

NEW CIRCUIT UPDATE No 2

Welcome to our second news-sheet. Lots of new-circuit things taking place, including people visiting the "other" circuit. Others are developing the organisation for the new circuit. We now have a good number of Names for the New Circuit, but keep them coming in! Here are the ones so far proposed:

Thames and Loddon (suggested by quite a few), **Calleva** (Roman name for Silchester, pretty well in the middle of the new circuit and situated between the Saxon settlements of Reading and Basing), **Shires** (or **Northern Shires**) - BerkSHIRE and HampSHIRE and **West Berkshire and North Hampshire**.

Rather than being geographical, these ideas: **Beulah** (Isaiah 62: 4 Zion's new name: opposite of a desolate land; figuratively [and appropriately] 'marriage') and **Pilgrim**, reflecting the purpose of the circuit. Finally, **Silvingstoke and Basilrea** (over to you to work them out!) and **Two Rivers**, an alternative to the first suggestion.

Can you do better? We would welcome other ideas! Closing date: 31 Oct. Please send to Terry Ayres.

PRAYER

Praying together in Advent

Work is progressing on a booklet that will be available to everyone who would like it. It will be in churches by the middle of November. This will include devotional material for every day and can be used individually or with other people. It is being produced jointly by the two existing circuits.

How did your church pray during the summer initiative?

Silchester

We prayed for, saw photos of and talked about all the churches in the new circuit. We also wrote Haiku prayers and finished with tea and cake.

(please note that all contact details are given overleaf)

OAKRIDGE, BASINGSTOKE

We asked people to write a short prayer which we then attached to a flip chart. Over a couple of weeks we incorporated them into the prayers during the service and printed some of them on our service-sheets.

Tilehurst, Reading

We had a very effective prayer day. A group met from 2-3pm and then 7-8pm, about 15 people in all. We created a prayer map on a display board standing about 6 feet tall with photos of all the churches in the new circuit, with details of ministers, and the main roads, motorways and rivers depicted by different coloured ribbons. This remains on display as a source of information and a prompt for prayer.

Mortimer Church

Wrote Haiku prayers during their prayer time and have since made contact with **Trinity, Basingstoke**, so that the two churches can work together – twinned!

VISITS BY READING & SILCHESTER TO BASINGSTOKE

Tadley Main Road recently visited and prayed for every Basingstoke church.

Local Preacher visit: **Robin Gowers, Reading and Silchester LP Sec**, joined the Basingstoke LP Meeting v recently. All the LPs introduced themselves to Robin, and later in the meeting he told the preachers lots of interesting things about how the R&S LP meeting works. We all agreed we need more reciprocal visits like this one.

On Sunday, 22 September, **Rev David Shaw led worship at Trinity, Basingstoke**. It was a wonderful occasion, with lots of folk coming from both circuits, and we thank them for that! David told us that he is disciplined in his preaching, following certain books from the Bible. He preached from Luke 13 v 31 – end. The 3 points he drew out about Jesus were – courage, determination and compassion.

After the service, there were refreshments, when many new friendships started.

We must arrange some visits to Reading and Silchester from Basingstoke!

IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

We have set up a group from the two circuits to oversee the organisation needed for our new circuit and these are the proposed principles for their guidance:-

- † **Be led by God; focussing on reading the Bible, prayer, listening and praising**
- † **Create an environment where Christian life can flourish; with a suitable structure to grow discipleship, mission and other relevant areas**
- † **Involve all; considering comments received, encouraging representation and consultation at all stages, sharing progress updates with everyone in the circuits**
- † **Take responsible action; report to Circuit Meetings, keep Superintendents informed, create, encourage and manage task groups**

There are representatives from each circuit. We shall need over the next few months quite a number of short-term small Task Groups, to cover the details like material resources, mission, prayer and - indeed - a vision for the whole circuit! If you would like to offer yourself, or nominate someone else for one of these groups, please make contact with Gill Lawson (Reading and Silchester) or Marianne Sales (Basingstoke). Thank-you!

WHAT HAVE CHURCHES BEEN DOING THIS SUMMER?

Reading Festival Weekend 2013

Emmanuel Methodist Church opened their doors again to the Festival Goers. Over the three days more than 950 breakfasts were served. Some volunteers slept overnight at the church for the whole weekend.

There was also a Multi-Sensory and interactive Prayer Labyrinth. On Sunday Morning the Church reverberated to the group, *Sounds of Salvation* and worship led by Rev Andy Moffoot.

Festival-Goers were very appreciative of the facilities, were keen to ask "why" we were doing it and comments such as "it is amazing, just everyone is so friendly", "wow great to sit on a chair", "can't believe you would do this for us".

THE MUG and BISCUIT St Andrew's, Basingstoke

This church building is just one year old. The circuit sold two-thirds of the previous site to the Borough, where they constructed new GP and Dental surgeries, as well as shopping-space for Boots the Chemist. To cover payment for the land, the Borough built us a lovely new church! The "Mug and Biscuit", a good-sized and very smart cafeteria, is part of the building where we welcome people from the local estate, and those visiting the surgeries.

The role of the Basingstoke Deacon, Ruth Yorke is to work with the community in this exciting mission project. There is a large variety of opportunities for all ages to take part, ranging from baptisms (several already!) to two community events with bouncy castles! Please will readers pray for all the visitors, that they will feel a Christian welcome.

Silchester Ecumenical Holiday Club

For children at primary school, it was based at the Methodist Church. The whole week was spent learning about how, with God's help, Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. Two big screens painted blue were seen in action on the Sunday when God parted the Red Sea and the Israelites escaped. We heard how God cared for the people in return for their obedience. Our craft activities included making sandals and miniature tablets of the Ten Commandments, and we also cooked unleavened bread. During the afternoons we made simple tents on the common, had a sports competition on the field, and went swimming on a really hot day. Children and leaders - all of us! - had a busy and enjoyable week.

On 1 October Silchester chapel and hall was made available for prayer for both our circuits. There with different places arranged where visitors could be quietly active at a craft table, write prayers on the wall, meditate - eat fruit! ... or just sit and pray.

Please send us your news for the next issue of UPDATE as soon as poss.

Contact: [Terry Ayres](#); [Gill Lawson](#) or [Marianne Sales](#)