



  
**The Methodist Church**  
**Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit**  
**Quarterly Newsletter**

Issue 12

December 2015

**Superintendent Minister's Letter**

Dear Friends,

I picked up a little booklet recently with Advent and Christmas in mind. It is by Stephen Cottrell, and is entitled 'Do nothing, Christmas is coming'. The book offers a thought for each day in Advent together with some practical and not preachy suggestions about how we might balance the demands and expectations of this time of year.

The essence of the book is really the essence of what we seek within our church-life:

- to listen to the narratives of Advent and Christmas again, and to try to do so as if for the first time
- to re-discover within familiar words that which might be new for us
- to focus upon the stillness of this season with its stories of people waiting, rather than to feel that we are being rushed from one place to another
- to find the value of the season which is there for us in the deep revelation of God's love present amongst us in Christ.

This is not part of the culture that is around us, or at least it is not part of the culture foisted upon us. Christmas seems now to begin in earnest for shops and television adverts as soon as Halloween is over, and these things are in part designed to engender within us a sense of panic and guilt that we are not as far ahead in our shopping as we should be.

We are blessed in church-life that this is not how it has to be for us. We have the weeks of Advent to prepare our hearts. We have readings and hymns and songs to recognise that this season is different for sincere and deep reasons. And then in carol services and on Christmas Day, we listen again to the truth that the "Word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us" - which puts our rushing-around into perspective!

However you celebrate this year, may you find time to pause...and to know the presence of God in your worship and in your home.

God bless, *Stephen*

**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green**  
**Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**

**Carol Services around the Circuit**

**13<sup>th</sup> December**

**6.30pm** Anerley led by Valerie Tredinnick

**20<sup>th</sup> December**

**10.30am** Hither Green

**10.30am** Sunfields led by Rev. Bill Tardy  
 Followed by refreshments

**11am** Wesley Hall led by Rev. Pam Clews

**4pm** Eltham Park led by Rev. Stephen Maunder

**5pm** Forest Hill led by Rev. Pam Clews

**6pm** Upper Norwood Rev. Imran Malik

**6pm** Burnt Ash led by Linda Ryan

Refreshments plus carol singing in the hall afterwards in aid of Action for Children

**6.30pm** Lewisham led by Rev. Stephen Maunder

**Family Nativity Services around the Circuit**

**13<sup>th</sup> December**

**10.30am** Sunfields led by Andrew Gibbs & Helen Seal

**11am** Wesley Hall led by Chris Watkins

**24<sup>th</sup> December**

**3-4pm** Burnt Ash led by Jenny Hamill

**4pm** Eltham Park led by Rev. Stephen Maunder

**Watchnight Services within the Circuit:  
 Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015**

Forest Hill 11.15pm

Lewisham 11.15pm

All are welcome



**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green**  
**Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**

## Focus on ... Wesley Hall Methodist Church

Wesley Hall Methodist Church started as open air services around a tree stump, near to where the present building is, before moving into a small building, known as The Tin Tabernacle, in 1883. It became an official church in 1877 and by 1889 it was too small for the very large congregation and Sunday School. After much fundraising the present building was opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2006 in Sydenham Road. It soon became a very busy place with Sewing Meetings, Men's Social Hour, Band of Hope, choir practice and of course, Sunday School and Services. In 1914, The Girls' Life Brigade and Boys' Life Brigade were started, and although closed during the war, the Boys' company restarted when the men returned home. In 1921 the Rev. Robertson Ballard became the minister. Although no longer there, he hung THE CHURCH OF THE HAPPY WELCOME sign across the front of the Church and numbers and organisations began to flourish.

After damage to the roof during WWII had been repaired we received the organ from The Methodist Church in Dartmouth Road where the building had to be demolished due to severe damage. In 1966 a small chapel was built in the back of the church so that when the congregation was very small it would be more comfortable. It was not really big enough so after much discussion the Church was moved downstairs in 1969 and the galleried upstairs area became the hall for activities and events and is still used as such today. The organ was dismantled and a stage added where the organ and choir stalls once stood, together with a kitchen area. Meetings for men and woman, Youth Club, Young Adults, MAYC, Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade and Theatre Club have all been run, upstairs and downstairs and in other smaller rooms throughout the years and are ongoing.

Today, average Sunday morning attendance for services is between 40 and 50. A crèche and Junior Church runs at the same time along with a group called SFC for young people aged 11 upwards. On the second Sunday of each month we have an All Age service followed by tea and coffee and about once a quarter we have Café Worship. Holy Communion is held every month. JMA collectors have raised money for missions for many years. Events such as Christmas Bazaars, Spring Fairs, Garden Parties, Afternoon Teas, Pantomimes and Productions are held throughout the year. Our chapel has a loop system fitted and projection is used throughout the service to support worship with hymn words, notices, photos. We also have hymn books including some in large print. The chapel is wheelchair accessible, and in the words of Rev. Ballard we continue to be a church of happy welcome.

**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green  
Lewisham Sunfields Upper Norwood Wesley Hall**



### Church Forthcoming Events

- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Dec. College Park Players present: **'Mist over the Mistletoe'**  
 Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup>/Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Dec. 7.45pm Burnt Ash  
 Sat. 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. [sold out] 2.30pm Burnt Ash  
 Tickets £7 (£6 concessions): booking [rynld@aol.com](mailto:rynld@aol.com)
- Sat. 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. **'More Than A Christmas Concert'** 2-5pm Wesley Hall  
 A Christmas afternoon including live entertainment,  
 afternoon tea, Christmas stalls, and much more...  
 Tickets Adults £5, children £3 from:  
 Sue Watkins 0208 777 0085 or [chris-watkins@sky.com](mailto:chris-watkins@sky.com)



### Circuit Forthcoming Events

- |                                   |                                 |             |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Wed. 20 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 7.45pm | LP & WL meeting                 | Forest Hill |
| Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 7.30pm | Circuit Missions Meeting        | Forest Hill |
| Tues 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb. 7.45pm  | Circuit Meeting                 | Burnt Ash   |
| Sat. 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 3pm    | Missions 'Cream Tea'            | Burnt Ash   |
| Sun 24 <sup>th</sup> Apr. 4.30pm  | Circuit Easter Offering Service | Lewisham    |

**Circuit Website: [bhcpmethodist.org.uk](http://bhcpmethodist.org.uk)**

Deadline for information for next newsletter:

**25<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

Please email details to: [office.bcpc@btinternet.com](mailto:office.bcpc@btinternet.com)

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