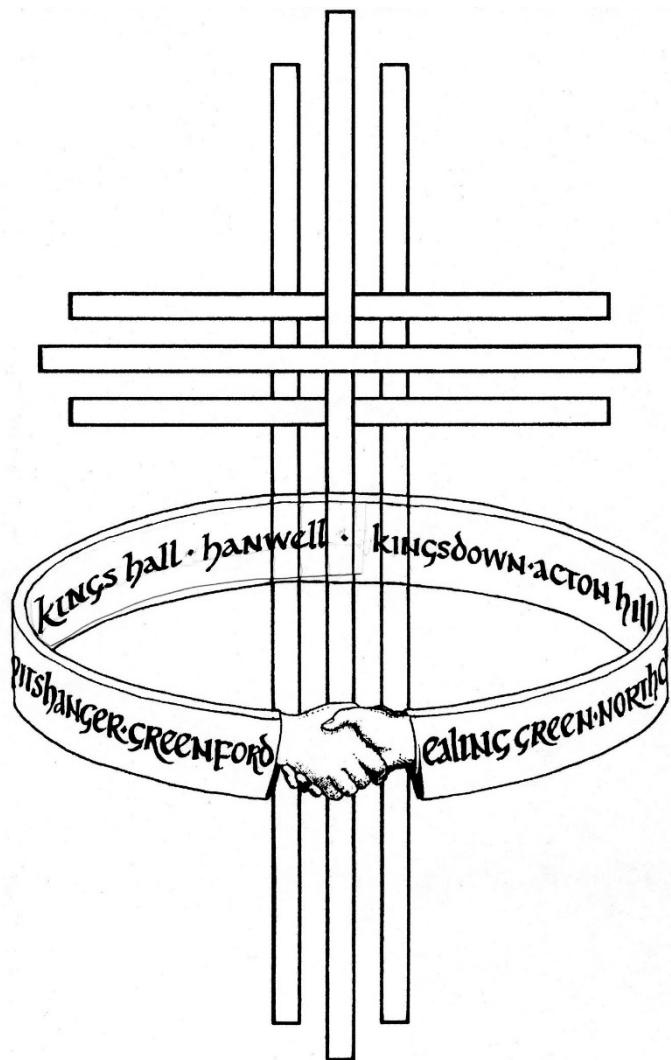


In-touch

No 74

December 2015 - February 2016



The magazine for *all* the Ealing Trinity Circuit.

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Circuit website
www.ealingtrinity.org.uk

Front Cover designed by Marion Narain

From the Superintendent

Welcome to the Winter 2015 edition of InTouch magazine!

There is much going on in the life of our churches and Circuit: we have appointed the Southall Christian Schools Worker; in the meantime MHA Live at Home, Street Pastors, Foodbank, and Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter steam ahead; our children's ministry in schools has welcomed several hundred students through the 'Quiet Zones' initiative; Salaamati has begun a new phase; the Living and Dying well Autumn series has kicked off; we have planted new worship and activities for children, and many other initiatives. Behind the scenes, we are moving forward with the appointment of a Circuit Finance Administrator, and progressing the re-development of the King's Hall, alongside the process of matching two new presbyters to the Circuit in stationing. As Ealing Green comes to the end of its refurbishment, several other churches are doing the work of discernment to see how they might re-develop. In addition, we are now supporting seven developing vocations for local preaching and a candidate for the presbyteral ministry: the life of the Circuit is full.

I am remembering the very clear direction I wrote about a little over a year ago - church is simple: **gather the folk, tell the story, break the bread.** All of our activities might feel frenetic except as we understand them to be an extension of the worship and prayer life at the heart of our Circuit work each week. All our doing begins and ends with a relationship with Jesus and a desire to know more of his mystery. When I think of it in those terms, my diary feels much less full, and my purpose much clearer in the priorities we try to set together.

I know that many of our churches are looking at ways of nurturing children and young people's faith, along with reaching out to those who do not speak English. So the person who has been sending repeated emails urging us to deal realistically with getting Polish language skills into our churches (you know who you are) may be frustrated not to have an immediate translation service, but is the right kind of prophet! New services are being planted, junior church and worship reviewed, and risks taken in opening the doors to children in new ways. And I know that many of our churches are hungry for more discipleship in accessible bits: Bible study, prayer helps, ethical reflection, and political activism.

As we begin the new church year in Advent, here is a moment to take stock of your own faith: in the ways in which you engage with your church, how are all the parts of you gathered? How are you learning more of the story of God's love? How are you fed? It is not about frenetic activity, but faithful service. And faith is an adventure. As we move through these months, rest easy in God's presence among us. It is a time of great challenge in our communities, in this city, and for our continent. And we will play our part, welcoming, reminding each other what is important and what is not, and finding food together. What a pleasure to share this next part of the journey with you.

With every blessing, Jen

From the Circuit Meeting

The most recent Circuit Meeting was held on 9th September. First of all, the meeting formally agreed to seek two new presbyters to join the Circuit in September 2016. These will replace Rev's Peter and Suva Catford who will leave the Circuit at the end of July. In addition, the meeting formally agreed to re-invite Rev Dr Jennifer Smith to remain with the Circuit for a further three years from September 2016. Jen will therefore be with us until July 2019.

On finance matters, David Street told the meeting that the Circuit's annual accounts were being prepared ready for audit. Importantly, all the properties held by the Circuit but not required as manses are now let and generating income for the Circuit. David also pointed out that of the training fund of £10,000, £8,000 had been spent during the year. This is regarded as one of the most important funds the Circuit has and people are encouraged to apply for grants. (Applications forms are available on the Circuit website – go to www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/forms-and-policies/ to find the forms for training grants). Rev Jen Smith added that in addition to training, grants from the fund were available for retreats, conference and other events.

David reported on the results of the 'Gathering the Harvest' initiative which had been undertaken during the summer. This looked at what support other circuits up and down the country give to their circuit and church treasurers. This ranged from full financial support including such day-to-day matters as banking money to much lower levels of support. He had concluded that the option to be recommended for our Circuit would be to provide a paid Finance Officer to give the maximum level of support possible. The meeting agreed to move forward in consultation with our church treasurers and stewards towards appointing a Finance Officer – a meeting has already been planned with treasurers and stewards to discuss how much support each church would like. One point to note, however is that in line with Methodist Standing Orders, each church will still need to appoint its own treasurer as one of its managing trustees – a paid Finance Officer cannot fulfil that role.

The situation regarding the King's Hall building continues to evolve. Since deciding to sell the building with provision for some retained space for Methodist and community use, the market has moved on as a result of the Crossrail scheme and Heathrow expansion. As a result the original scheme no longer represents 'best value' for the Circuit. Consideration is now being given to an alternative scheme which would involve retaining the freehold and selling a licence to redevelop the rear of the building at an estimated value of £2.5m. Such a scheme could also provide the Circuit with 4 – 6 flats to let and more retained space for community use. Authority to develop policy for King's Hall was delegated to the Circuit Policy Committee and the small 'Executive Group' it has set up to handle day-to-day issues relating to King's Hall.

Whilst on the subject, next year will see the centenary of King's Hall and celebratory events are being planned. It was suggested that a memorandum be sent to Conference, which will be in London next year to note the centenary.

There were several reports from churches on how they had used grants from the Circuit. Ealing Green reported that work on its refurbishment programme was progressing well and that their building should be handed over by the contractors during the last week in November. Fundraising for the project continues and there should be a small surplus (£2-3k) at its completion. The 'grand opening' for the Circuit would be the weekend of 9/10th January 2016 – there will be a special Circuit Service at Ealing Green to celebrate completion of the work on Sunday 10th January at 6.30pm.

Acton Hill reported that £2,000 of the £3,000 grant towards their Community Meal had been spent over the year. The Community Meal is open 44 weeks of the year and caters for up to about 75 clients each week. In total, 34 volunteers are involved in the Meal, many of whom come from outside of Acton Hill.

Northolt reported that the Jerusalem TV initiative had been highly successful during the school summer holidays. Jen Smith encouraged other churches to think about trying something similar in children's work.

Rev Suva Catford reported that the MHA Live at Home scheme is moving forward and a new manager, Sonia Dhamma has been appointed to work 27 hours per week. This was the second appointment, the first having been terminated by mutual agreement. Sonia will begin by spending time building links with churches in the Circuit.

Rev Rachel Bending reported that the Southall Schools Worker post had been re-advertised and there were two strong candidates. A Management Group for the worker had been formed and was operational, but a finance officer was required. This would probably be a fairly small job – if you are interested, please contact Rachel. The Schools Worker is now fully funded for five years and has received significant grants (from the London District and the All Saints Educational Trust). As a result, it was likely that the scheme would not require all the finance offered by the Circuit.

Finally, the meeting considered Rebecca Catford's renewed candidacy for the Methodist presbyteral ministry and Rebecca gave a statement of her sense of calling. Although she had had a sense of calling since she was quite young, she said she had not pursued it until she came to Ealing Trinity Circuit when she had decided to explore it further. Whilst she had felt a great deal of support for her previous candidacy two years ago, looking back, she realised that at that time she was not fully convinced herself. However, over the last two years she had addressed the issues identified during her previous candidacy and had also completed a degree in Community Organising from which had learnt a great deal about what leadership means in a church context (see Rebecca's article in the last edition of In-touch). As a result, she now felt much more confident about her sense of calling. The meeting agreed with her unanimously and Rebecca will now go forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The next Circuit Meeting will be held at Northolt on 8th March 2016.

Profile of a fun and functional meeting: (no really!) Quarterly Preaching Plan-making in Ealing Trinity

Rev Dr Jennifer Smith

Who makes the Quarterly Preaching Plan, and how? What principles lie behind it, and how do we try to use it to aid church growth and mission? Especially as Plan-making is one of the things we do quite differently from many circuits around Methodism, these are interesting, important questions in our Circuit. Making the ‘Plan’ is one of the responsibilities of superintendency, and in most circuits the superintendent alone or with other ministers simply delivers it.

For us, the actual process of Plan-making is overseen by the Superintendent, but is a fully collaborative process in which all our churches participate. What happens is this: there is a date by which all authorised preachers send available dates through to our administrative office, where Gerald collates them all and produces a table showing availability of all preachers by date and time. Churches then send through their special days and hoped for services; these are likewise collated and presented in a draft ‘Plan’ spreadsheet.

Then it gets interesting: Four times a year a group of one representative from each church physically meet and sit around a table. The group reviews general guidelines and expectations (these are important!), then works Sunday by Sunday (top to bottom of the list of churches, then bottom to top in the next week) to match preachers to services. The leader of the meeting shifts around the table with each week’s allocations, with the leader for a week choosing who around the table will chair for the next week’s planning.

This process took just under two hours for the December-February plan, including Christmas services. Everyone participates and there is much haggling and coordination; synergies emerge which the Superintendent would miss on her own.

Sometimes it feels like doing 3D chess, and sometimes there simply are not enough preachers to go around – in which case the room is pragmatic. In general it is not about wanting simply to spread burdens equally, but trying for mutual support.

Who comes from your church? Ask and find out: truly, this is a good and fun, if sometimes hard meeting. Would you like to attend and accompany your representative, or have a go? Do you have an insight or idea about how our general principles or strategy could be different? You are welcome. Find out more: the Circuit belongs to you!

Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter

Once again this winter, churches from our Circuit will be participating in the Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter (ECWNS). Last year, Greenford, Hanwell and Kingsdown hosted the shelter and will do so again this winter. This year, they are joined by Ealing Green. During late November and into December Hanwell will host the shelter on Friday and Saturday nights, followed by Kingsdown on Sunday nights and Greenford on Monday nights. Ealing Green will host the shelter on Thursday nights throughout January and February. In all, 21 churches throughout Ealing will be involved in providing the shelter this year.

The night shelter provides up to 14 guests with overnight accommodation for up to 28 nights. All are screened for suitability by homelessness charities before being accepted by the night shelter. One important feature to note is that the shelter offers accommodation to those guests only – it is not open to all comers.

ECWNS stands in the gap by providing for the most basic and essential needs for homeless people – sleep and food. A person who has been made homeless faces enormous risks as a rough sleeper including substance abuse, poor physical and mental health, and acts of criminality. ECWNS seeks to minimise these risks by creating a safe space for homeless people to find temporary respite while helping them to secure more permanent accommodation. Providing temporary respite ‘buys’ some more time before guests become further entrenched in homelessness and are adversely, and sometimes irreversibly, affected by the risks presented by homelessness. During their time in the shelter, ECWNS works with partner agencies (St. Mungo’s Broadway, Ealing Soup Kitchen and Acton Homeless Concern) and local housing services to look for a way to move on.

In addition to hosting the shelter, members from various of our churches also volunteer their help at churches outside of the Circuit, for example at South Hanwell Baptists and the International Presbyterian Church. This reflects another significant feature of the night shelter, ie the way it brings together volunteers from a variety of backgrounds, ages, different church denominations or with no church allegiance. Some even come from outside the Ealing area but all are motivated to help provide practical help and fellowship to the guests. It is a great way in which churches’ facilities can be used for the benefit of our communities. The reaction of one of the most committed volunteers at Kingsdown last year on learning that this was the church’s first experience of hosting is instructive. A non-church goer herself, she remarked that hosting the night shelter was “exactly what she expected churches should do”.

This winter, with the support of ECWNS, Hope for Southall Street Homeless (HSSH) will operate its own shelter in Southall which it hopes to continue as a year round operation. The issues in Southall are somewhat different from the rest of the Borough of Ealing as most of the people in need are from an Indian/Pakistani background. Many of them do not speak English and have difficulty coping with public transport – required to get from shelter to shelter as it rotates around the different churches involved. They are often reluctant, even frightened to leave the

confines of Southall where they feel a certain familiarity with the area. HSSH is also planning to offer a wider range of services to their clients including help with addiction, physical and mental health and legal advice - some also have specific issues relating to their immigration status.

Finally, Ealing Choral Society will be giving a Christmas Concert in support of ECWNS on 12th December at 7.00pm at St Barnabas, Pitshanger Lane. Tickets cost £12.00 (£6.00 16 and under) including mince pies and wine after the concert and are available from 020 8993 6465 or visit www.wegottickets.com/event/326801.

King's Hall afternoon congregation ask your prayers for Pakistan

You may have seen stories in recent news reports of Christians and others in Pakistan who have suffered persecution because of their religious beliefs. Some have been imprisoned under blasphemy charges, others have been physically attacked. Some have been forced to flee their homes.

Edgar Money and members of the charity CLAAS have been invited to discuss these issues in several meetings in recent weeks. These include a meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury, an appearance at a parliamentary select committee and a discussion with Lord Alton, who has himself visited and talked with those who have fled their homes.

CLAAS (Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement) is a Christian charity based in Southall dedicated to helping Christians persecuted in Pakistan. You can find out more about its work by going to www.claas.org.uk.

Please pray for all those who suffer persecution and for CLAAS and its workers.

Memorial Carol Service

6th December at 5.00pm at Kingsdown Methodist Church followed by refreshments

Amongst all the festivities and bustle of Christmas, grief can be hard to bear. This service gives a space to remember those we mourn and to support those who are grieving. All are welcome.

If you would like us to remember someone for whom you mourn, please email Rachel (rachelbending@mac.com) by 1.00pm on Friday 4th December.

Ealing Green Hosts Methodist Modern Art Collection

The Methodist Modern Art Collection exhibition “**Visions of the Sacred**” will be at Ealing Green from Saturday 9th April to Sunday 22nd May next year. The exhibition will also launch the refurbished church at Ealing Green as a public sacred space. There will be around 20 works of art on display on the three themes of ‘Struggles’, ‘Healing’ and ‘Hospitality’.

There will be an opening ceremony on Saturday 9th April with local dignitaries in attendance and thereafter the exhibition will be open to the public. The exact times, including evenings are yet to be decided, as they depend partly on the availability of volunteers to be on hand to welcome people, provide tea and coffee etc (volunteers from other churches in the Circuit would be very welcome).

Local schools are being invited and, if funding permits, there may be an “artist in residence” to do workshops, and Ealing Choral Society is planning to do a ‘Messiah’ from scratch on Saturday 16th April. All of this will take place in and among the artworks.

Admission to the exhibition is free, although donations will be welcome for the refreshments and for local charities including the Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter.

You can find out more about the Methodist Modern Art Collection by going to this page on the Methodist Church website.

www.methodist.org.uk/prayer-and-worship/the-methodist-art-collection

Iris Axon Concert Series at Acton Hill

Sunday afternoon concerts at 4.00pm

1 st November	Richard Boothby, viol da gamba
6 th December	Kaleidoscope Wind Ensemble
7 th February	Yoshiko Miyagawa, soprano
6 th March	Yura Zaika, piano
3 rd April	Alistair Logan, clarinet and Anna Lehair, piano

Tickets £5.00, available at the door

Concerts last about 1 hour

A New Scam involving a 'Surprise Delivery'

We received a 'round robin' e-mail recently from the Guinness former employees group describing yet another con-artist scam. Here it is the sorry story in full. Editor

"Wednesday a week ago, I had a phone call from someone saying that he was from some outfit called 'Express Couriers' (the name could be any courier company). He asked if I was going to be home because there was a package for me that required a signature. The caller said that the delivery would arrive at my home in roughly an hour. Sure enough, about an hour later, a uniformed delivery man turned up with a beautiful basket of flowers and a bottle of wine. I was very surprised since there was no special occasion or holiday, and I certainly didn't expect anything like it. Intrigued, I inquired as to who the sender was, but the courier replied, "I don't know, I'm only delivering the package." Apparently, a card was being sent separately (the card has never arrived!). There was also a consignment note with the gift.

The 'delivery man' then went on to explain that because the gift contained alcohol, there was a £3.50 'delivery/verification charge' to provide proof that he had actually delivered the package to an adult (of legal drinking age) and not just left it on the doorstep where it could be stolen or taken by anyone, especially a minor. This sounded logical and I offered to pay him cash. He then said that the delivery company required payment to be by credit or debit card only, so that everything was properly accounted for, and this would help in keeping a legal record of the transaction. He added that couriers don't carry cash to avoid loss or being targets for robbery.

My husband, who by this time was standing beside me, pulled out his credit card, and the 'delivery man', asked him to swipe the card on a small mobile card machine with a small screen and keypad. My husband was asked to enter his PIN number and a receipt was printed out. He was given a copy of the transaction. He 'delivery man' said everything was in order, and wished us good day.

To our horrible surprise, between Thursday and the following Monday, £4,000 had been charged/withdrawn from our credit/debit account at various ATM machines. Apparently the "mobile credit card machine," which the deliveryman carried now had all the info necessary to create a "dummy" card with all our card details including the PIN number. Upon finding out about the illegal transactions on our card, we immediately notified the bank which issued us a new card, and our credit/debit account was closed. We also personally went to the Police, where it was confirmed that it is definitely a scam because several households had been similarly hit."

WARNING: Be wary of accepting any "surprise gift or package," which you neither expect nor have personally ordered, especially if it involves any kind of payment as a condition of receiving the gift or package. Also, never accept anything if you do not personally know the sender or there is no proper identification of who the sender is. Above all, the only time you should give out any personal credit/debit card information is when you yourself initiated the purchase or transaction!

Onion Domes and Icons

Gerald Barton, Editor

Our summer holiday this year was a rather fine, if intensive trip around ‘Russia’s Golden Ring’. This is a circuit of historical towns and cities to the north east and south of Moscow, although some places we visited were rather beyond the usual ‘Ring’. Our trip took in monasteries and churches in such places as Sergiev Posad, Rostov Velikiy, Yaroslavl and Vologda towards the north, Kostroma (a former ‘closed’ city), Vladimir, Suzdal and Murom to the east, and Ryazan and Kolomna to the south. Most of these, I’m sure you have never heard of....

This being Russia, and Russia being Orthodox, we spent our time wallowing, as it were, in onion domes, frescoes and icons. To us, as Westerners, the effect is often somewhat fantastical, even magical. The look of churches topped with onion domes, the effect of standing in a completely frescoed church looking at the great icon stand (the iconostasis) screening off a great part of the church is other-worldly. That, in truth is one of the purposes of these things – to give a glimpse of a world ‘beyond’ the here-and-now, a glimpse into heaven.



Churches at the Kremlin, Rostov Velikiy

Icons, and the veneration of icons have the same purpose – to take us a step beyond ourselves and our world into the presence of God. In this country, we have become more familiar with icons in recent years – it is now nothing unusual to find that cathedrals and some other churches display icons they have acquired or commissioned. Many icons depicting saints or the Virgin Mary have a certain familiarity about them, but some express things in a rather different way than is typically the case in Western Christianity. One such is the so-called ‘Old Testament Trinity’. The Western, or ‘New Testament Trinity’ generally depicts the Holy Trinity as God the Father seated in the form of an old man with Christ, often as a child on his lap and the Holy Spirit descending above them as a dove. The Old Testament Trinity depiction is indirect, being based on Genesis ch18 vv 1 – 15. This passage tells how ‘the Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre’ (v1) in the form of three angels. Abraham and Sarah converse with the three angels who speak as ‘they’, in the plural. However, in verse 13 ‘they’ becomes ‘the Lord’ and the voice is in the singular. This, I guess is the connection between the Holy Trinity and this story – three angels appear, but they are also described as being one.

But why choose this indirect imagery to depict the Holy Trinity? The problem centres around the depiction of God the Father. The Second Council of Nicea in

AD787 confirmed that the depiction of Christ was allowed because he became man. The situation regarding the Father was less clear because ‘*No-one has seen the Father.*’

Although God the Father was, and sometimes still is depicted as a distinct figure, the Russian Orthodox Church finally forbade the depiction of God the Father at the Great Synod of Moscow in 1667. As the canons of the Russian Orthodox Church state “*It is most absurd and improper to depict in icons the Lord Sabaoth (that is to say, God the Father) with a grey beard and the Only-Begotten Son in His bosom with a dove between them, because no-one has seen the Father according to His Divinity, and the Father has no flesh, nor was the Son born in the flesh from the Father before the ages..... And although Daniel the prophet says that he beheld the Ancient of Days sitting on a throne, this should not be understood to refer to the Father, but to the Son, Who at His second coming will judge every nation at the dreadful Judgment.*”



Icon of the Old Testament Trinity, Yaroslavl Art Museum

The Old Testament Trinity shows the three angels seated around a stone table. In the background is a tree representing the sacred trees of Mamre. At either side in the icon above are the figures of Abraham and Sarah carrying offerings of food and drink – this version is also called the ‘Hospitality of Abraham’. Other versions, such as the one on the next page, which is a modern reproduction of the famous icon by the great Russian mediaeval icon painter Andrei Rublyov (c1360 – c1430), do not include Abraham and Sarah, thus focussing the viewer’s attention on the three angels.

In these icons, the figure on the left can be taken to represent God the Father. His robe is a glowing red shifting to an azure blue. The Son and the Holy Spirit gaze in his direction, their heads inclined deferentially. The Son is seated in the centre, his robe the deep purple of royalty. Over his robe he wears a mantle of blue indicating divinity. The Father and the Spirit wear their blues as their tunics. The Spirit wears a mantle of green which symbolises the Spirit as the source of life. On the Feast of Pentecost, Eastern Orthodox churches are decorated with greenery, boughs and branches, and worshippers wear green clothing. The Orthodox prayer to the Holy

Spirit begins, "O Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life..." As has commented been, "*This sense of the Spirit as the source of life, everywhere present, filling all things, contributes to one of the distinctives of Orthodox theology. That is, it is intimately bound up with daily life. There is no such thing as theology which is purely intellectual. If theology doesn't change you, if it doesn't flood you with light, it's not worth your time.*"

The three angels look alike – neither the Father nor the Son are depicted as we usually expect as bearded men. Rather the figures are depicted in the way angels usually appear in iconography - as young men with long, curly hair pulled back, no beards, and delicate gold wings.



Icon of the Old Testament Trinity after Andrei Rublyov

Notice the perspective in these two icons. The table top and the pedestals on which the angels representing the Father and the Spirit rest their feet tilt towards us as if we are looking down from above. At the level of the angels' faces, however we seem to be looking at them from shoulder height. This distortion of perspective is common in icon painting and creates a sense of being off-balance in an unfamiliar and powerful world. The scene seems to burst outwards, converging on us and challenging us.

The scene is, however one of tranquillity. None of the figures is speaking. This invites us to contemplate this icon in silence, perhaps allowing ourselves to enter into the mystery that is the Holy Trinity.

Religious practice in the Orthodox Church appears very different from what we are used to in our churches. It is nothing unusual to see people enter a church, cross themselves and bow in front of the icons, light a candle then stand and contemplate. They may be praying silently or just quietly contemplating the icon. This contrasts with our own practices of singing, reading, corporate praying and preaching. Silences, if they are there at all are short and ended quickly. Perhaps silence and wordlessness is something we need to cultivate more in our spiritual lives.

Remember: Winter 2015

Compiled by Mary Newman, Pitshanger

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today, in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you: He is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2 v10-11

Joy is not in things, it is in us

Richard Wagner

King of all days, oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came to the earth You created
All for love's sake, became poor.

Tim Hughes

The thing that is really hard and really amazing, is giving up on being perfect and beginning the work of becoming yourself

Ann Quindlen, author 1952

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

Desmond Tutu

Orphans for Orphans

Out of bad events good things can happen. More than 10 years ago two teenage boys were on holiday in Sri Lanka when the tsunami struck. Both their parents were killed. One brother saved the other one's life by pulling him to a roof.

The two boys, now in their 20's have set up a company making flip-flops. The profits go to help the orphans of Sri Lanka. Each one has a kingfisher stamped on it; their father's favourite bird.

Besides the children's home that has been built with the profits, they hope to build more homes. Their organisation is called Orphans for Orphans.

Richard Branson is one of a number of celebrities to support the charity.

A Prayer for Syria

Heavenly Father, this year we have witnessed on T.V. and in the newspapers the terrible plight of the people of Syria and other countries in the many regions of the world where there is violence and conflict.

At this time of year we particularly think of the children who have been born into a world of injustice and oppression.

We especially pray for those whose parents and siblings have lost their lives.

We thank you for the work of all who are involved in re-settling the refugees.

We pray for the day when your peace will reign throughout the world. *Amen*

And Then There Were Ten

In the last ‘Remember’ I wrote how Roger, William and Christopher came to live with Barbara and David Lee, followed by Diana.

Hampshire Social Services, aware that Barbara and David had given a home to four children from Ealing, asked them if they would look after two local boys aged 6 and 4 for two weeks. Two years later the boys, Charles and John were still there and adamant they wanted to stay.

Barbara and David would have adopted them but this meant that Social Services would need to contact the boys’ parents. Charles and John did not want this in case their parents objected, so they were the only children who were permanently fostered, not adopted.

In 1965 Barbara and David contacted Ealing Social Services to see if they had another black girl needing a home. They thought it would be good for Diana to have a sister. This was how they came to adopt Lorrianne.

With 7 children there was always plenty happening in the Lee family. Then, quite unexpectedly in 1967 Barbara found she was pregnant and this resulted in the birth of Jeneth. Then in 1973 Barbara gave birth to Rosamund and finally, Philip, in 1977.

Over the years, until she had a minor stroke I have seen Barbara once a year when she has come to London for the re-union of 6 or 7 ex-Southlands students.

Philip always met his mum at Paddington station and took her back there after our day out in London.

He is such a lovely young man, a professional singer with a beautiful voice. A year or so ago I went to hear him when he was singing at the Charing Cross Theatre and he came out to meet me after the performance.

At 79 Barbara still helps at the Mother and Toddler group at the local Methodist Church and she is also a volunteer at the Citizens Advice Bureau every Tuesday morning (in Highbridge). David died recently and after nearly 60 years together Barbara misses him very much. Together they were a blessing to many children and now Barbara is blessed with many grandchildren and great grandchildren in her wonderful rainbow family.

Open House

During the Open House London week-end in September I visited St. Lawrence Jewry, the official church of the City of London and a beautiful Wren Building. Whilst there I came across the following prayer:

Lord Jesus, our brother and our Saviour,
come into our hearts with your love,
with your joy, your hope, and your peace.

Help us to reflect your love for all
By loving and serving well we meet.

Lord Jesus,
come into our lives,
and share your gifts with all people.

Blessed are you, Lord Jesus,
Forever and ever. *Amen*

From the National Liturgy Office

A Prayer at Christmas

Heavenly Father we pray for all who are in special need this Christmas and for all who will not know the joy of the season.

We pray for the lonely and for those who are reminded of the loss of loved ones, through death or divorce.

We pray for those who cannot afford to buy the presents their children are hoping for and for those who will go into the New Year in debt.

We pray for your blessing on the Food Bank and Christians Against Poverty and for those who will take part in Night Shelter during the cold weather. *Amen*

Readings for Winter 2015

Isaiah Ch. 9 – The prophecy that the Messiah will come

Read the Christmas message in Matthew Ch 1 and 2 and Luke Ch. 1 and 2

A Thought for the New Year

Safety and happiness can only come from individuals, classes and nations being honest, fair and kind to each other

C.S. Lewis

Christmas Services around the Circuit 2015

Acton Hill

24th Dec 11.30pm Midnight Holy Communion
25th Dec 10.00am Christmas Morning Celebration Worship

Ealing Green

20th Dec 6.00pm Carols and Candles
24th Dec 4.00pm Caroling at the church front, followed by -
5.00pm Christmas Eve Service of Quiet Wonder
25th Dec 10.00am Christmas Morning Celebration Worship

Greenford

20th Dec 6.30pm Carol Service
24th Dec 4.00pm Christmas Eve Family Service
24th Dec 11.15pm Midnight Holy Communion
25th Dec 11.00am Christmas Morning Family Worship
31st Dec 10.30pm Watchnight Service

Hanwell

20th Dec 6.00pm Carol Service
24th Dec 11.30pm Midnight Communion

Kingsdown

20th Dec 6.00pm Carol Service
24th Dec 11.30pm Midnight Holy Communion
25th Dec 10.00am Christmas Morning Family Worship

King's Hall

21st Nov 1.00 – 6.00pm Carol Service followed by refreshments
24th Dec 2.00pm Carol Singing and giving out of mince pies outside King's Hall
25th Dec 1.00pm Christmas Day Holy Communion with Revd Rachel Bending
27th Dec 2.00pm Testimony Service
1st Jan 1.00pm New Year's Day Preaching Service (nb this service will be in Urdu)

Also on 10th Feb at 6.00pm: Ash Wednesday Service of Ashing outside King's Hall

Northolt

25th Dec 10.00am Christmas Morning Worship
3rd Jan 11.00am Carol Service

Pitshanger

20th Dec 10.30am Carol Service
25th Dec 9.30am Christmas Morning Worship

Northolt: Church Officers

*When the **Circuit Directory 2015-16** was produced, Northolt's entry was not properly updated. The following is a list of Northolt's Church Officers.*

Church Leadership Team: John Arhin, Jane Bennett, Janet Bettaccini, Ivy Emery, Margaret McCarthy, Carol Morrison, Lyn Sallows, Elizabeth Sherman, Sylvia Turner, Karen Whitehouse

Circuit Steward on Church Council: Derek Nicholls

Vestry Stewards: Anne Adams, Yvonne Budu-Manuel, Sandra Lavender, Sylvia Turner

Communion Stewards: Constance Arhin, Ivy Emery, Chrishanti George, Penny George, Margaret McCarthy, Regina Prempeh

AV Services: Catherine Whitehouse, Felix Kusi

Worship Leaders: Jane Bennett, Lorna Cyrus

Music Group: Jane Bennett, Toby Cox, Anton George, Chrishanthi George, Roy Hill, Cathy Snow, Karen Whitehouse

Church Council Sec'y: Jane Bennett

Treasurer/Gift Aid Sec'y: Lyn Sallows **Assistant Treasurer:** Janet Bettaccini

Property Stewards: Janet Bettaccini, Margaret McCarthy (Lettings)

Pastoral Secretary: Evelyn Phillips

Junior Church/Sunday School Superintendent: Mr John Kojo Arhin

Overseas Missions: Anne Adams

Action for Children: Janet Bettaccini

Christian Aid: Jane Bennett

Safeguarding: Elizabeth Sherman

Women's Bright Hour: Ivy Emery, Evelyn Phillips

Circuit Link Officer/Church Notices: Elizabeth Sherman

MWiB: Christina Tom-Johnson, Sylvia Turner

Flowers: Janet Bettaccini

Circuit Directory Update

MHA Live at Home Manager: Correct phone number is 020 8813 0519

Safeguarding Christina Tom-Johnson has stood down as
Circuit Safeguarding Coordinator

Forthcoming Events around the Circuit

[as notified to, or discovered by, the Editor]

December

- 6th Sun 17.00 **Memorial Carol Service at Kingsdown**
See p8 for further details
- 6th Sun 16.00 **Acton Hill: Iris Axon Concert Series**
Kaleidoscope Wind Ensemble Tickets £5.00
- 12th Sat 19.00 **Ealing Choral Society Christmas Concert**
At St Barnabas, Pitshanger Lane in support of
Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter
See final para of *Night Shelter article* p7-8 for details

January

- 10th Sun 18.30 **Circuit Service at Ealing Green**

February

- 7th Sun 16.00 **Acton Hill: Iris Axon Concert Series**
Yoshiko Miyagawa, soprano Tickets £5.00
- 16th Tues 19.30 **Circuit Policy Committee at Kingsdown**

March

- 5th Sat 10.30 **Ealing Animal Welfare Bazaar at Hanwell**
16.00 Many participating societies. Admission FREE.
For details call 020 8567 6739 www.animalwelfarebazaar.info

Articles for 'In-touch' Issue No 75 (March - May) should be sent by e-mail headed 'In-touch' to the Editor, **Gerald Barton**, or as hard copy to the Circuit Office.

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Office hours: Tues & Thurs 09.00 – 14.00

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