

# THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

## DISTRICT 31



Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders

Newsletter - Winter 2012



To serve the present age

My calling to fulfill

O may it all my powers engage

To do my Master's will

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.

"So Jizas get op an task chrang to di briiz, an tel di ski fi sell dong"

I wonder if you were able to understand and recognise this sentence from the story of Jesus stilling the storm (Mark 4v39) found in the Jamaican New Testament launched just recently after twenty years work of translation. It is written in patois or creole, based on English with West African influences, which has been widely spoken on the island since the 17th century. There is excitement and anticipation that people will now be able to find more readily that "the word of God is living and active" (Hebrews 4v12).

At the first LP meeting which I attended a very senior preacher passionately advocated that only the original version of the Bible should be used in public worship. Aware of his high academic standing I thought he meant Hebrew/Greek but discovered instead it was the King James' Version! Then when I was a young preacher in the mid- 1970's readings were often from the KJV rarely used now in services. There are still some passages which I think are diminished in other translations such as Psalm 23 and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5) which I read recently in a multi faith service for Syria in St Giles' Cathedral. However it is good that so many other versions have become available and acceptable so offering greater access and impact for more people.

Given the unattractiveness of the copies and difficulty of the KJV language it is a testimony to the power of the scriptures that I developed a love of them in childhood. It is of course also a testimony to those who told and taught them to me in ways which directed my life. The Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Very Rev Albert Bogle, speaks of this too in recalling his captivation with the story of Ruth when he was a seven year old at Sunday School and how it spoke to him of the importance of making right decisions. So it was that he responded by committing himself to following Jesus that day. We must never underestimate the power of the Bible nor the receptiveness of anyone, least of all children!

Here in Scotland two of our Methodists, Kenneth Mackinnon (Inverness) and Paul Ellingworth (Aberdeen) are still working to translate the NT for Gaelic speakers. Meanwhile, week by week in leading worship we all have the privilege and responsibility of opening the written word for it to speak into people's situations in living and active ways. It is relevant, personal and powerful but sometimes taken for granted and undervalued.

I discovered how much Singaporeans love their food whilst at their Methodist Conference representing our British Connexion. Instead of a biscuit or cake during each coffee break there was a lavish hot buffet each time. Folk were eager for me to sample the amazing variety of food and I was besieged by offers of " taste and see " which I could not refuse and was glad that I didn't!

This seems to me a basis for leading worship echoed by the psalmist who affirms from his own experience

"How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps119v103) and invites others to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps34v8).

Wishing you much feasting on the word of God and joy in sharing fragments with others.



Rev Lily P. Twist B.Sc., B.Th.

Chair of the Methodist Synod in Scotland

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**God who moulded the universe with his fingers**

**And holds all existence in the palm of his hands**

**Christ whose human touch held divine power**

**To heal the sick and restore life to the dead**

**Holy Spirit who enfolds us in the embrace of love**

**And lifts us on to a secure rock**

**This is the God we reach out to**

**This is the God who touches our lives with healing and hope**

**We believe in this God for ever**

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### **Nine months on...**

Many thanks to Lyn Smalridge for the eight faithful committed years he gave to the shared role of District Joint LP/WL Secretary. Knowing Lyn, I am sure he is not sitting back on his laurels but has already committed himself in other areas. I hope that my contribution will compare favourably. It has been an interesting and eventful nine months since I took up the position as District Joint LP/WL Secretary with Margaret Brown.

On 9 June 2012 Margaret and I were honoured to travel by train to Methodist Church House (MCH) in London to represent Scotland District at the **Annual LP/WL Secretary & Tutor Officers Meeting**. You can read a brief report on the meeting elsewhere in the newsletter.

Having travelled down the previous day and booked into a hotel in Kings Cross, we were able to take the opportunity to visit Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum right across the road from MCH in Marylebone. It was also good to have the opportunity to see John Wesley's nameplate from a High Speed Train (HST) power car which had recently been found in a dustbin in Edinburgh and is now on display in MCH.

The decision was taken not to hold our usual spring **LP/WL Secretary & Tutors Meeting** in May, as we felt it important to concentrate on gaining more information on the Fruitful Field Project and the proposal to reduce Scotland District to One Circuit. We were therefore delighted that Helen Wareing and Phil Haggis were able to come to Dunblane Cathedral Halls on 6 October 2012 to update us. Again you can read about this elsewhere.

***Hilary Henderson***

## **District LP/WL Weekend 2-3 February 2013**

Once again the venue is The Scottish Police College, Tulliallan. Though there were some initial concerns most felt the facilities provided at Tulliallan Castle were first-rate. However we will discuss the venue again at the business part of the weekend, so if you have any alternative suggestions please come prepared to share details.



**Scottish Police College, Tulliallan,  
Kincardine, Fife, FK10 4BE**

The focus of the weekend will be presented by **Gerald Bostock** and **John Sawkins** who will engage us in discussion on **"Apologetics? It's Alpha Plus"**. Last year many expressed their pleasure at the Saturday evening fellowship of song and story led by The Weatherfolk. This year there will be an opportunity to once again bring your own food to share in the Saturday evening fellowship led by Valerie and Ian Paget and Alan Henderson.

**As usual you will find a form in the newsletter to complete and return to Hilary as soon as possible with your deposit.**

## District Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Weekend

2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2013

### Theme for the Weekend

This year's District local preachers and worship leaders weekend explores **what we believe and why**, and asks,

- how do we make the case for Christianity today?
- what questions do people ask?
- why do we find it hard to answer them and why should we try?
- how do we put theory into practice and how can this equip us better for mission?

Together we will explore how we, as local preachers and worship leaders, think about and talk about our faith, and make the case for Christianity where we live and work.

APOLOGETICS? - IT'S ALPHA PLUS!

*- Exploring what we believe and why -*

SESSION 1: What is being asked of us?

SESSION 2: Why is it hard but worth it?

SESSION 3: Real-life conversations

SESSION 4: The way forward

### Those leading the sessions are:

#### Gerald Bostock

Gerald is now retired and stays in Perth. He served as a Methodist minister for many years including 8 years as a minister and Methodist University Chaplain in Edinburgh and 8 years as the Superintendent minister in Aberdeen. His particular interests are Origen of Alexandria and the early Church, including the Celtic Church, and has recently developed a concern for apologetics as an essential aspect of the mission of the Church in contemporary Britain.

## **John Sawkins**

John works at Heriot-Watt University and is a local preacher in the Edinburgh and Forth Circuit. He is a 'Breakout' (Sunday School) leader at the City of Edinburgh Methodist Church and through this work has developed an interest in trying to come up with answers to the tricky questions posed by the young people!



**Ian and Valerie Paget**

Ian and Valerie will lead a musical Saturday evening session.

Ian is a qualified PE Teacher and has a degree in Pastoral Ministry. He has worked as a Pastor in both Canada and Scotland and is currently working with Scripture Union in an Associate Worker Scheme called Colt which involves him working in schools in the Clackmannanshire Area. Ian is a gifted worship leader who has written many worship songs and has recorded two albums.

Ian's wife Valerie is a qualified radiographer working in the Beetsen West of Scotland Cancer Centre. She leads worship with Ian and especially enjoys leading kid's worship. Valerie is also gifted in creative dance in worship.

I am sure it is an evening that we will all enjoy.



## Annual LP/WL Secretary & Tutor Officers Meeting

### ***Margaret stands at the entrance of the Offices of Methodist Church House in London***



Doug Swanney chaired the meeting and Rev John Whitehead led the opening devotions. John reminded us of a recent TV advert for the Peugeot 206 which was set in India. A man looks at a poster of the new 206 and then decides to reshape his old banger by driving it into a wall, reversing it into a rock and then getting an elephant to sit on it. The strapline of the advert was "Why settle for less when you can have the real thing?" Reading from John's gospel [2:1-12] where Jesus turns water into wine, John pointed out that "Jesus is the real thing." He then posed a few questions:

- Is it the real thing when we lead worship? Does it fit our own personal agenda instead of being a celebration of God's work in his people?
- Is it the real thing in meeting people's needs? Do we encourage them to trust that Jesus is at the heart of what they do in their own lives?
- Is it the real thing in terms of sharing our own faith? Is it the real WE in worship? Do we give of ourselves or a different person entirely? We need to be true to God's expectation of us.

**Update on Connexion.** Bring the meeting up to date on what had been happening at Connexion level of relevance to this group, **Doug Swanney** mentioned that the Ministries Committee had put the **Fruitful Field Report** online for people to view. This Report highlights areas requiring further exploration in how the training of all ministries, ordained and lay is facilitated and the need for continual development after the initial training. A Working Group has been set up to look at providing a clear vision on how WL/LP training will be addressed [includes Fresh Expression and Youth Enterprise]. This group comprises of skilled expert staff close to District who can assist in training in a more localized area than from Methodist Church House. The future of Districts is being looked and to re-assessment and redistribution of Circuits. In Sept 2012 core modules of the new training course were to be made available. The review and continual development modules part of existing LP/WL assessment will include Safeguarding courses (renewed every 5 years).

Doug then opened up the meeting for discussion. It was stressed that the LP call should take account of the history of people offering for training. Previous training and preaching experience needs to be taken into account. The focus needs to be on equipping and encouraging the whole people of God. Decisions on the relevance of previous experience need to be locally at LP/WL meetings. It was important for honesty and truthfulness at LP/WL meetings about difficulties with On Trial's training issues and misunderstandings should be corrected at the meeting not elsewhere. How do we assess new LP/WL's on going learning skills? Training must be over all areas - including supers and tutors. There was a need for self-accountability which calls for an individual willingness to be formed. We can't keep doing some of the things the way we are doing now. Evangelism; spirituality teams; country-wide conferences; Connexional LP event; District conferences - all these can produce tools for MCLPD localized training. Think it would be helpful to have access to MC website locally to be able to add current information to statistics - may eliminate need for pink forms and could enable confirmation of figures.

**LWPT** We were given a history of the Leaders of Worship & Preachers Trust which began as LPMA in early 1800's and was fully ecumenical. It costs £50,000 to send out the '**Ichthus**' magazine and only 8,000 copies have been printed this year instead of the usual 20,000 copies. Only those who have requested it receive the magazines. We were asked to encourage congregations to take a retiring collection or have a coffee morning in aid of LWPT funds.

**Reports from Districts** were tabled and district representative were each given the opportunity to add to their news. Part of this involved open discussion on:

**Worship Leaders** and the way they have been accepted into the different circuits and how they are being used varied quite considerably. Some circuits had not yet invited WLs to attend LPs meetings. WLs should contact Preacher but not all do. It was felt that WL policies were not really grounded before WLs received into training - need general agreement. There was concern in some Circuits that the steward/contact person may be being passed over with WLs now first point of call.

**Local Preachers** We looked at how Local Preachers can be used in a wider sense, particularly for funerals and baptisms and also in 'fresh expressions'. There was some confusion over how to complete the report on LP services and guidelines were requested. It seemed to be a general problem as to how to get LPs to attend the LP meetings - it is their duty to attend but there are poor turnouts. The correlation between skill in written

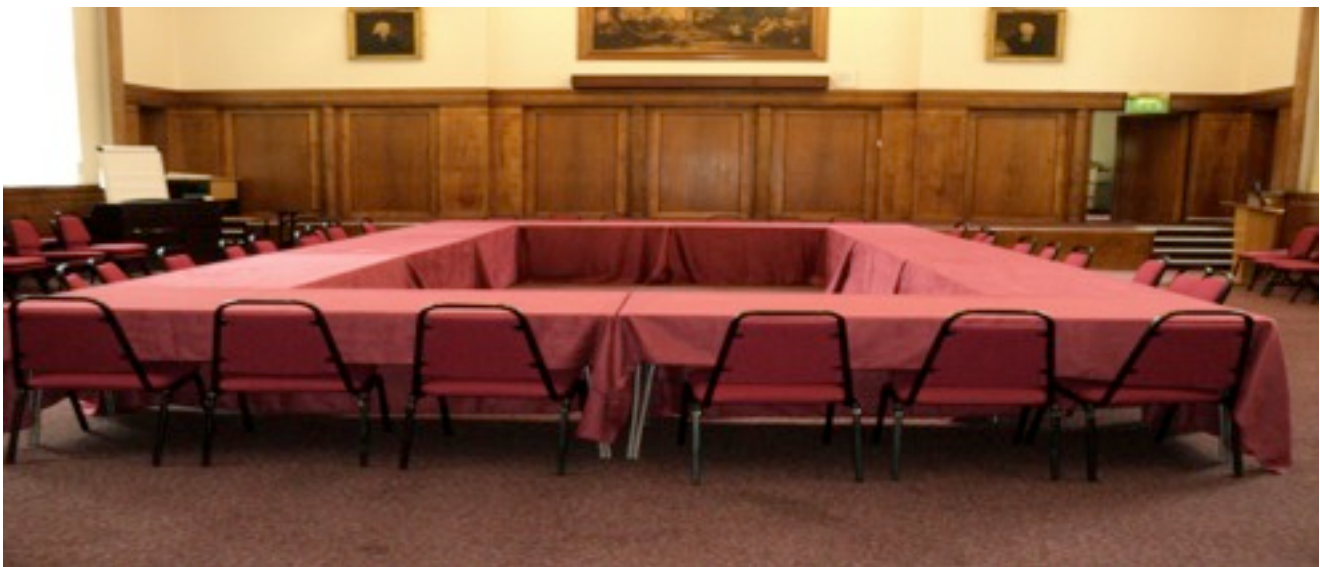
work (F&W Modules) and practical preaching skills was felt to need balance - should not be weighted more to one than the other.

**Tutors** standard of marking does not seem to be the same for each tutor. Tutor training days could be useful.

**General** There is an update of 'Singing the Faith' available for taped organs. There was an overabundance of Local Arrangements in some circuits which was questioned. It was good to recognize each other's preferences. A directory of circuits in District/Stats/Contacts would be useful. Some districts had joint circuit meetings within geographically connected areas. The boundaries are not well defined in the roles of Presbyter/Deacon/LP/WL and needs clarifying. District LP/WL Secy could be invited to visit LP/WL meetings in District but there was a question about how this could be facilitated. There was a general concern at young folk's skills being ignored or even blocked and recognition of our aging LP's/congregations and that no young folk are being called as LP/WL. In some districts, LP/WL meetings are held during the day. Some also have District Study Days. Where Circuits were merging it helped LP/WL meetings. Distances can be shortened by newsletters and Skype conference calls.

It was agreed that the District gathering of LP Secy/Tutors is helpful in enabling shared discussion of concerns in this way. Margaret and Hilary certainly enjoyed meeting those from other districts and hope they can make the journey again next year.

***Margaret Brown/Hilary Henderson***



**Meeting Room in Methodist Church House where the District LP's Secretaries and Tutors Meeting was held**

## **Autumn LP/WL Secretaries & Tutors Meeting**

We took the decision to cancel our spring meeting in favour of a more informative one in the autumn. Those able to be present at the Dunblane Cathedral Halls on 6 October 2012 were delighted to catch up with all that was happening in the different circuits and to hear from our speakers, **Helen Wareing** and **Phil Haggis**.

### **Update from Circuits**

**Ministerial ill health** and long-term absence of clergy was a major topic of the conversation. The changing nature of the ministerial role has put more pressure on clergy and stress of work was seen a major factor in long term sick leave. There is an urgent need to find ways to alleviate this situation for overworked ministers. A contributory factor to this situation is that congregations still hold high expectations of the minister and there is a requirement to re-educate congregations into less dependency on clergy. Travelling distance was still an issue. It was agreed there was a need to address current perceptions of church roles and that there is a lot being done by clergy that could just as easily be done by others. It is sad that people are being put in situations of struggling to cover gaps in ministry.

There were of course practical issues involved. Circuits struggling to fill preaching plans and pastoral care during absences are very grateful for neighbouring circuits' willingness to help fill the gap. The absence of ordained ministry raises a real problem in the administration of the sacraments. There was a need to gather information around the District to ascertain and address circuit requirements. It was suggested the LP role could allow for more involvement pastorally and sacramentally and Class Leaders could also be more involved in pastoral visiting.

**The Local Preachers** in general were valued by congregations and many were being invited to preach by other denominations in their local area. There were some circuits however who were not making full use of LPs. There was concern over LPs being removed from the plan because they were no longer worshipping in a Methodist congregation. This brought up the question of how we can still be Methodists in other denominations. It was suggested there was no reason why people could not have dual membership. LPs not finishing training was a concern with one LP lost to the church through lack of opportunity to preach which was a sad reflection on local circuits.

**The Worship Leaders** role and how they were being used was discussed. There was at the moment Worship Leaders Training happening at Tulliallan Police College covering two

days of extensive training rather than the usual seven sessions. Some circuits were not sure yet how to integrate WLs into their local situation. Some LPs had no problem working with WLs but others were resistant to sharing. Perhaps there was a need for a training day for LPs to explore how to work with WLs and experience leading of worship together.

## **Fruitful Field Project**

**Helen Wareing**, manager of the Methodist Church in Scotland Learning and Development Network and consultant to the Ministries Committee, gave an overview of the Fruitful Field Project which had been presented to Conference 2012. This report began with Conference 2010 identifying the need to look at the way the Methodist Church supports its members in the fields of formation, learning, training, theological education, scholarship, research and development .

Helen explained that the report was driven primarily by finance in light of the heavy drain on the budget in training of clergy and LPs. Training needs to be for the ministry of the whole people of God. Significant areas were identified - **People, Places** and **Pathways**. Though the emphasis should be focused on People it was often greatest on Places with little emphasis on Pathways. In an effort to shift from prioritizing Places to prioritizing People, there was agreed a reduction in the number of authorized training institutions. Now only two, Cliff College and The Queen's Foundation, will serve and support Circuits and Local Churches.

Helen stressed that both Wales and Scotland have had a big influence on this project. People at Conference 2012 were at first angered and confused at the Report but eventually there was a move towards it so that the Report went through almost unanimously. Helen is a member of the Implement Management Team charged with moving this project forward. She led us through Sections **132-147** which gives the design and implementation of new pathways, opportunities, programmes and resources for Local Preachers and Worship Leaders. The Project offers a more flexible, less rigid model of training with more adaptability to contexts, needs and aspirations of trainees.

Helen explained that the initial training will not be as extensive as at present with the learning process allowing for more personal spiritual development. Modules will be open to members of congregations to help them grow in faith. The course will incorporate more cultural contexts, all age, music, fresh expressions and messy church. Training materials will be shaped for flexible delivery for the use of the whole people of God. Continual development (CLPD) will be helped with the bringing together of training of LP and WL so common elements are shared together. The emphasis on accessibility is hoped to

encourage a culture of learning in Circuits and Local Churches. There will also be a new form of Assessment appropriate to learning goals and practice, focusing on a portfolio model and making less reliance on essay-style questions. The transition from F&W will be carefully managed within realistic timescales.

These new ventures will be supported by new roles with local church/circuit having a mentor/teacher to help people explore their calling and develop their leadership skills. A Pathway Mentor would help choose the most appropriate studies. Volunteer tutors will continue to support the delivery of modules. The significant point of contact will be the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network who will organize the design, development and delivery of new materials across districts and regions. Working alongside District Local Preachers' Secretaries, the Network's expert staff will have a key role in holding the 'big picture' within the region. Helen felt very positive about where the Report has come to with its 13 development strategies. There needs to be plenty more opportunity to discuss and reflect on what training requires and she suggested it would be good to have a spring meeting next year to take this further.

## **One Circuit**

**Phil Haggis**, a member of the One Circuit Group, updated us on the proposal to bring all the circuits in Scotland District together as one single Circuit. Phil had sent a survey round LPs and WLs asking for input on - how they felt Local Preachers should be planned; what more responsibility LP/WL could have in their own church; and how the role of LP/WL could be developed within the One Circuit Model. There was also space for other thoughts. Phil had received thirty two replies which helped inform the Draft Report of the One Circuit proposal presented to Synod on 15 September 2012.

The Resolution proposed by Phil at Synod, **"directs the OCG to continue to prepare details of the proposal through ongoing consultation and to communicate updates widely across the District"**.

The OCG Report currently being formulated will be driven by circuits and congregations. There had been some main concerns brought to OCG and Phil clarified them for us. a) There was no intention of Scotland District separating and merging with North of England. It is possible that we may end up as a Two Circuit District if Shetland stays separate; b) Supers will still have responsibility for churches in some way; c) The 'Pastor for every church' consideration would not be forced on churches, but would come from the request of congregations with consideration to fitting the person to the local church role and training provided.

Phil stressed that OCG will be looking at how best to use resources. The team will be meeting with circuit leadership teams to assess their mission aims and to clarify the concerns they may have in local areas. They have till December 2012 to re-draft the report to be voted on at Spring Synod 2013. Congregational members will all have opportunity to feed into their circuits. The new Chair will become involved in the process. Synod may say no to the One Circuit, in which case there would need to be a new direction as change is necessary and there would have to be an alternative course.

There was concern in some Circuits that Synod will make the decision and not listen to the people. OCG was engaged to **"communicate updates widely across the District"** and Phil explained will always meet in open Circuit and should be put on the agenda of LP meetings for discussion. He agreed that policy changes may be concerning people and that there are a number of considerations to take into account such as charitable status and responsibility of manses.

Phil encouraged us to look at the **Draft Report to Synod 2012 Appendix 3:** Information for Local Preachers based on OCG Proposal, which was based on the feedback of LPs and WLs who responded to his survey. There was concern that with a wider use of technology, LPs without access to electronic facilities would be linked with someone who had access. The proposal was that ministers would be responsible for coordinating and drawing up the plan for their own churches, but there would be a wider distribution and encouragement to share in different areas. Google accounts offer more privacy than church websites and ministers can edit documents as well as there being opportunity to link with other denominational websites. It was hoped that LPs and WLs would find more opportunities for working together in a shared ministry. WLs have an important role in worship and compliment the LPs, as they share and grow together. Many LPs already lead funerals, residential/care homes services and small groups, but it was suggested LPs/WLs could be more involved in the life of the churches. WLs could be authorized to work in other churches in group and LPs could mentor at local level.

**Margaret and Hilary would like to thank all who attended this meeting, with special thanks for the contribution of both Helen and Phil. We hope that everyone felt they had the opportunity to voice their concerns and share together. Let us all continue to pray for the future of Methodism in Scotland.**



## **EDINBURGH AND FORTH CIRCUIT**

### **Local Preachers and Worship Leaders - Annual Report 2011 / 12**

The year began with four on-trials and ended with one - 2 transferred to Worship Leading, one became an Accredited Local Preacher and one continues training having completed sections A and B of Worship and Preaching.

Two of our number died during the year - one Local Preacher and one Presbyter (Supernumerary). However, two Local Preachers have joined us from down south (Skipton & Grassington and South Lincolnshire) and two Supernumeraries (Newcastle Upon Tyne [West] and Barnard Castle & Teesdale). Therefore, our meeting numbers have increase a little.

We have discussed at our meetings the training and recognition of Worship Leaders of whom we have about 15 serving throughout the circuit and others considering joining this group. The Superintendent with one of the Local Preachers have spent considerable time establishing a training and continuing development course which will have its first running in the early part of next Connexional year. Hopefully, this will lead to new WLs being recognised in the circuit at the conclusion of the course.

We have had three presentations at our meetings: (i) Inspiring and Innovative Preaching in which we were encouraged to enhance our worship and preaching by being focused on inspiring our people and using innovative and appropriate ways of sharing the Good News. (ii) Adjacent Possibilities which encouraged us as individuals to dream about where we were in our journey and where we might find a new future for ourselves. The focus being to help us become better human beings. An exercise to stretch ourselves and discover skills that we did not know we had. (iii) Communication beyond the Sermon asked us to think about how we might use the new technologies, particularly the internet; using among other devices such innovations as the Social Networks - Facebook, Twitter, etc - to help us reach folk that we would not easily attract into church. Web sites were also discussed by way of exposing what we are and how we go about being church. A fascinating discussion that we held in parallel with our shared pizza meal.

An interesting year (which included thinking about the Fruitful Field project) in which we have attracted new people and extended our minds as we have got to know one another just a little bit better. It is indeed fun to serve God, but it is also challenging.



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## **REPORT FOR LOCAL PREACHERS OF CENTRAL SCOTLAND CIRCUIT.**

We continue to hold quarterly meetings with each meeting being either in Armadale, Stirling or Wallacestone Methodist Churches and alternating between locations.

We generally have a near “perfect” attendance of Preachers but the last few meetings have seen reduced attendance, due to a number of factors.

At the last meeting and following a request from the Superintendent, Rev. David Archer, preachers will be assisting the Angus, Dundee and Perth Circuit with preaching appointments. This is due to an extended illness of the A. D. P. Superintendent and health condition of the “resident” Local Preacher.

The pending consideration of a One Circuit for Scotland has raised a number of questions but the meeting noted that the bedding in of the One Circuit will be over a period.

Stuart Young, Local Preachers’ Secretary,

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## **INVERNESS CIRCUIT**

We have enjoyed shared tutorial meetings in the past with a LP on trial in preparation for his assignments. Sadly this person withdrew from LP studies but continuing LP’s have expressed a desire to meet for a similar purpose once or twice a year. We are also interested in meeting LP’s from adjoining Circuits and may look to arranging something in the New Year. As mentioned above, each quarter at least one service is reported on by a member of the LP meeting

IMC is adjusting to life this year without an appointed Presbyter and experiencing a reaction to a very formal approach to worship over the last few years. We are challenged by the need to take more appointments and to engage with different forms of worship that will keep the congregation alongside whilst developing their experience. Evening services take place in the lower hall of the church where media projection facilities are available. There has been little or no opportunity to involve other people in planning services and we are now beginning to explore this and other options.

Audrey Hensman, Secretary Inverness Circuit

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## **LANARKSHIRE CIRCUIT REPORT**

Over the last year we have seen several developments within Lanarkshire Circuit.

We have organised training for 5 worship leaders and now both the churches in our circuit have Worship Leaders who work alongside the preachers or have taken over full responsibility for worship on some Sundays. Our Worship Leaders are competent and very enthusiastic and a blessing to us, considering our small number of local preachers.

The last year we have shared our Local Preachers' meetings with our neighbouring circuit, Glasgow. This has given us an opportunity to explore and share our faith together. Both active preachers and those currently not taking appointments have attended. We have organised both circuit preachers' meetings for the same dates which will allow us to meet together, should we so wish. We have met in East Kilbride and New Stevenson buildings. With future re-organisation of district and circuits, we thought this was a good opportunity to "pave the way" for the future together.

Our church building in Nethererton has seen some redevelopments to assist worship. We have redesigned the sanctuary with the addition of new modern furniture, carpeting and an access ramp for wheelchairs or those with mobility issues. The easily moveable furniture will allow more variety in worship styles to be explored. We have also seen the addition of a new audio-visual system with a permanent overhead PC projector. Along with the new hymnbook this should allow us to approach praise in a new way and should allow more visual content in sermons and addresses.

Our New Stevenson members continue to welcome their local community into the building through coffee mornings and breakfast clubs and our Youth Worker is based there. He has been busy co-ordinating work across the circuit with our local ecumenical partners and our neighbouring primary school.

Taking all of our developments together, we believe that God has an exciting time for us as we further His Kingdom in Lanarkshire and beyond.

Allan McCullough, Secretary to Lanarkshire Circuit Preachers' Meeting

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## **REPORT FROM GLASGOW CIRCUIT**

We continue to be encouraged by the progress of two young women , Emma Haggis and Clare Purfit who are currently on trial in the circuit and also by Pierre Mungombe who is on note.

As mentioned above in Allan's report we have had shared LP & WL meetings with the Lanarkshire meeting in churches in the Lanarkshire and Glasgow Circuits.

At one of our recent joint meetings at East Kilbride one of the local preachers from the Glasgow Circuit, Miss Katherine Rennie led part of the meeting. As well as being a Local Preacher Katherine is also a member of the Iona Community. Using visual aids and written words placed in various parts of the area in which we met, Katherine asked us to consider prayerfully and reflectively our responsibilities for caring for the environment and the world in which we live.

At our meeting in March, Prof Phil Cotton led local preachers and worship leaders in a discussion entitled the 'educative heart' of the service. In small groups we were encouraged to share together what we felt was meant by 'challenging' and 'feeding' those who come to worship together. What were our habits of sermon and worship preparation? Phil also encouraged us to look at the five a day guideline for feeding. The principals of which are:

- Balanced (right combination)
- Moderated (appropriate amounts)
- Valid (right elements, shown to 'work')
- Structure (explicit)
- Message (made clear)
- Spirit-led (acknowledged)

This time proved to be very thought provoking, interesting and 'fruitful'.

We have at present 12 worship leaders who regularly share in leading worship in the Glasgow Circuit and they are also welcomed at many of the LP meetings as well. This coming together enables us to share quality time together and be supportive to one another in our calling.

Margaret Brown, Secretary Glasgow Circuit

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**NORTH OF SCOTLAND MISSION**

North of Scotland Mission currently have 13 accredited Local Preachers, 5 Local Preachers On Trial and one Local Preacher on Note. They also have 6 worship leaders.

Bruce Tollemache, Secretary North of Scotland Mission

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**AYRSHIRE AND RENFREWSHIRE CIRCUIT**

At the LP Secretaries and Tutors meeting Steven Moore, LP Secretary for Ayrshire and Renfrewshire advised how encouraged he had been at the number of local preachers from the surrounding circuits who had been willing and able to lead worship in the Ayrshire and Renfrewshire circuit when required. The circuit are also blessed with a number of Worship Leaders who regularly lead services and contribute much to the worship life of the circuit.

Steven Moore, Secretary Ayrshire and Renfrewshire Circuit

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**Dunbar Methodist Church - 2014**



Built in 1764 Dunbar Church was the first Methodist Church in Scotland and was John Wesley’s favourite. In 2014 the church will be celebrating it’s 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Due to the church’s age it is requiring a face lift and some small building work. A small working group from the congregation (with the circuit’s support) are undertaking this project to bring the church back to its original glory, and also looking at the future vision for the church, to see what could be happening there for the next 250 years.

As there is only one full year until 2014, it is important that the church start working on this project to ensure that everything is complete and ready for a year of celebrations. To be able to do the entire project the church will be needing funding, which they are currently working through.

You can get updates on the progress of the project in future newsletters.

# **One Circuit Local Preachers Replies Summary**

**Please find below the thoughts compiled from thirty two of the Local Preachers and Worship Leaders who responded to the questions sent out to all Local Preachers and Worship Leaders**

**1. How should Local Preachers be planned; for example should it be decided by small clusters of Local churches; negotiated with each Local preacher (and if so who should carry out the negotiation); or should it be within a certain travelling distance from their residence; or might it be around particular groupings of churches (for example rural or housing estate or city centre) and does a possible contextual focus highlight particular possibilities and learning needs?**

- Concern shown for going to one Circuit.
- There needs to be planning of services at a Local level.
- Focus must be given to the churches on the edge of the Circuit
- The information from Preachers requested one month ahead.
- The information could be collated by an Administrator
- Ministers plan their own churches with their own information before sending in for rest of dates to be filled.
- The ministers could plan in as well Local Preachers who are building up relationships with particular churches
- Use of Google documents to access and enter information for Ministers and Local Preachers could be used.
- Finalising of plan should be done by a Senior Presbyter
- A draft Plan could be Emailed to all Ministers and Preachers for confirmation
- There is an excitement in preaching in other areas of Scotland
- Preachers should be able to complete a matrix of churches they are willing to preach in.
- If there is to be a focus for a preacher on one particular church this should be agreed with the minister for that church
- Preachers should say how often they are willing to preach.
- Churches could then develop relationships with Preachers willing to travel the necessary distance alongside Preachers who are 'Local', and be encouraged to offer a ministry of hospitality including overnight stays,

- Preachers visiting other areas, say on holiday, could be encouraged to volunteer an appointment
- Churches should inform preachers of equipment, hymn books, bibles etc that are available to use in each church
- Full use of worship leaders in each church be made to help with continuity
- LP weekend could include workshops on particular topics/learning needs (eg rural, small/large congregations, AAW, multi-media technology, public speaking)
- "Local" thing about LPs will be lost, and if we were being sent to a greater number of different congregations it would be harder for us to get to know them and their individual requirements.
- Local Preachers and Worship Leaders need to be able to meet quarterly at a Local level to discuss appropriate business and gain from fellowship and an arranged speaker (from within or outside the group).
- Ongoing training to be given to both Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.
- The Scottish Local Preachers Weekend should continue.
- There are opportunities to develop one's preaching, to dovetail it to a particular area or group of people. However much thought and prayer will have to go into things
- Ensure we keep a focus on Scottish Methodism
- More use of Worship Leaders could be made
- Travelling expenses for the preacher should be met based on mileage.
- Payments where required should be made electronically to save Preachers being out of pocket
- Need to develop relationships with close denominations

## **2. Is there more responsibility a Local preacher or Worship Leader can have in their own Church**

- L.P.s and W.L.s, could perhaps consider taking on specific visits to members (in addition to the Class Leaders)
- Perhaps L.P.s and W.L.s could avail themselves to hold mini services for the housebound.
- With appropriate permission undertake "house visit communion".
- Perhaps L.P.s and W.L.s, could undertake mission work to new housing areas within their area, etc.
- The work of the Worship Leaders need to be clearly understood

- Local Preachers help with small groups both within and outside the church building
- Give opportunities to discuss the sermons with the congregation
- Be a designated Pastor in their Local church depending on aptitude and ability
- Become the 'lead' preacher in their Local church, assuming this is with consent of stewards/congregation develop specific ministries eg funerals
- Be active within the 'whole church Sunday School', followed by celebratory all age worship
- Could some LPs could be authorised to conduct communion services in their local churches.
- This would maybe not be for all LPs and additional training/selection could apply but it would help planning more than anything else if it could happen.
- Make it known that Local Preachers can conduct funerals within their Local church
- Team Ministry with the Local Minister
- Leading worship with other denominations
- We need to ensure we are where Christ has called us to be.
- A reminder Local Preachers should practice what they preach as they are always being watched!
- It would be hoped that each fellowship group would have a Local Preacher or Worship Leader. If not at least each group would have some sort of 'Worship Co-ordinator within their group.
- That Worship groups be encouraged to use the resource of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders

### **3. How could the role of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders be developed within the One Circuit Model.**

- Development of team preaching between Ministers, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.
- Explore themed preaching/worship across a group of churches
- Encouragement of occasional or regular study groups
- On-line forum for exploration of lectionary for those preaching (or not) on any particular Sunday to share insights and ideas
- Worship Leaders could be authorised to work in other churches as well as their own

- LPs could be 'assigned to fellowship groups or be encouraged to link with specific groups to share, lead, guide and offer pastoral care for.
- It may be that LPs need to include 'Practical Theology' or 'Pastoral Care' as a Unit in Faith and Worship - or add on Units for those who are not currently studying.
- Ministers in Local Appointment - maybe the LP role could be developed - for those who want it - to be more like this - non-stipendiary or stipendiary.
- The Circuit should take responsibility for the tutoring and accreditation of Local Preachers on trial.
- The Circuit would also have to decide on who should be given a note to preach.
- There should be arranged periodic training sessions and continuous Local preacher development activities on a Circuit wide basis.
- Setting up of a web-space of forum to share and exchange ideas.

#### **4. Other Thoughts**

- Scotland does not want to become a part of any other District
- Important that we keep the focus on Mission and Mission Centres
- We keep the message of Methodism in Scotland at the centre of what we are doing
- An opportunity be given for fellowships to discuss further the lectionary from the Sunday.
- Perhaps look at video conferencing services to fellowships with smaller numbers.
- With God all things are possible and we are Christians first and Methodists second.
- How will we show ourselves as 'A discipleship movement shaped for mission'
- We keep communicating about what is happening.
- Thought is given to how Holy Communion is shared across the District to cover all fellowships.
- We should not focus huge amount of time changing structures and management methods, but look more to enabling individuals and churches to be able to express their faith in the most relevant ways in the communities where they are placed.
- We pray for guidance



All Local Preachers including those on Trial, who have a computer should be able to access a document on which they can identify which churches they are willing to preach in any of the eight Circuits.

If a Local Preacher does not have access to E.mail then they can ask one of their fellow Preachers if they can input the information for them.

If a Local Preacher cannot access the document, if they let me know their name E.mail address and circuit I will arrange for access to be granted.

If any of the information is incorrect please let me know

Contact [philjanhaggis@live.co.uk](mailto:philjanhaggis@live.co.uk)

# Identity for local preachers

From Gill Dascombe:

THE Fruitful Field report (Recorder, August 3) sets out, among other things, the Methodist Church's agenda to "develop learning outcomes for local preachers and worship leaders, ensuring that these learning outcomes are firmly rooted in an understanding of the roles of local preacher and worship leader" (paragraph 145). But what are these roles, and how can we achieve this understanding?

Mr Wesley appointed preachers, itinerant and local. Over time, the role of the itinerant preacher has evolved into that of ordained presbyter, with its attendant responsibilities in worship and leadership. But the role of local preacher has changed very little. We still fulfil our appointments on the circuit plan, choose hymns, lead prayers and preach sermons, just as our forebears did.

Local preachers in this Dis-

trict have spoken about their perceptions of the particular significance of this lay ministry both to themselves and to their congregations. Continuity is highly valued; some people having served many years among the same group of churches, with the resultant deep-rooted sensitivity to their background, their needs and concerns.

Familiarity, approachability and the relevance and simplicity of their message are also mentioned, together with the precious opportunity to be both a giver and receiver of ministry within the fellowship of the whole people of God. It is a ministry "within" rather than "towards".

But the Church is changing and worship is changing! Circuits are becoming larger, leadership is becoming more team-orientated and worship is now no longer confined to the traditional Sunday morning hymn sandwich. Clearly, the role of the local preacher

needs to adapt if we are not to preach ourselves into obsolescence!

The Fruitful Field Report calls (paragraph 124) for the development of "collaborative ministry (in all its forms) in the new types of circuit and circuit missional aims and structures which are emerging in very different ways across the Connexion". But how is this vision to be achieved?

For local preachers, it has to mean an initial reshaping of their distinctive "within" ministry such that it may best serve the needs of the modern Church.

Traditionally, local preachers are not collaborators. Despite being numerous and visible ("Far more Methodist services of worship are led by local preachers than by ordained ministers" (Fruitful Field, paragraph 17)), they tend to operate, for the most part, Sunday by Sunday, on a solitary basis. Local preach-

ers have no autonomous voice in church leadership at any level. Consequently, they lack any real sense of corporate identity and corporate ministry and have no forum within which they may explore a new vision for the future in the wider context.

This has not been helped by the recent demise of the Connexional Local Preachers' committee and the post of Connexional Local Preachers' secretary.

Therefore, if local preachers are to become true collaborators in the worship ministry of the Church of the future and not mere fillers-in of gaps, a new corporate vision among local preachers must be found and nurtured. Before we encourage many more new people to answer the call, we need to be much clearer about what it is they are being called to do and where, and how. - Gill Dascombe, 15 Poise Brook Drive, Stockport.

A warm story that reminds us of the importance of treating everyone with whom we come into contact with well. We never know what's going on in their "world."

I arrived at the address where someone had requested a taxi. I honked but no one came out. I honked again, nothing. So I walked to the door and knocked. 'Just a minute', answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor. After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 90's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets.. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware.

'Would you carry my bag out to the car?' she said. I took the suitcase to the cab, and then returned to assist the woman. She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb. She kept thanking me for my kindness. 'It's nothing', I told her. 'I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated'.. 'Oh, you're such a good boy', she said.

When we got in the cab, she gave me an address, and then asked, 'Could you drive through downtown?' 'It's not the shortest way,' I answered quickly. 'Oh, I don't mind,' she said. 'I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice'. I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. 'I don't have any family left,' she continued. 'The doctor says I don't have very long.' I quietly reached over and shut off the meter. 'What route would you like me to take?' I asked.

For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighbourhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, 'I'm tired. Let's go now' We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move.

They must have been expecting her. I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair. 'How much do I owe you?' she asked, reaching into her purse. 'Nothing,' I said 'You have to make a living,' she answered. 'There are other passengers,' I responded. Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly. 'You gave an old woman a little moment of joy,' she said. 'Thank you.'

I squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life. I didn't pick up any more passengers that day. I drove aimlessly lost in thought. For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk. What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift? What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away? On a quick review, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments. But great moments often catch us unaware-beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

PEOPLE MAY NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID, OR WHAT YOU SAID, BUT THEY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

## **.do not grieve like the rest of humanity, who have no hope.'**

As representatives of Christ's body here on earth, what is it people see in our lives and hear in our words? Do we give the impression that we have deep within our hearts the conviction of the Apostle Paul that death is not an end but only a beginning? And if not, then why are we not asking the question of ourselves 'What is the hope to which I have been called?'

We live in a world where people are searching for reassurance, for hope, for identity and fulfillment. Yet they are apparently not finding it, because they are looking anywhere but towards the established Church. You've only got to look at the adverts in the paper for psychic fairs, new age philosophies, card readings, crystals and the like.

*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven ... and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive... will be caught up together... to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words. [1 Thes 16-18]*

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul gives encouragement to anyone who has lost a loved one, whether through war, illness or old age (4:13-18). It is a message that goes to the heart of the Good News of the Gospel - that our whole journey with Christ is one that has its ultimate conclusion in eternity.

Paul gives a vision of the glorious return of the Lord and this is a picture that would be a familiar one to the people; as a later preacher in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, John Chrysostom, explains;

'When a king made his entry into a city, certain ones among the dignitaries, the chief officials and those who were in good standing with the king would go out to meet him, whilst criminals and those on trial would be kept within the city to await sentence. In the same manner, when the Lord will come, the first group will go out to meet him with assurance, whilst those who are conscious of their sins will wait below for their judge.'

Paul here is following the example of Jesus in using familiar images to express the truth of the Gospel message - a truth that needs emphasising every day. Even Job, after all that he went through, was still able to proclaim;

'I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes - I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me! [Job 19:25-26]

This is the message that lies at the core of our faith - that death is not the end, because Jesus has defeated death. And just as Jesus was raised up to be with his Heavenly Father so shall we be raised up in the eternity that is the hope and centre of our faith. This is the faith to which we have been called and it is the hope that can sustain us through all manner of difficulty and hardship.

# My Prayer

## **Lord, why do I just think of you**

When evening shadows come to rest?  
Why were you not within my thoughts  
Throughout the hours of day just past?

Lord, why did I manage on my own  
To deal with problems thick and fast?  
When all I needed was to call  
And you would gladly share my task?

Lord, when will I ever learn to share  
Each moment of my life with you?  
Each thought, each feeling would become  
More precious - each discovery new.

Lord, help me now be more aware  
In every waking hour, of you.  
So every moment of my life,  
Is used to help your Power break through.

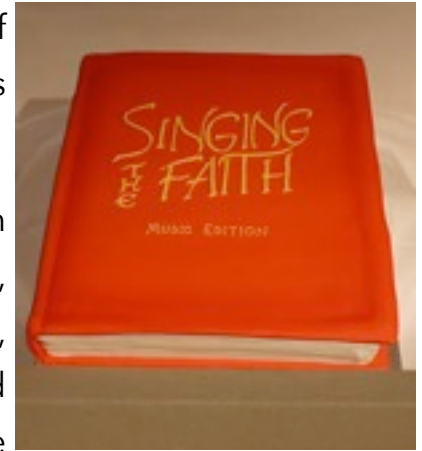


*Tune : O Waly, Waly (English traditional melody)*

*No copyright needed*



One year ago *Singing the Faith* was published; a collection of 840 hymns and songs, that would take an estimated forty hours to sing from beginning to end.



The collection was published by Hymns Ancient and Modern on behalf of the Methodist Church, after seven years of deliberation, theological scrutiny, musical collaboration and editing. To date, nearly 98,000 copies have been sold across all the published editions. Peter Brophy, who was Editor-in-Chief of *Singing the Faith*, said: "Having completed the editorial tasks for 'Singing the Faith' it was first of all a delight to handle the published book - all those scraps of paper, urgent emails and even more urgent phone calls now transformed into a hymnbook - a physical testament to the dedicated volunteers who worked for a Biblical seven years to bring it to fruition. "But it has been even more of a delight to visit Methodist churches from Cornwall to Berwick-on-Tweed and from London to Lancashire during the last twelve months and be handed a copy of 'our new hymnbook' by the steward at the entrance, and then to join in worship, whether traditional or modern, using what I truly believe is a precious resource given to us by God."

The [Singing the Faith Plus](#) website offers a wide range of free resources to help people get the most out of the collection, with lectionary suggestions and creative ideas for using hymns, for singing or in other ways. The site is also fast becoming a popular platform for new hymns and an encouragement to emerging writers.

"This beautifully presented hymn book is transforming worship through the sheer diversity of the hymns and songs contained within its pages," said the Revd Dr Mark Wakelin, President of the Methodist Conference. "Singing the Faith is the one hymn and song book you have to have."

The Revd Barbara Bircumshaw, Chair of the Music Resources Group which was responsible for producing the collection, said: "I am thrilled by the success of *Singing the Faith*. It's great that it is being widely used by congregations around the Connexion - more than I ever dreamed possible. And it's very humbling to have played a part in bringing *Singing the Faith* to birth! I pray that it will be a valuable tool for worship and witness, for glorifying God and sharing the Gospel in the twenty first century."

In response to huge demand, a special one-off printing of an organ edition was organised, and a Braille version of the collection is being developed in partnership with the [Torch Trust](#). Additionally, a 40-CD set of backing tracks for all of the hymns and songs is in production, for use by churches that do not have an organist or music group.

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## **OUR DAILY BREAD**

“Daily Bread is the most basic of needs. Jesus includes a petition for it in the Lord’s Prayer. But sometimes we ask for daily bread so quickly we do not think about what that request means for us.

To entrust to God your daily bread is to develop an attitude of utter trust in the loving care of God in your daily life. In ancient times most people had no store cupboards. Bread was bought or made daily. If you did not work that day, you did not eat. There was an urgency and desperation behind this petition. But also there is faith: the sovereign God, whose kingdom is coming and whose name is hallowed in the heavens, will provide.



## **TAKE A PIECE OF BREAD.**

As you hold the bread for a moment, thank God for those times in your life when needs have been met, perhaps in unexpected ways. As you eat your piece of bread, entrust to God your needs this day. The one who provided for our salvation in Jesus, the Bread of Life, will provide for us also.

Reflect that God may want to provide daily bread for others through you, through what you say and through what you are able to give to others. There is much hunger and unmet need in the world. Could this be due to the reluctance of God’s people to be channels through whom God desires to provide daily bread to others.

Giving too is part of our worship. As you have received, share with others.



Can I thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of the Winter District Newsletter and I look forward to receiving your contributions for our next issue. These should be sent to:

**Mrs Margaret Brown**

**14 Ebroch Drive**

**Kilsyth**

**Glasgow G65 0PG**

**Email - [margaret@jmbrown.plus.com](mailto:margaret@jmbrown.plus.com)**

## **INFORMATION FOR THE WEEKEND**

### **VENUE**

[Scottish Police College, Tulliallan Castle, Kincardine, Fife, FK10 4BE](#)

**Tulliallan Police College** is a conference and training centre for police and non-police organizations which provides training and conference rooms together with residential facilities. The residential facilities comprise single rooms with en suite facilities.

Situated in 90 acres of parkland on the outskirts of the village of Kincardine-on-Forth, just north of the point at which the Kincardine Bridge spans the River Forth, the College enjoys a central location within the Central Lowlands of Scotland. This situation renders the College easily accessible from most areas of Scotland.

The location is well served by a good motorway and trunk road network and the M876 terminates within 2 miles of the College.

The nearest railway stations are in Falkirk, some seven miles distant and both Edinburgh and Glasgow airports, some 30 and 40 miles away respectively, are less than an hour travelling time from the College. Car Parking is available within the College grounds

For Sat Nav use FK10 4BE

### **DATE OF WEEKEND - 2<sup>ND</sup>/3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2012**

**DETAILS** - Forms are enclosed with this Newsletter for this event and should be sent to Hilary Henderson, 14 Elizabeth Gardens, Stoneyburn, Bathgate, EH3 7TT with your deposit of £15. Made payable to **SCOTTISH METHODIST LOCAL PREACHERS**.

We look forward to seeing you there.