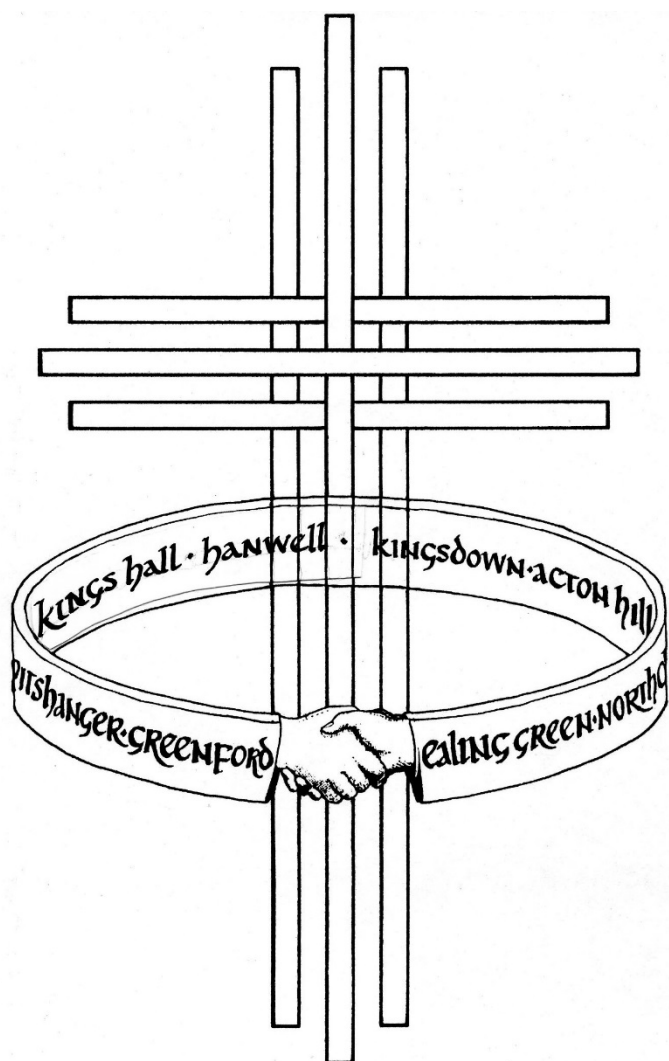


In-touch

No 81

September - November 2017



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

Dear Friends,

Thresholds, boundaries and doorways are magical, powerful places. Think, for instance, of the groom carrying his new bride into their new home and new life together, walking into school on the first day of your first term, stepping off the plane into a new and foreign land, or the time of waiting between being appointed to a job and beginning it. As we stand on the borders no longer in the old but not quite yet in the new we can feel unsettled, have a longing to turn back to the old familiar places behind us, or mourn the things and people we have left behind. We can feel overwhelmed by the change and all it will require of us. But we can also be excited by the new, filled with hope and seeing its promise and look forward to new experiences. We can be reassured by what the past has given us, and all that we carry with us into the new place.

This summer the Circuit has faced and continues to face a number of changes. We stand at our own threshold. We have seen the departure of loved members of our team: Jen, Randolph, and Pastor Zindani. We are welcoming new team members: Mrs Penny Pedley as Associate Pastor for Kingsdown and Ealing Green, Deacon Ramona Samuel working across the Circuit but concentrating on its east side, and Rev'd Calvin Samuel as a minister residing in the Circuit. In addition, I will become your superintendent. Northolt is looking forward to and working towards an exciting redevelopment. King's Hall continues to work and long for the building to be regenerated and the mission possibilities that will bring. Pitshanger, Kingsdown, Ealing Green and Acton Hill all welcome new ministers or familiar faces in new roles this September.

We stand in the borderland at the beginning of a new Connexional year bringing with us our hopes and our fears, the things we're looking forward to and all that we mourn, our strong emotions and our wish to just get on with business as usual. Please continue to pray for the life of the Circuit as we pass across the border into the new year. Please also come and join us on 3rd September at 6.30pm at Acton Hill as we celebrate our life together, welcome those who are new and commit ourselves to work, worship and care for each other in the year to come.

With love and blessings,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rachel', with a stylized, flowing script.

Circuit Welcome Service

The Welcome Service for new Circuit staff (see next report) is on Sunday 3rd September at Acton Hill Church at 6.30pm. All are welcome!

Circuit Staff: Departures, Arrivals and Changes

As you will all know, Rev Dr Jennifer Smith has now left the Circuit to become Superintendent Minister at Wesley's Chapel. Rev Rachel Bending is our new Superintendent with effect from 1st September. Rachel's appointment is a 'new invitation' meaning that she will start a new 5 year term within our Circuit. Rachel will relinquish pastoral oversight of Kingsdown but remain minister for King's Hall (Urdu/Hindi) and the King's Hall Class Meeting. She will also become minister for Pitshanger in place of Rev Shirlyn Toppin who will become minister for Acton Hill (in addition to Hanwell), also from 1st September.

Deacon Ramona Samuel is joining the Circuit and will support churches on the east side of the Circuit - Acton Hill, Ealing Green, Kingsdown & Pitshanger and will offer Circuit-wide support for young people. Although not appointed to the Circuit, Ramona's husband, Rev Calvin T Samuel will also be joining us and will be undertaking some preaching appointments at our churches. Calvin is Principal of the London School of Theology.

Following interviews in July, Penny Pedley has been appointed Associate Pastor for Ealing Green and Kingsdown with effect from 1st September. Penny is an Anglican Lay Minister with many years experience who has already participated in the life of the Circuit through her involvement with the Healing Team at Greenford and her preaching particularly at a number of our churches.

Penny, Ramona and Calvin will be welcomed to the Circuit at the Welcome Service on 3rd September.

Mike Brown completed his 6-year term as a Circuit Steward this year and has now stood down from the role. He was thanked for all his work over the last 6 years at the Circuit Meeting in June and at the Farewell Service in July.

Finally, and on a much sadder note, Pastor Salamat Zindani resigned as Associate Pastor for King's Hall (Urdu/Hindi) in August. The Circuit is hoping to seek a new Urdu-speaking Associate Pastor to support the King's Hall (Urdu/Hindi) church.

The 2018/2019 President and Vice President

The Methodist Conference has designated the Rev'd Michaela Youngson, a former Superintendent Minister of our Circuit and one of the three chairs of the London District to be President of the Conference 2018/19. The Vice-President for 2018/19 will be Bala Gnanapragasam who is a representative from the London District to the Conference. Bala serves on the boards of Christian Aid and MHA, is a trustee of the London HIV/Aids Chaplaincy and was the first Synod Secretary for the unified London District.



King's Hall Urdu-Speaking Church 50th Anniversary

This autumn sees the 50th anniversary of the King's Hall Urdu-speaking church in our Circuit. Formed in October 1967, the church is believed to be the oldest Urdu-speaking congregation in the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The anniversary will be celebrated at Hamborough Primary School (adjacent to King's Hall) on Saturday 14th October. Doors will be open at 2.00pm for a service of celebration at 3.00pm with a meal to follow. All are welcome!

From the Circuit Meeting

The most recent Circuit Meeting was on 14th June at Northolt.

The meeting began by approving the Circuit's accounts for the 2015-16 Connexional year so that they could be submitted to the Charity Commission. The budget for the coming year (2017-18) was then agreed. During the course of the discussion about the accounts, some members felt there was a need for greater clarity about who owns Methodist property. There is an explanation of the next article in this edition of In-touch.

As in previous years the budget shows the Circuit running at a significant annual loss (projected as about £100,000 for the coming year). In recent years this has been possible because of the sale of Moullin House and the former church at Perivale, but inevitably the Circuit must move towards financial stability over the next few years. Stephen Sears, the Circuit Treasurer presented a medium term financial strategy to the meeting. This aims to agree a plan to achieve break-even over a 3 – 5 year timescale and includes support for the financial management for our local churches from the Circuit Finance Officer, investment in the marketing and

fabric of our church buildings along with utilising the best professional advice available. Inevitably, this is likely to mean annual assessments increasing as churches are asked to increase their support for the Circuit.

Northolt reported on progress on the feasibility study for their re-development scheme. A favourable meeting has taken place with Ealing Council to discuss acquiring surplus land adjacent to the church to allow the church to expand. This would allow the development of a community hall and community gardens. Other possible works being considered could include the complete demolition and rebuilding of the current church. This would include building housing for sale which would release capital for the project. In addition, the project could include accommodation units for young people coming out of care. Plans are in progress and arrangements are in place for preliminary talks with architects to discuss what might be done. Many discussions have been held within the church and people are very excited by the proposals. Northolt is seeking a modern church building which is light and environmentally and energy aware.

The meeting agreed a grant of £23,400 to Hanwell to support work at the rear of their premises to replace outdated disabled, female and male toilets and to redecorate the corridors, the Church Parlour, Youth Room and Memorial Halls. The grant represents about 28% of the total cost of the project. Of the remainder of the project cost, a third will come from Hanwell's general funds and a further third from elsewhere. The remainder will come from fund-raising.

Trudie Bedeau, the new Scheme Manager for the MHA Ealing Live at Home Scheme was welcomed to the meeting. Trudie thanked the Circuit for its generous support financially and through the time and dedication of people around the Circuit. At the moment, the scheme is running Strength & Balance Classes at Greenford, Northolt and Pitshanger and new activities are being planned. These include a light lunch club; pampering sessions, a new Strength & Balance class at Ealing Green and a coach trip in August. A 'relaunch' of the MHA Ealing Live at Home Scheme is also planned.

This being Rev Dr Jen Smith's last Circuit Meeting, the meeting expressed its thanks and appreciation to her for her loyalty and enthusiasm and all she had done as Superintendent to build up the Circuit. The meeting was also Mike Brown's last as a Circuit Steward. He said it had been a great privilege to have been a Circuit Steward working with Jen as Superintendent. Jen's Farewell service was on 23rd July at Ealing Green.

The next Circuit Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12th September at 7.30pm at Hanwell.

Who Owns Methodist Property?

Gerald Barton, Editor

This might seem an odd question, but there was some desire expressed at the last Circuit Meeting in June for greater clarity about who actually does own Methodist property. The simple answer is that Methodist property is owned by the Methodist Church centrally, not by Districts, Circuits or local churches.

Legally, the proprietors of Methodist property as recorded on the registers of title at the Land Registry are the 'Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes' (TMCP) a body set up under the Methodist Church Act (1939).

Methodist property is held on what are known as 'Model Trusts'. These were defined in the (later) Methodist Church Act (1976) appearing as Schedule 2 of the Act. Under the Model Trust TMCP acts as 'custodian trustees' of Methodist Property. In practical terms this means TMCP must give their consent before certain things can be done with Methodist property, for example selling it; leasing out parts of it - such as former caretaker's flats in churches; making significant alterations; licensing third parties to use church premises and so on.

At Circuit and local church level, responsibility for all aspects of the use, management and maintenance of Methodist property falls to the 'managing trustees'. For local churches, the managing trustees are the members of the Church Council, for Circuits they are the members of the Circuit Meeting.

Simplistically put, you might say that people at the local church level have responsibility for their church buildings, and the circuits for manses, while TMCP act as the legal proprietors (ie owners).

When property is sold however, circuits retain most of the proceeds of sale. A proportion, the size of which varies with the size of the sale proceeds goes to TMCP to support the Methodist Church's work nationally, but most stays within the circuits.

Lettings officers may have picked up on the comment above about needing TMCP consent when third parties are licensed to use church premises (eg dance classes, yoga classes etc). This is true, but if churches use the standard forms of licence issued by TMCP, consent is deemed to have been given without the need to consult TMCP. Fortunately, churches in our circuit are using the standard forms, so this is not an issue.

I'm sure this will still seem rather complicated, but I hope this clarifies the ownership and responsibility for Methodist property at least somewhat.

Dancing in the Desert

Rev Rachel Bending

“At last proper desert!”

We'd had several days of driving, walking, photographing and wondering at the desert. We'd seen amazing variety and huge stretches of unchanged landscape. These had been filled with stunning plants flowering in the desert spring. Then we got to Death Valley and what Thomas termed 'proper desert' - a place that conformed to our expectations of sand dunes devoid of vegetation, of searing heat and dry air. In fact, even here, as we got closer we could see the small scrubby bushes that had found a foothold in the unpromising looking sand dunes and the skeletons of trees that had once grown to full height.



'A proper desert'

As I planned my sabbatical, my wish was to go and spend time in some of the places that the American artist Georgia O'Keefe (1887 – 1986) had painted and lived. Her work had drawn me and fascinated me for many years. I am captivated by its space and intensity. So our goal was New Mexico where Georgia O'Keefe had spent some time every year from 1929 and lived permanently following the death of her husband. While there we spent time in the museum of her work in Santa Fe and visited places she painted. In particular we visited 'The White Place' a canyon of weirdly shaped and sculpted white cliffs with, in its centre, a river bed which was bone dry on our first visit but had become a stream when Thomas and I returned following the rains. And then there were those rains - huge electrical storms. As we stayed in a ranch close to where Georgia O'Keefe had lived, the storms made rivers out of dry paths and lit the land with lightening and rainbows. Scripture echoed through my head – 'springs of living water in the desert'.

Along the way we experienced huge varieties of desert and mountain with cliffs striped with the amazing colours of the minerals they contained - alien seeming salt flats with sharp pinnacles and petrified forests with crystal filled logs. We marvelled at the ways in which animals, plants and people had found their niche and adapted themselves to live in desert environments. I could bore you for days with photos of flowers and plants, of cacti flowering and lizards on rocks, not to mention the homes and rock paintings of those humans who built sophisticated villages in fissures in the rock of desert cliffs. We were staggered by the distances between each place and the vastness of the landscape, the distance to the horizon.

As we travelled we danced and made new friends along the way. Enjoying the company of people who, like us, have fun dancing English dances from Jane Austen's time and modern American fast-moving dances that have developed from them. At one point we danced in a hall full of about 500 people including friends old and new. It was and is wonderful to be part of such a vibrant community that spans continents. Great fun and life giving!

I also created art as well as looking at it - in New Mexico as well as in the UK I went to glassblowing workshops and watched the molten glass dance and change as it was heated, cooled and blown. At home I enjoy creating flat glass objects and bowls formed from flat sheets shaped over a mould in a glass kiln. Sabbatical gave me a chance to work with molten glass taken from a furnace crucible. This meant that I could shape paperweights, baubles etc, feeling and watching the glass change as it heated and cooled.



Glassblowing in New Mexico

It's the horizon that continues to inspire and sustain my faith as I return. In London we rarely get to see a true horizon. Our sight is bound by buildings and we look at the pavements at our feet and fix our gaze on what is close by. At times our boundaries seem very different to those vast open spaces. Think of the ways in which our communities are so very local - Hanwell so separate from Southall, Hayes from Ealing etc. At times these physical boundaries are reflected in our thinking and spirituality and we need to be reminded to look up from our feet, widen our viewpoints and breathe in the fresh air.

On my return from the US I found myself going to Notting Hill to support the church there as it responded to the Grenfell Tower fire. As I walked in from Shepherd's Bush each day I was struck by all the little local boundaries which separate one community from its neighbour, by the way in which such a short distance can make such a difference in the culture and affluence of those living there.

There are times when we all need to gaze at the horizon, to gain fresh perspective, to realise how small the distances that divide us really are. On the day before attending a conference in Texas we went to the Gulf of Mexico. I sat on the beach, at the boundary between sea and land, allowing the waves to wash over me and gazed at the horizon taking in its vastness and the life and fresh air it brought.

Book Review: “Recreation – The Broads”

Blossom Jackson -Snr. Circuit Steward- Ealing Trinity Circuit

I recently received a copy of this inspirational book by Rev Briant Smith, Methodist Chaplain to the ‘Broads’ in the East Anglia District and once I started to read it, could not put it down! It soon became clear that its intent is not purely that it should be read as if it was a novel or a DIY kit for the enhancement of spiritual growth. Most importantly I found as I traversed its pages that it could be used as a useful tool kit for a ‘voyage of discovery’ into the realms of spirituality. And so readers will find that, once read, its magnetism will draw them back to pages, repeatedly!



Rev Briant Smith

The dual capacity of this little book not only provides precise and erudite views about the community life of the Broads, its fauna, flora and history, but also draws readers to put the Broads on their ‘bucket list’ of places to visit. More importantly, it serves to provide insights into a spectrum of spirituality in readily understandable language.

The book undoubtedly could also be used as a study guide to spirituality in a unique way.

Briant describes this user-friendly book on its cover as: -

‘A guide for seekers and searchers to some of the opportunities to experience the Broads as a place to explore, rediscover and develop a new awareness of nature and our identity through a deepening interaction with the world around us.’

I would strongly recommend this little book as a ‘good companion.’

“Recreation – The Broads” by Rev Briant Smith was published in 2009 by The Mill, Hellyg, Thetford Road, Coney Weston, Suffolk IP31 1DN

ISBN 978-0-9563557-0-6 price £4.99.

To obtain copies, contact- Briant Smith: email- briant@broadsspirituality.org.uk

Northolt Methodist Church

What Did We Do With Our 'Talents' Mission Grant?

Janet Bettaccini, Northolt

It seems a long time ago now (well, over 2 years), that each church within Ealing Trinity Circuit was allocated £5,000 to use towards 'mission'. I was reminded of this recently when we put up our Easter banner at Northolt. We decided that we would use some of our allocation to fund 5 banners to display outside our church. Being positioned just off a busy roundabout our wording had to be large enough to be seen from a vehicle but the words and numbers could not be so long that we distracted drivers! We rose to the challenge, had some fun and frustration trying to use words, numbers and graphics that reflected our mission within Northolt.

We had prepared banners for **Easter / Pentecost / Harvest / Christmas** and a general **Community Event**. We have found the banners to be a very effective way to let Northolt residents know we are open and active! Many thanks to Margaret McCarthy who accepted the challenge to get the art work done which proved to be more of a challenge than she had expected but the end results are excellent. Thank you again Margaret and Rev Kip Bennett for his advice also.

In the summer of 2015 we used some of the 'Talents' funding to run a junior holiday activity called Jerusalem TV. The younger members of our church and others in the Circuit became operators of a news studio as reporters, cameramen, newsreaders and producers reporting on the events of the first Holy Week. The event gave youngsters the opportunity to operate TV cameras, interview key personnel at the time, write an article or script. Great fun was had by all even if it was hard work! The youngsters had a chance to explore the happenings for that first Easter and their mission was to pass the message on which they did in a remarkable way.

The poster that suggested we had 'Given up Church for Lent' certainly drew attention and even upset one passer-by from another church until we explained that we had only given up going to church in the usual way on Sundays in Lent! We did things differently during that Lent and what a wonderful experience it was for us all. I for one will never forget Lent 2016! The programme, which did include a short church service each Sunday was simply inspirational taking us out into the local streets, to Northala Fields and into the homes of our housebound members bringing the message and music of Easter.

We used a little of the 'Talents' funding to buy small bars of Fairtrade chocolate which we distributed on Mothering Sunday to passers-by. We stood outside a small local supermarket and offered our small gift to the ladies ('Mums') who passed by. After a short period of apprehension, the men asked if they could have some chocolate for their wives, mothers and girlfriends! All said it was a kind gesture from the church. "Which church are you from?" was a common enquiry. It was clear some folk did not know there was an active church on the corner by the roundabout 200 yards away! They do now!

As music plays a large part in the life of Northolt Methodist Church with Shalom our music group, we desperately needed to repair our loudspeaker in church. We could not afford a new speaker but managed to track down a Christian electrician who specialised in supporting churches with their electronic musical equipment. He traced our problem to a detached wire which he re-soldered in the nick of time to repair our loudspeaker for our Musical Evening which attracted members from other churches and the locality and was hailed as a huge success. We have built up a strong rapport with this specialist electrician who charged us only for the re-soldering and not the time he took to trace the fault! He said he enjoyed his mission to help us out. The small sum we paid came from our 'Talents' fund as did a new drum pad for our drummer who played such an important part in the life of Shalom. As I write Toby (our drummer) is very poorly and we know God is alongside him in his difficult journey.

We invested in a battery charger to make sure all our microphones were fully charged each week to enable our mission to be heard by all in church. Replacing conventional batteries was becoming unsustainable.

Our final expenditure from our 'Talents' grant was to welcome a group from another church High Clere (near Reading and a former church served by Rev Peter Catford) for the day and to pay a return visit some months later. The exchange was such a happy one and we found we had similar aspirations, although different congregations but a common mission. Those who were able to make the exchange, which included several of our then 'Jesus Kids' found the experience exciting and rewarding.

Thank you Ealing Trinity Circuit for enabling us to extend our mission in a variety of ways which have had a lasting legacy.

Jesus Kids have evolved into 'Gods Squad'!

Prompted by Yemi who felt our young people at Northolt were not young goats (kids!), the younger members of our church had several meetings to discuss and select a new name. Ever democratic (!) we had a confidential vote using ballot papers, distinguishing between those under 18yrs and the adult (over18yr) leaders. It was agreed beforehand that the name should be selected by the under 18yr group. (Incidentally the same name was selected by both groups but not unanimously.) At our Covenant Service in January, the ballot papers were opened by Yemi and the new name was revealed.

Our former Jesus Kids are now called Gods Squad! (Purists, I know we have left out an apostrophe but this was the spelling selected!) We welcome our newly named **Gods Squad!** God bless you and all you do.

Bible Banks

An ecumenical initiative has set up 'Bible Banks' across the West Midlands to give away Bibles to those who do not have one, for free.

The Black Country Mission, which facilitates the initiative, has so far given away over 20,000 Bibles to homes, schools and residents around the area.

Rob Jones, on behalf of Black Country Mission, said: "The rapid growth of Bible Banks has been quite remarkable!



"There are now thirteen churches in the West Midlands with Bible Banks, compared to the five involved only a few months ago.

"As churches, it makes sense for us to give out free Bibles to those who do not have a Bible at home. Bible Banks can be made child friendly too and encourage church members to bring along any spare Bibles that they might not be using at home."

From "The Buzz" 2nd August 2017

Barn Dance at Hanwell

With live caller and band

Saturday 14th October 7.00 – 10.30pm in Hanwell Church Hall

Tickets including 2-course meal: Adults £10.00, Children 14 and under £5.00

To reserve your tickets call 020 8567 4018 or 020 8813 1871

In aid of Hanwell's refurbishment programme

*So, get out on those dancing shoes but don't delay -
numbers are limited!*

Remembrance Day: A Reflection

Gerald Barton, Editor

I have always found Remembrance Day a poignant occasion. Like most of my generation, my father served in the armed forces during World War II. He was conscripted into the Royal Marines and spent most of his war involved in anti-aircraft defence, although towards the end of the war he was put to work repairing bomb-damaged houses in London. My mother did factory work variously putting wheel-nuts on tanks and making torpedo nets. To my knowledge none of my relatives were killed or injured during the war, although my father came close to it when a V1 flying bomb destroyed a house he was working on. There but for the grace of God...

My maternal grandfather's family was not so fortunate in the First World War. My grandfather was lucky – he was invalided out of the army in June 1917 with health problems. However, his elder brother Robert died of wounds in France in April 1917 serving with the Canadian infantry and his younger brother Ernest was killed in action in July 1916 in Mesopotamia serving with the Devonshire Regt. When I discovered this a few years ago it made Remembrance Day rather more poignant for me.

In recent years public observance of Remembrance Day and also Armistice Day itself has increased in prominence. Perhaps this was because of the number of 'significant year' anniversaries, such as the 60th anniversary of D-Day and the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I, and maybe also because the last veterans of World War 1 were dying and veterans of World War II were reaching great age and were themselves gradually dying out. Our public ceremonies typically focus on our war dead, particularly on servicemen and women who have given their lives in defence of King or Queen and country and frequently have a somewhat 'military' overtone. Personally, I never find this really very satisfactory. "What," I ask myself, "about all the others on the other side?"

When I was a teenager my school arranged 3-week exchange trips with a school in Hannover. Pupils from Hannover came and stayed with our families in Bristol around Easter holiday time and we stayed with theirs during the summer. During my first visit, I well remember my exchange partner's father pointing to his right elbow, which was permanently locked and saying, "Grenade, Stalingrad." He was lucky to have been wounded and evacuated from the city and not taken prisoner by the Red Army. Not surprisingly, during that visit I also discovered that my exchange partner's grandfather had fought in the Kaiser's army in World War I. Here were ordinary men, swept into their country's armed forces to fight, just like my father, grandfather and great uncles in theirs.

Even if we recall all servicemen and women who died in war whatever side they were on, it still leaves a huge gap. War is a hideous business and doesn't just sweep men and women into armies to fight. It also crashes over civilians who happen to get in the way. Possibly, the 20th century was the worst in history for

civilians caught up in war, although the 21st is also doing its best, or should I say its worst in that respect.

According to C.N.Truman in "Civilian Casualties of World War 2" it is estimated that there were about 30.5 million civilian deaths in World War II. Of these, about 10 million were Chinese, 7.7 million citizens of the USSR, 5.3 million Polish, 3.8 million German and 1.3 million Yugoslav. Great Britain and the Commonwealth came well down the list with about 60,000 civilian deaths. In comparison, he estimates total military deaths on both sides to have been about 24.5 million, some 6 million less than the total for civilian deaths. Other sources give sometimes widely different estimates – the (US) National WW II Museum website estimates 15 million military deaths and 45 million civilian deaths. Both agree, however that civilian deaths exceeded military deaths by a large margin.

Perhaps we should not be surprised at these statistics. Civilians were made targets by both sides through the bombing of major cities and population centres.

In more recent times, few of us will forget the television coverage of the bodies of British servicemen and women killed in Iraq and Afghanistan being repatriated with military honours and taken in solemn procession through Royal Wootton Bassett. However, here again, the civilians killed in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan far out-number the military casualties. There are no precise estimates of civilian deaths in Iraq, but the Iraq Body Count Project estimated that between 2003 and 2013 about 174,000 Iraqis died as a result of the conflict. Of these 65 – 70% were 'non-combatants'. In comparison, some 4,491 US service personnel were killed between 2003 and 2014 and 179 British between 2003 and 2009. Of course, the majority of civilian deaths occurred in the sectarian violence that erupted with the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. Nonetheless, they are casualties that resulted from the invasion to topple Saddam and the failure to plan for what happened in the aftermath. Should we not remember them too?

None of this is to belittle the sacrifice made by the men and women who have lost their lives serving their countries. Whilst I find war utterly abhorrent, I am not a pacifist. There are, I believe occasions when armed conflict is the only way left to resist and defeat aggressive regimes. For example, I doubt very much if the world could have been rid of the scourge on Nazism without going to war with Hitler's Germany. However, I do not think that we should follow the dictum of the Prussian general and author of 'On War', Carl von Clausewitz, that 'War is a mere continuation of policy by other means.' War should be the very last resort not a 'mere continuation of policy'.

While I will again find Remembrance Day poignant this November, I will also feel somewhat uneasy about it. The point for me is clear, we should remember and lament *all* the victims of war – ours, theirs and all the civilians caught up in conflict, wherever it may be.

Remember in Autumn

Compiled by Mary Newman, Pitshanger

A Thought for Every Day

‘Your Heavenly Father already knows all your needs’

Matthew 6 v32

I hope that all of you who are reading this have enjoyed a good summer. Some of you will have spent it on journeys to far places and will have experienced different ways of life; hearing unfamiliar languages, tasting new foods, meeting people of other religions and cultures. I hope that however you travelled you arrived uneventfully at your destination and that you got home safely.

I was reading an old copy of ‘Word for Today’. The topic was ‘We Walk by Faith and not by Sight’ and concerned travelling by plane. “When we board, we don’t ask the pilot what buttons he plans to push or the route he will take.” The writer continued, “Basically you put your trust in the plane, the pilot and the airline. Today God is asking you to do the same with Him.”

In one of her sermons Rekha Cheriyan talked about the Christian journey. I quote from it. “For most of us, if we are honest, the Christian journey is an experience of lurching between conviction and doubt but perhaps we can look to the experiences of Abraham and Sarah for reassurance that we too can make faith prevail. We need to be prepared to follow the road that Jesus took. A road that may lead us through dry and dusty paths, through temptation and apparent failure – and through the wilderness, when we go through our difficult times.”

One summer my daughter Pip, rang from the Canaries where she and her husband and children were on holiday. She said the hotel and weather were fine and they were enjoying the break. Then she mentioned that they were being hassled by the company that gives her husband most of his work by phoning him as early as 8.30am. (Our daughter also works with him doing the Admin.)

He had got a friend who works in the same business to cover his work for 10 days but Pip said she thought the company realised he was abroad.

When I asked why they hadn’t just told the company they were on holiday (their first in 2 years) she said our son-in-law is contracted to be available 365 days a year; incredible but true.

Thinking about this I began to wonder if Christians are also under contract to try to follow in Christ’s footsteps 365 days a year. Maybe for Methodists that is what we mean when we renew our vows in the Covenant Service.

Thoughts about Silence

This place of silence is a secret and holy place in our own souls where God dwells
H.T. Hamblin

Prayer is like a secret garden made up of silence, rest and inwardness. But there are a thousand and one doors and we all have to find our own.
Jean Varmer

And a Thought about Loneliness

Loneliness is part of being human. It reminds us that we are not complete in ourselves.

David Runcorn

The following is from the Prayer Diary of St. Giles Church, Shermanbury.
Give thanks for faith and what we believe.

Belief

I have to believe
That you still exist
Somewhere;
That you still watch me
Sometimes;
That you still love me
Somehow.

I have to believe
That life has meaning
Somehow;
That I am useful here
Sometimes;
That I make small differences
Somewhere.

I have to believe
That I need to stay here
For some time;
That all this teaches me
Something;
So that I can meet you again
Somewhere.

By Ann Thorp – submitted by Tim Bunting

Sorrow and Strength

'Sorrow produces strength,
Sorrow today will be your strength tomorrow'

Pastor Steven Furbick TBN UK

My friend Valerie sent me this lovely prayer.

How can I endure?

Lord, how can I endure this life of sorrow, unless you strengthen me with your mercy and grace? Do not turn your face from me. Do not withdraw your consolation from me, lest my soul becomes like a waterless desert. Teach me, O Lord, to do your will, and to live humbly. You alone know me perfectly, seeing into my soul. You alone can give lasting peace and joy.

A Prayer of Thomas a Kempis (1380-1471)

Some Thoughts Following May 22nd 2017

When our son, who lives with his wife and children in Manchester rang us early on May 23rd to tell us about the terrible atrocity that took place the night before, it seemed that nothing good could come out of the murder and maiming of innocent children and adults.

But you will remember as I do: Taxi drivers gave free lifts.

Hotels took in people who were stranded because the train station was closed.

A homeless man went to comfort the victims.

2 men carried a placard, 'Free Hugs'.

So many people queued to give blood they had to turn some of them away.

Members of the public took bottles of water to the emergency services and to people waiting to hear news about relatives.

Even in the darkest situations some goodness and light can shine through.

He said, "I long to take your load, I want to bear your burdens too, as you walk along life's road. But this you must remember, this is one thing you must know - I cannot take your burden until you let it go."

Corrie Ten Boom

A Prayer for Autumn

Heavenly Father, we pray for all who are in especial need; for the sick, the bereaved, for the disabled and for those with life limiting conditions. Remember in your love the victims of violence and injustice. We pray for those who for many years will suffer as the result of the bombing in Manchester, the attacks in London and for the many regions of the world where violence is a way of life. We especially pray for Christians in areas of the world who are persecuted for their beliefs. We also particularly pray for the many affected by the terrible tragedy at Grenfell Tower and for the continued work of all who are helping the victims especially the Notting Hill Methodist Church and other local churches. Amen

Peace for the World

We look forward to the time when the power of love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.

William E. Gladstone (1809-1888)

Readings for Autumn

Ezekiel 34 v11-31	The good Shepherd
Hosea 11 v1-12	God's Love for his rebellious people
Amos 9 v11-15	The Future Restoration of Israel

I have found in the Bible words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterance for my hidden griefs and pleadings for my shame and feebleness.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

I should like to express my thanks to Rachel Kamara, who very kindly types 'Remember' for me before sending it to Gerald – Mary Newman

*And I should like to thank Mary for her faithful contributions to 'In-touch'.
Gerald Barton, Editor*

Circuit Directory Update

Forthcoming Events around the Circuit

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

September

3rd Sun 18.30 **Welcome and Installation Service at Acton Hill**

5th Tues 19.30 **Circuit Policy Group at Kingsdown**

12th Tues 19.30 **Circuit Meeting at Hanwell**

16th Sat 10.00 **Kingsdown Book Fair**
12.30 *In aid of All We Can*

20th Wed 19.30 **Local Preachers & Worship Leaders Meeting**

October

14th Sat 14.00 **King's Hall (Urdu/Hindi) Church 50th Anniversary**
See p5 for further details

14th Sat 19.00 **Hanwell Barn Dance**
Adults £10, Children 14 or under £5, includes 2-course meal.
See p13 for further details

November

4th Sat 10.00 **Kingsdown Book Fair**
12.30 *In aid of Methodist Homes*

Articles for '**In-touch**' **Issue No 82 (December - February)** should be sent by e-mail headed '**In-touch**' to the Editor, **Gerald Barton**, or as hard copy to the Circuit Office.

Ealing Trinity Circuit Office
Kingsdown Methodist Church, Kingsdown Ave, West Ealing, London W13 9PR
office@ealingtrinity.org.uk

Office hours: Tues & Thurs 09.00 – 14.00

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