



# Local Preachers & Worship Leaders Newsletter

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

DISTRICT 31

Newsletter for the  
LOCAL PREACHERS & WORSHIP LEADERS



Winter 2014

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter.

Contributions for the Spring e-newsletter should be sent to, [lpwlsotland.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:lpwlsotland.secretary@gmail.com), by end of February 2015.

Contact information:

**Margaret Brown**

14 Ebroch Drive, Kilsyth,  
Glasgow, G65 0PG  
Tel: 01236 823586  
email: [margaret@jmbrown.plus.com](mailto:margaret@jmbrown.plus.com)

**Hilary Henderson**

14 Elizabeth Gardens,  
Stoneyburn, EH47 8BP  
Tel: 01501 762645  
email: [hilarymhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:hilarymhenderson@gmail.com)

Online version of this newsletter and other useful information please visit:

[www.methodistchurchinsotland.org.uk/local-preachers-a-worship-leaders.htm](http://www.methodistchurchinsotland.org.uk/local-preachers-a-worship-leaders.htm)

May you find the season of Christmas and the coming of the Christ Child to be a time of blessing and joy and eternal hope. Best wishes for 2015

Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Dear Friends                              | 3  |
| Prayer For The Advent Season              | 4  |
| Report on LP/WL in Scotland District      | 5  |
| Resources for Worship Leaders             | 6  |
| Edinburgh & Forth Circuit Report          | 7  |
| Angus, Dundee & Perthshire Circuit Report | 8  |
| Central Scotland Circuit Report           | 9  |
| Ayrshire & Renfrewshire Circuit Report    | 10 |
| Strathclyde Circuit Report                | 11 |
| North of Scotland Mission Circuit Report  | 11 |
| The Preacher                              | 12 |
| He was a Storyteller                      | 13 |
| LP & WL Weekend 2015                      | 14 |
| Hymns and films                           | 15 |
| Prayer for Christmas Presence             | 16 |
| Singing The Faith                         | 17 |
| Worship: Leading & Preaching (WLP)        | 18 |
| World War One soldier saved by Bible      | 22 |
| Who do you think you are                  | 23 |
| LP/WL Weekend 2016                        | 24 |
| Meditating on Scripture                   | 24 |
| LP & WL Weekend 2014                      | 26 |
| Responding to Ebola                       | 27 |
| Persecution of the Church is growing      | 27 |

*Christmas Greetings*

## Dear Friends

As they say, time flies and I am now into my second year as Chair of Synod. I have now preached in almost all of our churches across Scotland. Wherever I have been, I have met faithful members of our relatively small Scottish Methodist family, including a number of our Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. Sometimes, of course, when I have expected to see one of them in the congregation, they have been out elsewhere in the Circuit leading worship. As I have said before, the contribution that Local Preachers and Worship Leaders make to the worshipping life of our churches is very much appreciated by the congregations, so thank you, again.

You will be receiving this newsletter as we come to the seasons of Advent and Christmas. I hope that, in your leading of worship, you won't be tempted to rush straight to Christmas without first enjoying the Advent time of looking forward. I once overheard a man saying that he was cross with his family for not letting him know that his daughter was coming for a visit from Australia. They had wanted to surprise him. His complaint was that they had deprived him of the pleasure of anticipating her visit. So, please don't deprive your congregations of the pleasure of anticipating Christmas.

Finally, have you come across a worship resource called spill the beans which describes itself as a 'worship and learning resource for all ages... with a Scottish flavour'? It is full of lots of useful ideas. For further details go to [www.spillbeans.org.uk](http://www.spillbeans.org.uk) I think you can also get a printed version of the material.

Have a great Advent and Christmas - and New Year, when it arrives.

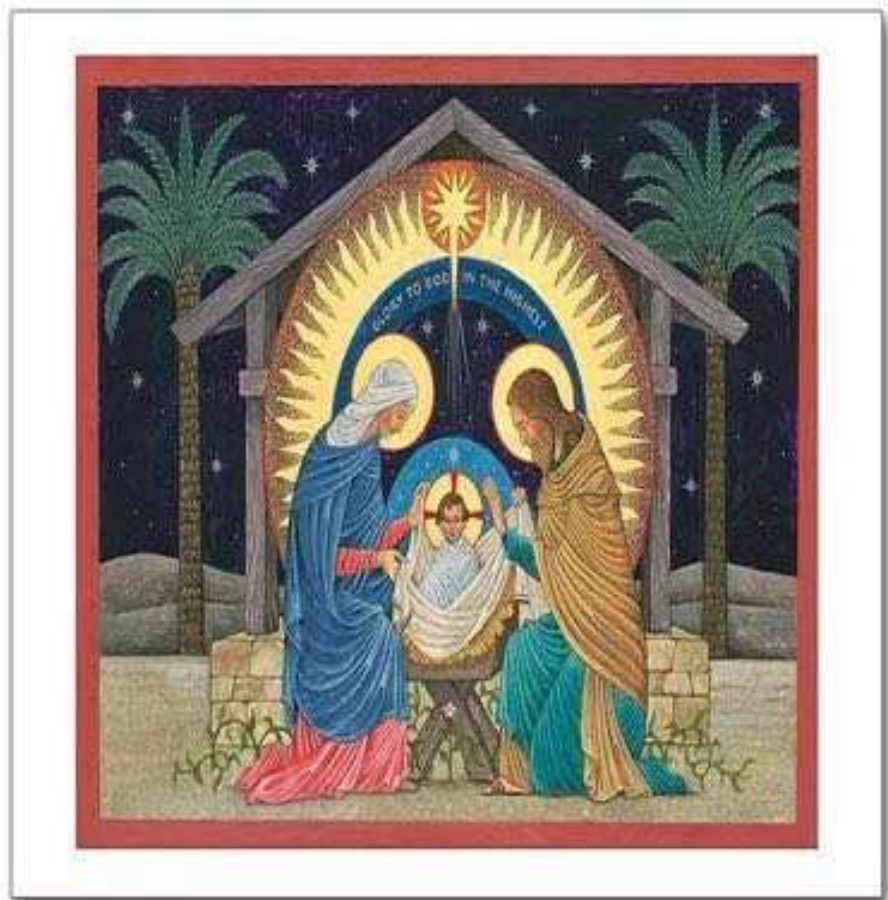
With every blessing,  
David



## Prayer For The Advent Season

Heavenly Father, we thank you for showing us your greatness in the helplessness of a newborn baby, your glory in the squalor of a cattle shed and your love in a poor family who could find no room at the inn.

May we welcome Christ into our lives and learn that real greatness lies in humble service, real glory is wrapped in holiness and real love shines like starlight, even in the darkest place. Amen





## Report on LP/WL in Scotland District

We have at present 96 Local Preachers (71 of whom are currently actively leading worship). There are currently 10 people in the District who are On Trial and 3 On Note. There are now 57 worship leaders in the District.

Some circuits have more Local Preachers available to take worship than others but there has been a trend, particularly over the past few years, of Local Preachers moving between circuits to lead worship when required. Both preachers and congregations have welcomed this new arrangement.

Many more churches have had a projector/screen installed and this has led to more Local Preachers both learning and using this new equipment during worship.

While some circuits have a good attendance at the Local Preachers Meeting others have not. A reason for this is often the distances that Preachers have to travel especially at night which some LP find they are unable to do. Some circuits have a good record for recruiting and training local preachers while others, particularly those without a tutor, have not.

There has been an increase over the past few years of training and using Worship Leaders and most circuits now have Worship Leaders who help in leading worship and planning Local Appointments. In many of the circuits Worship Leaders join with Local Preachers at quarterly LP Meetings and this has encouraged joint working, learning and sharing together.

Our annual LP/WL Weekend which takes place on the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in February each year continues to provide a resource for LP/WL alike and as the area that our District covers is so large it enables our LP/WL to have a very welcome time of fellowship with each other (see middle pages for details and booking for next years weekend and page 25 for details of our 2016 speaker).

One of our circuits held an open day recently to recruit Local Preachers which attracted a number of people interested in finding out about Local Preaching. However in view of the introduction of the New Pathway Training to replace Faith and Worship many of those attending felt they would prefer to wait until the transition from Faith and Worship to the New Pathway Training had been established.

We have twice yearly meetings with Circuit Local Preachers' Secretaries and Tutors to update them on various aspects of Local Preaching and Worship Leading as well as providing a space for sharing what is happening in their own circuits. Lately these meetings have had to be cancelled through lack of support. We believe that the reasons for this is the busy lives that most of us lead and the distances that many of our participants have to travel.

LP and WL are regularly kept informed with a newsletter in the Spring/Summer (electronic and paper) and a booklet in the Autumn/Winter. These publications seek to keep our LP and WL up to date with what is happening round the District and beyond. LP/WL information can also be obtained via the Scottish Methodist Website.



---

## Resources for Worship Leaders

*from Phil Haggis, Local Preacher & Worship Leader Trainer in the Strathclyde Circuit*

- ✚ From the Web: Singing the Faith Plus and Roots
- ✚ Book wise the prayer manual, books by Nick Fawcett for Meditations like: **'A Most Amazing Man', 'Common Worship Miscellany', 'No Ordinary Man'**
- ✚ **'Prayers for all seasons'**. Tom Wright's **'Twelve Months of Sunday's Years A, B & C'**.
- ✚ Ian Black **'Intercessions for Years A, B and C'**. These are books of prayers and meditations, and in the **'Common Worship Miscellany'** include some children Activities as well.



## Edinburgh & Forth Circuit Report

It has been a rather interesting year for us here in Edinburgh & Forth. At our first meeting of the session we discussed how we might find ways to refresh our meeting to make it more attractive to our members. The outcome was that a questionnaire was produced and circulated to each member. A good response was achieved (over 60% response level). At the second meeting of the year the findings from the questionnaire were discussed and the following main decisions were agreed:

- The meetings would start at 7:30pm and close by 9:15pm and all future meetings would be held at CEMC, Edinburgh.
- The style would be less formal to provide a more relaxed atmosphere which would encourage a greater feeling of fellowship
- There would be a training-focused session at each meeting of at least 45 minutes where a member might present a topic for discussion, a book might be reviewed or an outside speaker invited to present a topic from their particular expertise

At the third meeting the Superintendent of the Circuit took the meeting through a presentation which was being employed by the Circuit leadership team to enable them to complete a review of the Circuit in relation to staffing, budget and mission. The members met in groups to provide input to the overall process. At our fourth meeting we discussed the Connexional paper 'Explaining generosity in Methodist tradition and theology' which invited us to consider the topic with the following questions as a guide:



- If generosity is more the outcome of an inner quest, where do you imagine the quest to begin?
- For Wesley, theology was a practical discipline that must be linked to action. How do you imagine and dream these links to be generously fashioned in the 21st century?
- What constitutes the nature of the generous Local Preacher and Worship Leader?
- What are the challenges of being the generous church in the contemporary world?

Finally for those with an interest in numbers we had an average of 23 people attend our four meetings during the year. The total membership is 57 of whom 12 are unable to attend for reasons of age or fitness. Of the remaining members 60% attended two or more meetings in the year (8 attended all four).

*Alan Whitson Secretary*



## Angus, Dundee & Perthshire Circuit Report

In June we celebrated the life of the late Elma Burness both as a missionary in West Africa and as a preacher in this circuit. The tribute was given by Dr Alistair MacDonald of Morpeth, a former Local Preacher in the circuit and other preachers took part in the service.

The main issue over the past months has been the illness of a number of our preachers. The other circuit preachers, however, willingly took on an increased number of appointments and we are grateful to preachers from the Edinburgh & Forth, North of Scotland Mission and Central Circuits for helping us out to ensure that all appointments were fulfilled.

*Keith Pearson, Secretary*





## Central Scotland Circuit Report

We continue to meet three times each year. Meetings are well attended with good discussion and fellowship. With effect from September meetings have been open to Worship Leaders and we have benefitted from the wider mix of all who lead worship in the circuit.

Brian Baker decided to retire from regular preaching. Since moving to the District Brian's preaching and fellowship has been appreciated by congregations and by fellow local preachers.

We were pleased to see our Worship Leaders in training flourish and become increasingly involved in leading worship in their respective churches. Sandy Harvie was recognised as a Worship Leader at Wallacestone church.

Julia Reid has continued to progress well through Local Preacher training and is on course to complete the training in 2015. Julia has led some stimulating debates using material from Faith & Worship.

Five LPs attended the LP weekend at the beginning of February.

*Anne Baird, Secretary*



## Ayrshire & Renfrewshire Circuit Report

Ayrshire and Renfrewshire Circuit planned and hosted a “Local Preachers’ Taster Day” at Paisley Central Hall on 24 May 2014. The day was open to current local Preachers and Worship Leaders and to others who wanted to find out more about the roles of a Local Preacher and Worship Leader.

The net was cast across neighbouring Circuits and we were pleased to welcome people from Glasgow and Lanarkshire Circuits. The date was significant and we spent time thinking about John Wesley’s experience of his heart being strangely warmed. We looked at God’s call on some of the characters from the Bible and of their often reluctance to respond to that call.

Rev Chris Foxon, District LP Tutor, gave an outline of what training would be required and of the support that was offered during the period of training. It was interesting to hear from some how God was stirring hearts and from others about their call to preach.

Testimonies from those who have been called to preach were similar in that no one had jumped up and offered themselves right away. Most of us had made excuses and delayed the process as much as possible. So it was no surprise to find that folks weren’t forming a queue to sign up. However, I do believe that seeds were sown.

I hope that this will not be a “one off” event. We need to be praying at our Local Preachers’ meeting that the Spirit will stir hearts and we need to tend the seeds that were sown lest they be lost and remembered only as “a good day out!”

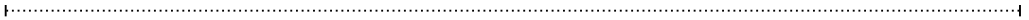
*Kathleen Pearson, Secretary*



## Strathclyde Circuit Report

You will realise from the title that there have been changes in the Glasgow area since the last Newsletter. From 1 September the Glasgow and Lanarkshire Circuits have amalgamated. Deacon Anita Shaw who has begun ministry in Netherton and New Stevenston, and Rev'd Jake Tatton who has begun ministry at Mossspark, have joined the team. The Rev'd Jim Booth and his wife Carole have also joined us. Jim recently retired as Chair of the Liverpool Circuit and Carole is a local preacher. The new circuit looks forward to working together in worship and mission over the coming years.

*Katherine Rennie, Secretary*



## North of Scotland Mission Circuit Report



Bruce Tollemache has resigned from the position of Local Preachers Secretary after many years of service. Carol Reeves is the new LP secretary.

The North of Scotland Mission Circuit only has two paid presbyters at the moment and so many of the preaching appointments are taken up by Local Preachers and Supernumeraries.

We have a new Worship Leader in Aberdeen who leads the Singing Group as well as contributing to other parts of morning worship.'

*Carol Reeves, Secretary*

# The Preacher

A preacher went forth to preach, and as he preached, some words fell by the wayside into the ears of casual visitors to holy places on special occasions; and those unprepared strangers could not understand the alien language of an exclusive religion; and they remained unimpressed even by the crushing handshakes and the hard seats.

And some of the preacher's words fell among the sedimentary rocks of conventional worship- like polished pebbles, echoing and clattering, and adding another layer to a dead tradition.

And some words floated like thistledown among the prolific weeks of humdrum thinking; they settled without taking root, among the choking tendrils of mediocre expectations.

And some words fell on good ground of minds and hearts, open, eager and hungry; but the words themselves were like dry pellets that even the birds would spit out - pieces of grit which sometimes sparkle but have no power except to blind searching eyes.

And the preacher returned to his lonely chamber without a harvest. What use to curse the soil if the seed is sterile? God told him. "Come close to me in life and prayer and listen to my Word; look again into the treasury of Scripture and I will show you seed potent enough to bear fruit and a lamp to guide the pilgrims through the valley of shadows; and a sword, sharp to pierce to the very heart."



## He was a Storyteller

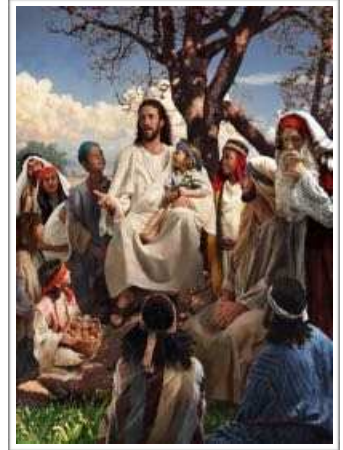
He was a storyteller  
And he drew pictures with words;  
A tiny seed growing into a huge tree  
A lamp under a bed  
A lost sheep crying  
Buckets of fish  
Hungry birds gobbling up corn  
A house built on a rock  
Workmen grumbling....

He was a storyteller  
And he asked his listeners questions;  
Who was a neighbour to this man?  
Why do you call me good?  
What do you think the owner of the vineyard would do?  
What is the greatest commandment?

He was a storyteller  
And he knew how to deliver the punchlines that stuck in your memory;  
No servant can be the slave of two masters.  
Whatever is hidden will be brought out into the open.  
Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me  
Your heart will always be where your riches are.

He was a storyteller,  
With words he could draw pictures  
He asked questions that made you stop and think  
And people listened  
And people remembered  
And some of them followed him.

The called him  
The Word of God



*Ruth Burgess*

# LP & WL Weekend 2015

31<sup>st</sup> Jan – 1<sup>st</sup> February

Once again you are invited to attend the annual LP/WL Weekend Conference. There is also an open invitation for any ministers who would care to join us.

Last year saw us moving to a new venue in Coatbridge. The Conforti Institute was found to be eminently suitable for our needs and is booked again for 2015. Details of facilities and directions can be found on their website [www.confortiinstitute.org](http://www.confortiinstitute.org)

As usual, all costs are subsidised and include meals and refreshments. Travel expenses will be reimbursed. Costs for those able to stay overnight is £40 per person (50% deposit required to book the room). Rooms are twinned bedded with no extra cost for single occupancy. It would be helpful if you notify us if you wish to share, and with whom. Cost for those only able to come during the day is £10 per day with payment to be made on arrival. Everyone is asked to complete the booking form included in this newsletter. Sandwiches and refreshments are provided prior to the start of the Saturday sessions.



We are delighted to have **Claire Benton-Evans** as our speaker for 2015. Claire is the Youth & Children's Officer for the Diocese of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church. She will be offering practical workshops in creative prayer with all ages, and dramatic interactive storytelling, all designed to encourage people, inspire them and give them lots of ideas to take away and use as well.

There will be a chance to learn more about children's spirituality and how this differs from adult spirituality. This is a really important basis for work with children, and for older people especially, it offers a way into better understanding how children think and what they want from church. Claire will also help us explore the theology of all-age worship, and how this is expressed in practice when we get down to the nitty-gritty of teaching all ages and putting together an all-age service. Claire will be available over the weekend should individuals wish to discuss their particular church circumstances and challenges with her. More information can be found on Claire's website - [www.clairebentonevans.com](http://www.clairebentonevans.com)

We will again be sharing a time of food and fellowship on Saturday evening and you are invited to bring some snacks to share. Perhaps there are some of you who could also bring a song, a poem, or perform a drama for everyone's entertainment. It is hoped that Rev David Easton will be able to be with us on Sunday to continue the tradition of the District Chair presiding at morning communion.

Should you have any queries relating to the weekend please do not hesitate to contact Hilary or Margaret.



Local Preachers & Worship Leaders

The Methodist Church in Scotland

Local Preachers & Worship Leaders  
Weekend Conference

31<sup>st</sup> January - 1<sup>st</sup> February 2014

Booking Form

Margaret Brown & Hilary Henderson  
District Joint LP/WL Secretary



# LP/WL WEEKEND CONFERENCE

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January 1pm to

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February 3.30pm

## BOOKING FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance details I will be attending:

- Full Weekend\* £40 (includes ensuite room + meals)
- Day 1: Saturday £10 (includes refreshments & evening meal)
- Day 2: Sunday £10 (includes breakfast/lunch & refreshments)
- I should like sandwiches on Saturday

Special requirements (access/diet/other):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*A 50% deposit is required to secure an overnight booking  
Balance can be paid during the weekend

Make cheques payable to:  
"SCOTTISH METHODIST LOCAL PREACHERS"

Please send completed form with deposit if applicable to:  
Mrs Hilary Henderson, 14 Elizabeth Gardens, Stoneyburn, EH47 8BP  
(01501 762645) Email [hilarymhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:hilarymhenderson@gmail.com)

# Scotland District LP/WL Weekend Conference

## PROGRAMME 2015

Tea/coffee sandwiches available from 12.30pm

### **SATURDAY 31<sup>st</sup> January**

- 1.30 Opening worship and introduction
- 2.00 Session One: Creative prayer with all ages
- 3.00 Afternoon Tea/Coffee
- 3.15 Session Two: All-age storytelling
- 4.15 Short Break and Business meeting
- 5.00 Session Three: Children's spirituality in theory and practice
- 6.00 Dinner
- 7.15 Time of sharing food and fellowship

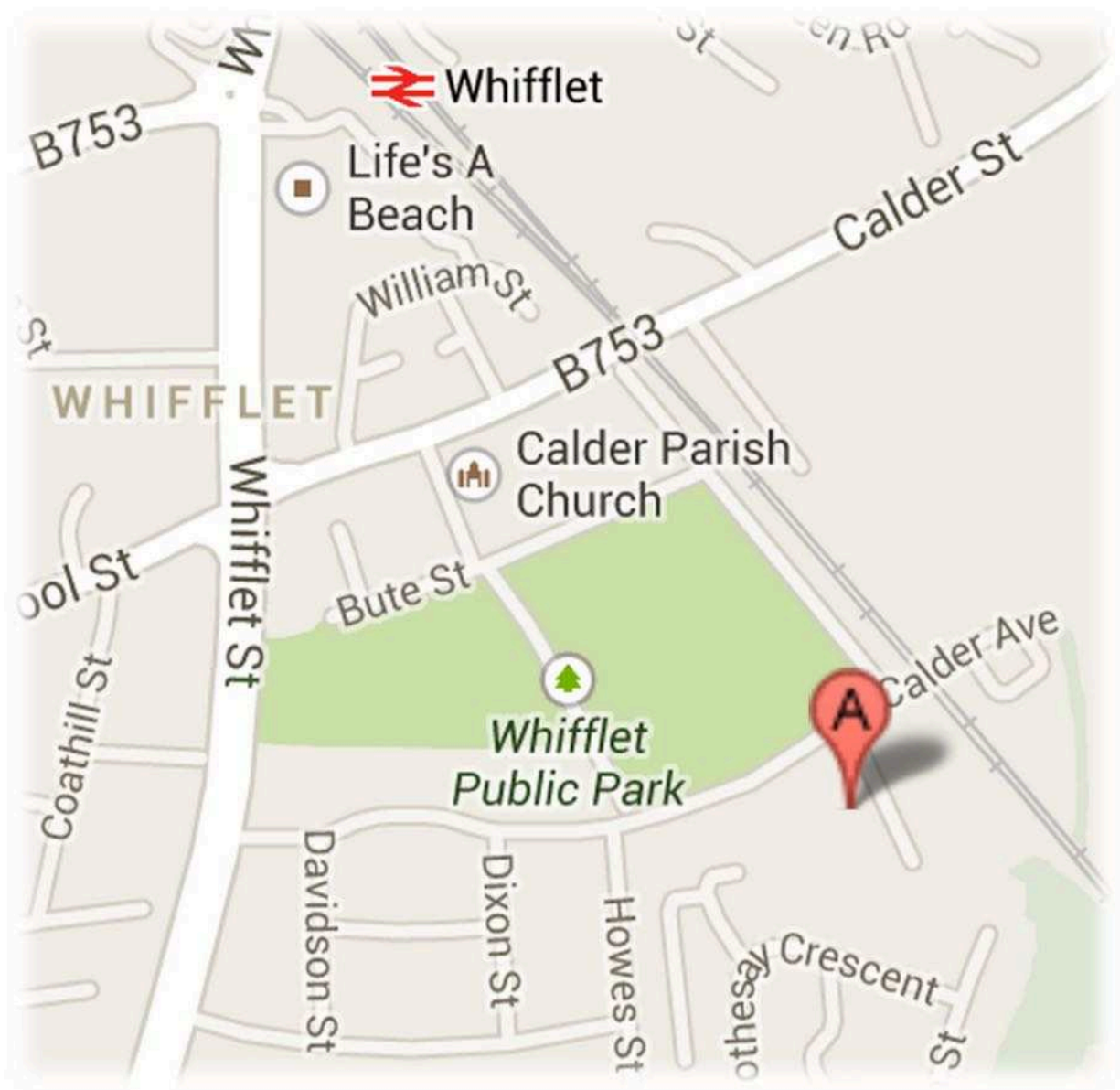
### **SUNDAY 1<sup>st</sup> February**

- 8.00 Holy Communion in the Chapel
- 9.00 Breakfast
- 9.45 Session Four: Theology & Teaching of all-age worship
- 11.00 Morning Tea/Coffee
- 11.15 Planning for closing worship
- 1.00 Lunch
- 2.00 Closing worship
- 3.15 Disperse

# The Conforti Institute

Calder House | Calder Avenue | Coatbridge  
ML5 4JS | Phone: 01236 607120  
[www.confortiinstitute.org](http://www.confortiinstitute.org)

The Institute offers comfortable and welcoming residential accommodation for up to 70 people, based on shared en-suite twin and family-sized rooms. A full cereal/continental breakfast is provided. All rooms have telephone and internet access. Tea and coffee facilities are also provided. Off-street car parking is available.



- By car: From East or West A8 turn north onto A725.  
From North M80 to M73 East A8 then North A725
- By train: Nearest station is Whifflet



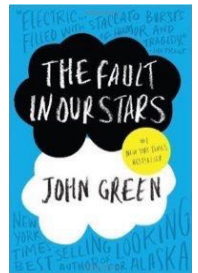
**Laurence Wareing** is a Local Preacher in the Edinburgh and Forth Circuit. He works as a freelance writer, producer and trainer. As editor of the Methodist hymn website Singing the Faith Plus Laurence engages with his love of words and music that reflect, re-express and challenge faith. Laurence has very kindly given us permission to re-produce a recent article that he wrote for the Magnet magazine offering ideas for developing faith through a study of well-known hymns and contemporary films.

## Hymns and films

Magnet article 15 June 14

No self-respecting film director would thank you for suggesting that the latest Hollywood blockbuster could be summed up in a few verses of religious poetry and yet...films, like all art forms, have the power to make us reflect - on our likes and dislikes, our values, and our beliefs. And there are always connections to be explored; ideas to be affirmed or to be challenged. While writing a series of film-related articles for the website 'Singing the Faith Plus' (which supports the most recent UK Methodist hymn book), I discovered how the words of certain hymns may pick up on movie themes and develop them from a Christian point of view.

Take, for example, this summer's teenage hit, **The Fault in Our Stars**, based on the bestselling novel by John Green. The story brings together Hazel and the confident, thoughtful Augustus Waters, both of them teenage cancer patients in remission. Their evolving love is interwoven with the progression of their respective illnesses. But the film is more than a heart-tugging "cancer story". Amongst other things (and you might well wish to focus on something else), it is about the way in which love can enter and transform imperfect situations. "Life doesn't have to be perfect for love to be extraordinary" is the film's strap line.



Which might also be the strap line for the season of Christmas. When we sing, 'Love came down at Christmas', we are challenged to ask ourselves, "What did that look like?" Part of the answer will be about something extraordinary transforming imperfect people in an imperfect world. In Philip Doddridge's perennial 'Hark the glad sound!', God comes, we sing, "...the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure".

Sitting our hymns alongside popular films is not about imposing a message on a movie. We must allow films to say what they wish to say. But perhaps we may use the texts of hymns to both echo and act as springboards for developing the movie themes in light of our Christian experience. To what extent do the words of hymns connect with our daily lives; lives reflected to a greater or lesser extent in the movies?



'The Fault in Our Stars' traces a way through a world that has let us down but seems to offer more (a theme picked up in other ways in another Christmas perennial – Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*). It's the same world that we sing of in different paraphrases of Psalm 23 – simultaneously acknowledging an incarnate, guiding love that doesn't demand perfection but walks beside us through thick and thin.

Singing the Faith Plus' exploration of four Oscar-nominated movies (which included an interesting connection between '12 Years a Slave' and another Advent hymn, James Montgomery's 'Hail to the Lord's Anointed') offered starting points for some challenging discussion – and endeavoured to take our hymn texts and an important medium of popular culture equally seriously.



For more examples of hymn-related films, see 'Singing the Faith goes to the Oscars', [www.singingthefaithplus.org.uk](http://www.singingthefaithplus.org.uk)

## Prayer for Christmas Presence

*By Daphne Kitching*

Generous Father,

At this busy time of year, help us to remember the important things. In all the rush of sending cards and giving presents may we make time to be still, to acknowledge your sending and giving of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. Thank you that he didn't stay in the stable in Bethlehem, but lived and died and became the Saviour of all who put their trust in him. May we receive afresh the gift of your presence with us in Jesus, now and for ever, with great thankfulness. In his name, we pray. Amen.

# Singing The Faith

*Some Alternative suggested tunes (which congregations may know)*

| StF Hymn No. | First Line                                  | Alternative Tune |
|--------------|---|------------------|
| 5            | Father in whom we live                      | 347              |
| 43           | Come let us praise the Lord                 | 69               |
| 158          | Lord you sometimes speak in wonders         | 169              |
| 160          | Powerful in making us wise to salvation     | 13               |
| 163          | When listening prophets dare to speak       | 457              |
| 189          | Wild and lone the prophet's voice           | 355 (i)          |
| 253          | Love inspired the anger                     | MHB286           |
| 260          | Swiftly pass the clouds of glory            | 25               |
| 271          | Come wounded healer, your suff'rings reveal | 526              |
| 296          | Christ has risen while earth slumbers       | 323(i)           |
| 369          | Baptise us with your Spirit                 | 315              |
| 402          | Go to the world! Go into all the earth      | 745              |
| 408          | How small a spark has lit a living tree     | MHB798           |
| 425          | God of forgiveness, your people you freed   | 449              |
| 429          | Lord, we turn to you for mercy              | 341              |
| 493          | Come, Lord to our souls come down           | MHB850           |
| 510          | Says Jesus 'Come and gather round           | 669              |
| 511          | Speak in stillness, God we pray             | 669              |
| 543          | Wonder of wonders, life is beginning        | 125              |
| 595          | Lord we have come at your own invitation    | 13               |
| 619          | Thanks for friends who keep on loving       | 8                |
| 660          | Called by Christ to be disciples            | 503              |
| 665          | Make us your prophets, Lord                 | 372              |
| 684          | Here on the threshold of a new beginning    | 350              |
| 703          | In an age of twisted values                 | 323(i)           |
| 708          | O God of hope, your prophets spoke          | 495              |
| 713          | Show me how to stand for justice            | 568              |

# Worship: Leading & Preaching (WLP)

Below is an extract of the minutes of a meeting which was held in Dunblane on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014, with Circuit Superintendents, Local Preacher's Secretaries and Tutors to consider the new Worship Leading and Preaching Course for your information.

Helen Wareing welcomed all, and introduced Richard Armiger, from the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network (**DMLN**) who is leading the pilot of the new Worship: Leading & Preaching training programme in the East of England Region.

## Session 1: Introduction to Worship: Leading & Preaching (WLP)

Richard told us something about himself and then asked if there were any particular things people were looking for out of this session. The response was that the important issues are the things that are different or have changed set against Faith & Worship (**F&W**) and how the new training course will be assessed. Richard hoped that the answers to these would become apparent through the presentation - which could also be downloaded from the Methodist Website:

[www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/local-preachers/proposed-new-training-pathways](http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/local-preachers/proposed-new-training-pathways)

Richard explained that the decision to replace **F&W** came about because though having been revised **F&W** was written to a different context than the Church finds itself in today. The need for something new was evidenced in the variety of 'alternate' pathways churches were producing around the Connexion. Conversations and development of this new course have been going on for two and a half years and the **DMLN** came into being last year promoting and supporting this course. The launch date is September 2015 for Modules 1-4, for both Worship Leaders (**WL**) and Local Preachers (**LP**) which is already piloting; with the pilot of Modules 5-8, for **LP** only, beginning at the same time.

This course is designed to create confident leaders with a greater knowledge to speak of God. It offers improved **WL** training throughout. People need to be made aware that this course is soon to be available and that though **F&W** will continue for a few years it will come to an end in August 2021. It has been found that group study has proven to be a more positive way to learn, the challenge however is how to gather people together in groups owing to geographical considerations.

**WLP** offers a greater flexibility of use and is more accessible with **on-line learning**. Group study will offer a wide supportive framework at regional and circuit level with local groups being set up if feasible. If not online or for areas of low broadband, students will be supported with printouts and Power Points/videos can be



downloaded onto another device. It is possible to extract certain sections to be used for further development at local church level as well as a useful tool in the continual development of **WLs** and **LPs**.

It is important to assess the ongoing needs of our congregations and find ways of addressing those needs for the future church and to encourage a culture of learning in circuits and local churches. Respecting the fact that people learn in different ways, **WLP** incorporates a variety of learning styles with opportunities to see, hear and do as well as read and have conversations to enable greater understanding. It also recognises the value of people's experiences being brought to their leadership roles.

Each of the eight Modules has three sections with sessions under the headings **Worship; Prepare; Explore;** and **Extend** which offer students a range of ways to apply and put learning into practice and extend their learning should they so desire. Though there seems to be a lot involved in this course, especially for **WLs**, there is obviously value for both **WLs** and **LPs** being able to study at the same depth. At its heart the course aims to help learners make connections with their preaching and/or worship leading and to stimulate the learner's own experimentation and learning.

**WLP** can help widen **LP/WL** vision of different worship styles relating to their local congregations. Messy Church leaders for example can be helped with this course. The course has the flexibility to help approved skills be instilled into students, with scope for LP meetings to gather with students and work on the course together to refresh and enhance skills. When questioned about how this course can enable learning for students with English as a second or third language, Richard explained that diversity is amplified in London so there has been awareness of this and pilots have included these people. The pilot in Birmingham is a multi-cultural diversity group.

The Videos included in the course were seen as a great improvement with the option to be easily lifted for use in church training. For example, the 'Reading the Bible in Church' video can help the student move from watching and listening to someone else, to watching themselves, to then practicing and developing the skill. This applies not only to reading but to preaching, and is an option which is not given sufficient focus in **F&W**.

**Modules 1-4** are all entitled 'Encountering God...' (1. groundwork; 2. in the life of the church; 3. in daily life; 4. in unexpected places). **Modules 5-8** focuses much more around Preaching (5. Ministry of the Word; 6. Living Faith; 7. Understanding our Story; 8. Voices from the Margins) and specific bits from **F&W** can be found throughout. There is also a **pre-Module 1** for introduction to the course and a **handbook for**

**tutors** to printout with overview. These are now trialling with the pilot groups but hopefully will be made more available soon.

There is a wider range of people involved in the writing process with writers from across the Connexion, who have a descriptive manual with prompts to assist them and opportunity to have conversations with others to enable creativity and the sharing of a wide range of experience. Though mainly Methodist, there are conversations ongoing with other denominations with strong Methodist connections, to make this course available to them.

Assessment will be by portfolio – one for **Modules 1-4 (WL&LP)** and another for **Modules 5-8 (LP only)**. It will assess three main aspects – Knowledge & understanding; Practical skills and Reflective skills. Grading is not by percentage any more but will be either ‘met’ or ‘not met’. In recognition that we are in the business of forming the **WL/LP** and also enabling application of their skills, the assessment will be both formative and summative. LPs will be ‘On Note’ for **Module 1-4** and expected to move to ‘On Trial’ at **Module 5** (though may move up sooner - LP meetings decision).

As students work through the modules there are parts which will be suitable to be included in their portfolio but not all and the tutor will see how the student is progressing and understanding. The completed portfolio will include evidence from services led by the learner; 3-5 services (for **WL**); 5-7 services (for **LP**); two reflections on acts of worship led by others; six pieces of work that apply theological understanding in different media contexts.

There are clear guidelines for tutors to test student’s development, ensuring a closer relationship between tutors’ marks and assessors’ marks. Assessment will be done locally by tutors and moderated by a Regional Moderator (in Scotland’s case this is Helen Wareing). Moderating is not a second marking – this will be done at a Connexional sampling.

Things that have changed are that **WLs** and **LPs** will train together (with the option to include others); **WLs** will be provided with a Mentor; Portfolios are moderated in regions; and if **WLs** feel the call to preach they can continue the course (existing **WLs** would need to do all 8 Modules). What has not changed is that the **LP** meeting continues to lead in the process of discernment; local Tutors assess portfolios; and the course is open to all.

Those already on **F&W** course can transfer to **WLP** with credits being awarded in relation to sections completed and assessment passed. For instance those having done **Sections A & B** could transfer into the course at **Module 5-8**. As the final date for entry to the **F&W** course is September 2016 the two courses will be running

together until 2021 leaving a double resource requirement. Some tutors may choose to retire from tutoring rather than retrain on the new course.

## Session 2: Identifying next steps

After lunch, Richard handed out a paper entitled 'If you are training as a Worship Leader or Local Preacher what help can you expect?' outlining the main responsibilities of tutors and mentors. Having read through this paper the question was raised as to the potential of an LP 'on trial' being mentored by a WL. Richard said he was hesitant to reply as he felt that though possible, it might not be suitable, however there may be cases where it would work. It would be down to the local LP meeting to explore this. Mentoring is about enabling the student to be the best they can be. Another question related to the time when Mentors would cease to be required. Richard suggested this should be at least for Modules 1-4 or between moving from 'On Note' to 'On Trial'. Training material for these two roles will be available soon.

In two groups we began to grapple with identifying next steps for Scotland District. It was unfortunate that not all circuits were represented at the meeting so we were encouraged to think how things might fit for those areas. Richard encouraged us to look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that this new course might have for our District, Circuit and Congregation.

### Group A

- Difficulty in resourcing - are we covered - do we have the people-power?
- How many tutors will stay - do we need to look at wider resource rather than local context?
- Skills gap - in technical areas
- Financial implications
- District co-ordination may be a better route
- Should **F&W** deadline be rethought - District decision
- Opportunities - more exciting, innovative, fresh approach to leadership can only benefit the church
- Key players - Superintendents
- How can this reach into congregations especially the young? (Richard - adapting the course to train 13-14 year olds is being looked at)
- Residential learning District wide and Regional on-line - cost implications and how to structure residentials (Richard - some residential costs £135 per person per week - delivery of **WLP** about same as **F&W** not more)

## Group B

- Regional Moderator and Tutors to meet together to bring **WLP** from District level.
- We have tutors who have specialisms.
- How many **WL/LP** do we have on the ground?
- Mentor role is equally important
- Start points rather than staggered entry. (Richard suggested students could start on the mentoring process as a way to lead into a set start date)

Without all circuits being at the meeting it was difficult to see how we could manage to introduce, deliver and support the **WLP** course and effect the changes needed in the methods of working of tutors and mentors. It was noted that Inverness does not at present have a tutor or a superintendent.

It was agreed that the **WLP** course, being mainly on-line, could be better supported at District level allowing a wider sharing of tutors and make better use of their specialist skills. Groups would be easier facilitated and residential weekends organised. This would greatly benefit all circuits, especially those with limited training resources. It was also felt that we could offer our situation as a model for Shetland District.

Chris Foxon, District Tutor and Helen Wareing DMLN Coordinator, were asked to convene a steering group to better assess how the new course could be introduced, delivered and supported throughout District. The group would include District LP Secretaries. It was agreed that Chris and Helen would also be responsible for writing a letter to DPC to seek approval for this approach and to report back to a meeting of **LP/WL** Secretaries & Tutors with Superintendents in February 2015 in time to report to **DPC** again at its March meeting.

**Chris has since written to DPC, who have agreed the District framework. We are now looking for people to volunteer to be part of the steering group.**

## World War One soldier saved by Bible

The Bible Society relates how, in 1917, two bullets destined for Private Bush's chest were stopped by a Bible he kept in his breast pocket. He was knocked off his feet and into a shell hole at Ypres, Belgium, and although he was injured, he survived and lived to the ripe old age of 76.

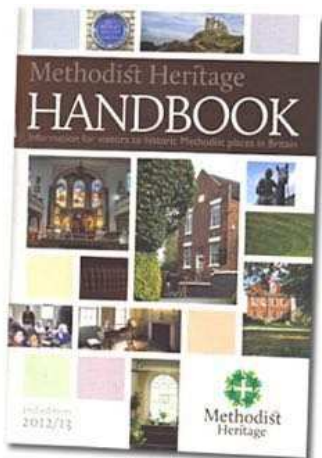




'Who do you think you are?' has become a popular television programme where well known celebrities find out about their past. Methodist Heritage Officer, Jo Hibbard, has helped Methodists connect with their own history. Two books which help trace our Methodist heritage are:

### **A Methodist in the Family?**

Answers to ten frequently asked family history questions  
Author: Philip Thornborow



The FREE **Methodist Heritage Handbook 2012/13** provides background stories and location information for over 100 Methodist heritage sites of historic importance, in a handy 80-page A5.

**Both available from Methodist Publishing House**

<http://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk>

# LP/WL Weekend 2016

This will be led by Revd Paul Wilson



**The Revd Paul Wilson** serves as the development worker for Methodist Evangelicals Together (MET) and has previously spent 22 years in circuit ministry. His ministry has been built on the principles of 'discipleship shaped for mission', seeing churches grow through relevant worship, biblical preaching, small groups, prayer, serving the local community and the ministry of healing and wholeness. He is married to Karen and has three children.

Information on the Methodist Evangelicals Together can be found on the website: [www.met-uk.org](http://www.met-uk.org)

*Below we quote an article that Paul wrote for the website of the Methodist Church on Meditating on Scripture*

## Meditating on Scripture

Daily Bible reading can so easily become a 'ticking the box' exercise, with us rushing through our reading so that we can say we have done it. But later we can find it hard to remember what we have read and have not applied the reading to our lives. That is not what Bible reading is supposed to be like. It should be a life-transforming encounter with God. What went wrong? How can we put it right? Try meditating on the Scripture. This is easier than it sounds. Even the busiest person can fit it into their busy schedule.

**M**inutes – not hours – is all the time that is needed. We all need to slow down, but may not have the time to stop. Five minutes of reading the Bible, followed by five minutes meditating on it will change your life for good. Meditation can take place on the Tube, whilst jogging, during a daily chore or with a tea or coffee in your favourite chair.

**E**ncouraged by Scripture, this is an opportunity to encounter God, entering God's presence and tuning our thoughts to God's thoughts. It is an opportunity to think about God's character, commandments and creation (Psalm 77:12; Psalm 119:15). Whatever time of the day or night, we are encouraged to find stability in God in the midst of a changing and often troublesome world (Psalm 1; Joshua 1:8).

**D**eep thinking about God is one definition of meditation. Putting aside the commentaries and word studies, it is allowing the Holy Spirit to move us Godward, looking into Scripture to respond to that which feeds not only our minds, but also speaks to our hearts.

**I**maginations and feelings can be released. Slowly reading Scripture, entering into the story as one of the characters, can help bring stories to life. Exploring how the disciples felt in the storm when Jesus was asleep can resonate with our own experience when God seems absent or inactive when we are in a life-threatening situation (Mark 4:35-41). Yet to hear Jesus' command, "Peace! be still!" may bring a moment of deep peace stilling our anxiety and suddenly realising that God is with us (Matthew 28:20; Philippians 4:6-7).

**T**aking a verse or two into the day, can be a bite-sized way of feeding on Scripture. There is no right or wrong way to read Scripture. You may be reading several chapters in a day in order to read through the Bible in a year, but focus in on a key verse or incident for five minutes. If you are following a devotional guide, do not simply read the contributor's meditation - good as it might be - but think about your own and maybe write it down in a journal.

**A**doration (or praising God for who God is) is the first part of meditation, leading into prayer. The Scripture can bring into focus a part of God's character which inspires the 'wow factor' into our prayers. To be captured by the loving acceptance of Jesus for people evokes praise as we realise it applies to us too!

**T**hanksgiving for what God has done, rather than being repetitive if left to our own thoughts, is made new as we experience more of who we are in Christ (Ephesians 1) or have the eyes of our hearts opened to the extent of God's love for us (Ephesians 3:17-18). The Psalms are full of thanksgiving for the many blessings that God has given us (eg Psalm 103).

**I**ntercessions (prayers for others) become more than the usual shopping list. If we are meditating on Psalm 23, we may bring our family's material, physical, spiritual and emotional needs to God. It may be guidance for jobs, studies or problems at work, or a time of peace and tranquillity for an over-stressed parent or friend, even placing them in God's hands in the midst of I Worship I Compassion I Devotion & Spiritual Rhythms I Just Living I Evangelism I bereavement, illness or need. Different readings will bring different needs to mind.



**O**nward into life and outward into the world is the purpose of meditation. From the time of quiet reflection we are then equipped for what is thrown at us in everyday life. By encountering God, we may receive guidance for everyday ordinary human issues or those life-transforming moments when we are led into a new direction of career or calling to serve God in a very practical way.

**N**ow is the time to take ten minutes out. Stop, go to your favourite place with a drink, open the Bible at either Isaiah 55 or your Bible reading for the day and slowly read it, think about it and pray it. In the words of Isaiah, bring your thirst, your needs, seek God and allow God's word to do a new thing in your life.

This works for me. I pray that it works for you too!

Going further:

*Richard Foster Life with God (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 2008)*

*George H Guthrie, Read the Bible for Life (Broadman & Holman Publishing, 2011)*

*Gerard Hughes, God of Surprises (London, DLT, third edition 2008)*

*Methodist Evangelicals Together (www.met-uk.org)*

*For a range of resources on engaging spiritual practices, visit [www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk](http://www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk)*

---

## LP & WL Weekend 2014

On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February our weekend conference was lead by Rev Chris Foxon, our District Tutor. Having a background in education, as a teacher and lecturer, Chris was well equipped to help us think about children in relation to God and worship, and what we can do to extend our children's spiritual experience.

We were also pleased to have the opportunity to meet and get to know our new District Chair, Rev David Easton, who led us in a discussion of 'how we shape our ministry while living our lives as Christians at the interface', and 'how we can help our congregation to make sense of our community and our world'.

Opposite is some of the LPs & WLs who attended.



# Responding to Ebola

All We Can, the relief arm of the Methodist Church, has stepped up its response to the escalating Ebola crisis in West Africa. It has made an emergency grant of £10,000 and opened an humanitarian appeal fund for donations to support the relief effort in Sierra Leone and Liberia and help prevent the spread of the virus. Angela Mugore, Director of International Programmes and Partnerships



Methodist  
relief and  
development

commented: "Our emergency partner organisations are working hard in extremely challenging conditions to reduce infection rates, establish quarantine zones, and provide humanitarian assistance to affected communities." To donate, visit [www.allwecan.org.uk](http://www.allwecan.org.uk)

---

## Persecution of the Church is growing

As the year draws to a close let's remember in our prayers the millions of Christians who live in various parts of the Muslim world. Many of these are facing persecution, and thousands of them have been martyred for their faith during 2014 alone.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has said that since the rise of Islamic State, Christian communities which have existed "in many cases since the days of St Paul" are now under threat in countries such as Syria and Egypt. To give just two of many dozens of examples: in Egypt during August alone, around 100 Christian sites were attacked, and 42 churches burnt to the ground. In September All Saints Anglican church in Peshawar, Pakistan was bombed, killing 85 and injuring more than 200 people. And similar horrific stories abound.



The Most Rev Justin Welby, who leads almost 80 million Anglicans around the world, said that despite the persecution, it was right that Christians should continue to pray for the terrorists. "As Christians, one of the things is that we pray for justice and particularly the issues around the anger that comes from this kind of killing. But we are also called as Jesus did at the Cross, to pray for those who are doing us harm."



The Methodist Church is one of the largest Christian churches serving Great Britain, with nearly 230,000 members and regular contact with over 512,000 people. It has 5,023 churches in Great Britain, and also maintains links with other Methodist churches totalling a worldwide membership of 70 million. Its activities, both alone and with ecumenical and secular partners, are based on four aims known as Our Calling:

- To increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love
- To help people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care
- To be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice
- To make more followers of Jesus Christ