



## UPDATE

October 2016

Circuit 26/4,  
Southampton District

### Circuit Gathering

*Let Love be Reel*

**Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup>**

St Andrew's Basingstoke

*Come for **any** part of the day!*

**From 09.30** Arrive, registration, coffee

**10.00** Welcome and introduction

**10.30** *The Blame Culture, conflict is always personal* — led by Graham Hindle

**11.30 to 12.15** "A Taste of Circuit Life"  
Various short presentations

**From 12 noon** lunch, (bring your own)

Soup, tea & coffee available, monetary donations towards cost will be appreciated.

**1pm to 1.50** *To go up, or around? Tools and techniques for dealing with difference* - led by Graham Hindle

**1pm to 1.50pm** AmbuBless Consultation  
*(see following article about this vision)*

**2pm to 3pm** Worship

**3pm** Tea & cake

**3.30 to 5.30** Barn Dance

**From 5.45pm** Fish & Chip Supper @ £6  
(or chicken / sausage / veggie burger with Gluten-free option)

**ALL DAY:** refreshments, various stalls & displays. **Optional** intergenerational (adults & children together) craft activities available.

### “AmbuBless”

**What is it?** - It's a vision of taking the ministry of God's blessing beyond the walls of our churches... in a vintage ambulance... sharing God's love on the streets of our town(s), estates, villages, at festivals & carnivals in our parks and communities.



**WANTED!** – a ‘multi-disciplinary team’ (*every medical pun intended!*) to deliver God's TLC (tender loving care) at every level of the vision.

*...from car mechanics/diesel engineers to vintage & classic vehicle enthusiasts to garage space providers to ambulance maintenance & ‘housekeeping’...*

*to ‘money people’ who can help with funding initiatives, budgeting & account keeping...*

*to ‘blessing clinic appointment’ makers, creative administrators, publicity producers & social media buffs...*

*to ‘nurses’ and ‘doctors’ and ‘vintage paramedics’ as tea-making carers, holy listeners, prescribers of grace-full blessings and blessers...*

***to all who are ready to take some holy, theatrical risk to see God's kingdom grow within us and around us!***

**SO!** ...Have you been sensing a dis-ease, a restlessness in your body, mind and spirit for something new to get involved in?

**Find out more** at The Circuit Gathering on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November – take your place at the operating table as the consultation discussion progresses through diagnosis & prognosis!

or if you cannot be there, contact  
Deacon Marlene Skuce

Email [marlene.skuce@methodist.org.uk](mailto:marlene.skuce@methodist.org.uk)  
Tel 077 99442091 /01256 323590

***There is a Circuit Prayer Resource being created for Advent which will include liturgy which can be used in Sunday worship.***

### PMC (Partnership for Missional Church)

The two Caversham Methodist Churches have now been involved in PMC for one year of a three or even four year process to enable us to become “missional”. The process takes so long as we are aiming to change the thinking of our congregations, and over time there will be experimental phases. We are hoping to discern where God is working in our community and find “Partners in Peace” to work with. We are working in partnership with Anglican Churches in the Oxford

Diocese. This includes most of the Anglican churches in Caversham, as well as others from as far away as Newbury.

All involved have now met three times over a Friday and Saturday, when we are led by a very dynamic American called Bob, as well as other leaders from the UK.

Our first year has been spent listening, in a variety of ways, to find out exactly where we currently are, and only then can we move forward in the way that God wants us to. We have been listening to God by Dwelling in the Word, reading a passage from the bible every time we meet and then sharing with a partner the words or phrase that we have been particularly drawn to. The passage we have been reading this last year has been Luke 10 v 1 -12. We initially thought it would be tedious reading the same passage so often, but we continually find something new in the words.

We have been listening to the congregation in three ways. First looking at demographic data for the communities in which our churches are set. Second interviewing members of our congregation, both those who are very involved in the church and those whose attendance is sporadic, using a set list of questions.

Third drawing up a timeline of the church, recording positive and negative times in the life of the church and times or events that gave us hope for the future.

We then produced short summaries for everyone to consider as we attempted to discern God's plan for us. We are now conducting community interviews to help plan our first missional experiment.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> we will have a day to consider the evidence we have gathered and with the help of a facilitator discern where God is leading us. This next year will be an experiment, which by its very nature may fail, but hopefully will still lead us forward. We would ask for your prayers for this important day for our churches.

Brenda Caborn

***You will be able to hear more in a short presentation at Circuit Gathering.***

To contribute to Update please email  
[Update@basingstokereadingmethodists.uk](mailto:Update@basingstokereadingmethodists.uk)

## **A New Experience**

Life is interesting when an opportunity to experience something new comes along. As a new probationer deacon, this past year has been filled with many new experiences. On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July I had the opportunity to attend Methodist Conference for the first time and in particular to attend the Ordination Service for the Methodist Diaconal Order (MDO).

It was a rich and challenging blessing to be present at this act of worship which was full of both solemn commitment and vibrant joy, as Maria Howard and twelve other probationer deacon colleagues were ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands to become full members of the MDO, at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster. As each promised to continue the ministry of 'witness and service' which was established in their lives at their baptism, we were reminded that this is the calling of every baptised Christian. In being ordained as a Deacon, the ordinands were reminded that this was a life-long commitment to this ministry of sharing the love of God by following the example of Jesus Christ by serving others wherever God would lead them. Integral to the promises being made was the commitment also to encourage and enable other Christians to respond to God's call to be witnesses of how Jesus was at work in their lives and to reach their fullest expressions of serving God by serving others. All this would be possible through God's sustaining grace.

In the same instance I was transported back to the moving and inspiring challenge of Maria's ordination testimony service a few weeks earlier. She shared in gentle and yet incredibly powerful ways how God with endless faithfulness and love had personally impacted her life and brought her to this point of being ordained as a deacon. She left us in no doubt that God is in the business of using ordinary people as channels of his grace, hope and blessing to others, in each of our journeys of ongoing transformation to be more like Jesus, through the darkest and the best times of life. While God may call some to ordained ministry as members of the Methodist Diaconal Order, all are called to the diaconal ministry of witness and service.

Marlene Skuce.