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Charity No 1134870

Circuit News

Autumn 2014



LARKFIELD

What a year this has been so far! It has been a joyous time as we have celebrated and continue to celebrate our 50th Anniversary. We have enjoyed meeting old friends and new. Previous ministers have come to share worship and preach, and three more still to come.

It has also been a time of dust and mess, scaffolding and paint as our new Welcome Area has taken shape. It wasn't ready for our Anniversary but in June at the time of our Flower Festival we had a "soft opening". We understand that is the term that is used when a building is opened before it is completed. So, look out for the "grand opening" later on. You will be invited!

We have now just had some new windows fitted in the Church, which we hope in time will be transformed with stained glass. The real good news is that people have been noticing and asking questions. New people have come through the doors on a Sunday. We are looking at ways in which we can be more open during the week. We pray that our Welcome Area will make us a more welcoming Church, so that the work of Christ in Larkfield will continue, hopefully for at least another 50 years.

CIRCUIT NEWS

We are looking forward to welcoming two new Ministers to our Circuit. Rev Noreen Daley-Lee, her husband Lafton and two year old son Emmanuel will soon be moving to their manse in Gravesend. After many months of negotiations, a manse in Dartford is about to become available for Deacon Jane Paine and her husband Alan. Many thanks go to Alan Wood, Circuit Treasurer, for his persistence, long-suffering patience (!?) and eventual ability to move the unmoveable, so that Jane and Alan will have somewhere to live.

The Welcome Service for Jane and Noreen will be at Gravesend Methodist Church at 4pm on Sunday 7th September. Please join us if you can.

Please pray for Jane and Noreen and their families, as they move into our Circuit. We pray that their ministries with us will be a time of blessing and joy for them and for us all.



HARTLIP

It was blustery weather—sunshine and showers on the 10th May but our Spring Tea Afternoon was a happy occasion when friends met in the Retreat Centre behind the Chapel for tea, scones and cakes and relaxing conversation in a pleasant atmosphere. The Afternoon was a real success and £298.17 was raised altogether.

Sunday 8th June was the 194th Anniversary of this remarkable building and we celebrated the occasion with a “Hartlip Tea” when we were joined by many who regularly worship here and by those who came from afar for this special day. The chapel gardens and interior were looking at their best for the Anniversary Service at 6.30pm which was led by Deacon Pru Cahill and we welcomed Elena Markova from Rainham who sang two beautiful solos. The building resounded with many voices raised in praise and thanks to God at this special time.

The Methodist Church and Retreat Centre were represented at the Hartlip Community Day held on 5th July at the Village Hall when there was an opportunity for all village groups to publicise their activities and for local people to get to know what “goes on” in this quiet village. We were well represented with an exhibition of Church and Retreat Centre activities. The Retreat Centre has been well used this year with visits from various groups from different churches holding away-days as well as individuals benefitting from peaceful surroundings. The Community Day was a time of witness to our faith, with a member of our congregation on hand to answer questions and engage with visitors.

The sun shone on Saturday 12th July after a cool and gloomy morning and visitors were able to enjoy the annual Strawberry Tea Afternoon in the beautiful gardens either side of the chapel as well as meeting together in the Retreat Centre. £318 was raised from this successful afternoon.

Our Harvest Festival will be held on Sunday 21st September this year when our service will be led by Rev Clifford Newman. All are welcome to join in thanking God for His many blessings. As usual the following day, Monday 22nd September at 7pm we have a short service followed by the auction of produce, the proceeds of which will be donated to charity.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

SEPTEMBER

- 7th** Circuit Service to welcome Rev Noreen Daley-Lee and Deacon Jane Paine, 4pm @ Gravesend.
- 10th** Local Preachers & Worship Leaders meeting @ Larkfield.
- 22nd** Plan dates for Dec-Jan due in to the office today.
- 23rd** Circuit meeting 7.30pm @ Swanscombe.

OCTOBER

- 4th** Craft Fair @ Hextable. 10am-3pm.
Quiz Night @ Gravesend. 6.15pm for 6.30pm start.
- 18th** Promise Auction @ Gravesend. 4.30pm
- 22nd** Winter Circuit News items due in to the office today!
- 30th** Fun Morning @ Dene Holm.

NOVEMBER

- 8th** Quiz Night @ Dene Holm. 7.30pm.
- 22nd** Autumn Fayre @ Dene Holm. 2pm.
- 29th** Christmas Bazaar @ Gravesend. 10.30am.

(17th January 2015 African Children's Choir at Gravesend)

GRAVESEND

Hello from Gravesend Methodist Church. So what's on in the near future - in addition to our regular weekly activities? Well on Sunday 7th September at 4pm we are hosting the Circuit Service for the Induction of Rev Noreen Daley-Lee and the new Deacon for Dartford, Jane Paine. We look forward to "good circuit support". (Drinks & cakes will be served after the service if you need an incentive to come!). We will also be acknowledging all the ministerial duties and pastoral care that Deacon Vic Downs has carried out in Gravesend whilst we did not have a resident Minister.

Our Harvest Weekend commences on Saturday 20th September at 4pm with a welcome Harvest Tea for our new minister, Rev Noreen Daley-Lee and her family. All Gravesend, Dene Holm & Swanscombe members and friends are welcome. Our 11am Sunday Harvest Service with Communion will be led by Noreen when donations received will be going to our Foodbank.

A "Quiz Evening with a Twist" - on 4th October at 6.15pm. Another of our very popular family friendly quiz nights with Ploughman's Platter. Teams of 6 people at £5 per head which includes the Ploughman's Platter—bring your own nibbles and soft drinks (sorry no alcohol). We would love to see teams from other circuit churches. Register your team with Robert Hardy, 01474 357681 or email on roberthardy33@gmail.com. Proceeds to our C21st Project improvements. Bring all of your senses, they will be needed!

On Saturday 18th October—A Promises Auction with Tea. Tea at 4.30pm followed by the auction where church members and friends provide auction lots for you to bid on—past lots have varied from an afternoon at the House of Commons to Tea at the seaside and your windows cleaned! So come along, get a bargain and support our C21st Project improvements in the process.

Our Christmas Bazaar will be held from 10:30am to 2pm on Saturday 29th November. A chance to do some Christmas present shopping whilst supporting the work of our church. Christmas decorations, jewellery, crafts, home made produce, plants, refreshments etc.

One advance date for your diary is Saturday 17th January 2015 at 7:30pm when the African Children's Choir is coming to Gravesend again. They came to Gravesend on their tour in January 2013 and a fantastic time was had by all. Their enthusiasm, musical ability and sense of fun is catching and we defy anyone to go away without a beaming smile upon their face. Tickets for this inspiring evening go fast so please register your early interest with Robert Hardy on 01474 357681 or email roberthardy33@gmail.com. Put the date in your diaries and more details will be given later.

C21st Project—By the time you read this, approval should have been given to commence physical works on our C21st Project. We have been raising funds for this over the last few years and as we have now collected over £30,000 + a £10,000 bequest we believe the time is right to apply for grants and to commence a first phase of the works. Ask any of the agencies in Gravesend “where work is done for the vulnerable in the community” and they will say the Methodist Church. However, buildings like ours designed in the late 1800's do not meet the aspirations of a 21st century congregation and community. As a result we hope to re-work the layout of the rooms to the rear of the church to enable use by, and for, the town centre community 7 days a week, but which is presently impossible. Improvements are essential if we are to be a thriving community based church for the future.

“Your local Town Centre Church bringing God's love to the heart of the Community”

HEXTABLE

The summer seems to be an active part of the year. Our Boys' Brigade Award evening treated the parents and friends to a photo record of the years activities with commentary as well as presenting the awards gained over the sessions. The boys also performed a number of entertaining items and demonstrated some of their activities.

Tony Miller from Whitechapel Mission led our Church Anniversary service giving us all a better understanding of the fantastic work they do at the Mission which our church supports in many ways.

Our Girls' Brigade had the Celebration of Achievements evening where all sections performed an item to show their parents what they can do. The evening gives the younger ones an idea of what goes on in the older sections, so they know what to look forward to as they move through the age groups. The awards gained through their badge work were presented by Pamela Brockfield, the founder Captain.

The Missions Sunday service was part led by one of our younger members who had been a volunteer in the Gambia and shared his experience with us. He was part of a group of youngsters who were tasked with painting a newly built section of a school in a remote part of the country. Faced with very different surroundings and facilities they were all amazed how happy the children were with so little compared to us.

The Church away day at Littlehampton started with an indifferent weather forecast, the day however turned out fine. The tide was in and so were some of the youngsters, the more senior settled for walks, train rides and crazy golf or just sit and enjoy the day and company! We were fortunate to again have the use of Rustington Methodist Church for our service on the way home and were very pleased to have the Rev Douglas Graham and his wife Heather join us for the service. They live in Worthing.

Some may remember him when he was our Minister in the Kent Thameside Circuit.

We have transferred from the Dartford Food Bank to the more local Swanley unit which has now opened.

Our regular weekly and monthly meetings can be found on www.hextablemethodist.org.uk—church groups.



THE BRENT

We have recently formed a Mission Team as a means of unlocking the growth of our church. We are exploring different ways to reach out to those who use our premises, but may not come to worship on a Sunday. After several years of not having a website, we realise that in the 21st Century, to most people if you are not “on the net” you do not exist, so we are in the early stages of planning our website and hope to have it up and running in the autumn.

Our Sunday services are now based on Roots and this is proving to be a blessing. Our Local Arrangement services release people to come out of their comfort zones and participate fully in the act of worship. Roots gives us a framework and continuity.

We eagerly await the arrival of our new Deacon, Jane Paine in September.

Our Sunday School hopes to go on a trip to Legoland in October.

ST. LUKE'S

During the weekend of June 7th & 8th St. Luke's celebrated the 50th anniversary of the opening of the church building in 1964. On the Saturday we held our usual Coffee Morning with added extras, which included strawberries, scones, cream and jam plus many delicious cakes etc. for sale. A photographic exhibition was on display, which included pictures going right back to the laying of the foundation stone by Monica Wilding's great aunt, Dora Kennard! Monica had also lent us some very interesting pictures of her descendants who lived in the area and were closely linked to Methodism. The exhibition was a great conversation piece as people remembered events and faces from days gone by. We were very grateful to all those who lent their photos.

On the Sunday we were very pleased to welcome back the Rev David Faulkner to lead our Anniversary service. He had held the fort for us in-between ministers about ten years ago and it was lovely to see him with his wife, Debbie, and their two children. After the service there was a celebratory cake for all to share and then we moved down to the church hall for lunch, which was prepared by some of the ladies, desserts being provided by some of the guests. There were 56 people and we just managed to squeeze in enough tables and chairs. While we were waiting for our meal there was a quiz about the last 50 years of the church to complete set by Tim Crouch. As the saying goes, a great time was had by all!

Building Project Update. We have now received the plans and costings for this Project. Our proposals will be placed before the Circuit meeting in September for consideration. When it is approved we know we face a big challenge in raising funds. We will be delighted to receive any ideas or donations towards this task. Please contact Rev Tony Graff, Building Project, St. Luke's Methodist Church Centre, City Way, Rochester, Kent, ME1 2BQ if you are able to help in any way.

HOLY TRINITY, SOUTH CHATHAM

The Parish will be welcoming Rev Nathan Ward on 14th September following his ordination as a Deacon the previous day in Rochester Cathedral. Nathan will be serving across the three churches of the parish as a self-supporting minister. We are also hopeful that in the coming weeks the appointment of a new Team Vicar will also be confirmed—this will be a full time appointment, again working across St. Alban, St. David and St. William.

The Cornerstone Coffee Shop at St. William's in Walderslade continues to flourish offering not only probably the best cakes in Medway but also a friendly welcome.



Please continue to pray for Rev John Hellyer for continued healing and blessings as he begins his gentle return to work.

SWANSCOMBE

On Sunday June 29th we celebrated our Church Anniversary, 126 years young and going from strength to strength with God's help. Our service was lead by Ian Packham which we all enjoyed, learning some new songs. After the service we joined together for a light meal which was well supported and enjoyed by all.

Our "Coffee Mornings" are held on the second Saturday of the month at 9.30am and all are welcome to come along to enjoy a chat, cup of tea and home made cakes. On the 8th November we will be holding a special "Coffee Morning" which will include Christmas presents, cards, decorations etc. So get your bargains before it's too late!

At Swanscombe we are continuing to pray for God's support and blessings. We know He answers prayer and has plans for Swanscombe, some of us may not see what those plans are, but we will leave a legacy for future generations. Our services are evolving, some very interactive and lively. We are using new technology, the "Easy Worship" package with projected words and images and not to forget the music section! (Tambourines and shakers!).

