

**Opportunities for Coffee and Fellowship within the Circuit:**

**Burnt Ash:**

Wednesday mornings 10am–12 noon

**Eltham Park:**

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month 10.30-12 noon

**Forest Hill:**

Tuesday Fellowship 2pm–3.30pm

**Sunfields:**

Saturday mornings 10am–12 noon



The **Methodist Church** 

**Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit**  
**Quarterly Newsletter**

Issue 17

March 2017

**Superintendent Minister's Letter**

Dear Friends,

This edition of our magazine is published during Lent, a season which for many Christians is associated with giving something up. This may take the form of fasting, or more often the putting on one side of things we know are not really good for us - biscuits, crisps, cakes etc.. In addition to this practice of putting on one side, we are also encouraged to take up something different. In both of these we endeavour to mark the days of Lent as a distinct period of time.

Our newsletter has a particular focus upon the work of Mercy Ships, which we heard about during our recent Circuit Service. Those present were very happy to support their work through the offering that was taken. Our Easter Offering collections are also part of our Christian response as we reach to the needs of others in God's world.

Other organisations, such as 'All we Can' provide materials for use during Lent which give an insight into their work, and an encouragement to develop our desire for justice in the world. They also offer daily emails with a suggested reading and prayer to help to focus upon God's calling to us. In this we are reminded that Lenten giving is to do with prayer and thought and time, as well as money.

In the days leading to Easter and beyond, we are presented with a period of time in which we may look at our relationship with God, consider the road that we are travelling, and to be challenged by our calling to give as we have received.

May we know the extent of God's blessing upon us during this season, as we renew our commitment to Christ who in taking up the cross, gave up all things for our sake.

God bless,  
*Stephen*

**Circuit/Church Forthcoming Events**

Tues. 14 <sup>th</sup> March	Presbyteral Synod		Wesley's Chapel
Wed. 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	LWP Meeting	7.45pm	Forest Hill
Sat. 6 <sup>th</sup> May	Representative Synod		Central Hall
Sun. 7 <sup>th</sup> May	Circuit Easter Offering Service	4pm	Hither Green
Sat. 17 <sup>th</sup> June	Circuit Garden party		Forest Hill
Tues. 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Circuit Meeting	7.45pm	Wesley Hall

**Maundy Thursday Services**  
**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April**

Upper Norwood – Lovefeast	7pm
Eltham Park	8pm
Forest Hill	8pm

**Good Friday Services**  
**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April**

Anerley	9.15am
Burnt Ash	9.30am
Eltham Park	10.30am
Forest Hill	10.30am
Hither Green	10.30am
Lewisham	9.00am
Wesley Hall	11.00am



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

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## MWIB District Day, Central Hall, Westminster, Saturday 22 October 2016

My first attendance at a Methodist Women's District Day was to represent Ira Fernando who is our Circuit representative in the Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB), London District. The event was partly a business meeting and partly to learn something of the work of the two main charities – "Mercy Ships" and "Open Hands, Gambia" - that the MWiB London District are sponsoring currently and to which funds raised at the Circuit 2016 Summer Garden Party for the Project is directed. Overall very enlightening on the work of women in the Methodist Church.

The Day started with a riveting and moving presentation by Revd. Hilary and Dr. Leo Cheng on the mission work of Mercy Ships which sail to some of the world's poorest regions in Africa and the Far East offering medical assistance and help with sustainable development. The ship stays in the agreed country for up to 10 months to ensure care continues from patient assessments, through surgery, to healing.

Revd Hilary is not only a minister for Methodist churches in East London, but also acts as Chaplain on the "Africa Mercy". She offers pastoral care to patients before and after surgery and to the 450 staff, crew and volunteers during her periods on the ship. Her husband Leo is a consultant and maxillofacial surgeon at The Royal London Hospital, who also spends time on the ship operating on people with deformities, such as neck and face tumours, hernias, cleft lip, and trauma injuries sustained through civil war. So that is where some of the money donated and fundraised for Missions work goes. All the ship's staffs are volunteers: from top surgeons to cooks, cleaners, plumbers, electricians and hairdressers.

There is a great need for young volunteers. Seeing the presentation made me wish I was a few years younger – I would certainly have offered to volunteer on this ship. What an experience this could be for young people on their gap year or newly qualified! As is the practice nowadays, volunteers fundraise for their expenses beforehand, and they can work on the ship for short periods at a time if they wish.

The business part of the meeting involved the formal introduction of the next President-elect, Caroline Ogunsola. Cheques for portions of the Project funds raised this year were handed over, amid much cheering, to the two charities to further their work. Such is the need that a new larger ship is being built.

**Anerley Burnt Ash Eltham Park Forest Hill Hither Green  
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Fundraising for both current charities continues until August 2017 when the focus changes to two new ones chosen by the incoming President. There were news and reports by members of the Executive, and announcements of some forthcoming activities:

**This year's Easter Offering theme** will be "Shine Light Shine"

**Friday 31<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017** – International Conference at Swanwick. Anyone wanting to attend to apply now as this is a very popular event.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2017** – District Day at Wesley's Chapel, City Road. Highlights will be a presentation on "Open Hands", Gambia (the second current charity being supported) plus induction and handover to the next President Caroline Ogunsola.

### *Brenda Onatade*

The **CIRCUIT MISSIONS SERVICE** to focus on **MERCY SHIPS** was held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30p.m. led by Rev. Bill Tardy. The Guest Speaker from Mercy Ships Dorothy Baker made an extremely moving presentation using visual clips to illustrate the valuable healing work done by the highly qualified medical professionals who are all volunteers who pay to be part of Mercy Ships.

The response from the Circuit was really encouraging as there was a large congregation who were interested in the work done by Mercy Ships. Dorothy Baker remarked that she was happy to be speaking to a Christian audience. Thank you to everyone who was there and supported Mercy Ships.

The total collected as the retiring collection was £301.00.

### *Ira Fernando*

*Circuit Missions & MWiB Secretary*

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

**Deadline for information for next newsletter:**

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

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

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