

Rejoice!

February 2016



**The Magazine of the
West Norfolk Methodist Circuit**

Dear friends,

As I write in early January, our churches start again after our Christmas period. The New Year offers a fresh start for us as we seek to be the people of God in our different locations in West Norfolk.

Just before Christmas I popped into the Oxfam shop in Lynn and came away with a bargain. The book I saw I had discovered many years ago and had made notes from a library copy but now for just £3 can read it at my leisure. The book I had found was "Stages of Faith" by James Fowler.

The author argues that faith has stages in a similar way that Jean Piaget, the child psychologist said that children develop by stages to adulthood. In all of this there is nothing automatic; we can stay fixed in one stage for the rest of our lives. It reminded me of Luke's account of the calling of the first disciples where Jesus says to Simon Peter, "Push the boat into deeper water and let down your nets for a catch." Discipleship may start at the shallow end but is not meant to stay there but move to deeper waters.

Every person who has trained to be a teacher will have read of all kinds of experiments devised by Jean Piaget to show that children grow and change not just physically but cognitively. In one, he pours water from a tall glass to a wide glass and the child is asked which glass has most water. At one age the child gives a wrong answer but a year later realises that they are the same volume. They have it sussed. This is a natural part of child development.

But what about spiritual development? Firstly, we need to recognise that God's grace can work in our lives. If God's grace were absent we would only fumble about in the dark. But because of God's grace we can grow and develop as God wants us to.

Christian living is often about doing the same things on a regular basis; it is the daily round. In this we can so easily remain stuck in the same place - though that does not have to be the case. Somehow what we do often, which includes our usual prayers and worship etc. needs to be a means by which we grow.

Then there may be fresh things that need to take place in our lives. When I moved here I decided that I would book a few days in May each year to go to Holy Island. I go on my own and use these days to wander around the island, attend Morning Prayer at the church on the island and try to be open to what God would say to me. Most visitors are tourists but for a few days I am a pilgrim (or at least I try to be). So what new things do each of us need to do so that growth and development can take place? There may be opportunities in Lent to learn more about faith and grow.

The answer will be different for each one of us. Recently, I have been reading some book reviews - there is a new book out with an arresting title - "Deep Church Rising". I must read the book to see what they have in mind, but in the absence of that, may I suggest that the challenge for 2016 is to create lives and churches that go deeper; deeper in our relationship with God, deeper in our relationship with each other, deeper in service to our community and those in need. What would it mean for us and our churches to go deeper?

Sincerely **Maurice**

MWiB – Easter Offering

No sooner is Christmas behind us we have Lent coming up with Easter on the horizon. Time then to mention 'Easter Offerings' and the Dedication Service which is to be held at London Road on 11th May at 2.30 pm lead by Rev Catherine Dixon.

The title for this year's service is "Child, get up" inspired by the words of Jesus in John 10:10 in that God created each child with the potential to use their talents and gifts to the full and will focus on Dalit women and girls in India who suffer from discrimination on account of their caste status and gender.

Collection envelopes and promotional material will be distributed at the Circuit Meeting to be held at Gaywood on 16th March. All donations received are paid into a separate account and **all** monies go to World Mission ie funding Nationals in Mission Appointments and in grants to overseas churches including the Dalit Solidarity Network UK.

Thanks to all who have supported us generously in the past; £1,853-4 from this Circuit last year and over £400,000 nationwide.

Note to Church Treasurers:- There is some updated information re opening Envelopes and concerning 'Gift Aid' copies of which will also be available at the Circuit Meeting. Thank you again.

Mary Uttin

We wish Mrs Anne Bailey at The Haven Wretton congratulations on celebrating her 100th birthday on February 18th.

Praying together in the Circuit

One day in your presence is better than a thousand elsewhere. Psalm 84 is a wonderful expression of longing for God, appreciation of His goodness and love, excitement at the prospect of worshipping Him and being in His presence. One day in your presence is better than a thousand elsewhere. Really! One day better than one thousand days, that's two years and two hundred and seventy days! That's devotion! and a wise choice. The sons of Korah composed about 25 psalms and were 'worship leaders'. Their psalms enhanced with music seem to be in tune with the words of theologian Karl Barth "Christian worship is the most momentous, most urgent, most glorious action that can take place in human life".

2016 is a leap year, an extra day. One day, 24 hours or 1440 minutes. How about using that time spread throughout the year to worship, to give thanks for the privilege of worship we treasure now and to pray for more. For longing and love to increase in our Circuit and in all the world. For people to experience the presence of God in a life changing way. For His word to be alive and active in the power of the Holy Spirit. For our coming together with expectation and excitement. For our going out week by week as we continue to worship, serve and witness to the one we love, value, appreciate and long for.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your strength and with all your mind;

and, Love your neighbour as yourself.

This day for you Lord, in all I do Lord, in all I am Lord,
come shining through.

Let your spirit flow, let your glory show,
that the world might know, you live in me and I love you.

Prayers have been requested for:-

Derek + Viv, Stephanie, Janice, Amy, Trisha, Linda, Andrew, Mavis, Julia, Rachel, Judy, Dulcie + Neill. Kelly, Kath, Stephen + Victoria, William, Tom. Ken and Norma. Brian Osborne.

We are saddened to hear of the death of Ruth Harbach, daughter of Rev. Colin and Pam Harbach. Ruth encountered health problems for many years; she has been on our prayer list and on our hearts. We hold Colin and Pam and their family in our prayers.

For Pam Fowles as she awaits treatment; for the families of Gwen Oldham and Olive Caley. Ruth Cross

EASTER PRAISE: SAVE THE DATE!!

In the afternoon of Saturday 2nd April 2016 there will be a Circuit service at London Road to celebrate Easter.

More details to follow – watch this space!

Lent Group at South Wootton

Following on from our Advent course based on Stephen Cottrell's *Walking Backwards to Christmas*, we will be meeting once more on Tuesday mornings for a Lent course based on his *The Things He Said: The Story of the First Easter Day*. We had a wonderfully mixed group of Anglicans and Methodists from five different churches meeting during Advent; all are welcome to join us in Lent. Tuesdays 10.30-11.45am, 9th February – 15th March. For more information please contact the Rev. Catherine Dixon.

Ash Wednesday

London Road will be hosting a service of ashing and Holy Communion on Wednesday 10th February at 7pm, to which all the Circuit is invited as we begin the season of Lent. Although this is fairly unusual in the Methodist church, provision is made with an order of service in the *Methodist Worship Book*, which we will be following. Ashing is optional. The Rev. Catherine Dixon will be

preaching and presiding.

Women's World Day of Prayer: Friday 4th March

This year's service has been prepared by the Christian women of Cuba and has the title "Receive Children. Receive Me". The united King's Lynn service this year will be at London Road at 11am, with a Cuban-style welcome café beginning at 10.30. The service will be led by the Rev. Catherine Dixon, who will also be the speaker. The Downham Market service will be at 2pm at St Edmund's and the Hunstanton service will be at St Mary's Old Hunstanton at 3pm.

Pastoral Carers' Day

The Spring Pastoral Carers' Day will be at Downham Market on Saturday 27th February, coffee and arrivals from 9.30 for a 10am start. Everyone is welcome to share in this day of refreshment and reflection. The day will be led by the Rev. Catherine Dixon and her title is "A Matter of Life and Death". If you would like to come, please let Phyllis Bowman (01553 671288) know for catering purposes. There is no charge for the day, but donations towards costs will be welcomed.

Sankey Afternoon at Highgate

Following the enthusiastic reception for the last Sankey afternoon at Highgate we are planning another on Sunday 28th February, 3pm. All are welcome to come and sing some old favourites (or learn some new 'old favourites'!) and to share in worship. Please let Catherine know in advance if there is a particular hymn you would like included.

Around the churches



Stanhoe

Christmas has come and gone, and we celebrated with our annual Carol Service on the morning of 13th December. We sang many of the usual carols, and had the pleasure of a solo sung by Margaret Walters, who sings with me in Fakenham Choral Society. She sang the lovely spiritual, Mary's Boy Child, accompanied by our ever competent and long suffering organist, John Loose (he never knows what I am going to throw at him next)! It was a joy to have Valerie Shackcloth's grandchildren at our service, as we seldom see children in church nowadays. The church was beautifully decorated, by Sushila Russell's flower arrangements, together with Valerie Shackcloth's Christmas tree and Advent ring. At the end of the service, we served drinks and mince pies and had a time of fellowship. We took a retiring collection, and the proceeds were made up to £100 from church funds, and then divided between Action for Children and the Cumbria Community Fund for the relief of flood victims.

On 27th December, we were pleased to leave behind the hectic busyness of Christmas, and join together in quiet reflection in our service of Holy Communion, conducted by Rev. Stephen Oliver.

Steve will also have led our ecumenical service celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on the afternoon of Monday, 18th January, when we will have invited members of the local Anglican churches to join us for worship, followed by tea and cake and a time of fellowship. The preacher was be the Rev. Peter Cook, the local Anglican vicar.

We wish all our friends in the Circuit a very Happy New Year.

Elizabeth MacLeod

Downham Market

Ladies Friendship Circle

Our first meeting is on 3rd February 2016. We are welcoming our dear friend Andy Malcolm from the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. He is always a pleasure to listen to and to hear about the wonderful work he does.

The speaker at our next meeting on 17th February, Brian Bannister, has postponed to 22nd June as he has other commitments.

We will let you know at the next meeting what we replaces it him!

Hope you have all kept well over the Christmas period and look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

Margaret

'If Winter comes can Spring be far behind it' as the song goes, but we really haven't had any Winter yet so will we have a late Spring as we had last year when we escaped snowy, icy weather? Our Christmas celebrations over, we now look forward to Easter.

Our Church was decorated rather differently this year as we invested in some pillar LED candles for our eleven window sills, so the only candles to be lit were those on the Advent ring (health and safety would be proud of us). Now we have a quantity of used wax candles which can be recycled by anyone into the craft of candle making. Please get in touch if you would like them. We didn't have a huge Christmas tree in Church, but a smaller one in the social centre and one on the stage in the hall. The front left hand corner of the Church where the tree usually stands was decorated by a huge banner crafted by our new banner making group. We have had small banners in series of three on the pulpit, communion table and lectern. I am/with you/always and Jesus said/let your light/shine. For Advent we had a huge one in the Christmas tree space with four large candles nestling in a bed of holly leaves and berries with the words watch, prepare, behold and rejoice cross stitched down the candles. The Christmas banner even surpassed this work of art with a larger than life (how do I know how large they are) angel on a royal blue background with the words 'Glory to God' and 'Joy to the World'. Our thanks go to all the folk who lovingly produced such beautiful adornments for our sanctuary. We now await the Easter banner with anticipation. The Good Friday Walk of Witness will finish as usual at our Church so do come to the service afterwards or at least inspect the banner.

Our services have been enriched lately with visits from the local deaf community with their Minister the Rev. Anne Richardson signing for them at the front. I am trying to pick up some of the signs but the memory isn't very good in advanced years. It occurs to me that if we all signed we would not have to learn different languages as the signs are based on the meaning, not the spelling of the words and the world would be a quieter place. The group hope to visit once a month and they are very welcome.

Messy Church continues to thrive, albeit with slightly reduced numbers in January when 25 children attended with 48 meals in all served. The theme was the childhood of Jesus and the children made ball and cup games and played five stones, as Jesus might have done.

Our young mums are meeting regularly on Mondays between 10 and 11 a.m. and among other things are planning an Easter egg hunt. If you have young

toddlers and would appreciate a good natter while your toddlers leave you in peace playing with other youngsters do come and join them, new faces are always welcome.

Our Boys Brigade is also flourishing and the Captain, Ralph Perkins, reports that the 1st Company Downham Market, The Boys' Brigade is a select band of 8 boys who attend regularly. So far this session they have taken part in a sleepover at the Church, a drumming Day in preparation for the Norwich Lord Mayors Show and the Christmas Party. Planned for February is the sleepover and Challenge at Lowestoft which features the chance to play games all night! In the activity sessions the boys have constructed model aeroplanes, sewn together fabric owls, made toy caterpillars, Christmas Elves and Advent Rings. 2016 has commenced with activities based on a Star Wars theme.

A typical evening commences with active games such as football or an obstacle course to burn off excess energy! The boys then assemble for raising the Union Flag and then they separate into sections for badge work activities. One section of the badge work involves studying Bible stories and biblical characters as BB is a Christian Youth Organisation. Once activities are done there is a chance to play more games before brief devotions and the lowering of the Union Flag.

Our Saturday coffee mornings still attract a large crowd for a convivial few hours, a chance to enjoy home made refreshments and pick up a few bargains from our extensive bric a brac stall. I am indoors now selling mostly houseplants. Donations of bric a brac are always gratefully received so if you have any unsuitable Christmas presents this is your chance to dispose of them.

At the first meeting of the year Churches Together in Downham made plans for future joint services. Christian Aid week starts on 15th May and there will be a service at Wimbotsham Church at 6.30p.m on 22nd. As fewer street collections are possible, it was hoped that Churches would have a fund raising event/collection for that service. The Good Friday walk of witness will take place on 25th March starting at St. Edmunds at 9.00 a.m. All are welcome and we hope the weather will not be too inclement. Our two sessions of carol singing at Tesco raised £224 and many donations from individuals and Churches enabled us to fund forty food hampers. Tesco donated over £200 of food and plastic boxes (replacing the old cardboard ones). However, the demand from Health Visitors left few for the Churches to allocate so it is hoped to fund raise earlier this year to provide more hampers and again it is hoped that Churches will support this by having a special event or appeal, perhaps a collection at harvest services or suppers? Money, not food, is requested to make the uniform completion of the hampers easier. The food bank has been extra busy over the last few months due to benefit changes, low wages and rising numbers of drug or alcohol dependent people.

Seventeen volunteers come to help and the food bank is registered with Job Centres to get volunteers from those looking for work. There are collection points for donations at Tesco, Barclays Bank and in our Social Centre and your continued support, both with food gifts and prayers is asked for and greatly appreciated. If you can help the food bank in any way please contact the coordinator, Alex Coates, on 01366 384474. The Rev. Judith Grundy gave a report on her family's visit to the migrant camp, known as the Calais Jungle, which is split into two, one camp for men the other for women and children. They went on 29TH December taking blankets, clothes, food and children's shoe box gifts. Conditions were absolutely appalling. These people have lost everything, their homes, family members and possessions, but one man said 'at least we are safe here'. Judith will not be going to Calais again but if you could help in any way log on to the Children of Calais website. Here's hoping that by the time the March edition is out we shall have got through most of the Winter and that signs of Spring are on the way with the daffodils blooming for Mothering Sunday. Keep warm and well.

Joan Macey

Dersingham

On Monday 14th December we at Dersingham were delighted to host the Carol Service of Years 5 and 6 from Dersingham VA Primary and Nursery School. Sixty children plus teachers and helpers arranged themselves across the front of the church and with carols, readings, poems and prayers took us through the story of the first Nativity. Parents, grandparents, friends and church members thoroughly enjoyed seeing and hearing their enthusiastic re-telling of the story. Rev Steve gave the children much to think about with his talk about a chocolate orange and the children were delighted when they were all given a piece at the end of the service. This was the first time such a service has taken place and we hope and pray it will be the first of many.

Our Candlelight Carol Service on the Sunday before Christmas was held at 4p.m. this year and was followed by mince pies and coffee in the hall. The traditional carols and readings were interspersed with stories and anecdotes from Rev. Steve, which went down well with the members of the congregation for whom this was their annual visit to the church, but he followed it up with a more serious and challenging message about the meaning of Christmas. Another 'first' for us was the Communion Service at 11.30p.m. on Christmas Eve. A joyful celebration with carols and readings became a moving and significant celebration as midnight passed and our first act on Christmas morning was taking communion. And those who admitted to wondering whether they would be able to keep awake managed it!

The collection on Christmas Day and the stars on the tree money amounted to £223.31 which has been divided between The Purfleet Trust in King's Lynn and Water Aid Deliver Life Appeal. Another successful Chicken Foot evening at the beginning of January raised £141 for the Stroke Unit at the QE Hospital and church funds.

The local Diocesan Lent meetings this year have been arranged for Sunday evenings at 6p.m, which unfortunately clashes with our evening service time.

The dates and venues are:

14 th Feb.	Hunstanton, St Edmund's
21 st Feb.	Docking or Snettisham (to be confirmed)
28 th Feb.	Holme-next-the-Sea
6 th March	West Newton
13 th March	Dersingham, St. Nicholas (Choral evensong)

The lunches on the first Monday of the month continue to be much appreciated by the community as are the coffee mornings on the last Saturday of the month.

Elizabeth Batstone and Rosemary Caink

Terrington St Clement

On December 5th we held our Christmas Coffee Morning with Bric -a- brac, books, produce and cakes, raffle, competitions, "Guess the baby reindeer's birthday" "How long is the string Christmas tree ", "Where are the parcels?", sweets in jar. The Ladies in the kitchen provided coffee and light lunches of soup and mince pies. The sum raised for Chapel funds was £390.40. A big thank you to everyone who helped in any way.

At MWiB (Network) we shared carols and readings followed by mince pies, Christmas cake squares and shortbread. A collection of loose change totalled £13, which was given to Helen Maguire's project in Kenya.

Various collections over Christmas raised £115.15 for Action For Children.

Linda Howling

Pott Row

What a great Christmas Tree Festival !!! More Trees, more lights, more people. This was the best year yet.

We could not do this without our hard working team of helpers, who surprise us every year with their artistic ideas, Our heartfelt thanks go to all of them. Also a big Thank you to anyone who helped in any way, and of course to all the visitors, who all agreed it was the best Festival.

The candle-lit carol service rounded off the weekend on a high note, with a wonderful service led by Rev Catherine Dixon.

Once again thank you and a Happy New Year from everyone at Pott Row Methodist Church!!!.

Best Wishes

Jenny Baker

Christmas Tree Festival

Seeing the announcement in the magazine about the Christmas Tree Festival at Pott Row I thought I would go along and have a look.

The first things to catch my eye were two boards with coloured milk tops arranged like Christmas trees (much better than throwing them in the green bin!)

Entering the chapel, oh what a lovely warm reception was given as we came in from the cold wind.

I just stood for a minute looking at the whole Chapel filled with trees - many with flashing lights and all had different decorations. I gathered there was one real pine tree amongst twenty four others, one of which appeared to be made of old ship's rigging - very effective.

Just inside on the right was a tree quietly flashing, "Look, I am here! You nearly missed us!" and there was a knitted nativity group down on the mat.

Moving towards the stage the steps were covered with holly, candles and the knitted coloured milk tops, again most effective.

On the stage the pulpit had been turned around giving a nice open space for a nativity scene with a lighted angel above.

Also on the stage were other trees flashing, two trees well dressed by children from Holly Meadows, a white tree standing on its own looking very cold, and wooden nativity displays.

There was a table with a display of candles, and the organ was not forgotten and had little lights hanging on it.

Just at the end by the door was another nativity scene - this time with larger knitted figures, and the window ledges were used as well.

In the back room were many craft and bric-a-brac stalls. The tables all had small trees on them and plates with mince pies and biscuits, and coffee or tea was being served.

There was also a raffle with many prizes.

It was well worth spending time at the annual festival which I gather each year is a little different.

Christmas Fellowship Breakfast at Pott Row

Oh what a lovely atmosphere in the Chapel - all around us were many decorated Christmas trees and nativity scenes and coloured lights.

Chairs were placed round a long table also decorated for the breakfast.

On the table were the usual dishes of butter alongside baskets of rolls - but why rolls?

It was a bit disappointing that there were only ten people who managed to get there as there are generally more.

The Rev. Catherine Dixon came with her loveable dog rejoicing in the name of Bertie who stayed comfortably on her lap watching the proceedings.

I then realised why there were rolls and not toast when dishes of hot bacon arrived for us to make our own bacon butties - delicious!

After the food it was time for a short service led by Catherine with Advent hymns, prayers and a talk on the theme "He came and dwelt amongst us," (and so did the dog!)

The change of breakfast menu was a lovely surprise and we once again thanked all who worked so hard to make it such a special occasion.

We all look forward to the next Fellowship Breakfast.

Pott Row Annual Christmas Lunch

Once again the Pott Row team treated us to a traditional Christmas meal. They were kept busy attending to twenty five of us and succeeded in making us very welcome.

The usual sound of crackers snapping was followed by the wearing of paper hats and the reading of jokes.

The trays began arriving with laden plates - oh what a sight for sore eyes! The thought of no cooking, just enjoying both the food and the company sharing your table.

Next came the Christmas pudding with cream and custard in large portions, followed by coffee or tea along with mince pies and chocolate mint squares - what next?

Trays of white and red drink for a toast later on!

The Rev. Catherine thanked the team for all their hard work providing such a delicious meal.

Noticing some of the drink for toasting had been drunk, a refill was produced, and Steven proposed a toast for a happy Christmas for us all.

The raffle was drawn and I think most people were lucky.

As Catherine had another service to lead she had to leave early.

That was another successful Pott Row Christmas Lunch!

Pott Row Correspondent

North Lynn

Double Celebrations! Since the last issue of 'Rejoice' North Lynn has enjoyed not one but two celebrations! The first was our Church Anniversary – on November 30th – St Andrew's Day – when we celebrated 52 years of serving the community. Rev. Andrew Maguire and Rev. Becca Rogers shared leading our worship which included old favourites and modern classics amongst the hymns. As part of her talk Becca told us of her experiences as a beginner water-skier and how land based preparation was essential – just as the Advent Season was preparation for what was to come with the birth of Jesus. Before we got our preparations in full swing however we needed to continue with the Church Birthday and so 20 of us sat down after the service to a 'crock pot' lunch. There were four varieties to choose from – some ladies had brought their slow cookers from home filled with delicious hot main courses, whilst others provided trifles and cheese cakes. What a lunch we had! Finally the menfolk rolled up their sleeves and washed up!

This was the beginning of our Advent preparations too as over the next few weeks we heard of how the Bible tells us of the coming of a Saviour through the Old Testament and in the work of John the Baptist. We also prepared by decorating the church whilst the Guides and Brownies decorated the hall. So by the Sunday before Christmas we were able to hold our annual Carol and Nativity Play by Candle Light service in the afternoon; and what a lovely service, including the obligatory dressing up of Shepherds and Wise Men and a willing Joseph and Mary though no real baby for the manger this time. Thanks again go to the cake and tea makers.

With many away visiting families, those remaining gathered on Christmas Day in St John's with Becca and husband Tim and were delighted with the retelling of the Christmas Story illustrated with chocolate bars!!

'Don't try this at home' was our final Christmas Time Celebration on the Sunday after Christmas – as Becca provided an early reminder of the visit of the Magi complete with gold coins, precious oils and best of all real Incense, on a hot ember, providing a unique piquancy to our celebrations of thankfulness for the birth of our Saviour. We may think we know the Christmas Story but each year we can be surprised once again in it's retelling.

So into the New Year – we may make resolutions to keep or break but we in North Lynn look forward to continuing to work in the community through our witness and weekly activities.

Neville Posnett

Stow Bridge

We will begin with a good and happy New Year to all. Sadly it's a fact we cannot smile all the days of our life, there are some days which will bear sad news for us, or there will be some dreadful happening near or far which will concern us and will not help us to smile. Yes, we can get over our sadness, deep concerns and put on a smiley face and get on with our lives in this wonderful world.

Isn't it good to see the rising of people's spirits and happiness, with everyone looking toward the days off work and Christmas festivities, of partying and presents, and get together with pretty lights. And it seems to me there is a special joy and happiness amongst all folk and families. Of course, we think of all the hard work and preparation that goes in to the many things we attempt to do.

I think many people were blessed with ample food and presents. Yes of course we thought of the millions of poor people in need of the basic things of life world wide, but thinking of our area of West Norfolk we should be really thankful. God has given us so much, with the wonderful Christmas story which took place hundreds of years ago.

Actually when the first Christmas happened it wasn't such a cosy story as we like to make it today. But for those concerned it was good news and they witnessed it with joy in their hearts.

Yes, there is mystery in it, but it was done in God's way. We don't understand all of God's way but we thank Him for its happening.

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A couple of months ago a coffee morning was held at George and Heather's which was well attended. It was a nice gathering and £253 was raised. Our grateful thanks go to all the cooks, tea makers and givers and buyers of the stall.

Peter Hewitt

Hunstanton

We started at the beginning of October with a Bring and Sing for M.H.A. with all the proceeds going to them. This was followed by our Harvest festival, which took the form of four allotments, beginning with the Garden of Eden and ending with the Bible and the cross. People brought their goods and put them in the various sections.

Then time for our Carol Service. We actually had two, one for our congregation and one for the Stroke Association that meets in our church. We put a Christmas tree in the Town Hall, the theme being the 12 days of Christmas. After all that, time to celebrate Christmas itself, beginning with the season of Advent and all that goes with it.

And so to the New Year, which we started with our annual Covenant Service. What a year we are going to have, beginning with a Circus Praise party at 6pm on 27th February. Yes, I did say circus. If you are interested in coming to see it you can get tickets for £3 per family from the following number- 01485535964 or Carolhmc@btinternet.com.

J Broadway Ex steward

Hilgay

During December we had a very successful Band Concert with Hilgay Silver and Youth bands playing together for the evening. Thanks to all who took part especially the young soloists. The proceeds from this evening were shared equally between Hilgay Silver Band and Hilgay Methodist Church. Thanks to all who attended.

A Christmas card was available to be signed by members of different organisations using our building instead of individual cards to each other. £50 was raised for New Dawn India. Thanks again to all who contributed.

The Guild, Bowls club and Shell Club all held Christmas Meetings where I am sure lots of fun was had and lots of food consumed.

We are looking forward during 2016 to welcoming Deacon Irene who will be joining us in August and we are all very grateful to Deacon Janet for all the help she is giving us at present.

On January 12th we shall resume our weekly Tuesday morning Coffee and Chat time for parents of children at Hilgay School and anyone else who cares to join us from 9 am, in the warmth of our Chapel instead of getting cold chatting at the school gate. Look forward to seeing you there!

Pauline Driver.

St Faith's

By the beginning of February the name of the man or woman appointed as the new Rector of St Faith's Church, Gaywood, may be known following interviews of short-listed candidates at the end of January. It may be that the successful applicant will be required to give notice in his/her existing parish, so it could still be several months before the new Rector takes up the post. Whoever the new Rector is, please keep that person in your prayers as he/she prepares to

take up the post and face the challenges of taking our parish forward and proclaiming Christ's Gospel in Gaywood for the next few years.

You may have heard from time to time services and events arranged at St Faith's Church mentioned on BBC Radio Norfolk's popular early Sunday morning Faith programme presented by Anthony Isaacs. Now Mr Isaacs, who is also part of the Radio Norfolk management team, has said he would be willing to come to Gaywood and give a presentation about the Radio station and his role within it. It may be that he will give his talk, a date for which is still to be confirmed, as part of the King's Lynn Churches Together programme. Please look out for the date and venue for the talk.

Saturday, 6th February, sees the latest in the popular monthly Saturday Coffee mornings held in Gaywood Church Rooms. The sessions start at 10.30am and last for an hour or so. Everyone is welcome to go along and enjoy good company among friends, a cup of tea or coffee and tempting home-made cakes and scones can be purchased.. There is usually a raffle and donations of prizes are always welcome.

Church member Julie Swinton is inviting those interested in reading the Bible as part of a group, to weekly Tuesday evening sessions in the Choir vestry in St Faith's Church. More details are available by contacting Julie via the church office.

St Faith's fund-raising group will again be arranging this year's Spring Fayre in Gaywood Church Rooms on Saturday, 19th March, beginning at 2pm. As always, donations of goods, including home-made cakes and preserves, toys, games, books and bric-a-brac are most welcome to help fill the stalls. Please make a note of the date, 19th March, in your diary.

On a bright December day family and friends of the late Margaret Woodford, a much-missed and valued member of St Faith's church family who died suddenly three years ago , gathered and formed "a circle of love" in the church driveway for the dedication and blessing of a new oak bench made by Margaret's husband, John, in memory of his wife.

In his trademark, lovely way, St Faith's team vicar, the Rev. Dale Gingrich, spoke from the heart as he dedicated and blessed the bench which stands outside the front garden of his church bungalow home. Pam Woodford (no relation to John) read from Ecclesiastes 3 ..."For every season there is a time...." and trumpeter John Barker filled the air with moving musical sounds. All those attending the ceremony were given different coloured roses and in turn they placed these on the bench in memory of Margaret. Mr Woodford said he was presenting the bench to be "set apart in service to Christ's Church as a place of rest, refreshment and welcome."

How often do you find yourself wandering into St Faith's Church at times other than when services are held?

I personally find I do this more and more and feel I benefit greatly from the experience.

I find myself sitting in the pew at the back of the church and in the tranquillity and silence, I really am at peace with God in His house. Sometimes I pray, sometimes I just sit and let thoughts and feelings wash over me, it is a wonderful therapeutic experience.

As someone who has now worshipped at St Faith's for nearly 53 years, the church has always meant a great deal to me and as I sit in the beautifully-kept building, past events are recalled. These include my Confirmation as an 11-year-old choirboy by the then Bishop of Norwich, the weddings of family and friends, the funerals of both my parents, Ken and Jenny (25 years apart) and those of many of our church members to whom we have sadly said goodbye over the years.

I often think of the great festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest and of former clergy and their varying styles of worship leadership.

I have sat in church when the sun has streamed through the clear glass windows on a summer's afternoon and when the light is fading in the late afternoon of a cold December day. Do try it yourself sometime, when you have a spare half-an-hour or so, you will find it an enriching experience. The church is open weekday mornings between 9am and 12 noon and at other times by contacting the clergy.

It is Happy 6th Birthday to that wonderful band of creative church members in St Faith's Prayer Shawl Ministry. A New Year lunch in the Church Room was hosted by the Group and was much enjoyed by those attending. Over the years members have knitted beautiful, colourful shawls and scarves and these have been given to those people in need of God's love and comfort, folk who have been unwell, bereaved or simply going through a difficult time in their lives. Hundreds and hundreds of shawls and scarves have been made. As well as giving comfort to people locally, some of the shawls have been sent to various parts of the world to give comfort when there have been natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding. A batch of the shawls has recently been sent to the York and Lake District areas where people have lost all their possessions after their homes have been flooded. Cards, with a cross-stitch design on the front and carrying loving greetings, are included with each shawl and scarf.

At the recent lunch, Sarah Russell and Gill Hiles spoke of the work of the dedicated knitters, who regularly meet together and create such lovely shawls and scarves. If you would like to know more about the Prayer Shawl Ministry, or would be interested in joining the group, please contact either Sarah or Gill via the church office.

Lent groups are again due to be arranged at St Faith's Church and details will be available by contacting the church office. There will be a service for Ash Wednesday on February 10th at 7.30pm.

Richard Parr.

POLDARK

Those of us who like period dramas have had plenty recently to enjoy: Downton Abbey, Mr Selfridge, Paradise and now War and Peace. My favourite is Poldark. Lucky Chinese President! He was taken to see the set of the new series. I can't wait for it to come up. In the meantime there are the books. Winston Graham was a prolific author; he wrote some 40 novels. Literally "wrote" with a fountain pen (remember them?) for he did not possess a computer, or even a typewriter. 12 of them are on the Poldark theme. I am now on number six.

Ross Poldark returns after fighting in the American war only to find that the family estate and mine were in ruins following the death of his father and Elizabeth, the girl he had hoped to marry, was now engaged to his cousin Francis. He rescues a young girl from a beating and takes her on as a kitchen maid, Her name is Demelza and we see her gradually adjusting to a new way of life while losing nothing of her street-wise good sense. Eventually she becomes Mrs Poldark and struggles to take her place in society. She is greatly embarrassed when her rough, harsh, miner father insists on coming to the christening of her first child. However, it transpires that he has fallen in with the "Methodies" and is a changed man. This leads to an intriguing sub plot. Her brother Sam has also been converted and with another brother, Drake, comes seeking work in Ross's newly opened mine. Sam loses no opportunity of telling everyone about his new-found faith and seeks to convert them. So far in the story he has had no success with brother Drake. He gathers together a group of converts and they attend the local parish church. Unfortunately their enthusiasm and loud singing mean that they are not welcomed so they set about building a Meeting House with their own hands on land owned by Ross who lets them have it for Demelza's sake.

I don't know whether Winston Graham had any personal link with the Methodist Church or just whether it was because of painstaking research, but in writing about the early Methodist movement he gets everything right, including Methodist terms, such as "Class Leader", "Society", "Circuit Steward" and "Connexion". The setting is towards the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century while Methodism was spreading like wildfire. We find Sam going to Gwennap Pit, an amphitheatre caused by mining subsidence. That is again an instance of authentic Methodist history. Wesley preached 18 times there to crowds of up to 20,000 people.

The Poldark story is set against the background of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. At the same time in England there was considerable unrest. Closure of mines in Cornwall led to extreme poverty and social deprivation with some of the characters being caught up in riots. At the other end of the social scale the upper classes were living in luxury. It has been said that John Wesley saved England from the excesses of the French Revolution. Winston Graham brings this in too. Here is an extract from the novel I am reading, "The Four Swans" page 99:

"When the history of this time comes to be written, I wonder if it will be looked on as the history of two revolutions. The French Revolution and the English – or Methodist – revolution. The one seeks liberty, equality and fraternity in the eyes of men; the other seeks liberty, equality and fraternity in the eyes of God"

When Poldark comes round again I shall look out for these fascinating glimpses into early Methodist history.

John Garfoot

Annual Daffodil Day Celebration at Central Hall Westminster

Would you like to join me and others on a trip to this event in Methodist Central Hall on Monday 7th March? I have attended in the past and it is a very enjoyable, uplifting occasion. We will go on the 9.54 train from King's Lynn so could meet up with any others at the station or at Watlington or Downham Market. The return train fare to Westminster will be £33.85.

We could take a packed lunch, although there is a café in the basement and coffee and tea and water is usually served outside the worship area doors too.

The Worship ends before 4 p.m so we would aim to return on the 16.44 from Kings Cross arriving at King's Lynn at 18.27.

Daffodils - To celebrate the day most people wear a daffodil. Representatives from the Marie Curie charity will be selling daffodil badges at the entrance to the Hall'.

**If you would like to join us please contact Helen Maguire
01553 828998**

WEDNESDAY 4TH MAY 2.30 pm AN INVITE TO ALL

We welcome you to Terrington Methodist Church ladies meeting to hear about and see pictures of projects in Kivuria, mid-Kenya. There will be a bring and buy stall. More details will be in a later 'Rejoice'.

M.W.I.B. Forthcoming Events:-

Women's World Day of Prayer - March 4th 2016 to be held at:-
London Road Methodist Church, King's Lynn at 11.00am
Terrington St.Clement Methodist Church at 7.00pm
St Edmund's Church Downham Market at 2pm
Easter Offering London Road Methodist Church on May 11th at 2.30pm.
A.G.M. London Road Methodist Church on October 3rd at 2.30pm.

District Events:-

Forum Meetings Diss Methodist Church on February 19th 10.00am
and September 23rd at 10.00am.
District Conference Belsey Bridge on March 5th/6th
(Speaker:- Anne Browse - President).
Daffodil Day London March 7th
Spring District Day Upwell Methodist Church on April 21st.
Paul Field in Concert Methodist Central Hall, Westminster on May 21st
3.00pm - 5.00pm
Autumn District Day South Lowestoft Church on October 6th
The President's Project is EACH (East Anglian Children's Hospice)

THURSFORD SONGS OF PRAISE - SUNDAY 13th MARCH

The Central Norfolk Circuit is organising a Songs of Praise at The Thursford Collection on Sunday 13th March at 3.00 pm. This is a popular event with choir, band and organist. The preacher will be the Rev. Julian Pursehouse, our Chair of District. It should be an uplifting afternoon.
As a Circuit we in West Norfolk are planning to organise a coach to take people to this special event. The coach will pick up at Downham Market, King's Lynn and Hunstanton, leaving Downham Market at 12.15 pm, pick up in King's Lynn at London Road 12.45pm and Hunstanton Methodist Church at

1.15pm. Pay on the coach but if you ask for a seat to be reserved then payment must be met. The cost of the coach will be £8 per person. Those who went last year thought it a very moving service.

We have reserved 40 tickets (which are free of charge), but it will be essential to have a ticket to gain admission. If you would like to have a ticket and join the coach then please contact Barbara Foster by 21st February. Tel. 01553 811867. Email rabbit1308@btinternet.com.

We have some talented people in our Circuit. This is from Sue

O Lord

My dear, sweet Lord
Enter within
And make me whole
Free of all sin
Please lift morale
Dry every tear
And take away
All that I fear.

From sense of dread
To sins, confess -
To make me face
Every day's stress.

So dear, sweet Lord
I'll say again
In your blest name
I ask.....Amen

They say you can't please all the people all of the time.

No Rejoicing

I sat staring in dismay at a cold, dull corner between altar and pulpit. I cannot believe that there is a Cathedral in the country lacking a Christmas tree. What makes Downham Church Council think they are so superior? Not in my reckoning.

P Fowles



Any items for the **March** edition should be with the editor by **February 12th**, earlier if possible.

Mrs Barbara Foster
140 Stow Road
Magdalen, King's Lynn
PE34 3BD
Tel. 01553 811867
E mail rabbit1308@btinternet.com

Young people are not all bad!

While walking past the church in Downham the other day, I saw a couple of teenagers who were also walking past.

I over heard one say how much she wanted to run up the new sloping flower bed in the front of the church.

Then she said, "I won't though because it's the church".

I had to smile, because I was so pleased to hear it.

Elizabeth

I have immense admiration for our preachers, presenting the same message, week after week in a fresh and challenging way. Sometimes it's just a single word that can hit the right note.

Such a thing happened to me the other day. I think the speaker was talking about talents, how we all have a place. But it's when we augment each other that it makes a whole. It threw up such an image of cohesion for me.

The other thing I came across that struck a chord is because Jesus touched the earth we are invited to touch God.

A peaceful New Year to all from Pat Benefer

People are invited to consider joining house groups in The Woottons, gathering on Tuesday morning at 10am and each weekday evening (apart from Fridays).

More details about the groups, topics being discussed, venues and times of meetings can be obtained by contacting The Woottons Rectory office on 01553 671381. .

St Faith's Team Vicar, The Rev Dale Gingrich and Daphne Sampson (contactable via St Faith's Church office) will have full details of the various Lent options available and will be happy to help you with enquiries

**RADICAL HOSPITALITY
FRIDAY NIGHT IS MUSIC NIGHT**

WHERE: Snettisham Methodist Church

**WHAT: Inspiring and joyful music for
heart and soul by the
WEST NORFOLK SINGERS
DAVID GODFREY
 (Pipe Organ)
 (One other to be confirmed)
 Free food and refreshments**

WHEN: APRIL 22ND BEGINNING 7PM

**THIS IS AN INVITATION TO:
Be inspired and fed**

Downham Market - Golden Anniversary

As you read this the year long celebrations at Downham Market will have started. Three Methodist Churches came together in the sixties to build the Church that we know today and it was formally opened in 1966. A good year!!

In early December a new raised flower bed was constructed at the front of the church and we are looking forward to some wonderful displays as the seasons progress.

The year began with all age worship on January 3rd led by Deacon Janet Stafford and on January 23rd a 60's party with games, music and food typical of the 1960's will have been enjoyed by us all.

On 13th February you are invited to join us for a Beetle Drive and tea followed by an evening of magic by Rev. David Leese from Epworth who will also preach on the following morning. Tickets for all or part of the afternoon/evening are available from Maureen Hibling (01366 500619 or maureen_hibling@yahoo.co.uk) and cost £2 for Beetle Drive, £2 for tea and £2 for the magic show with prices just £1 for each element for children.

Watch this space for details of more exciting events to be held throughout the year.

Potato Crisps

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato crisps and a six-pack of root beer and started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some crisps. He gratefully accepted and smiled at him.

His smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered

him a root beer. Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word... As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave; but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. He gave him his biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied "I ate potato crisps in the park with God." However, before his son responded he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime!

Embrace all equally!

Have lunch with God.....bring crisps.

Thanks to Joan Macey for this.

DIACONAL APPOINTMENT FROM SEPTEMBER 2016

We are delighted to share that the Diaconal Order has agreed to station a deacon in our Circuit for five years from September 2016. This appointment is facilitated by a 50% grant from the District Advance Fund for which we are extremely grateful. The grant has been offered because the appointment will have a particular focus on new and creative outreach work among young people and families. The work will be based at Hilgay and Downham Market in the first instance, with a hope that it can be extended to Feltwell and Southery in future years. Deacon Irene Tafirenyika visited the Circuit and will be moving from her current appointment in Bradford in the late summer and we look forward to getting to know her in the autumn.

Please hold Irene and this exciting new appointment in your prayers (and also the process for finalising the sale of Lion House and purchasing a new manse!).

Andrew Maguire



Join us for Duggie Dug Dug's

Circus Praise Party

An Event for all Ages
with music, puppets,
trapeze and loads of fun



Hunstanton Methodist Church, Austin Street

6pm Saturday 27th February '16



Tickets must be pre booked
from 01485535964 or carolhmc@btinternet.com

Family ticket: £3

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary February 2016 onwards

Sunday 28th February Sankey Afternoon at Highgate 3pm

Saturday 20th February Fellowship Breakfast at Hilgay at 8.30 am

Saturday February 27th Pastoral Carers' Day at Downham

Friday 4th March Women's World Day of Prayer

Monday 7th March Daffodil Day at Central Hall Westminster

Saturday 12th March Fellowship Breakfast at Wimbotsham at 8.30

Sunday 13th March Songs of Praise at Thursford

Saturday 19th March Spring Fair at St Faith's Gaywood

Saturday 9th April Fellowship Breakfast at St. Germans at 8.30

Friday 22nd April Radical Hospitality at Snettisham 7pm

Wednesday 4th May Ladies' Meeting about Kivyria Projects 2.30pm

Saturday 14th May Fellowship Breakfast at Marham at 8.30

Saturday 21st May Paul Field Concert Westminster Central Hall

Saturday 11th June Fellowship Breakfast at Downham at 8.30

Saturday 9th July Fellowship Breakfast at Pott Row at 8.30

Saturday 13th August Fellowship Breakfast at Barbara and Terry Foster's at 8.30