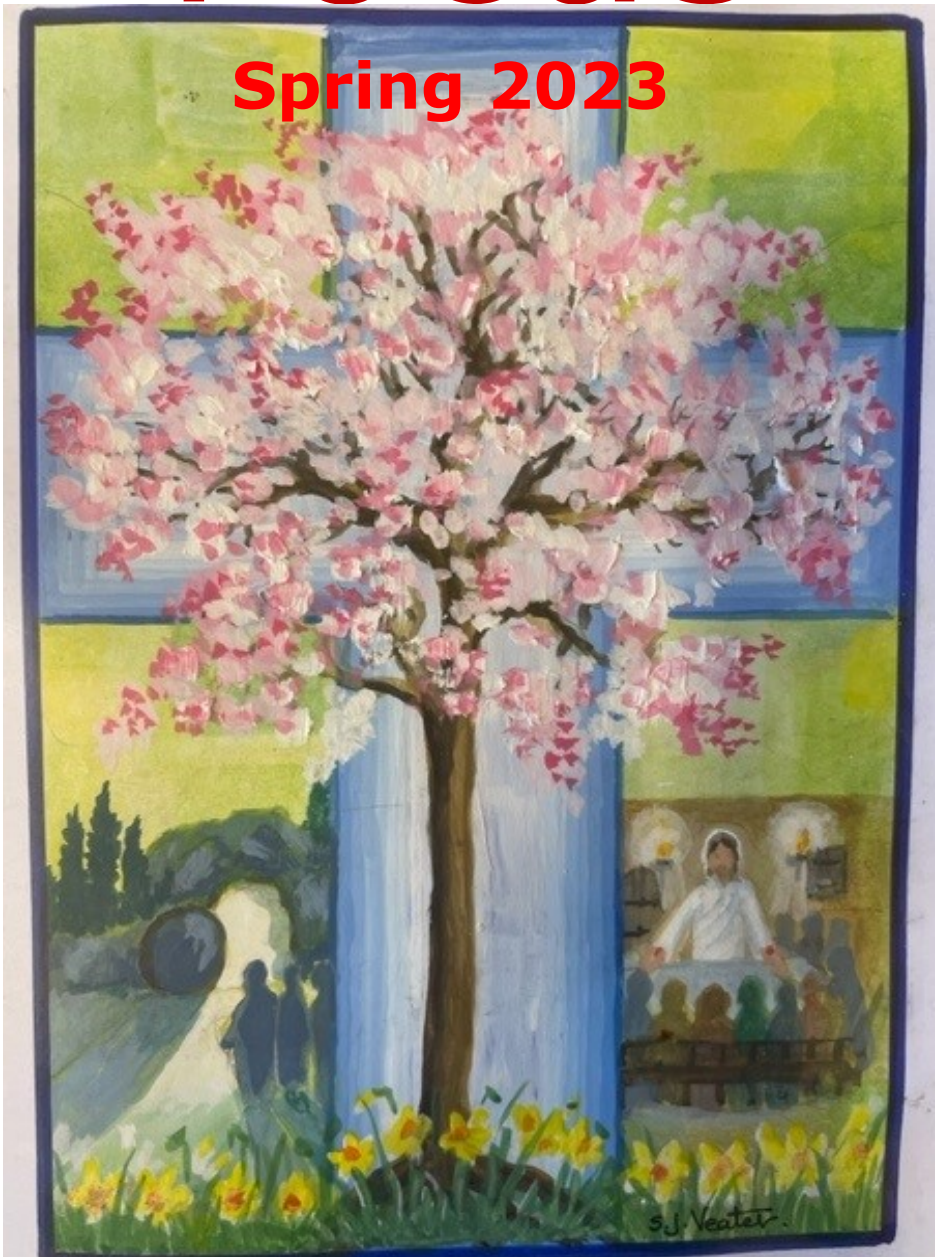


# Focus

Spring 2023



## Andy's Letter

Dear friends,

Some of you may be aware of a pack of pictures published a few years ago called 'The Christ We Share'. It contains 32 pictures from around the world, by contemporary artists, who were reinterpreting images of Christ within their own contexts.

There is a picture of a painting by a Filipino artist who depicted the Last Supper as a group of poor farmers in the Philippines whose life is a struggle with feudal land policies, corrupt political systems and the injustices of globalisation, Christ is seen as the one who shares God's banquet with those who feel devalued.

Another one from Latin America shows a wanted poster; Christ portrayed as a rebel who fights for the poor and voiceless and who is therefore a danger, a threat to the rich and powerful.

There is one from Sri Lanka where Tamils and Sinhalese are unable to drink from the same well so the image of Christ receiving the water from the well from a woman of a different culture challenges the way we treat one another.

And yet another comes from Korea and portrays Christ carrying the cross of a fractured map of Korea, North and South divided. Through it we're reminded of the broken world we live in, nation against nation, community against community, faith against faith, individual against individuals, ourselves against others.

All these pictures speak not just to the situation that is the context of the picture, but also to many of the situations we find ourselves in in our own lives. And they portray Christ as the one who has been, and is in, all situations and who is with us in whatever situation we find ourselves today if only we would recognise it. And the artists see that it is His presence that can in some way transform situations and bring healing, peace, dignity, justice and joy.

The Easter story brings that into sharp focus as it goes through highs and lows. As the story unfolds we see joyous celebration followed by betrayal and abandonment, punishment and death for an innocent man. We see strained and broken relationships, false



accusations and bullying, the greed of the powerful, the intolerance of the religious and the selfish apathy of many.

We see the end of hope....

But then we see a new beginning, the stirring of New Life. For death is not the end of the story, indeed it is the signal for a new beginning, a transformation that has resulted in many millions of transformations and as a result much that is good and life giving. And the possibility for that new beginning is for each and everyone of us and for all who live if we would just allow ourselves to be transformed by the presence of the eternal Christ in our hearts because if we are transformed then we will transform our situation.

As I write we are approaching the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The picture with this article is by a Ukrainian painter Alla Kysliakova.

It is not part of the collection but one I recently found on the internet. It speaks to me of the life Jesus lived, his pursuit of justice and peace that challenges the ways of power and ultimately leads to his death on a cross.

It speaks to me of the spirit of peace that empowered his living and talking even through his arrest and subsequent trials and even continues to the moment of his death.

Through his death and through the ongoing presence of the Christ countless people have found healing and hope. They have had their lives transformed with new life.

As we pray for the situation in Ukraine we also pray for all who are in situations of conflict and violence and pray that they, and all of us, may know the peace of Christ and the joy of new life.

Have a good Easter and may it be a time of renewal for us all,



Andy

## COMment

Shirley Veater has designed our beautiful Spring cover which she describes as follows:

"This cover design expresses our joy as new life returns after the darker days of Winter. We celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus after the dark days of his Passion and Crucifixion. Under the flowering cherry tree we see the women early on Easter morning surprised to find the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. Then the disciples gathered together in fear in their locked hideaway and Jesus stands before them. He speaks and eats and invites them to touch him."

Shirley has designed the last four covers, embracing all four seasons and a huge thank you for this special gift to us.

Now a challenge:

**We invite you to submit your designs for our Summer 2023 edition!**

We are inviting you to have a go and utilise all those artistic gifts we know you have. Don't be shy. Shirley can provide advice if would you like and she will decide on the picture we use. Please submit to Steve by 14th April 2023.

As always thanks to all who have contributed items for this edition; please keep them coming. Thanks in anticipation.

**Steve**

## Focus: People

### Spotlight On....Cynthia Tudor

*Continuing our feature where in every edition we put the spotlight on one of our Circuit members and perhaps we will learn more about someone whom many will have known for a while. The person is given a list of 18 questions and asked to select and respond to 8. Here is Cynthia's choice and answers:*

#### **What is your earliest memory?**

My earliest memory that can be dated was watching from my bedroom window the fire that destroyed the old Crystal Palace on November 30<sup>th</sup> 1936

#### **Tell me about where you grew up and what your family life was like?**

I was born in West Norwood a long awaited only child for parents who were committed Christians and members of Knights Hill Wesleyan (at that







time) Methodist church and all my early memories are associated with my home school and the church there. At the beginning of the war we relocated to a village in Lancashire and of course became part of the local Methodist church. It was here that my faith was further forged, I was received into membership and also encouraged to begin training as a local preacher having found my voice giving reports on various youth conferences my parents encouraged me to attend. In 1950 I went to Manchester University on a theology course. A year later John Tudor arrived to do the same and the rest is history. His subsequent ministry

took us from East Ham to The Fylde to Derby to Coventry to Brighton and finally to Westminster before we came back to Brighton to enjoy a retirement ministry that enabled us to share in church life in the Bahamas and the US from time to time as well as here. After John died it has been so good to be among friends and a church family who had known and loved him as I did.

### **What do/did you do as a career and why?**

Before we were married I trained as a secondary school teacher of Religious Studies motivated not only by my faith but by the academic approach of my RS teacher at school so later when church and family life allowed I took every opportunity to further that career wherever we happened to be living.

### **What has been the strongest influences in your life?**

My whole life has evolved within the framework of the church and the faith I committed myself to as a teenager and I wouldn't want it to have been other than it has been.

### **What are your favourite hymns?**

I have many favourite hymns but the words from one of them "Captain of Israel's host" used as the bidding at the first communion service when I became a



member “ Our strength your grace our rule your word our end the glory of the Lord” have remained with me throughout my life.

**What one word would you use to describe yourself?**

I think independent perhaps the consequence of being an only child but being independent does have its drawbacks!

**What are you most proud of accomplishing?**

I don't know what I have accomplished but I am overwhelmed with thankfulness at having a loving family and some rich experiences in countless church families and for all the opportunities life has afforded.

**What has been the happiest day of your life? / What has been the saddest?**

I have been fortunate or rather blessed as a dear friend used to say that I have not had any traumatic incidents other than the usual roller coaster events of everyday life through which faith has sustained me during the sad times of bereavement and faithful friends been there for me, but I have had many very happy ones especially those involving the family as on my 90th birthday celebration seeing them together enjoying each others company just marred because John wasn't with us in person albeit there in spirit as we toasted absent friends and talked about them and the love that has embraced us.

*Thank you Cynthia for sharing your thoughts and precious recollections.*

## **Congratulations**

We have so much to celebrate this quarter including:

- ◆ Alan Saunders celebrated his ninetieth birthday in style on 22 December at Adur Indoor Bowling club. Surrounded by family and friends, including many church friends and his great-granddaughter, Alan refused presents and instead raised upwards of £1,000 for Action for Children
- ◆ We welcomed the following new members over the last quarter: Ruth, Jackie, Lou, Lily, Stewart, Jason and Deborah were made members at Hove in November; Kate and Christopher joined Stanford Avenue in January and Sam, Vanessa, Richmond, Ray, Hailey and Ady joined Dorset Gardens over Christmas services. Alleluia.





- ◆ On a very blustery November evening in the middle of a downpour, a convivial crowd gathered at Hove Town Hall for the Lord Lieutenant's formal presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to Paul Richards and Stay Up Late. We hear it was a great party.
- ◆ JJ Baiden-Amissah from Hove signed up in January for Run the Month: Marathon Edition. This raises funds for Prostrate Cancer research. At the last count he has raised a magnificent £548.
- ◆ Olga and Tanya, Ukrainian guests of the Gravestocks, thanked the Circuit for its generous financial gift from the Refugee Project fund & or the care & encouragement given.



- ◆ Finally all five churches have signed up for the City of Sanctuary Organisation and have submitted their respective application for Church of Sanctuary award. In anticipation we will be celebrating the awards at our special Sanctuary service on 12 March at Dorset Gardens.

# Farewell Jean Hunter

**1924—2022**

Jean was born at home in a flat on Haverstock Hill, Belsize Park, London in 1924, the first child of Jack and Daisy to be followed by a sister Betty in 1926. From the start there were close ties with Aunts and Uncles on both sides of the family as well as her nine cousins and their children and grandchildren. The family moved to Kingsbury, NW9 and Jean gained a scholarship to attend the North London Collegiate School.

The outbreak of the Second World War brought big changes, initially being evacuated with the school to Luton and then the family moving to Llandudno due to many Inland Revenue departments being moved there, including her father's. Jean completed her schooling there at John Bright Grammar School before following her father into the Inland Revenue where she was to remain for all her working life. The Inland Revenue had requisitioned many of the hotels in Llandudno and Jean would reminisce with amusement that, as her office working environment was in fact an hotel bedroom her working week was punctuated with an agreed rota of people coming for their weekly bath. The family returned to London after the war with Jean joining the Estates Duty Office in Shepherd's Bush.

Jean's faith grew in her twenties and thirties in the era of Billy Graham crusades and holidays were often of a Christian fellowship nature. The next move was to the Sussex Coast with her parents and Betty with the purchase of a new flat in Osborne Villas, Hove whilst continuing her career in Thames Ditton and finally Durrington. Jean joined the Baptist Church in Holland Road

as an active participant in the worship, community and social side.

Although Jean didn't have any children of her own, she was definitely more than an auntie to Bill and me, going above and beyond in many ways with childcare on most weekends and holidays. I remember a young friend asking, "Which mummy have you got today – the one with glasses or the one who says, 'No more biscuits?'" Jean was the





one with glasses- there was no way that she would have denied anyone an extra biscuit! Nothing was too much trouble for Jean who was always interested in our lives, our friends and then went on to take a great interest in her great nieces and nephew. So Jean was very kind to us and all her friends and family but her kindness didn't stop there- it extended to everyone, whether it was a young child who had fallen off a swing or someone searching through a rubbish bin. Jean saw the good in everyone- a rare quality to have – and she wanted to help them. Jean and her mother went to join Betty and family in Truro in 1982 having taken a slightly early retirement after forty years in the Civil Service. Jean had always loved Cornwall and threw herself into the community there joining country dance and historical groups. She made the decision to worship at St Mary Clement Methodist Church and through the then Minister's encouragement started to lead his Wednesday afternoon bible class. This was the start of Jean's journey and training to become a Local Preacher which she carried out among some of the more rural chapels in Cornwall with the local paper, to Jean's amusement, duly reporting in its village round-up that the preacher had been Miss Hunter of Truro. Jean returned to Hove to live near Betty and enjoyed time meeting up with old friends and making new ones through her membership of and fellowship from Hove Methodist Church. Thank you Jean, you touched so many lives and it has been a privilege to know you. You leave behind a simple but wonderful legacy – kindness.

### **Janet Noad ( Jean Hunter's niece.)**

Corinthians 13:4 "Love is patient, love is kind. Love is not envious, boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful, it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, it rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

Jean was special because she was all those things Paul spoke of. She silently accepted her increasing lack of sight and hearing. I never heard her complain. What an example she was to me and I am sure to others. She sat with others at Tuesday Lunch club, not able to communicate with those around her, but noticeable by her obvious enjoyment of the food placed in front of her by the volunteers. Her effect on those around her always produced kind reactions from people willing to help her when she needed it. Jean's faith in her God and Saviour Jesus Christ was total. When she joined us at HMC in the evening of her life she had retired from Local Preaching. She told me that it was definitely a 'calling' from God and accepted it as such. She had never aspired to be a Local Preacher.

Jean quickly became a member of the HMC family. We were fortunate in that she joined our Central House Group. Her knowledge of the Scriptures was amazing. As her hearing deteriorated she again accepted it, never complained, although she must have been aware. Over the latter years before the Covid19 epidemic, Jean would join in and indeed offer help as much as she was able including help with raising funds for the Ghana Water project. She led and encouraged people to join in the pre-Sunday service prayer group. She was accepting of us all without prejudice. Her support of the Monday Guild was absolute. I feel an enormous sense of loss now that Jean has passed on, gone to Glory. It is not what Jean did, it is more to do with who she was. God bless her, she will not be forgotten.

**Rose Bateman**

I only knew Jean towards the end of her life, as someone who compelled your attention not by being loud or active, but by the quality of her presence. Benignity and closeness to God flowed out of her, and it was a joy and a privilege to sit in a prayer circle with her. I saw her as a bright light and a spiritual warrior, manifested in one old-fashioned elderly lady. I have no doubt there was rejoicing in heaven when she arrived.

**Elin Star**

## Focus: Features

### **People and Groups in New Testament times:**

*This series of articles look at a number of matters relating to peoples and groups in the Mediterranean world in the period c. 150 B.C. to 96 A.D.*

### **12. The Pharisees - II – History**

As I wrote last time, the Hebrew word *Pěŗûšîm* [Perushim] in this period is usually translated as Pharisees, and is generally thought to be the origin of the word. Whether *Pěŗûšîm* always refers to Pharisees is another matter. When used of Pharisees, *Pěŗûšîm* means something like, 'separatists', but separating from what? There is no clear answer but it may well have been a rejection of Greek cultural ideas in order to focus on their understanding of God's Law as given in the first five books of the Bible, the Torah.

They are first mentioned as a group during the reign of the Hasmonaean king, Jonathan (reigned 161-143 B.C.). Our knowledge of them at this time comes from Josephus, who was

generally pro-Pharisee. The earliest event in which they figure specifically is in the reign of John Hyrcanus I (r. 135-104). Josephus relates a story in which the king asked the Pharisees to speak frankly. One of them, Eliezar, criticized the king. Hyrcanus wanted Eliezar executed for his impudence and from that time supported the Sadducees rather than the Pharisees. The impression given in all the sources is that, throughout this period, some Pharisees were willing 'to speak truth to power': a very dangerous activity at that time.

The Hasmonean kings continued to be wary of the Pharisees. Alexander Jannaeus's (r. 103-76 B.C.) reign had seen civil war and Pharisees were amongst those who had suffered. But when was dying he recommended to his wife, Salome Alexandra (r. 76-67 B.C.) to whom he gave the government after his death, that she rely on them. Salome followed this advice and her reign was relatively peaceful. Josephus suggests that they ran the government but this was in part because he thought (as almost everyone did at that time) that a woman could not rule effectively. Even so, it was only under Salome that Pharisees exercised influence and power in government.

When Herod became king he honoured the Pharisee, Pollion, and his disciple, Samais. This was partly because they persuaded the citizens of Jerusalem to admit Herod during a siege, and partly because Pollion had accurately predicted what would happen when Herod was on trial for his life. Until his last years, Herod continued to look favourably on Pharisees out of respect for Pollion, but they exercised no political power. To quote E. P. Sanders, '*... during Jesus' lifetime, they must be regarded as principally religious teachers and experts, deservedly popular and respected.*'

Although the New Testament portrays them as wealthy (e.g. Lk 16 v 14) Pharisees came from a broad range of society. During the Roman-Jewish war of 66-70 A.D. Josephus was in military command of Galilee. The leadership in Jerusalem had concerns about him and sent a four-man delegation. Two, both Pharisees, were from 'the ordinary class of people', a third was from a priestly family and also a Pharisee. The fourth was from a family of high priests and not a Pharisee. Apparently the idea was to look at Josephus' actions from all points of view. There are examples of both poor and wealthy Pharisees. We must assume that Hillel was a Pharisee, certainly his grandson, Gamaliel, and great-grandson, Simeon ben Gamaliel, were. Hillel had earned his living as a day labourer. On the other hand, Joseph of Arimathea, was obviously wealthy, he could afford a large tomb.

Simeon ben Gamaliel, one of few named Pharisees, was a

strong proponent of the war against Rome when it started in 66 A.D. but opposed the extremes of the Zealots who eventually took over. Within a generation of that war ending with Jerusalem and its Temple destroyed, many Jewish groups, like the Sadducees with their focus on the Temple ritual, and the Essenes in their centre at Qumran, had disappeared. The Pharisees, with their focus on the Torah, survived and evolved into the rabbis. Their understanding of the Torah was codified in c. 200 A.D. as the Mishnah by another descendant of Hillel, Rabbi Judah the Prince. In general terms the Pharisees can be seen as the ancestors of modern Judaism. We shall look at Pharisee beliefs next time.

**Mick Hickman**



## **Earth “Church”**

Following my description of Earth “Church” in the last issue of Focus as a gathering of folk who spend time in nature together enjoying its peace and beauty and the way it helps us feel close to God, we now have a date to make a trip together to Saddlescombe Farm and be guests of Grow Wellbeing who will help us experience afresh what is around us.

They have invited us to be with them on the farm on

**Saturday, April 1, from 10am to about 4pm.**

We will need to bring a packed lunch, but drinks will be provided and we are advised to dress for a day in the great outdoors! This will include some walking for those who are able. The Circuit is subsidising the outing so the booking fee is £10.

A booking form is included next page. Please complete it and send it, as soon as you can and certainly by March 1.

If you want to know more about Grow Wellbeing, have a look at their website <https://www.growingwellbeing.org.uk> and if you want more information, please be in touch: 01273 640247 or



cpark1947@gmail.com. If you need transport or can provide transport, please let us know. Everybody is welcome to join the day, even if you aren't interested in regular gatherings. It will be uplifting and deeply nourishing, I promise!

**Cynthia Park**



**Outing to Saddlescombe Farm, Saddlescomb Road, BN45 7DE**

**Booking Form**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Email:** (if you have one):

**Do you have any physical limitations we need to be aware of?**

**Do you need transport or can you provide transport for others?**

*Cash—Pay to Cynthia - or drop off at Hove or DG office.*

*Cheques - make payable to Brighton and Hove Methodist Circuit and send to Circuit Office*

*BACS transfer to: Brighton & Hove Methodist Circuit*

*Sort Code 20-12-75*

*Account No: 90929433*

**A Methodist Way of Life**

*God loves you unconditionally, no strings attached. That's the good news.*

A Methodist Way of Life is a way of saying yes to the good news.

There are twelve things that we can do as individuals or as a church community.

None of this makes God love you any more - but they may help you realise how deeply you are loved.

May you be transformed as you reflect on your encounters with God that come through doing these activities.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/worship/>

**2. We worship with others regularly**

Meeting together with other Christians for worship is important.

In this shared activity, whether on-site or on-line, we normally do these things in some way:

**Read the Bible**, and reflect on it to help us to know more of God.

**Participate in prayers** of praise, adoration, confession, thanksgiving and intercession, which helps us explore different dimensions of prayer.

**Sing, and say words together** which reminds us of our shared journey, as well as the poetic nature of trying to express truths about God.

Similarly, focusing on an object, lighting candles and keeping silence together are all actions which allow us to approach the mystery of God.

[Singing the Faith Plus](#) is a one-stop-shop for other resources and advice for preparing and leading worship.



## Verdancy?

We had a problem in our house before Christmas, only one I hear you say? Yes, a very particular seasonal problem. When we moved out of our house in Sutton Coldfield in April, we labelled the contents as 1's or 2's. Because we were downsizing the 1's were the items that we knew we would want and the 2's were the things which we could do without, initially. So, when we finally arrived in Hove at the end of July the removal people brought us our 1's and life in our new home began. In mid-December, however, we realized that all of our Christmas decorations were marked as 2's and were therefore still in Sutton. This made choosing and buying a Christmas tree problematic, when you know you have at least two Christmas tree stands, three festoons of lights, multiple swags of tinsel and innumerable baubles just raring to go, but somehow unreachable.

Anyway, whilst we were pondering the annual question of real versus artificial tree outside a local supermarket, we bought a copy of the Big Issue. This contained a review of the 'Avatar' film sequel 'The Way of Water', which has been 12 years in the making. When I watched the original film in 2009, the highest



grossing film of all time, I commented to anyone who was listening that this was probably the best anti-war film ever, with its focus on the protection of the pristine environment on Pandora from the ravages of a brutal, callous invasion force from planet Earth. Whilst ruminating on this I remembered that in Canada the UN Biodiversity Conference COP 15, the biggest Biodiversity Conference ever with 17,000 delegates from 190 countries was struggling towards its conclusion. The Conference closed on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December and the final communique included an agreement to protect one third of the planet for nature by 2030 with the aim of enhancing and restoring ecosystems, halting species extinction and maintaining biodiversity. The time for platitudes was over and hopefully the delegates have come up with a plan, which sets out how to stop the 'death by a billion cuts' that we are inflicting on our world, our support system, our home, our life. Biodiversity loss is, in reality, the other side of the climate change coin and there is little point in stopping the one without stopping the other. Cynically I hope that this agreement doesn't end up like the tale of the three beggars who each promised to put their last morsel of food into the cooking pot so that they could share a good meal together. Unfortunately, for one reason or another in the end none of the beggars put their promised contribution into the cooking pot and they all finished up sharing a meal of hot water. While I was writing some of these words, we were listening to the last 'Any Questions' of 2022 and the final questioner asked the panel what they were optimistic about for 2023. Fortunately, there was not much time left at the end of the programme because the 'great and good' who made up the panel struggled to suggest anything meaningful or positive. Looking forward I realised that it would soon be the 21<sup>st</sup> of December, the Winter Solstice when the stones at Stonehenge would tell any who are

watching that the longest night is past and that Spring is coming, with its time for planting and the renewal of hope. As God said to Noah as long as the earth endures seed time and harvest will never cease.

Unfortunately, that could easily be seen as a 'cop out' and an excuse to leave it all to God. But the words actually say as long as the earth endures seed time and harvest will never cease. Unfortunately, if we don't act as God's hands on earth and do our bit to ensure that the earth actually endures then the seedtime and harvest will cease.

We are all God's hands. So, what will you contribute towards ensuring that the earth endures, seedtime and harvest continues and biodiversity is preserved?

### **Peter Farley**

*My wife and I moved to Hangleton from Sutton Coldfield during the summer 2022 to be nearer to our daughter who lives in Aldrington. The move was a problematic downsize but more of that another day. As lifelong Methodists we decided that we would try Hove Methodist Church and liked what we found. Back in Sutton I wrote for our Church newsletter, so asked if there was a Church magazine in Hove and the rest, as they say, is history.*

## **The Emmaus Road**



I wondered why our Lord went to Emmaus so early after His Resurrection - and it was only later that any answer emerged. There were several puzzling things about it. The Emmaus two were involved in an absolutely unique situation - God personally revealing the scriptures to them - and yet, though their hearts burned within them as He spoke, they did not record a single thing

that He said. His words would have been precious to us and a lamp to the feet of our descendants

But they did invite Him into their home, (as we all must if we are to know Him ) and they did prepare supper for Him before, to their astonishment, He vanished out of their sight as soon as they recognised Him

We often think the story ends here. But it doesn't. Because they went to Jerusalem, at once, to tell his disciples what had happened, - which, of course, Christ knew very well they would do. And as Luke tells us, they were still debating it when our Lord appeared. So the two Emmaus disciples were present when



our Lord made His first Resurrection appearance in the Upper Room.

What a wonderful, unimaginable reward for faith. It was why Jesus went to Emmaus in the first place. And how like our Lord to remember them, after all He had suffered. How close they must have been to Christ to receive a reward like that.

Let us remember this unique reward, given to two humble men, when we recall that, on the third day, He rose again from the dead.

**Selwyn Veater**

## Focus: Winter 22—23

### A look back at our Winter activities

**Lis Coblenz reports from Stanford Avenue**



that their Christmas & Craft Fair was a great success and as well as the rented stall holders taking money they were amazed to make over £1,500 from sales and donations. The Christmas Eve service was lovely and many of the children



wanted to join in the telling of the Christmas story by dressing up and following (some better than others) Andy's instructions. The church also participated in the local Christmas Advent light up with illuminations outside under the direction of Mel Gillam.



**Alan Imms reports the following from Patcham:**

The Christmas Market raised almost £1,500 and thank you to Paula Steel for organising it and to everyone who helped or spent their money to make it a worthwhile day.

A Big Thank You to Caroline Dewer for organising the Nativity play on December 11th and to all those who took part or helped in any way. Also to everyone who braved the snow to come and support it to make it a great afternoon. After the play hot chocolate and mince pies were served followed by a candle-lit carol service which was led by Sue Jacobs who kindly stepped in



at short notice as Dan was off sick. On December 18th we held our final All Age Worship of the year. Bacon sandwiches are always available prior to the start of our AAW services. Geoff Harrington led the service which was very well attended, and music was provided by members of the Barnstormers band. There were also a good number of children who took part in the worship.



Read the review of Barnstormers Christmas panto on pages 21—22



Meanwhile at **Hove** the festive season kicked off with the Martlets Christmas Concert which Michael Hill said: "Just got to say what a wonderful memorable afternoon we have hosted today with the Martlets Good Vibrations Choir.... a packed church and gallery.... such a happy atmosphere..... The very professional performance by the singers gave us a wonderful happy occasion."

Many families came to the Polka Tots Christmas Party and enjoyed playing, food (including an amazing cake made by Lai) and a visit from Santa all made possible by Rachel and her band



of helpers.

Carols around the Tree drew a good crowd, supported by the singing of Aneesa and members of the Martlet's Choir. The hot dogs and chestnuts roasting were also

appreciated. An in-house sit down lunch returned on Christmas Day with about 120 enjoying the meal and another 17

receiving a home delivery. Made possible by the time, talents and generosity of so many volunteers across the Hove community who pitched in to help.





**Deborah** reports that Christmas Holiday Club at **Dorset Gardens** was a huge success again, thanks to the hard work of Liz in her preparation. As always there was plenty for everyone to do includes games and baking. There were crafts, which included making Mary and Jesus figures to hang on the Christmas tree, as well as a mini-wreath. When the grown-ups arrived to collect their children, they were invited to listen to the children sing. The 50 children went home with bags of goodies that they had made, and those who were involved in running the day went home for a lie down, exhausted but happy!



**Woodingdean** held its Christmas Tree Festival, the first for three years. Deborah said the trees looked fabulous, with the church looking very festive. I can't remember the last time I saw so many angels in one place! Alongside the angels on trees, other angels are meeting and greeting, making drinks, and providing refreshments. With Santa making an appearance, a Jazz café

with Work in Progress and a concert by Brighton Male Choir, there was plenty to entertain.

Both congregations had much to celebrate over the Christmas period, with each having their Carol Services, which were attended by both regular congregations and a number of visitors.



**Dorset Gardens** have had three very moving



services, with new members welcomed on Sunday 18th December, the baptism of baby Kevin on Christmas Day, and on 1st January as part of their Covenant service, an adult baptism and three more new members. Deborah concluded 'Hopefully, the wonderful events of Christmas will continue to give us hope as we begin a new year'.



## Superbella Cinderella

Its November and Brighton parents and children once again anticipate with smiling faces the coming of another panto season. Their hopes were fully rewarded with a richly colourful and laugh filled rendition of the Christmas classic Cinderella, wonderfully staged at Patcham Methodist Church by the resident theatre company the Barnstormers.

The show was the directional debut of Imogen Fox who felt that four years without a panto was an absence that needed to end and what an absolute success her production proved to be. Musical Director stalwart Russell Taylor and his musicians and pit singers opened the evening with an overture that gave a taste of his composing weaving of well known tunes from musicals (Mamma Mia, The Lion King) with pop music favourites. He even managed to sew some light classical melodies into the tapestry. It was all professional note perfect, expertly bringing the score to life.

The story is set in the village of Stoneybroke brought to life on





stage by designer Karin Ashby and the back stage team. A real shout out must go to the costume department headed by Christine Ashby and Angie Webb. They made each character a glittering sight to behold. Of course the story centres on three main characters – Cinderella (Natalie Harrington) and her two bullying and vile

step-sisters (Lucy Cadman & Nick Herriott). These two had the audience sneering with disgust and simultaneously crying with laughter, a perfect pair of villains. Keith Fox played Baron Hardup perfectly as Cinderella's skint father. Prince Charming (James Smith) and Dandini (Claire Hewitt) brought fine voices and just the right measure to the search for true love. Comedy was in the foreground from Bodget (Astrid Fox) and Leggett (Mark Lambert). Kindness was embodied by the Fairy Godmother (Paula Bates). No Barnstormers production could be staged without the sterling work done by the construction, lighting and sound crew. Every show's success rests on their dedicated hours behind the scenes. With all Barnstormers show, it's the ensemble pieces that really bring the troupe's talents to a full blossom. With choreography from Tamsin Renno and Amber Harrington married to popular songs known to all (Circle of Life, Walking on Sunshine) and closing with an audience sing-a-long.



Cinderella was indeed a Barnstormers show to remember and a perfect festive season delight for young & old.

**Paul McGrail**

# Mission Focus



## Circuit Refugee Project

We are delighted to report that Dorset Gardens, Woodingdean and Patcham have now submitted their applications, with supporting documentation, to Sanctuary on Sea for the Church of Sanctuary award - Stanford Avenue and Hove are about to complete theirs at time of writing.

Assuming all applications are successful, the Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal will be coming to present the awards, which will also

confer on us the title of Circuit of Sanctuary, at our Circuit Together service at DG on 12 March.

The service will be followed by a lunch to which everyone is invited. Please let your church rep know if you intend to stay and if you have any special dietary requirements, for numbers and to help us cater accordingly.

We have been collecting men's clothing for those temporarily residing in Brighton hotels. People have been very generous and we have donated four bags of clothing to Care4Calais.

As the Circuit, we have also donated a sum to Jollof Cafe, Brighton, a cafe run by and for refugees.

Our collection of foodbank items continues, mostly from Patcham church, we have taken several boot-loads to Voices in Exile and to Sussex University foodbank which is accessed by refugee students.

We are always exploring new ways to fundraise and promote the project . We are planning new events for the spring. For example at DG we are planning another table top sale on February 4th when we will have tables selling greetings cards, a tombola, teas, coffees and cakes and will also be selling pre-owned dressing-up costumes suitable for children for school Book Week when they dress as characters from favourite books. If you would like a table (£5) or if you have tombola items or dressing-up costume to donate including hats and costume jewellery etc please contact Sue or Deeptima.

The previous fundraising table top sale in

### Table-Top sale and Coffee Morning

**Saturday, 4 February**  
**10.30 am - 1 pm**  
Greetings Cards ...  
Tombola ... pre-owned  
costume and bric-a-brac for  
School Book Week dressing up\*  
*- a great opportunity to  
pick up a bargain!*  
Plus tea, coffee and cakes.

Tables £5 each,  
contact Sue 07943 401608 or  
Deeptima 07715 976579 to book.  
Funds raised will support the Circuit  
Refugee Project and (costume table)  
Carlton Hill School. \*Dressing up items  
can be donated via the Office at School.

FAO PTA

**Dorset Gardens Methodist Church  
BN2 1RL**



aid of the project, at DG and table at Patcham Christmas Market, both went very well and we thank everyone for their support. £290 was raised in total.

At Woodingdean the Project decorated a Christmas Tree with pictures of ways to help refugees and asylum seekers (warm clothing, a welcoming cup of tea, a hot meal, donating to foodbanks, a smile etc) as well as logos of the organisations we are supporting as part of our project. The theme was the carol "I saw Three Ships" so we added origami boats and in the background an inflatable dinghy, sourced from PMC, to remember the hazardous journey some refugees are forced to make. Around the base we put some of the project bags we are selling to raise funds. We also included orange heart-shaped planes showing support for the campaign 'Fill the Skies with Hope' against the Rwanda

deportation scheme.

At Hove, Ruth has been visiting the Network for International Women (NIW) and has got them to do a couple of designs for some new notecards which we will be producing soon. Look out for them!

Our Circuit Together service at Stanford Avenue was very well attended and the speaker, Angie, from Sanctuary on Sea, spoke to us and continued the conversation over teas and coffees afterwards.

We are continuing to find new ways of supporting those who are arriving in our city without an immigration status. If you have any ideas, please share them with your church project rep or alternatively with Deeptima or Sue.

An extensive document of organisations and agencies to offer help to refugees and asylum seekers from Sanctuary on Sea is available at each Circuit church, please ask your rep where to find it. There is also a Brighton & Hove information leaflet which also covers some of these organisations. We do not expect anyone to be an expert or offer advice beyond signposting to the relevant organisation or agency who can help, whilst offering the usual Methodist welcome of a warm space, a cup of tea and a



welcoming smile.

A huge thank you to everyone who is supporting the project in any way and please read below the story of Lilly .

**Sue Harrington, Deeptima Massey**

## The story of Lilly

Lilly was the beautician giving me some treatment one day, and as we started talking, she told me that she was from Ukraine and had been living in England for several years. Her husband had died and she had two teenage children.

She went on to tell me that she had paid for her Mother and her cousin to join her due to the war, and had really struggled to find money to pay the fare as she wasn't entitled to government help. She said her Mother struggled to walk and she couldn't take her outside because of this. Also she couldn't speak English.

So I asked the Patcham Church family if they would lend her a wheelchair for her Mother, and possibly raise some money so that it would at least pay for the plane tickets. The Church family were

absolutely amazing and we raised almost £800 for her.

When I gave it to her, she was totally overwhelmed with our generosity, and said one day when free (she works seven days a week) she would come and say thanks to the Church congregation's generosity.

**Caroline Dewar**

[left] Fundraising: Knitted brooches.



## Warm Spaces

Methodist churches have responded to the cost-of-living crisis by opening their doors to ensure that communities are not left out in the cold. More than 450 Methodist churches have now registered on the Warm Welcome website as being willing to offer somewhere for people to find heat, comfort and companionship.

This makes the Methodists second only to the Church of England in uptake of the scheme. Four of our Circuit churches are now promoting this service locally offering a range of days and times. Well done on providing these truly warm welcomes and demonstrating our hospitality.



# Business Focus

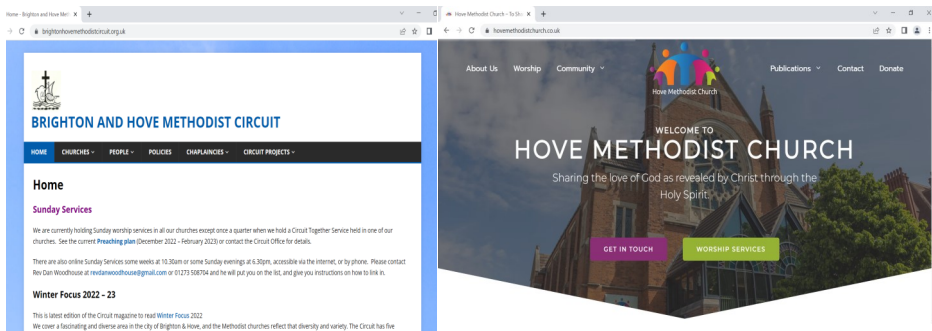
## Spreading the word

Do you know that the Circuit has a website at:

<https://brightonhovemethodistcircuit.org.uk/>

Here you can refer to the latest plan, Focus, details of circuit people, policies, chaplaincies and of course our circuit project.

Do take a look, let Steve know any feedback and anything else you would like to see on this site.



Well done to Hove Methodist Church who with the help & expertise of Louise & Jackie have launched a very snazzy new website. It's at the same address as the old one:

<https://www.hovemethodistchurch.co.uk>

Keep up to date on all happening at Hove Church.

## Safeguarding Update

Following our November training at Patcham we are pleased to announce we are planning a Spring date. Everyone who holds a post in the five Circuit churches, particularly if working with children or vulnerable adults is required to complete the training. Safeguarding protects not only the congregation, and people using the building, but also



ourselves as we carry out the work of the church and community.

If this training is relevant or of interest to any church-related role you do, then you are invited to the next:

### **Creating Safer Space Foundation module**

Face-to-face training

on **Wednesday 29th March 1.30 – 4.00pm**  
**at Woodingdean Methodist Church.**

Email [steve.preston@brightonhovemethodistcircuit.org.uk](mailto:steve.preston@brightonhovemethodistcircuit.org.uk) to book your place or call on 01273 499157

**Rosemary Cuthbert** *Circuit Safeguarding Officer*

## **Protecting our Data (GDPR)**

### **Email Scams**

I expect many of us have received emails which have turned out to be not what they seemed and sometimes they can lead into tricky or bad situations which may even cause us to lose out financially. Very often these scam emails seem to come from people we know who are asking for help. Please be wary of them and if in any doubt it is much better to ring the person they are supposedly from and check out the situation. Below are a few things to look out for if you get an email you are concerned about.

#### 1. Emails Demanding Urgent Action

Emails threatening a negative consequence, or a loss of opportunity unless urgent action is taken, are often phishing emails. Attackers use this approach to rush recipients into action before they study the email for potential flaws or inconsistencies.

#### 2. Emails with Bad Grammar and Spelling Mistakes

Another way to spot phishing is bad grammar and spelling mistakes.

#### 3. Emails with an Unfamiliar Greeting or Salutation

Emails exchanged between work colleagues usually have an informal salutation. Those that start "Dear," or contain phrases not normally used in informal conversation with that person should arouse suspicion.

#### 4. Inconsistencies in Email Addresses, Links & Domain Names

Another way how to spot phishing is by finding inconsistencies in email addresses, links and domain names. Does the email originate from someone you correspond with often? If so, check the sender's address against previous emails from them. Even if it does look the same it is not a guarantee.



#### 5. Suspicious Attachments

Emails with attachments should always be treated suspiciously – especially if they have an unfamiliar extension or one commonly associated with malware (.zip, .exe, .scr, etc.).

#### 6. Emails Requesting Login Credentials, Payment Information or Sensitive Data

Emails originating from an unexpected or unfamiliar sender that request login credentials, payment information or other sensitive data should always be treated with caution.

#### 7. Too Good to Be True Emails

Too good to be true emails are those which incentivize the recipient to click on a link or open an attachment by claiming there will be a reward of some nature. If the sender of the email is unfamiliar or the recipient did not initiate the contact, the likelihood is this is a phishing email.

If in doubt don't respond to the email but contact the person by phone. Be aware it is easy to be caught out.

**Andy**

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) events**

The title of our first District EDI event this year is

### **'THE FORGOTTEN AND THE UNLOVED'**

On Thursday 20 April 2023 at 7.30pm until 8.45pm via Zoom.

Led by: Deacon Michelle Legumi (The Beacon Church & Christian Centre in Dover, South-East District)

'The Forgotten and the Unloved' - there are many people within our society who can feel invisible; that they don't belong anywhere; dismissed. Our actions as church communities can help people to be 'seen' and in doing so take people on an unexpected and wonderful journey of transformation. Deacon Michelle Legumi will explore this theme through stories of encounters with those she and others meet through the ministry in Dover. One such story will be shared by Alice who will join her and whose life has been totally transformed by love.

All are welcome to attend, learn and share in the discussion.

Pre-Registration Link :  
[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJctce6qqzwsHtPft\\_9P6Le1Eo\\_J540re\\_qt](https://zoom.us/join/join?j=93067257647)  
Meeting ID : 930 6725 7647  
Passcode : 522814

Another great EDI event **"COME AS YOU ARE"**

Date: Wednesday 26 April 2023 at 7.30pm until 8.45pm via Zoom.

Led by: Revd. Ian Couchman, West Sussex (Coast and Downs) Circuit, South East District

"Come as you are" - is an invitation to do just that because God has accepted us just as we are. In this session we will be exploring how do we as Church 'Come as we are' and how we can journey with those who feel they are or have been excluded. During a time of sharing, we will explore how we can best reflect the likeness of Christ to those we encounter and explore what we need to do to value each person for who they really are, being made in the image of God.

All are welcome to attend, learn and share in the discussion.

Pre-Registration Link :

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJApdu2qqjMoH909302HSBzMwmFpKEel68ES](https://zoom.us/join/join?j=93067257647)

Contact Steve Preston if want the joining details.

### *Miscellaneous pictures from Christmas festivities*





## Dates for the diary:

- Saturday 4th February, 10.30am to 1pm **Table Top Sale** at Dorset Gardens Methodist Church
- Saturday 11th February, 5pm to 7pm **Valentine's Cabaret** at Hove Methodist Church.
- Monday 20th February, 1.30 for 2.00pm Film Club showing **'The Horse Whisperer'** at Woodingdean Methodist Church
- 21st and 22nd February, at 7:30pm **A Night With Barnstormers** is a three course dinner with an array of musical theatre songs performed for your entertainment! At Patcham Methodist Church. Prices are £25 per person.
- Friday 24 Feb 6.30pm **Vigil for the Ukraine** at Hove Methodist Church
- Saturday 18 March 9.30 - 11.00 **Community Breakfast** at Hove Methodist Church
- Saturday 18th March: **Spring & Craft Fair**, Stanford Avenue. Free entry. From 11.00 to 3pm
- Saturday 1st April **Earth Church** at Saddlecombe Farm.
- **Cream Teas & Beetle Drive**, Stanford Avenue Methodist Church 15th April from 2pm
- Saturday evening 15th April, **Brighton & Hove City Brass Concert** with full buffet refreshment at Woodingdean Methodist Church
- **Rendezvous Youth Club Reunion** at Stanford Avenue Methodist Church 29th April, from 5pm
- Sunday 7th May **Dorset Gardens Church Anniversary and Coronation Party** from 10.30am
- Saturday 13 May 2.30 **Coronation Celebration** with Martlets choir at Hove Methodist Church
- Stanford Avenue Methodist Church is planning ahead for it's **Quasiquicentennial (125th Anniversary)** on 14th May) and seeking greetings, memories, and photos to Martyn Coblentz martyn.coblentz@btopenworld.com by 20th March.
- The legendary **Hove Street Party**, Hove Methodist Church, Saturday 1st July from 12.00 to 4.00pm.

# Special Services this Easter

## Circuit Services

Ash Wednesday 22nd Feb	7.30pm	Evening Service at Dorset Gardens
Easter Sunday 9th April	06.00am	Sunrise Communion on Hove Beach
Sunday 16th April	3.00pm	Easter Offering Service at Patcham
Sunday 28th May	08.00am	Pentecost Communion at Ditchling Beacon

## Dorset Gardens:

Maundy Thurs 6th April	1pm	Prayers & Communion
Good Friday 7th April	2.30pm	Easter Reflections
Easter Sunday 9th April	10.30am	Easter Communion

## Hove:

Maundy Thurs 6th April	7.30pm	Communion
Good Friday 7th April	1030am	Morning Worship
Easter Sunday 9th April	10.30am	Easter Communion

## Patcham

Easter Sunday 9th April	10.30am	Easter Communion
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## Stanford Avenue

Good Friday 7th April	1030am	Morning Worship
Easter Sunday 9th April	10.30am	Easter Communion

## Woodingdean

Maundy Thurs 6th April	7.30pm	Evening Worship
Easter Sunday 9th April	10.00am	Easter Communion

Our next **Circuit Together Service** will be on **Sunday 12th March at Dorset Gardens Methodist Church at 10.30pm.**

The preacher will be Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal OBE. He was the first person from a minority ethnic background to be appointed President of the Methodist Conference, in 2000 - 2001, and is a founder of City of Sanctuary (UK). This will be a celebration of our becoming a Circuit of Sanctuary and will be followed by a lunch to which everyone is invited. It promises to be a milestone service in the life of our Circuit. Don't miss it.





Easter  
Offering  
2023

# NO BORDERS TO GOD'S LOVE

**Easter Offering Service at Patcham  
on Sunday 16th April at 3pm**

*No borders to God's love*

The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as a citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself.

Leviticus 19:34 [NIV]

As a Circuit we support people who have come to the UK in search of sanctuary. The Easter Offering 2023 dedication service will be a celebration of God's love and mission worldwide and will focus on welcome and hospitality, especially to people who are displaced and forced to migrate.

The service will include the dedication of the Easter Offering, all of which goes to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, supporting and working with over 100 Partner Churches and organisations around the world.



*He is risen.*

## **Copy Deadline**

Please submit your articles, jokes and miscellaneous pet pics for our 2023 Summer Edition by 14th April. Thank you.

## **Circuit Office**

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[office@hovemethodistchurch.co.uk](mailto:office@hovemethodistchurch.co.uk)

Superintendent: Rev Andy Lowe