office.

With all good wishes



HOPE THEATRE CAFE @ BROOM METHODIST CHURCH

Fresh Expressions is a banner term for a variety of exciting and imaginative ways in which the Church is seeking to be the Church in ways that connect with new people. One way in which we are seeking to do this on the Rotherham & Dearne Valley Circuit is through the new Hope Theatre Cafe at Broom Methodist Church. Spurred on by the vision of Hope08 Mrs. Anne Middleton, Church Family & Community Worker at Broom, has helped us from her background in Theatre to set up a monthly cafe style event, drawing in some of the best Christian artistes from across the country.

January saw 80 people gathering at the Hope Theatre Cafe when we had special guest Michael Marcus from the Orkney Islands. In February we had accomplished instrumentalist Simeon Wood. March had two performances of the Passion Play on Good Friday and Easter Saturday. As for April we had Georgie Talbot with Second Opinion Band; and in May we had Mime artist, Steve Murray. Other events are planned so please contact the Circuit Office on 01709839575 if you want tickets, but be warned, they sell out nearly as soon as they are released.

The Rotherham & Dearne Valley Circuit

invites you to their annual

Bible Festival

Broom Methodist Church, Broom Lane, Rotherham.

Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd June 2008

Guest Speaker: Paul Ashby. – Former Old Testament Tutor at Cliff College.

Special feature: Saturday 21st June

- "Walk through the Bible" New Testament part.

FOCUS IN THE PEAK

Hathersage Fun Club DVD Library

Hathersage Methodist Church after school club, Fun Club, recently launched a DVD library for the children. Those who attend the club can take home a Veggie Tales DVD to watch. 20 Veggie Tales DVDs were purchased with money from the Methodist and Anglican Churches in the village and are offered on free loan to the children.

The idea is to present the Christian message to the children in a format that is suitable for them and is entertaining. The Veggie Tales DVDs were chosen because of the great animation and the clear Christian message that they present. As the children take the DVDs home then hopefully the whole family can benefit from watching the DVD and of hearing the gospel message. The DVD library has been a great success and is backed up by the Peak Methodist Circuit web site on which the children can log in and comment and review the DVDs they watch.

Altogether@3

In Hathersage in the Peak Circuit a new service, Altogether@3, has started once a month held in St Michael's Primary School hall. The idea came from the Anglican Vicar Rev Katie Tupling and is run in partnership between the Anglican and Methodist Church in Hathersage. The aim is not to replicate a traditional Sunday service but to have something more flexible that will appeal to those who find a traditional service inhibiting or not suitable to them personally. The service uses DVDs, action songs and crafts to help people express their faith in a way that allows them to interact more with the service. The theme of the first service was on Noah and how God keeps his promises. The worship music included action songs that adults as well as children joined in with. Children and adults remain together and experience worship together rather than taking the children to one side, as in a traditional service, for them to do something different. As part of the prayer time each person coloured in a 6in cardboard figure which they then placed on a Noah's ark display as an indication of their commitment to God.

We hope that approaching church in a new way, that develops from people's own experiences and feelings of their faith rather than shoehorn them into a traditional service will help to tackle the declining interest in Christianity. Altogether@3 is a very exciting project, running parallel with traditional church. The two may not necessarily meet but the Christian faith and our expression of it are journeys which develop and change as we progress onwards but the destination remains the same.

Bakewell at Work

For the majority of us work plays an important part in our lives, whether it is full-time, part-time or voluntary. Our Christian faith also takes up a large part of our lives but we sometimes don't connect the two.

The Bakewell at Work initiative that has been started by Bakewell Methodist Church is hoping to bring the Christian community in the town and the business community together. It also hopes that it can encourage and support Christians in their witness at work. The initiative is supported by the Association of Bakewell Christians.

Links were made in August last year when businesses were invited to participate in the Harvest Festival. Christmas cards were then sent out, inviting people to attend the Christmas services. However, it is not only about inviting people into the church but the

church going out to the people. If, as Christians, we are to pray for our community then it is important to discover at first hand the needs of our business community. In order to do this Lay Worker Dave Keegan has been spending his Monday mornings visiting the local businesses and chatting to the people in the shops and businesses. Issues that are raised from these informal chats are brought back to the prayer groups at Bakewell Methodist Church. If there are ways that the Christian community can get involved on a practical level then hopefully this will become apparent through the contact.

It is also important for us to pray for all those who are members or attend our churches that work during the week. Our prayers and support should encourage them in their Christian witness during their working week and a Bakewell Methodist Church at Work booklet includes a list of the employment and voluntary work done by our church members.

The Peak Methodist Circuit web site has a page <http://peakmethodist.org.uk/bakewell@work.asp> that will be used to keep site visitors up to date with what is happening through the initiative.

Dave Keegan Peak Circuit Lay Worker

If they won't come to us . . .

A passion for Christ in the community and a passion for transport are fulfilled when Rev. Nigel Bibbings, of Sheffield Brunswick Circuit, takes a special minibus round the streets of a local estate near St. Paul's Church in Dronfield.

BarnaBus is equipped as a mobile coffee bar serving Fairtrade refreshments, and encourages people to come out of their houses and meet their neighbours. Nigel explains, "It says, 'Community Encourager' on the side of the bus and that's exactly what we wanted to do. Churches Together in Dronfield and District (CTDD) support the ministry of the bus, and we have helpers and drivers from all the local churches taking part. There's no preaching! The quiet presence of Christians serving refreshments and listening to the chat is welcomed."

The bus started its work on a new estate of Housing Association houses where none of the residents knew each other. Angela, a single mother, is very grateful for the weekly visit. "This year I sent Christmas cards to all the neighbours. I wouldn't have known them if it hadn't been for BarnaBus."

There are plans to increase the use of the bus onto other local estates in the near future.

CTDD also runs a bus ministry in the town centre on Friday nights, when the teenagers in the town can join volunteers for doughnuts and coffee. The "Jesus Bus" is welcomed by the youngsters and local police alike, and there are also plans to develop this form of community outreach.

Elisabeth Bibbings, Dronfield

MRDF Support

MRDF continues its support of various trouble spots on our behalf in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Burma and thanks are given to all those who respond to the emergency appeals. MRDF are also reinforcing their network of Co-ordinators and have a Co-ordinators Day planned for 14 June 2008 at Acomb Methodist Church, York starting at 10-30 am – Contact them for more info on 020 7467 5132