



News from Synod

Dear Friends

The young worship leaders from Leytonstone ably led our morning worship as we gathered in Synod at Methodist Central Hall Westminster on the 8th September to **take a good look**.

We **looked backwards** at the Methodist Conference, through the eyes of 3 of our representatives. Apart from a debate on climate change much of the Conference was focussed on proposed changes to the Connexional Team. This debate was the culmination of several years of hard work. Conference's broad acceptance of the proposals mean that many processes will be simplified and more flexible, allowing the Team to adapt without major upheaval; making it more fit for purpose in the 21st century and more able to play its part in developing the priorities of the Methodist Church.

We **looked within** through the perspectives of young people - with Lindsey MacFarlane, the Croydon Circuit youth worker; Peter Baffoe, a member of the Association of Black Methodist Youth Clubs Exec; and Chidi Onyeforo, Chair of the Methodist Youth Exec. They challenged us to offer appropriate pastoral care and nurture to the young people in our churches, to receive the gifts they offer, make sure they know what's happening and - literally - put youth concerns higher up the Church agenda.

We **looked forward** to a number of vision and training days that are happening in the District and heard news of new opportunities, as well as a significant challenge to recruit and train new young Local Preachers. For further details see the centre pages.

We **looked around** us at the impact of climate change and the damage being done to the environment by our excessive consumption of the world's resources. We heard of the impact climate change on our brothers and sisters in the Pacific, including the islands of Tuvalu where 20% of the population have had to leave due to the rising sea level – the first official climate change refugees. Jennifer Potter reflected theologically on why we should be concerned and David Craine, a local preacher in Harlesden and Mayor's Advisor, gave a London perspective, highlighting the urgent need for us all to start making small changes in the way we use resources **now**, and indicating there is only a 10 year window in which to make significant change.

The themes of the synod were offered up in worship at the end of our day, including testimonies from Parchmore (solar panels on the roof), the Forest Hill junior stewards (a 12 and 13 year-old who are part of the leadership team) and Patrick Kandeh (who candidated for ministry from Walworth and has recently arrived as a probationer minister in the Bromley Circuit). As a new Methodist year begins everyone was challenged to identify one new thing we will do or to which we will (re)commit ourselves personally and one new thing we should be taking back to our churches and circuits. What page will we contribute to the ongoing story of Methodism in London?

It turned out to be a long day, with Synod overrunning - and we have been properly challenged to manage the time better in future. Part of the dilemma is that there is so much bubbling up in the District – and that's something we want to celebrate!

At the start of this new year you too are challenged to **take a good look**: at your lifestyle and vocation; with others at the pattern of life in the Circuit churches and their local communities. **Take a good look** and reflect on what you see. Where is God at work? Where is good news needed? What should come

to an end? What needs to be done in fresh ways? What needs to be started? Who might we be working with? Like the connexional team we need to develop more flexible structures that are fit for purpose, discerning where God is already at work and joining in.

Ermal Kirby

Stuart Jordan

Jenny Impey

EDEV

Extending discipleship Exploring vocation

A new opportunity for everyone. A circuit based, flexible programme for all who want to grow in faith and discipleship. It's for those who know they wish to candidate for the ministry and for those who know they don't and for those who are not sure!

Superintendents and Circuit Stewards will be given more information in October.

If you can't wait until then, then contact the Guy Chester Centre who already have a course running.
<http://www.chestercentre.org.uk/>

Civic and Social Care

The research report from Queen Mary College is available on the District website. Info submitted by 102 churches is on a map at www.londonmethodist.org/map.aspx. Why not look up your church. Is it listed? If so is the information up to date? If not why not tell the District resource centre what is happening so that the map can be updated?

The City of London Sharing the Wealth

The Synod passed a resolution which asked the Civic Engagement Commission to do some research on the issue of high salaries and bonuses in the city and their impact on society. The Commission would be pleased to hear from anyone who has an interest in this area;

associate@wesleychapel.org.uk
hannahreed@yahoo.co.uk

New training patters for Local preachers

The District has set a challenge to itself: in the next two years to recruit and train: 20 Local Preachers under 20 years old and 20 Local Preachers under 40.
To encourage each Circuit to recruit and train 10 new Worship Leaders.

The District will be running a Faith and Worship Access Course to help in the training.

Interested? Then contact Worship Task Group
Richard Foyn
Richard_foyn@mac.com

New circuits

The Lesnes Abbey Circuit was launched on Sunday 2nd September, it is an amalgamation of the Shooters Hill and Plumstead and Thamesmead circuits.

Synod also approved the amalgamation of the Orpington and Chislehurst Circuits from 1st September 2008. Watch this space for their new name.

Good practice

Is your church and circuit complying with safeguarding legislation? Check it out on the London District website.

How accessible is your church for those with disabilities? The District has adopted a framework to help us move towards an accessible district check it out on the website.

Climate change

For further resources logon to..

<http://www.london.gov.uk/>

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

<http://www.mrdf.org.uk/>

For Connexional Environmental Policy <http://www.methodist.org.uk/>

District Advance Fund

The District Advance Fund will have a grant-making capability of around £450,000 this year. This year it gave grants towards layworkers and youth workers, property schemes as well as more creative things such as mosaics. The policy for grant making can be found in the district directory and on the website.

Deadlines for applications:

21st September 2007;

14th December 2007;

18th April 2008

Youth participation?

How does your church include young people? How does it offer nurture and pastoral care? How do you let young people know what is happening - have you thought of emailing and using text messages? How do you use the gifts and energy that the young people bring. The District are currently listening to the voices of young people, what is your church doing?

Methodist Conference

All reports can be found on the Methodist Church website <http://www.methodist.org.uk/>

Events

Fresh Expressions Vision Day 10.30am – 4pm. Saturday 22nd September at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, cost £15. Booking via district resource centre.

Celebration with President and Vice-president. Remember the launch of the District? The next big celebration will be on Saturday 16th February 2008 at Methodist Central Hall Westminster. Book the date now, details will be available later in the year.

Worship in the global city Saturday 13th October at Hinde Street Methodist Church. A day for local preachers, worship leaders and everyone concerned for the quality of worship in our churches. Cost £10. Booking via District Resource Centre.

Meetings for Circuit Stewards Thursday 18th October 2.30pm and 6.30pm at Methodist Central Hall Westminster

Vacancy:

Nick Palfreyman, the **District Disability Advisor** has just left London to serve with VSO. We need a new advisor or a group of people who together could advise the district. If you are interested or know someone who might be then please get in touch.

Resources

Three new resources are available from the District Resource Centre and on-line via the web-site:

- **Prayer Handbook** which lists prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for every circuit in the District and offers a suggested Sunday cycle of prayer to ensure we pray faithfully for one another over the year.
- **Mini Directory** which lists key contact people in the District and is available for all officers in the local church.
- **Circuit Review Pack** which is a resource to help circuits conduct their own reviews.

District Resource Centre: 020 7654 3850

Email: admin@methodistlondon.org.uk

District Website: www.londonmethodist.org

STOP PRESS!

In the light of the Climate Change debate at Synod Christian Aid have forwarded the following details on what is happening in London

Events happening in London around our Cut the Carbon March on 1 & 2 October. After brilliant rallies and events in Edinburgh, Leeds, Birmingham and Cardiff, the Cut Carbon March will finish with a flourish in London. The full low down on the March is here:

www.christianaid.org.uk/stoppoverty/climatechange/march/index.aspx

Monday 1 October - The Last Night of the March

7.30pm at St John's Waterloo, Waterloo Road, SE1 8TY.

Join the marchers on the last night of their march for an evening of acoustic music, climate change stories and blistered feet! Featuring: Martin John Nicholls, Andy Flanagan, Gareth Davies-Jones and the Cut the Carbon marchers

Tickets £5 from london@christian-aid.org or 020 7523 2321

2 October - Join the final mile of the 1,000-mile Cut the Carbon March

Gather at 11am in Potters Fields Park SE1, and in the Riverside area (nearest tube London Bridge). There will be entertainment, with comedian and climate campaigner, Alistair McGowan, top of the bill.

For more info contact: campaigns@christian-aid.org or call 020 7523 2264

And finally... celebrate at St Paul's Cathedral at 2pm

To finish in style there will be a celebratory service at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the achievement of the marchers and everyone down the country who has made the march possible - washing clothes, cooking dinners, recharging electric vehicles!

Tickets for the service are free but on a first come, first served basis. To book yours, just call 020 7523 2258.