



West Sussex (Coast and Downs) Methodist Circuit

Please send your news for September, October & November to:

office@westsussexcoastanddownscircuit.co.uk

May 2023

Welcome to the first quarterly Circuit Newsletter, sharing news and forthcoming events.

MISSION MARKET PLACE

During the last quarter the One World, One Family group held a successful Market Place event at Offington Park MC. It was interesting to see what missional projects the Circuit was involved in and to share ideas and resources. Thank you to all those contributed and organised this event.



During this event there was a special Circuit Celebration Service where we recognised four Local Preachers for their long service. Pictured here are Brian Kelley, David Booth and Wendy Corney having just received their certificates. Shelagh Morgan was not well enough to attend on the day but is now feeling much better.

FIRST AID

The Circuit has also recently held two courses at Lancing and Goring Methodist Churches. These were all day courses followed by an exam and our congratulations go to the 24 people who attended and have subsequently been awarded their certificates.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 17th June 9.30am-4pm Littlehampton United Church will be hosting an 'African Inspired Art Exhibition'. Organised by the charity Friends of the Mombasa Children. All artists/church groups/schools who would like to exhibit are welcome to contact Chris Azzaro for details c.azzaro@mombasachildren.org.uk.

Sunday 25th of June Steyning MC will be providing refreshments during the **Steyning Open Gardens** event, from 12 noon until 4.30pm. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available all afternoon, and sandwich lunches will be available from 12.30-1.30pm. This is a joint initiative with Steyning in Bloom and the money raised from the refreshments will be shared 50/50 with them. Everyone is welcome.

Saturday 8th July at Goring MC a **Summer Fair** with all the usual stalls, activities and refreshments. Let us pray for some sunshine and do please pop along.

Sunday 16th July at Felpham MC at 3.30pm is the **Circuit Farewell Service** for Revd. Dan Balsdon and family followed by a tea.

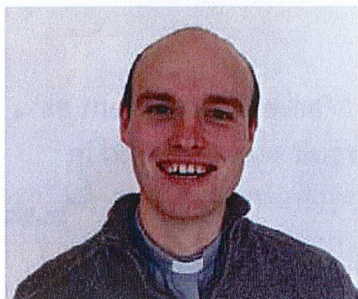
Tuesday 1st August there is a **Family Fun Day** at **Goring M.C.**

Saturday 12th August at 12.30pm there is the **Circuit Summer BBQ** at **Rustington MC.**

Tuesday-Thursday 15-17th August Holiday at Home (for adults) at **Rustington MC**. £10 per day including lunch. Further details or to book your place ring the Church Office 01903 776900.

The Revd. Dan Balsdon and his family will be moving to the Dorking & Horsham Circuit in the summer. Dan will also be taking up the role of Assistant Chair in the district in addition to his circuit responsibilities.

MESSAGE FROM DAN:



'I was giving our vegetable patch its first dig-over of the season last weekend, and I was suddenly struck that this was the last 'first dig' I would offer this vegetable patch.

The vegetable patch didn't exist here when we arrived, and so year by year we've invested time and effort into it: turning the soil, adding compost, pulling out weeds and removing stones (no matter how many times you dig, there are always stones that evade the eye!). After all that investment of time, it feels a bit sad to think we will soon be leaving it behind.

Similar feelings can be said for how I feel as I prepare to complete my season of ministry here. Over the last 5 years, in so many different ways, I've invested time and energy across the circuit, as well as in the churches where I have pastoral charge. Lots has changed in my time here. We've laid things down and taken things up. We've tried things and learnt from the successes and failures. And, of course, we've navigated a little pandemic along the way, which seemed to launch me into the position of circuit zoom specialist for a short while!

As I look back at the journey we've had together, I'm not finding it easy to prepare to be uprooted as I leave you all. But at the same time, I find God nudging me, saying that 'turning the soil' (of vegetable patches and in ministry) is a good and healthy thing. The uprooting that turning the soil can cause brings opportunity for new potential, new perspectives, new planting to take root, and new growth to be seen.

As the writer of Ecclesiastes so beautifully puts it;

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to plant and a time to uproot. (*Ecclesiastes 3: 1, 2b.*)

As the chapter goes on, beyond the more familiar poem, we find words which remind us that the work God calls us to is never ours, it is always God's. And so, season by season, God is at work, inviting different people to partner and participate. We each never see or comprehend the whole picture, because it is bigger than we can comprehend. All time and all things are God's, and so God desires that we find pleasure and joy in the small parts to which we are called to participate.

Friends, I have found great joy and pleasure during this season of serving God among you, and I am sure God has great opportunities ahead for you all. It has been a privilege to partner with you, and I assure you of our prayers for you as you enter your new season, just as I know you will be praying for us.

Thank you all for your welcome, encouragement, love and prayer you have offered to me, Louise, Rebekah and Lydia during my ministry here. '