

The **Methodist** Church in Scotland



In Touch

Issue 9 Summer/Autumn 2017

Edinburgh &
Forth

Strathclyde

Ayrshire &
Renfrewshire

Central

North of
Scotland

Angus
Dundee &
Perthshire

Inverness

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our new style of *In Touch* which is now being distributed electronically. This will be sent to someone in each church who will forward it to other members and print any copies that people who don't have access to email. It would also be a good idea to put a copy on a notice board somewhere in the Church. We hope this works well and will save us a lot of the problems we have had with distribution. Paper copies will still be sent to those who need them. It is intended that the newsletter will now come out bi-monthly rather than just three times a year. So if you have information you would like to appear in it, please get in touch with Fiona at our District Office in Dunblane.

As well as welcoming the new approach to our newsletter the beginning of another Methodist Church year sees us welcoming new ministers and a new Circuit. A special service at Grahamston Church marked the inauguration of the new Forth Valley Circuit as a result of the merger of the Central and Edinburgh and Forth Circuits. We wish them well in this new venture, especially as they will be short-staffed following the early departure of Andrew and Belinda Letby who were asked to go to Croydon to fill some essential appointments there – a reminder that we are, indeed, a Connexional Church.

At our Synod in Aberdeen we welcomed Laurent Vernet who will serve part-time as a Probationer Minister in the Forth Valley Circuit. Laurent is well-known in the Edinburgh end of the new Circuit as he candidated from there. We also welcomed Nik Wooller She will be serving part-time in the Angus, Dundee and Perthshire Circuit and part-time for the District on our new project working with 'Churchless Christians' and 'Missing Methodists' (see previous editions of *In Touch*) This exciting new venture will look for ways to connect with those who claim a Christian faith but don't want to be part of a more traditional Church, or just want to explore what faith might mean for them. The 'Missing Methodists' are mostly those who live in parts of Scotland where there are no Methodist Churches and, for whatever reason, want to retain a link with Methodism. If you know of and such Methodists, or 'Churchless Christians, please get in touch with Nik:

revnik@live.co.uk

Some of us were able to be at Conference this year and were delighted to be able to go to the Ordination service in Coventry Cathedral where Stephanie Njeru and Hilda Warwick were ordained following their Receptions to Full Connexion at the Conference service in the morning. We wish them well in their continued ministry in the Forth valley Circuit.

So, as we begin another Methodist Year, I wish you all well.

Every blessing,

David

THANK YOU Methodist Church in Scotland for your wonderful gift to me of a Methodist tartan kilt and sash for my year as Vice-President of the Conference. As many of you will know, I wore the outfit with great pride when I was inducted at the Opening of Conference (see photo). It has attracted a considerable amount of interest and comment, with several folk asking me where they can obtain one - maybe the district will need to look at re-issuing the tartan?!



The theme which Rev. Loraine Mellor (as President) and I have chosen for this year is “Day by Day – exploring the rhythm of mission and discipleship” and we have enjoyed digging into this theme in various ways. Since Conference I have led a four-day retreat in Cumbria (which involved several women from MWiB Scotland), met the Archbishop of Canterbury, attended the Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival as part of my visit to the Southampton district and crossed the water to the Methodist Church in the Isle of Man! I have also spent a week in Ethiopia with **All We Can**, which was fascinating and challenging. You can read more about the travels Loraine and I undertake through the *Blog of the President and Vice-President of the Conference* (<http://methodist-presandvp.blogspot.co.uk/>) and of course the prayer card lists many of our visits. We greatly value your prayers and look forward to having a few days together in Scotland in April next year (24th-26th) which will include an open event at Pollokshaws in the Strathclyde circuit. More details will be circulated nearer the time.

Jill Baker

Wesley Historical Society
Annual General Meeting and Lecture
30th June 2017

Kingswood School Bath was the location for the 2017 A.G.M. and Annual Lecture on the last day of June, a glorious warm sunny day.

The General Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society reported on the members who had died since the A.G.M. the previous year, mentioning in particular Rev John Newton, President Emeritus and David Cowling whose ‘lively and informative reports from Scotland were always greatly appreciated’. The meeting then rose to stand in silent memory and grateful prayer for the lives of those whom the meeting remembered.

Following the A.G.M. the meeting was privileged to hear something of the history of Kingswood School from its origins as a school for the sons of miners in Kingswood near Bristol to its current location and purpose through a somewhat chequered history. A tour of the school led by senior pupils brought the mornings activities to a close.

The Annual Lecture, ‘John Cennick: the first Son of the Gospel’ was given by G. M. Best, former Headmaster of Kingswood School 1987 – 2008. Mr Best has written a book on Mr Cennick, the first of Mr Wesley’s lay preachers yet a man whose name is not familiar to most of us. The lecture was most enlightening, John Cennick apparently a more compelling preacher than John Wesley left the Wesleys, became a Moravian and had an extremely effective ministry in Northern Ireland where he established both churches and preaching places.

Mr Best, a historian, novelist and warden of the New Room in Bristol has written a book about Mr Cennick entitled ‘John Cennick The Forgotten Evangelist’ which is and available from New Room Publications Bristol very reasonably priced at £9.95

Beryl Cowling August 2017

News from the Scottish Churches Rural Group

Our ecumenical Churches Tent was, as it has been for many years, at the Royal Highland Show in June. Volunteers from a range of Christian denominations welcomed visitors, offering free hot drinks and the opportunity to sit down and rest weary legs.

Our presence at the Show aims to 'tell' of *God's* presence and care, to let people see what churches around the country are doing, and to encourage discussion about what Christian people could be doing within local rural communities.

The majority of the visitors to our tent were people concerned about social and health care, keen to discuss how church and faith can help. Many others came with worries or anxieties, and appreciated a listening ear or the offer of prayer.

On the tent walls and on a TV screen, we had displays with information about initiatives important for people concerned with rural communities to be aware of:

- Parish Nursing
- the Anti-Human Trafficking Group
- the Pilgrim Routes Forum
- the Rural Mental Health Forum

The new National Rural Mental Health Forum was officially launched at the Royal Highland Show, with a pledge by the Minister for Mental Health of Scottish Government funding until April 2018, to be used to encourage the development of local partnerships. The aim of the Forum is to bring together the range of organisations working in rural Scotland, such as Forestry Commission, National Farmers' Union Scotland, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Crofting Federation and many more. The Scottish Churches Rural Group is an active member of the Forum, encouraging local congregations to join in partnerships to support local groups, challenge the stigma around mental illness and reduce social isolation.

Many of our Methodist churches, though based within small towns, have members living in rural areas, so it is important that the Methodist Church in Scotland considers how it can play its part. All denominational leaders have information about the Forum; details can also be found on its website – www.ruralwellbeing.org

Anyone who would like to discuss the role of local churches in rural well-being, or who is interested in hearing more about the Scottish Churches Rural Group or any of the other groups mentioned above, is welcome to contact Lorna Murray - revrat1999@yahoo.com

Rev Lorna Murray, July 2017

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of "In Touch"
If you would like to submit an article to the Winter issue, please send to Fiona Inglis at
fiona@methodistchurch.plus.com by Friday 24th November 2017

Please use Word format when emailing

Please continue to check our website for updates www.methodistchurchinScotland.net/

The Methodist Church in Scotland
Old Churches House, 1 Kirk St, Dunblane, FK15 0AJ
Tel: 01786 820295