

Harlington *April*

Methodist **2025**

Monthly

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Hi all,

Our Annual Church Meeting was an interesting affair, reported separately in the Monthly, but raising many questions for the Church, and also looking at ways we can seek answers. It included a jacket potato lunch, which made me think that it is quite a while since we had a church meal together.

It is interesting to see how, when we get together, we can discuss ways to do things and we may feel more able to volunteer or to understand the need for certain things to be done or actions taken.

A number of things came out of the meeting, including consideration of pushing forward with ideas we have for using money left to the church, which is currently being labelled "New Project". A team is forming to look at that, expect more information soon as we intend to get something to start happening as soon as possible.

It is fascinating how, when we meet, we can be both optimistic and realistic. Our meeting looked at the good and bad, but we didn't think that the bad outweighed the good possibilities yet, although we know we can't let things drift.

The Circuit also has to go through a similar exercise. The problem is that often, when we hear the word "Circuit", we think that there is some great organisation. There isn't. The Circuit is the collection of churches and their members. Circuit officers come from these as do Circuit funds. Therefore the Circuit is holding a Listening Day. There is a full description of this elsewhere in the monthly. Please read it and see if you can join in.

Clive

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

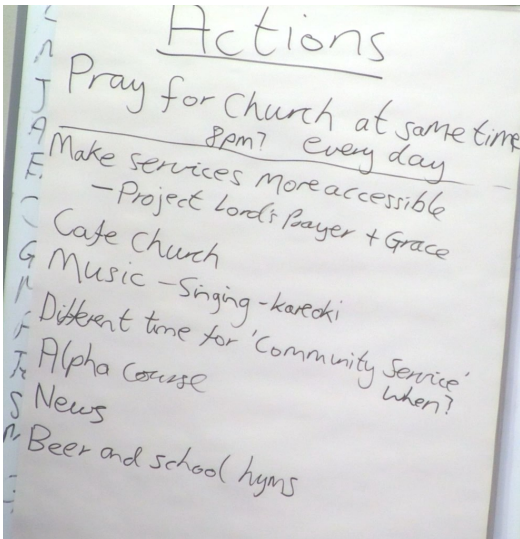
The annual church meeting, held on 23rd March, took a different form this year.



As the Circuit is working through the Next Steps for the Circuit, they have suggested that churches do the same thing – and we haven't had a serious discussion by the whole church for some time. Angela Brydon started us off, after the morning service, with a discussion as to what was good about the church now, which gave us a good starting point.



Over and after lunch, we talked about what would happen to the church over the next five years if nothing changed,



and then we looked at things we could do to stop what seems to be, in the opinion of most people, an inevitable route to closing. We produced a list of actions, which I hope will be displayed in the church – but if not, ask to see it or any of the other material produced! – and the stewards will get together, with Claudia, and see what we can do, as a whole congregation, towards growing into a better future.

Two specific actions were the pray-time and setting up a “New Project” team to see how we can use our legacy monies for outreach.

We finished the afternoon by making appointments for the next year.

Thanks must go to Angela, for providing a discussion strategy, and to Martin and Hazel, for co-ordinating and providing lunch. Thanks also go to the people who provided desserts for those of us with a sweet tooth!

HARLINGTON MESSY CHURCH



Our next Messy Church will be on 19th April 2025 at 4 pm which will be live/Zoom/Streamed. If you would like to join us, either as a participant or a helper, please feel free. People may well be needed to help small children.

Our April session is on Easter Saturday when we will be looking at Holy Week and Easter..

Our normal format is to do activities until 4.45 pm, then have a Celebration which includes singing and further activities, usually ones it is easier to do at home. This is streamed and recorded.

Then at 5.30 pm we have tea. By the way, the past celebrations are still on YouTube, as are the fully recorded sessions we did in lockdown.

Messy Church is always on the third Saturday. If you can help at any of these, please let Clive or Tina know so that we can arrange things most efficiently. If you stay to the end you get tea!

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Our next planned events are the Good Friday Walk of Witness, Christian Aid Week and the Lower School Summer Fayre. Keep your eyes open for appeals for assistance with these.

LOCAL ARRANGEMENT SERVICES

There are an increasing number of Local Arrangements services on the plan. Although some churches have closed following the pandemic and some are working together, we have also lost a number of Local Preachers who have retired or died. We are also starting to see the reduction in full-time ministers. This means that it is getting harder to cover all the appointments on the plan, and we are seeing more LAs that we have not asked for. If you could help take part in preparing or leading an LA, please let one of the stewards know.

CHARITY FOR 2025

The church's charity for 2025 will be the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), as agreed in 2023. During the course of the year we will try to provide you with information about the work they do on the coast and in the seas around the UK.



Lifeboats

CIRCUIT LISTENING DAY

To **all** the people of the South Bedfordshire Circuit

We invite you to join us for an important **Listening Day** on **Saturday, 26th April 2025**, at **Newland Church, Crawley Green Road, Luton, LU2 9TE (formerly known as Wigmore)**. This day is a key opportunity for us to gather, reflect, and share our thoughts, concerns, and hopes as we seek God's vision for the future of our Circuit. Your presence and voice are crucial in shaping the path ahead. This Listening Day is part of a broader, ongoing process of reflection and discernment that we are undertaking as a Circuit.

As we reflect together as staff, we rejoice in the good things we notice across the Circuit:

- The warmth, faithfulness and generosity of our people,
- The welcome given to preachers by congregations,
- The care and support shared between people and more widely with the community.

However we also notice some challenges and are sure you will be aware of these:

- The difficulties in staffing the Circuit – both financially internally and due to the shortage of ministers connexionally.
- We are losing one $\frac{3}{4}$ minister this summer and may then lose further members of staff in subsequent years – and these may not be replaced.
- Churches are struggling to find personnel willing to take up some of the posts.
- Ministers are feeling the pressure of being spread more thinly and not able to build relationships as they would wish, particularly if pastoral responsibilities keep changing each time there is a staff change.
- The need to have discerned a way forward by May when further conversations will be occurring about stationing of ministers

Our current Circuit Mission Statement commits us to working according to some guiding principles:

- deep listening to churches by walking alongside them in envisioning their future story
- the future of the churches and circuit is a result of consultation, not a CLT matter only

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- the process of coming to decisions about how human and financial resources are used will involve the churches
- each church's discernment will be respected and the wisdom of the people within that church valued
- all we do is underpinned by the good news of the gospel and our theology of hope and surrounded by prayer

This process is about more than structural or staffing decisions and simply reallocating churches and ministers and spreading support more thinly. It is about discerning what is essential and what God wants us to prioritise in this season. We are committed to listening to God, to each other and to the Circuit as a whole. Your involvement is vital in shaping the proposals that will guide our future together.

We look forward to gathering with you for this crucial time of prayer, reflection and discernment as together we seek God's guidance for the future of the Circuit.

Please share this information widely in your church. It would be helpful if you could let your senior steward know of your intention to attend by 13th April.

Agenda for the Day:

- **10:30 am – Welcome & Worship** (Each church to bring an item that demonstrates their mission and ministry)
- **11:15 am – Setting the Scene**
- **11:30 am – Discussion 1**
- **12.10 pm – Discussion 2**
- **12.50 pm – Lunch Break** (Lunch provided by the Circuit; churches are invited to bring cakes to share)
- **1.50 pm – Discussion 3**
- **2.30 pm – Discussion 4**
- **3:10 pm – Closing Worship & Reflection**
- **3:30 pm – Finish**

With every blessing

The Circuit staff team

APRIL DIARY

- 1st 1600 *Outside Booking Kristy Dance*
1945 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
- 2nd 1545 *Outside Booking—Emily—Child Singing*
1930 *Outside Booking—Emily T-G Adult Dance*
- 3rd 1445 Bright Hour Fellowship
- 4th 1830 626 Club
2015 TFT
- 5th 1500 Cinema Club
- 6th** 1000 Morning Service led by Martin Wallis—Come & See
1500 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
1800 Evening Service led by Rev Claudia Lupi inc Communion
- 7th 1400 Crafternoon Tea
2000 *Outside Booking—Scott Hemsley*
- 8th 1600 *Outside Booking Kristy Dance*
1945 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
- 9th 0930 *Outside Booking—Megan George—Wreath making*
1545 *Outside Booking—Emily—Child Singing*
- 10th 1445 Bright Hour Fellowship
- 11th 1830 626 Club
- 12th
- 13th** 1000 Morning Service led by Worship Group
1500 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
- 14th
- 15th 1600 *Outside Booking Kristy Dance*
1945 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
- 16th 1545 *Outside Booking—Emily—Child Singing*
- 17th 1445 Bright Hour Fellowship
- 18th 0945 Good Friday Walk of Witness leaves from the Church
- 19th 1600 Messy Church
- 20th** **0930 EASTER SUNDAY** Service led by Rev Claudia Lupi inc Comm.
- 21st 1400 Crafternoon Tea
2000 *Outside Booking—Scott Hemsley*
- 22nd 1600 *Outside Booking Kristy Dance*
1945 *Outside Booking—PBGS*
- 23rd 1545 *Outside Booking—Emily—Child Singing*

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1930 *Outside Booking—Emily T-G Adult Dance*

24th 1430 Thursday Fellowship Group—Sermon on the Mount—Matt. 5:
1445 Bright Hour Fellowship

25th 1830 626 Club
2015 TFT

26th 1000 Coffee Morning

**1030 CIRCUIT LISTENING DAY—at Newland Church, Crawley
Green Road, Luton, LU2 9TE (formerly known as Wigmore)**

27th 1000 Morning Service led by Local Arrangement
1300 *Outside Booking—Emily Hancock Mock Exam*

28th 0900 *Outside Booking—Emily Hancock—Dance Exams*

29th 1600 *Outside Booking Kristy Dance*

30th 1545 *Outside Booking—Emily—Child Singing*

30th 1930 *Outside Booking—Emily T-G Adult Dance*

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE TIME!

Don't forget that the Easter Sunday service starts at 9.30 am.

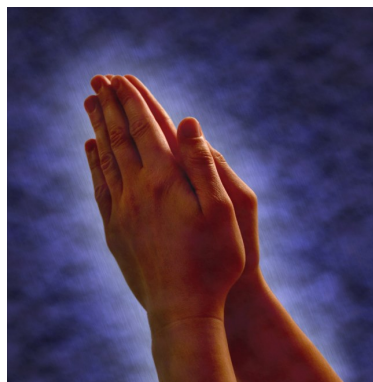
BRITISH SUMMER TIME

Clocks go forward an hour this weekend.

PRAYER TIME

At the annual church meeting it was proposed that we all pray for the future of the Church. It was suggested that we all try to do it at the same time but from wherever we happen to be at the time. It was proposed that this be at 8am and 8pm so please set your alarms and join us in prayer at either or both of these times.

Cathy



OUTSIDE BOOKINGS - APRIL

01st Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
01st Apr	1945	2200	PBGS
02nd Apr	1545	1830	Emily Hancock—Child Singing
02nd Apr	1930	2030	Emily T-G—Adult Dance
05th Apr	1500	1900	Cinema Club
06th Apr	1500	1700	PBGS
07th Apr	2000	2200	Scott Hemsley Band
08th Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
08th Apr	1945	2200	PBGS
09th Apr	0930	1230	Megan George—Wreath making
09th Apr	1545	1830	Emily Hancock—Child Singing
09th Apr	1930	2030	Emily T-G—Adult Dance
13th Apr	1500	1700	PBGS
15th Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
15th Apr	1945	2200	PBGS
16th Apr	1545	1830	Emily Hancock—Child Singing
16th Apr	1930	2030	Emily T-G Adult Dance
21st Apr	2000	2200	Scott Hemsley Band
22nd Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
22nd Apr	1945	2200	PBGS
23rd Apr	1545	1830	Emily Hancock—Child Singing
27th Apr	1300	1700	Emily Hancock—Mock Exams
28th Apr	0900	1630	Emily Hancock—Dance Exams
29th Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
29th Apr	1600	2000	Kristy Burgoine—Dance
30th Apr	1545	1830	Emily Hancock—Child Singing
30th Apr	1930	2030	Emily T-G—Adult Dance

GETTING THE NEWS

How do you like to get the news? Do you like paper? Do you use Facebook? Would you prefer news on TV?

The Church has a Facebook page which we sometimes use, and the occasional diary item on YouTube could also be extended.

Let me know what you would like.

Clive

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Our services in March mostly followed the usual pattern. Our Sunday evening communion service continues to be supported. Special services included the Pastoral Visitors Dedication service, the Circuit Ash Wednesday Service, with us because we can run Zoom and stream the service, and the service before our ACM which was led by Angela Brydon, the District Discipleship Enabler.

Pancake Parlour was held, after an amount of



debate, and we must thank those from other churches who came to help us. The event was well attended, considering the lack of general advertising, and is always a good time to meet people.



626 Club has met during March. Our numbers have fluctuated a lot over the month, hopefully they will stabilise after Easter.

TFT has also continued to meet, having started the month with a trip to Scotland for the UK final for Masterteam. They came fifth in this contest. They did, however, come first in the Battalion First Aid competition, and joint 3rd in Friends of St. Mary's quiz. They also looked at Lent and produced the posters you can see in the hall, which attracted the attention of some of the 626 children, enabling a conversation.

For the Bright Hour Fellowship, the month started with Chris Berry talking about his work with refugees and the problems they face on coming here. Often they are on their own having left their family in their own country, need to learn the English language and need to prove they are coming here for their own safety. Although they are put in hotel accommodation this is only for a specified amount of time before they have to leave, finding accommodation for themselves.

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Alan and Christine Parfit spoke about the History of the Oberammergau Passion play showing pictures of the costumes used and how they changed with the years it was performed.

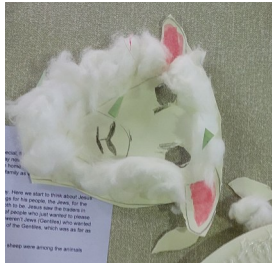
John and Barbara did a very interesting music quiz with songs from the 1940's - 1950's.

Claudia gave us questions to answer about our lives and how our Faith in God had helped us, how we saw God and whether we had been taught about anything by him. Our answers were filmed.

Fellowship Groups have been meeting, augmented by two Lent groups, including the one watching The Chosen.

OTB continues in both Harlington and Sundon.

We had another good attendance at Messy Church. We were looking at Lent up to Palm Sunday, so we talked about Jesus'



baptism, the temptations, also Mothering Sunday, Passion Sunday and Palm Sunday and the Cleansing of the Temple. This led to Picture Frames, sheep masks, palm leaves, pictures etc. As usual, we finished with tea.

Film Club showed How to Train Your Dragon 2.

The Coffee Morning was a little quiet this month.

MAF – MISSION AVIATION FELLOWSHIP

2025 is the 80th anniversary of the set up of MAF, an international Christian organisation who today reach out to people in over 25 countries. A fleet of more than 100 light aircraft operate to more than a thousand destinations in difficult terrain that have become inaccessible due to derelict roads, natural disaster or violent conflict. They offer a link to the wider world by providing transport for food, water, medical supplies as well as health professionals, emergency workers and Christian missionaries.

We recognised their work some years ago at one of our Café Services.

They rely a lot on charitable donations. If you would like to know more, please see Mary Caveney.

PANCAKE PARLOUR—RESULT

At Pancake Parlour we served 88 pancakes and made a profit of just over £88 for our charity this year, which is the RNLI. Thanks to all who helped in any way, and to all who attended.

BRIGHT HOUR FELLOWSHIP — April Speakers

3 rd	-	Vicki Yorke
10 th	.-	AGM with Claudia
17 th	-	Tim Haines
24 th	-	Diane Maple

ROTAS

DATE	STEWARD	FLOWERS
06 April	am tbc pm tbc	
13 April	John	Parfitt
20 April	Cathy	Doreen EASTER
27 April	Madeline	Setterfield

Could you be a vestry Steward? Have a word with Tina.
The Flower Rota for 2025 is available. Could you fill any spaces? Speak to Doreen.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

The two Thursday Fellowship groups still meet, every other week.

At 10.30 am. Live. Please contact Helen/Sandra for dates and location.

At 2.30 pm. On Zoom. Contact Tina (874481) for dates and details of the joining link.

CIRCUIT SERVICE—DUNSTABLE DOWNS

This will be on 13th July this year. Please make a note in your diaries and try to attend this different service. If anyone would like to help either with the logistics or the worship let Claudia know.



ISSUE #52

Welcome to the latest edition of our monthly magazine/notices. Deadline for items for the **MAY** edition will be **THU 17TH APR** for things for the diary to Trevor, or general articles and pictures of things being done by our church community to me by Thursday 24th April 2025. It is still possible to send late notices. These will normally be tagged on to the end of the circulated weekly service.

FLOWER ROTA—2025

Doreen has kindly agreed to manage the flower rota again for 2025 and a copy is on the notice board in the hallway.

Regular bookings have already been added BUT please check to see if any have been missed.

PLEASE check the list often to see if you can fill a space. Unable to provide the flowers? No problem—just make a donation to Doreen and she will sort out a flower display on a 'blank' date.



TECH TRAINING

I am trying to sort out a date for refresher training for the Sound System and for simplified Zoom, but a lot of things are happening at present and Easter and all the May Bank Holidays are coming up. I will suggest some dates as soon as I can.

Clive

WIFI

WiFi is available in the Hall. Ask Clive for the password. Note that the system keeps information on the type of sites visited.

BLANK PAGES

Pages come in 4s, but we only needed two pages extra. How could you use these two pages?

Prayer suggestions

Activity lists

Suggestions of ways the Church could reach out to the community

Draft of your testimony

Article for the next issue

The list could be endless!

NOTICES Details of items for the Notices should be delivered to Trevor Caveney at the caveney@ntlworld.com OR t315485@gmail.com

DEADLINE for inclusion in May edition is **THU 17th April**

CHURCH BOOKING DIARY

PLEASE check with Trevor before adding any dates or events.

Prayer Chain number: Dorothy Preston 874841

Church Website: www.harlingtonmethodistchurch.uk

Church YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTMWR_QCxujkh1zHjTFcoJw

FACEBOOK

Don't forget the church has a Facebook page. You can use this for communicating, and it's very good for showing pictures. If you want to join the group, contact Martin. Remember, the more people who use it and who belong to the group, the more useful it becomes.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE CHURCH FAMILY



Pick up your pen, pencil or keyboard and share with us what you are doing in your life and as part of the Church.

Please feel free to send me items of interest, messages, birthdays, anniversaries or anything else you might wish to share for inclusion in future editions of these E-notices. Keep safe.

Trevor & Mary

CONTACT MAGAZINE

The latest edition is available at <https://harlingtonvillagemagazine.org>

Paper copies will also be available.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

'The calling of Harlington Methodist Church is to respond to and celebrate the Gospel of God's presence. In all of our activities we seek to serve Harlington and the wider world. Most of all we aspire to honour and serve the living God.'