

Circuit News: October 2021



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Dear Friends,

October is the time for counting. I sit at my office window and count the pink footed geese flying over the house. You normally hear them before you see them. Their purposeful V's which reduce wind resistance for the travelling birds is as much a part of the heralding of autumn in Southport as are the shortening days and falling leaves. They know where they have come from, and they know where they are heading. It is one of life's miracles that they make this amazing flight every year from Greenland and Iceland to winter here. It is an amazing sight.

Every year in the Methodist Church we do something called the October Count. We look at the numbers attending worship, look at membership figures and generally take a snapshot of the life of the church. We also fill in property and finance schedules which all contributes to our understanding of church and circuit life. I know that figures cannot tell us everything, but they help us paint a picture of the health of the churches. The Circuit Churches have also been asked to conduct a Church Review looking at their mission and ministry and discerning what God saying to us, which will all feed into the Circuit Review.

The pink footed geese, which are part of our Circuit logo, have learnt that travelling together helps them travel further. There is an African proverb that says 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.' The pink footed geese have also learnt to honk to give encouragement to one another.

We want people who are passionate about sharing the gospel, people who are committed to exploring what God is calling 'the people called Methodists' to be and do so that we can be a transforming presence here in Southport to be part of the Circuit Review. Is this you? Our Vision Meeting at **St Francis of Assisi on Monday 11th October at 7.30pm** is a call to refocus our resources and energies away from some activities which have served their time. We have been talking about this for a long time – since at least the 1970's! The challenge is 'if not now, then when?' Our statistics paint a depressing picture. but we know that we are stronger when we travel together. Let me hear you honk!

Marie-Anne

Circuit Services

Early Morning Communion on Sunday 3rd October at 9am at PPW, Scarisbrick New Road. If you coming by car please offer a lift to someone who is unable to drive.

Victoria: A Service of Celebration with Rev. Peter Hughes at PPW, Scarisbrick New Road, on **Sunday 10th October at 4pm** followed by tea. There will be an offering for Compassion Acts - tins and dried goods for the Foodbank or gifts of money to support their work with vulnerable families in Southport will be gratefully received.

Raising Praise on Sunday 24th October at Leyland Road at **6pm**. A time of praise and hearing what God is doing here in Southport.

Circuit Property Steward

We are looking for a Circuit Property Steward to help us oversee the building now known as the Victoria Centre and be a support to local church property stewards. If you would be interested in this important role, please email Marie-Anne and I'll send you the role description.

Rise to the Moment COP26 Climate Walk Friday 8th and Saturday 9 October

A group of young people are carrying a boat to Glasgow where the government is hosting key UN climate talks in November. The climate crisis is a storm we all face, but we're not all in the same boat. On Friday 8th October a group will be walking from Christ Church to Crosby and then on to Liverpool Cathedral on Saturday 9th October to ask our leaders for more urgent action on climate change. You can walk any stage of the walk. For more information contact Marie-Anne 513128

Action for Children - Craftivism

We believe there's a star in every child. When a child has the safe and happy childhood they deserve, their star shines brightly. But too many children in the UK right now don't have the chance to shine. Their childhoods are overshadowed by poverty, abuse, neglect and poor mental health. But with your support we can change this. To stand out from the hundreds of emails and letters MPs get every day, we'd love you to send them a homemade star. We want the message to come across loud and clear: politicians need to act now so that vulnerable children's stars can shine. More information and a draft letter for our MPs Damien Moore (Southport) or Rosie Cooper (West Lancashire) can be found here: www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-us/fundraise-with-us/find-an-event-near-you/crafting-for-change

Walking with Micah: Methodist Principles for Social Justice

What does 'challenging injustice' look like in your life? Methodists are involved in responding to needs in our communities or the world, through running debt advice centres, giving to foodbanks, raising money for charities. Sometimes we use our consumer power, through buying Fairtrade bananas or avoiding excess plastic wrapping. And through our protesting, writing letters to MPs or community organising we try to change problems at their source. The Methodist Church has set up – Walking with Micah: Methodist Principles for Social Justice – to explore what it means to be a justice-seeking church and people. Through this, we hope to increase our practical ability to seek God's justice, as a Church and in our own Christian lives. What would this look like in our circuit? www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah/

John Fernley Educational Fund is a local Methodist charity that makes grants to children and young people in Sefton for education and training purposes. If you know a young person who qualifies please contact circuit office for details.

Marriage and Relationships

Following prayerful consideration by the whole Church, in June 2021 the Methodist Conference voted to confirm provisional resolutions on the principles or qualities of good relating, understanding of cohabitation and same sex marriages conducted on Methodist premises or by Methodist office-holders. More information about the Conference resolutions and guidance for local churches can be found here www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/marriage-and-relationships/

Prayer Pointers

- 3Generate the children's and youth assembly of the Methodist Church meeting at the NEC Birmingham, 29-31 October. The theme is 'In Tune', what does it mean to be in tune with each other and with God and how do we all have a part to play as part of the Body of Christ.
- Circuit Vision Evening and for Rev Jacky Bellfield the new District Mission and Evangelism Facilitator who is leading us.
- Young people as they go to university, and for University Chaplaincy Teams.
- For those feeling isolated at home.

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Items for the next newsletter need to be received by 22nd October.