

Kitbag!

Volume 9, Issue 3

March 2009

A Quiet Place

A quiet place
where stillness and silence
met a troubled and distressed
mind.

Jesus, his soul overwhelmed with
sorrow
sought its peace.
Gethsemane.

A quiet place where
wind murmured in the trees;
and birds soared on the wing;
where prayer came easily
and naturally.

A quiet place that lent
itself to sleep;
where drowsy disciples nodded
off;
failed to keep watch;
not once, not twice,
but three times.

A quiet place where
the peace was shattered
by the traitor's steps
the betrayer's kiss.
Violence filled the air;
uproar replaced tranquillity.
Arrest and desertion,
not one stayed with him.
All fled.

A quiet place once more
Gethsemane.

Jan Grimwood

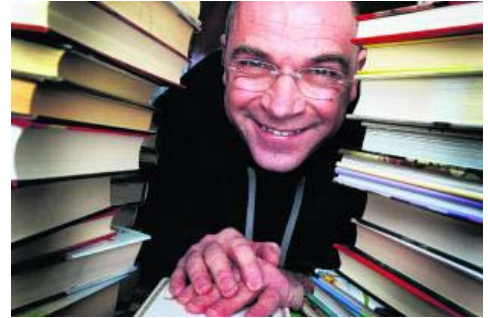
Prepare for Easter

7th-11th Apr	<i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i> Headington Theatre
7th Apr	Holy Week Service Horspath—8pm
9th Apr	Supper Communion Rose Hill—7pm Holy Communion Tackley—7:30pm Kennington—7:30pm

Rose Hill Library

As many of you will know, Stephen Richardson, the Methodist Deacon on the Rose Hill estate, has been working to set up a community library on the estate aimed at uniting the area through reading. The facility is initially set to be open twice a week in a room within the Rose Hill Community Centre. Donations of books are pouring in and £5,000 has been secured from housing developers' contributions to Oxfordshire County Council.

Although the estate already has a mobile library it is open for such a short period of time that many people are unable to access it. The hope, too, is that this new project will be more than just another library. As Stephen says: "It will be a place for people to look at books, but we also hope to grow community links out of this. We want to serve tea and coffee and encourage people to hang around and talk to each other. We also want to avoid various things. Libraries can have an officious atmosphere with lots of forms to fill in and fines. We don't want any of that! Instead, we want people to engage with reading and



feel comfortable.

"So far, we've had a very positive response. We've got some volunteers on board, although we could always do with more, and people want to see it happen. Lots of people are offering books and we are also hoping to have magazines, newspapers, talking books and, in time, videos, CDs and DVDs. The great thing about it is that it is being driven by the community who are really keen. Our aim is to get it off the ground and then let the community shape it."

There has already been a great response from around the circuit to Stephen's plea for books—but he is always happy for more! If you have anything to contribute, please do contact him on 01865-712880 or email stephen.richardson@oxfordmethodists.org.uk.



Have a banana!

On Saturday, 21st February, 120 Fairtrade bananas were given away to passers-by outside Cowley

Road Methodist Church. It was a great way of engaging with the community and showing that the church is alive and well. It was encouraging to see just how many people have an interest in the church and in church life. Some even expressed an interest in coming on a Sunday morning. And all this was just the byproduct of promoting Fairtrade Fortnight.

The following day Wesley Memorial hosted its second Fairtrade Fashion Show after the morning service. We

were entertained by the performances of our very own catwalk models raising awareness of ethically sourced clothing. The show was followed by a meal in aid of Fairtrade.

More information about Fairtrade issues can be found at the Fairtrade Foundation's website. Go to www.fairtrade.org.uk. Alternatively, don't forget the Fairtrade Shop at St Michael at the Northgate on Oxford's Cornmarket.



Rob Winn

Owls and sleepouts



Malcolm Bromhall, pastoral & development worker for the Northern Mission Partnership, teamed up with Kidlington church member John Winterbottom for a sponsored sleep out in February just as temperatures slumped to 10 below zero! The idea was to raise awareness of Poverty & Homelessness Action Week with half the proceeds going to homelessness charities and half to the church's own outreach work. At the time of going to press, Malcolm and John reckoned to have raised upwards of £750.



It's not like Kidlington's Chrysalis Youth Club to get into a flap, but the feathers were really flying when *Chrissie's Owls* of Stonesfield turned up with some of their flighty friends recently. Pictured with one of Chrissie's "flying squad" is club member Owen Stepney.

Jim Howes

It is with sadness that the death was announced of Jim Howes. He died peacefully, aged 86, in the John Radcliffe Hospital on Tuesday, 13th January, after some months of illness. The funeral service was held in Combe Methodist Church on Friday 30th January followed by cremation.

Jim was well known in the Oxford Circuit attending Combe Methodist Church for most of his adult life, acting as Senior Steward and a member of the Church Council. With his wife Betty, who died 10 years ago, he worked devotedly for the church and only ceased to worship there when he moved to Wales some 6 years ago. He finally moved to Charlbury to be near his youngest daughter who lives in Stonesfield.

Jim was also a tireless worker outside the church, first

as a farmer then, finally, as a nurseryman near Ramsden. He eventually retired with Betty to Combe and was at last able to pursue his passion for woodworking. He equipped himself with all that was necessary to do wood turning and over some years raised thousands of pounds for the National Children's Home (now "Action for Children"). All the profit he made from selling his work at Craft Fairs and church events went to them. He was given an award by NCH for all that he did.

Jim will be missed by many and the church and circuit are all the poorer for losing a man such as Jim. He will be remembered with deep gratitude for all his efforts.

Tony Severn

Eileen Brooker

Eileen Brooker was a much loved member of Rose Hill Methodist Church. The following is taken from her recent obituary in the Guardian, written by Manuela Da Costa-Fernandes.

"I cannot remember when I first met Eileen Brooker, who has died aged 80, but she was always there in the background as I grew up. A nurse, she was also a community leader in Rose Hill and Cowley - "the other Oxford" - in the shadows of the dreaming spires. A devout Methodist, she lived her faith, organising activities and street parties in Courtland Road, our street. My family fled Uganda as refugees and our pebble-dashed house was our first real English home. We were the first, and only, Ugandan-Asian family to move into the road, and Mrs Brooker was one of the first neighbours to approach and welcome my mother. Mrs Brooker became a mothering figure for my own mother, replacing the extended family we had left and becoming part of my new British extended family. If my mother ran out of flour, we children would fight to go over to Mrs Brooker's house.

Within it we would find chocolate biscuits to eat and a quintessentially English collection of teapots.

"My parents left Courtland Road after an electrical fire. A neighbour rescued my mother and sister. I was studying at Exeter University, surrounded by green hills, red brick and old money. Months later, I walked out of university and returned to Rose Hill. Mrs Brooker found me sitting on the concrete wall, staring at the charred embers of the life that we had salvaged from Uganda. She made me a cup of tea, gave me biscuits and told me to return to university. And I did.

"After graduation, I moved to New York as a trainee journalist. I sent Mrs Brooker postcards and Christmas cards wherever work took me: Ohio, Georgia, Texas, Florida, California and Connecticut. My mother updated me whenever she met Mrs Brooker, saying how pleased she was to receive my cards, but that she seemed surprised that I remembered her. How could I forget her?"



Bladon Junior Church



Christmas Review

The church was once again packed to capacity for our Candlelit Concert. We had spent several weeks decorating the church with

thousands of fairy lights and other lighting effects and the building looked truly spectacular. The concert included songs from musicals such as *Mary Poppins*, *Spamalot* and *Whistle Down the Wind* as well as more traditional Christmas songs. However, the highlight must surely have been a comedy version of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* which almost brought the house down! The Christmas Family Service included a nativity play called

"Strictly Come Jesus" written as always by our resident comedian Steve Moss. Once again we were extremely lucky with carol singing – despite rain earlier in the week the weather turned warm and dry and we raised £120.

Thank you to everyone who came and made it such an enjoyable occasion as well as those in the village who gave so



generously. In January we held our New Year party with lots of traditional games and a final visit by Santa on his

way back to the North Pole!

Juniorchurch.co.uk

Our Junior Church website contains pictures from our shows over the years as well as all the latest news from church, a history section, details of all our services and an online shop where you purchase DVDs and photo CDs from our productions. There is also a members section for more informal gossip not suitable for the public part of the site! This section links to our message boards where 48 Junior Church members past and present have registered and made over 55,000 posts!

Mrs Vera Hoad

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Mrs Vera Hoad. Vera joined Bladon Methodist Sunday School as a class teacher in 1966 and became Superintendent in 1972. She led the Sunday School for almost 20 years, over-seeing many changes to keep the Sunday School relevant for the changing times. These included renaming the Sunday School as "Junior Church" and running an evening "club" for the older members. There will be a memorial service celebrating her life on 28th March at 2pm in the church. Our thoughts and prayers are with Vera's family.

And Finally

If you travel on the Oxford Tube to London then see if you can spot a photograph from our production of *Oliver* in their on-board magazine!

Philip Rumsby

Tiri Vawadzani*

On 7th March, the Ruwadzano/Manyano Fellowship in the UK will be holding an overnight Bible School at Wesley Memorial Church here in Oxford. The theme is from Romans 12:21 "Conquering evil with good".

Ruwadzano/Manyano is a women's fellowship group of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe whose roots can be traced back to Transvaal in South Africa where "The African Women's Prayer Union" was launched by Mrs Amos Burnet in order to bring African women to the forefront of Methodist Evangelism. In 1920 the movement expanded to Zimbabwe and has since then moved from strength to strength, becoming a recognised cornerstone of the Methodist Church.

It is now over 5 years since the R/M fellowship expanded to the UK and membership now stands at 300. Subscriptions are £30 per year of which £20 goes to support the Zimbabwe R/M and £10 is for the administrative costs in the UK. R/M branches can be found as far apart as northern Scotland and Wales. We follow the calendar of events as outlined in the R/M of The Zimbabwe Methodist Church. We hold Conventions and Bible schools annually with the last Convention being held over 3 days in September 2008.

Though the R/M originated from within Wesleyan Methodists, it soon spread to the other denominations and the different movements are easily identified by their

uniforms. In the UK, the ecumenical R/M Fellowship meets quarterly. The last overnight ecumenical meeting held in Bournemouth was attended by 500 delegates. The R/M members recognize that they have to live their faith by reaching out not just to each other but also to neighbours and strangers through prayer, bible study and action.

Today, the R/M continues to be a "potent evangelistic agency of the Zimbabwean Methodists" and we pray that the lessons we will learn in March will continue to strengthen our witnessing of the life and hope in Christ.

More details of this and other activities can be obtained from Rhoda Sharawakanda-Muzondo (rshalax@hotmail.com).



Grace Samkange

*translates as "We Fellowship Together"

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KEEPING
IN TOUCH

Please send contributions to the
editor, Jonathan Todd, either
via the circuit office or by email.

Deadline for next issue
18th May 2009



Sunrise Service
Rose Hill
6am—Easter Morning
Followed by breakfast

Dates for your Diary

Mar 3rd—Apr 7th *Every Tuesday at 7:30pm*

Mission Shaped Intro - A six week course to rediscover mission and reimagine church. Led by the Revd Tim Woolley, the District's director of mission.

Mar 19th—1pm

Winter into Spring—A concert of songs and poems given by Sue Whorton and Nia Williama. Wesley Memorial Church

Apr 5th—5:30pm

Spirituality on Screen—*Son of Man*. Venue: 10 Bletchingdon Road, Islip

Apr 26th—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—I: Who are you?*

May 3rd—5:30pm

Spirituality on Screen—*WALL-E*. Venue: 10 Bletchingdon Road, Islip

May 3rd—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—II: What happened?*

May 10th—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—III: Are you sure?*

May 17th—6.30pm at Lime Walk

Circuit Service —The Admission of Sue Barratt as a Local Preacher

May 17th—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—IV: Will you join me?*

May 24th—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—V: Where's he gone?*

May 31st—8pm

CREW *Questioning Easter—VI: What now?*

Jun 14th—5:30pm

Spirituality on Screen—*Into the Wild*. Venue: 10 Bletchingdon Road, Islip
(Note change of date!)

Jun 21st—6.30pm at Wesley Memorial

Circuit Service—Preacher: Rev Alison Tomlin

Questioning Easter

CREW (Cowley Road Evening Worship) launches itself with a six-week series entitled *Questioning Easter*. This is a chance to share in contemporary worship in a relaxed atmosphere, with music, thought-provoking presentations and opportunities to respond to God's word in a variety of ways. We begin with coffee and end with ice-cream at G&Ds across the road. Everyone is welcome. We begin on 26th April and meet at 8pm every Sunday until 31st May.

Murder on the high seas!



Just before Christmas, young people from around the circuit came together for a Pirate Murder Mystery. Cowley Road Methodist Church was transformed into a large pirate ship complete with its very own pirate crew. One pirate murder later and the young people were acting as police inspectors, quizzing pirate's of all ages and backgrounds. The evening revealed a deceitful tale of murder and revenge, brought about by a bag of parrot food. The event was lots of fun - for both the leaders and the young people

If you have any ideas for future youth circuit events then please contact Gemma Winn either via the Circuit Office or email: gemma.winn@oxfordmethodists.org.uk.