

Methodist reporter

July & August 2024

E-News from the St Albans and
Welwyn Methodist circuit

ISSUE 197



**Testimony Service for
Rosemary Mutopo
9th June 2024 at Marlborough
Road Methodist Church,
St Albans**

Pictured:
Deacon Nigel Perrott
Rev Adam Nyawo
Rev Daniel Yovan
Rev Rosemary Mutopo
Rev Lorna Valentine
Rev David Jebb
Rev Caroline Weaver

The service was well attended and

included an address by Rev Adam Nyawo, former Chaplain of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Fellowship UK, whose members provided some traditional Zimbabwe music. The service was led by Rev Dr David Chapman, Chair of the Methodist District, and Rev David Jebb. Rosemary's Testimony illuminated the tough and trying path she has had to follow in her training for the ministry, whilst also working as a ward sister in an NHS Hospital. Monday to Friday at the Hospital and then Friday to Sunday at Queens College. Service link: www.digswellvillagechurch.org.uk

Ordination service on 30th June at Batley, Yorkshire



**Rev Rosemary Mutopo
receives the
'Laying on of hands'
at her Ordination.**

A still image from the live video stream of the service. The service was led by the Methodist President, The Rev Ruth M Gee, Vice-President Bala Gnanapragasam and the Preacher was The Rev Helen Kirk. The service can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/heDu7i4n7bA>

ROSEMARY'S ORDINATION SERVICE

Sunday 30th June at Batley Central Methodist Church

Rosemary was one of seven ordinands at Batley Central Methodist Church on Sunday 30th June, and it was a wonderful occasion. The Order of Service declared that "this is a solemn but deeply joyful service" and it certainly was on both counts! All ages and ethnicities were represented by the large congregation and as you can imagine the roof was nearly raised by the hearty singing. A group of us went from Digswell Village Church, and I saw a large contingent from Oxlease there as well.

The sermon was delivered by Revd. Helen Kirk, chair of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent district, and she amusingly and thoughtfully compared us as Christians with her own newborn granddaughter – beloved before she had achieved or done anything, as we are beloved by God despite our failings. It was also pointed out to the ordinands that although the day was the culmination of a lot of work and effort, it is only the beginning of their journey as ministers.

Rosemary and the other candidates were presented to the President of Conference, and after the acclamation from the congregation of "They are worthy", they knelt while the President and each ordinand's assisting minister laid hands upon their heads. Rosemary was assisted by our own circuit superintendent Revd David Jebb. A bible was presented to each ordinand.

After the service there was joyous and impromptu singing and dancing in the entrance from Rosemary and the Zimbabwean fellowship. Tea and biscuits rounded off a wonderful afternoon



Helen Robinson



The ordinands at Batley:

Jonny Bell,
Juliet Kisob,
Joy Mayisiri,
Rosemary Mutopo,
Steve Sutton,
Marcia Tull,
Wendy Walker

NEWS, ARTICLES AND ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE METHODIST REPORTER

All copy for the Methodist Reporter should be sent via email to: news@methodistreporter.org.uk

Copy must be received by the 20th of the month, for the following month's issue.

Copy is only acceptable in the following file formats:

Documents containing text: Microsoft Word (.doc/docx). Pictures: Jpeg (Text documents sent as Jpeg or other graphic files will not be included). **Please ensure you have permission from people (or young people's parents) for their picture to be published in Reporter.**

Please do not send PDF files as we are not able to edit them and therefore may reject as unusable.

No scans of documents are acceptable, only the originals, please. Please keep article to a half page maximum. (Max 350 words)

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Diary and Circuit events

**ST. ALBANS
CATHEDRAL**

You are invited to attend a
**Free Church Service in the Lady Chapel
on the following Wednesdays at 11.00am:**

3rd July 2024

The Revd Vanessa Jefferson

Precentor, St Albans Cathedral.

7th August 2024

The Reverend Mary Moody

Regional Minister, Central Baptist Association.

18th September 2024

The Revd Graham Clarke

Baptist Minister.

Free Church Ecumenical Chaplain: Reverend Simon Carver,
Email: simoncarver@btinternet.com



Around the circuit churches

Circuit Events – See pages 5 & 6

Looking forward to the autumn we have two events that you need to pop into your diary.

We are delighted that Deacon Eunice Attwood will be leading a special morning on the 26th October at Cornerstone. Eunice will be helping us to think about how the bible shows us how to care for those on the margins of our communities. I am sure we all want to try and serve our communities in different ways and this will be a great opportunity to discover something new. Eunice brings many years of experience working in some of the most deprived in the UK.

This is open to everyone, so do please pop the date down.

We are also holding a weekend of prayer at Cornerstone in September. This will be a quiet time of prayer for individuals or small groups. You can sign up for an hour slot between sunrise and sunset on each day. This is open to anyone in the circuit and we will be running this alongside other churches in Hatfield.

If you would like any more information on either events please contact **Deacon Nigel** on 07380 276 036 or nigel.perrott@methodist.org.uk

Sustainable St Albans 'SustFest' 7 – 16 June

MRMC has always participated in this festival of community events, most obviously by having a sustainability theme for our June Thinking Lunch. The SustFest dates do not always include the first Thursday, but you can list events that are close to the date and in the spirit of SustFest.

Our **Thinking Lunch** speaker this year was Major Heather Poxon, Territorial Environment Officer for



the Salvation Army, talk title 'Treading Softly – Tackling the Climate Emergency'. We heard about the difference small projects are making to the communities in which they are based, and the bigger challenges that we are facing nationally and globally. We ended with a game to see how many of the people attending could tick a box on the bingo grid - how many things do you do? A thought-provoking talk and discussion, and the bingo card is prompting our household to review some of our activities and purchases.

A new **SustFest** event this year was the **Expo** at the Alban Arena over the weekend of 7 – 9 June. **Green Christian St Albans** had a stand and had collated images from local EcoChurches. MRMC featured with our candle wax and (past) crisp packet deliveries by bicycle to recyclers. We take the candle wax to St John's, Southdown. We don't know what they then do with it, but when 'networking' at the Green Christian stall we learnt that one church collects their wax and then makes it into small candles that are used in a special service.

An **MRMC** member was promoting cycling on the Sustainable Travel stand – that is our Rona Wightman in the St Albans Cycle Campaign vest, along with Kate Swindells from the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership.



Links for more information:

SustFest <https://sustainablestalbans.org/sustfest/>

Green Christian

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/about/local-groups/st-albans/>

<https://www.saint-lukes.co.uk/green-christian-st-albans>

Circuit Online Services at Hatfield Road and Digswell Churches:
Hatfield Road: <http://www.hatfieldroadmethodist.org/?cat=78>
Digswell: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpct7x1zgoY3-kMx_N60dka

Hatfield Road **Methodist** Church 

Come and watch the film series everyone's talking about...

The CHOSEN

SEASON ONE

Sundays at 4pm

May 19, June 16, July 21

September 15

October 20

November 17

The **CHOSEN** is the first ever multi-season TV drama about the life of Jesus, inviting us to see Him through the eyes of those who knew Him.

Each screening will be followed by a chance to discuss the episode together. Refreshments will be served. All welcome.

This series on the life of Jesus continues at Hatfield Road MC on Sundays 4pm on 21 July, September 15th, October 20th and November 17th.

Many of the films that make up the series are on the 'Chosen', YouTube channel:

<https://>

www.youtube.com/

[@TheChosenSeries](https://www.youtube.com/@TheChosenSeries)

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HATFIELD

SUNRISE TO SUNSET PRAYER ROOM

13TH - 15TH SEPTEMBER

INDIVIDUALS OR SMALL GROUPS ARE INVITED TO PRAY FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF HATFIELD



Sign up using the QR Code



Or contact Nigel
07380 276 036

HOSTED AT:
CORNERSTONE HOUSE • CHIPMUNK CHASE • HATFIELD



Hatfield Road Methodist Church – National Cream Tea Day

This year at Hatfield Road we decided to celebrate National Cream Tea Day (yes, there really is one...!) in style.



On Friday 28th June, the Day itself, our weekly Day Care group for elderly folk enjoyed scones with lashings of clotted cream and homemade strawberry jam with their afternoon cuppa.



On the Saturday afternoon, we opened the church to all, with gazebos in the car park, and seating in the church for those wanting to avoid the sun. Activities were provided for children, and we all tucked into a feast of sandwiches, cakes, and of course plenty of scones, cream and homemade jam, all provided by church members. A great time was had by all, and we raised well over £250 for our nominated charities.

How can we be a church serving those on the Margins?

A morning to discuss and learn some theological foundations to enable the church to help those on the margins of our society.

You are invited to join us at:
St Johns Methodist Church, Potters Bar
on Saturday 26th October
10am until 2pm.
*Arrivals from 9.30am – Bring a packed lunch

Please book with: Deacon Nigel Perrott
nigel.perrott@methodist.org.uk
07350 276 036



led by: Deacon Bunlee Atwood
Church at the Margins Officer

The Methodist Church



Notice outside a Methodist Church:

**TIRED OUT AND
RUN DOWN?
COME IN FOR A
SERVICE**



Abridged report from the June circuit meeting

NOTES FROM CIRCUIT MEETING HELD 18/06/2024 AT OXLEASE METHODIST CHURCH

It was a depleted meeting with only 20 people in attendance. We firstly heard news from all of the churches of the good things that are happening. Here is a list of what I noted.

MRMC – Club Saturday is now running, I think once a month, under the guidance of Maggie Dodd and Nigel Perrott; they are starting All Age Worship once a month.

HRMC – Following a successful Youth Alpha course, four of the participants were confirmed; there has been a Youth Service; Afternoon tea taking place 29th June; chance to chat on a Monday morning at Morrisons.

SJPB – Autumn alpha course has 12 people signed up none of whom come to church currently; creative church has expanded and has moved into the main hall; weekly welcome space continues with many non church people attending for friendship, food, games; helping with Churches Together Holiday Club in summer; discussions ongoing on whether to employ an outreach worker; considering having a gang show in November.

Radlett – A Churches Together Advent Course is going to be run from the church; 2 new members; churches together picnic in July; Anglicans running a God and chips event.

Shenley – Messy church continues to go well; new baby and toddlers group bringing 22 children plus parents/carers; looking at running a couple of summer camps in August.

DVC – 60th anniversary year with a big event on 7th July with a live band and a march around the village; prayers for the street; holiday club in August.

LW – Mother and Toddler group has restarted; work being carried out to accommodate renewal of long term letting.

Oxlease – Had run the Pentecost BBQ; having a cultural day on 21st July with service and fellowship with food; working with the scouts to have a service together; start of a monthly Café Church service.

Panshanger – Praying round the streets; Hope café; ongoing work in the church to accommodate increasing attendance on Sunday mornings.

Cornerstone – Now an official centre being used by Social Services; 2 trips planned over the summer plus Farm visiting Cornerstone; after school club continues to grow with 12 children coming.

The churches were congratulated for their ongoing work and mission and the CLT reminds the churches that it is an enabling body and with circuit finances in a healthy state, can contribute to the work, but the local churches are in charge of their own mission.

The circuit accounts have now been signed off and will be lodged with the relevant body including list of trustees. The figures for the current financial year are projected to show a small surplus. We have benefitted from increase interests receipts, but have had to spend some of that on unexpected manse repairs. We have moved in the right direction since 21/22 when the circuit made a £28k loss. Our reserves stand at £145k which is just under 50% of annual expenditure and more or less in line with our policy. The budget for next financial year was agreed at previous meeting and is projected at break even again. A £2,000 grant to Ludwick way was approved which is to make alterations to accommodate an existing letting. A short term loan to Radlett had been made since last meeting and it is hoped this will be repaid in the not too distant future. This was requested to upgrade the previous

manse after a long term letting to prepare the property for a new let. It was noted that money could be released to do mission work by selling properties within the circuit although this then does mean that rental income would then be lost.

It was confirmed that the Connexion has approved the closure of Birchwood, and a management committee has been set up to look after the premises as it will continue to be rented to the special needs school and for use for other mission purposes. A thanksgiving service is taking place at Birchwood church on the 4th August at 3pm.

The LPWL committee was pleased to announce that Claire Debnam has moved to on trial following successful period on note with Stuart Johnson. Also Maggie Dodd is looking to go through local preacher training. Sadly, Gladys Smith's health prevents her from carrying out any preaching for the time being. It was highlighted that there will be a Study Day at St John's on 26th October – details will be published elsewhere, and there will be a Quiet Day next year during lent.

We were told that Safeguarding and EDI needs to be on all church council agendas going forwards. Whilst we have carried out a lot of training over the last year and many people have done the requisite training, there are a number of people in roles where training MUST be carried out. Anyone who has not done the training by this August, will have to be asked to step down from their respective roles until training has been completed. We are being audited as a circuit so it is important that you make sure your church is up to date in this area.

We are looking at getting the Circuit accredited as an Eco Circuit as we have three churches that have accreditation, but it would be good for all of us to consider this aspect within our churches.

Guy Fenner – Circuit Steward



The poster is for the 3Generate 2024 event, held from 4-6 October at NEC Birmingham. It features a purple background with white and yellow text. The top left has the 3Generate 2024 logo with the Methodist Children & Youth Assembly name. The main text says 'Tickets on sale 16th April'. Below that, it describes the weekend as a time to remember for children and young people. Contact information for planning is provided at the bottom left. On the right, there is a collage of photos showing young people at the event, with three purple icons above them labeled 'Tune in', 'What is God Saying', and 'What is next?'. A quote from a 2023 volunteer is featured at the bottom right.

3GENERATE 2024
Methodist Children & Youth Assembly

4-6 October
NEC Birmingham

Tickets on sale 16th April

A weekend to remember for children and young people! Start making plans to bring a group to 3Generate 2024.

If you need help in planning your group, contact us at:
3Generate@methodistchurch.org.uk

Tune in What is God Saying What is next?

“I kept describing the weekend as a calming balm. I was so encouraged by the wide range of different young people and their views. And that the focus was on helping them tune-in with God.”

2023 Volunteer

Would you like to come along to 3Generate in Birmingham this autumn? The Circuit are looking to get a group of young people together to go. If you are interested, please contact Maggie Dodd: mrsaggiedodd@gmail.com or Deacon Nigel Perrott: nigel.perrott@methodist.org Web site: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/ministries/children-youth-family-ministry/3generate/>

ECO CHURCH

We know that many of our churches are working to become recognised as Eco Churches by A Rocha, the Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment. Each month, they issue an Eco Tip, to help us all to do our bit, and here are the tips for July & August:



JULY

Taste the benefits of seasonal and local food. Plan to incorporate locally grown produce into your diet and shopping list throughout the seasons, as it is harvested at its peak ripeness, ensuring superior flavour compared to imported alternatives that have travelled thousands of miles. If saying grace before a meal is regular practice in your household, this month, include giving thanks for your local food producers.

AUGUST

Assist local wildlife during very hot weather. Provide hedgehogs with hedgehog biscuits (available at many pet stores and online) or dog biscuits (small/ crumbed) as their prey of slugs, snails and worms diminishes, and ensure a safe exit for them and other small mammals if you have a garden pond. Help garden birds by maintaining a filled bird bath and supplying supplementary food including black sunflower seeds, pinhead oatmeal, soaked sultanas, raisins, currants, mealworms, waxworms, and a nutritious seed mixture, when natural supplies become scarce.

Notes from the Eco Forum held on Monday 24th June 2024

The meeting was well attended with 16 individuals representing more than 12 churches and 6 circuits. Angela Brydon opened with prayer and indicated that the meeting would be kept short given the warm evening.

As there were a number of folk present at the forum for the first time we went around the room introducing ourselves and sharing our Eco Stories. It was apparent from the time of sharing that things are progressing whether toward awards or by deepening the work already done.

Some folks had received an email from A Rocha indicating that a new survey would be available shortly. As not everyone had received the email, Angela agreed to forward that to everyone. Basically, anyone using the old survey has until the end of the year to complete awards. So, if just starting then the new survey should be used when available. Angela to email Hamish Leese to see if has any knowledge of the new survey.

As a District we currently have 51% of churches across the District registered for Eco Church with 47% of those churches with Bronze awards and 10% with Silver. This is good progress towards the Methodist Church targets for 2026 of 50% of churches registered and 50% of registered church to have Bronze awards and 20% with Silver.

Questions were asked about a District Mission plan, and Angela reported that this is a work in progress, but there is a working document available that is helpful, before it is agreed. Please email Angela if you would like a copy.

There was a discussion about which of our Circuits were registered with Eco Church. Currently North Beds (Bronze), Colchester, Chelmsford and St Albans & Welwyn are registered with South Beds planning to register. All Circuits have at least 2 churches registered for Eco Church so further steady progress here. It was acknowledged that A Rocha don't really understand circuits and the way we manage manses in the Methodist Church. Angela to contact Hamish to see if he was aware of any progress.

Blister packs were once again discussed and there is a mixed response from Superdrug, however Boots are starting to roll out a collection scheme. Also, a refill shop in Chelmsford is in contact with Astra Zeneca about recycling [blister packs](#). We hope to have details to pass on so that others can perhaps petition Astra Zeneca too.

The meeting closed in prayer at 8.30pm