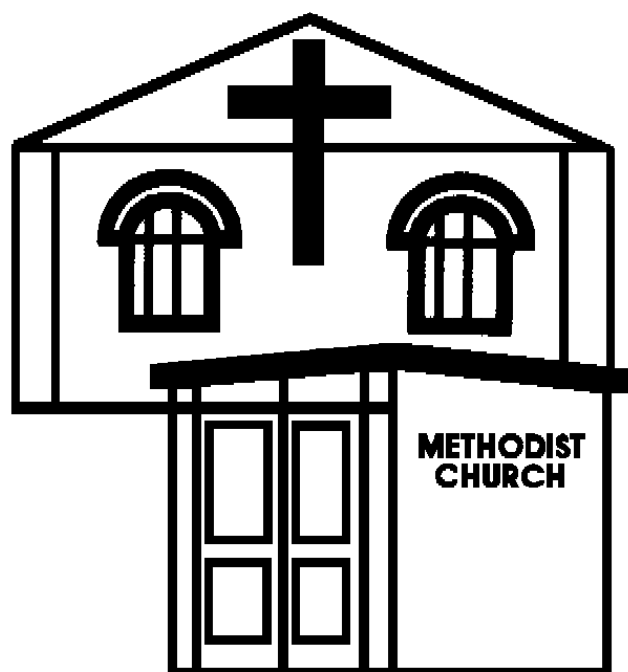


# Thatcham Methodist Church Newsletter

April 2024

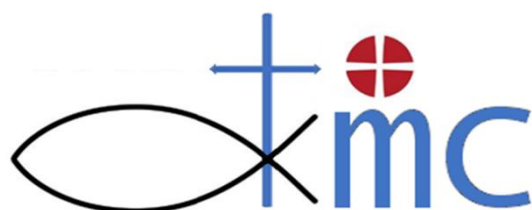


**Minister: Revd Rachel Borgars**

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## Diary Dates for April

Wednesday	3rd	10.00am	Chair-based exercises
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Christine Thomas</b>
Wednesday	10th	10.00am	Chair-based exercises
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>14th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Revd Andy Fitchet</b>
Wednesday	17th	10.00am	Chair Based Exercises
Thursday	18th	2.30pm	Vintage Adventure
Friday	19th	2.00pm	Cuppa and Chat
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>21st</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Revd Jenny Ellis</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion Service led by Revd Rachel Borgars</b>

## May Newsletter

The next Newsletter will be circulated by e:mail at beginning of May. Please pass any items to Pete or Sandra **by Tuesday 30th April** or email them to: [sharpeset@gmail.com](mailto:sharpeset@gmail.com)

## Regular Circuit Activities

Circuit Zoom gatherings:

First Monday of the month – “Hot Potatoes”

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84961411119>, Meeting ID: 849 6141 1119)

## Dear Friends

Having been with you since September, I think it is probably the time to say that I am no longer 'the new minister', although there is still much I need to absorb and reflect upon about our Methodist life and witness in Thatcham.

We are in the season of Easter, and so this month I offer you some reflections on the great themes of resurrection and new beginnings. The nineteenth century American preacher, Phillips Brooks, said, "The great Easter truth is not that we are to live newly after death, but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the resurrection." The period of Easter invites us all, whether regular churchgoer or not, to join in the opportunities for new life and experience new growth within ourselves through all that Jesus Christ has done for us.

Signs of new growth are beginning to show all around us with the coming of spring plants in the gardens. However, as Christians, we believe that the signs of new growth that Easter reminds us of are not just things that change on the outside, like planting new flowers in the garden. We believe that through knowing Jesus Christ and learning to follow him, we can be changed from the inside and so see God's world in a new and exciting way.

Some people perhaps, see Christianity today as irrelevant and out of date. For me, the opposite is true: the message of Easter is about living a life of risks, about recognising opportunities and responding to the challenge of a faith that not even death can overcome. So I invite you to join with me in looking beyond the stone at the entrance to the tomb to discover all the good new things that God has in store for us in the future. Let us accept the challenge of being "Easter People" – the people who live in the present with hopes and dreams for the future.

The hope that Christians speak of is not some kind of rose-tinted utopia far removed from the reality of daily living. Colin Morris once wrote, "Hope is possible because there is no situation, however unpromising, which is impervious to love." In these days when war and conflict and human suffering on an immense scale are uppermost in many people's thoughts, we need to remind ourselves on a daily basis of God's plan of hope for his world and our part within that plan.

May the season of Easter be a season of hope, both for us as individuals and as part of God's world.

*Rachel*

Peace,

# **Circuit Stewards' Report to Church Councils**

## **Spring 2024**

### **Matters from the Circuit Leadership Team:**

#### **Circuit Strategy:**

Active group discussions have been taking place with members of the Basingstoke and Reading circuit. Both circuit meetings agreed in principle to amalgamate in September 2024 with further agreement at the January circuit meetings. The new proposed circuit name is 'Berkshire and Hampshire Borders'. The new circuit superintendent will be Revd Martin Beukes, with Revd Rachel Borgars acting as deputy. With a deadline of the start of March for the results of votes from all circuit members to go to the District Policy Committee, all churches in the circuits have been sent copies of the amalgamation resolutions on which they must vote. To this end extraordinary meetings have been/were set up this February at all churches; this being followed by an Extraordinary Circuit Meeting on-line vote to be recorded. The result will be despatched and discussed by the District on 16th March. The recommendations are then voted on at Synod in April before being passed to Conference to finalise in the Summer.

A couple of joint meetings/services for the new circuit are planned over the summer, with a Final New Circuit Launch on September 8th. The venue is yet to be agreed.

#### **Circuit Staffing**

Luke McCleod is with us until the end of August but is now being paid by our circuit. The good news is that his application as a candidate for ministerial training in the Methodist Church has been accepted and he will be leaving us to start the next stage of his training.

No candidates have been appointed for the Andover and Newbury posts from the round of recruitment. A candidate for the pastoral development worker had been offered the post but had subsequently withdrawn. After some re-evaluation of the job descriptions and roles it was agreed that we would re-advertise more widely and for longer. We agreed that we would amalgamate the Andover posts and also change the Job Title for Newbury.

Revd Peter Bennett superannuated on 1st September 2023. He and Christine are moving to their new home this February and there will be a farewell service for Peter at Newbury on the 23rd March at 3pm.

## **District Staffing**

Andrew de Ville will not continue as District Chair after August 2024. The September District Synod has nominated the Revd Rachel Bending to Conference as new Chair, for 6 years from September 2024. Rachel is currently superintendent of the Ealing Circuit in the London District. There will be a welcome service on September 1st at 3.30pm at Salisbury Methodist Church.

## **Property update:**

### **Overton:**

Retrospective building regulations approval have had to be sought for work done previously. We are now waiting for the planning application to come up before Basingstoke and Deane Council in the coming month.

### **Andover:**

It has been decided to sell the old St Andrew's premises. To this purpose some useful work has been done to make the boundary fencing clear. The sale will be promoted as soon as possible, subject to District approval.

Bridge Street is awaiting a local company to do some work on their gutters, but all other developments are complete.

### **Hungerford:**

The members are discussing their future options with the possibility of replacing the faulty roof tiles with solar panels. This is not only a cheaper option it will make the costs reduce and the ecological aspects put them in line for grants from several sources.

### **Newbury:**

Newbury have applied for a grant towards the work on their front garden – and the new aspect is eye-catching in a positive way. Well worth the “drive past”!

### **Thatcham:**

The work on the facilities in the entrance lobby giving two toilets, of which one is accessible to all, is now finished. The front hall has also been repainted, carpeted and had ceiling tiles changed to control noise levels and make it welcoming to users.

## Finance Report:

The Circuit meeting approved the Financial Report and associated accounts. The individual churches were thanked for sending in their accounts on time to help with the amalgamation discussions.

## Safeguarding:

No updates are required on circuit or church policies.

## EDI training:

The Methodist Church has produced an Inclusive Language Guide based on the concepts of Justice, Dignity and Solidarity. Significant progress has been made with this training, but there are still a number of people needing to complete the two courses. A further in-person training session will be arranged in April – probably in Andover.

Dates of next Circuit meeting:- Thursday 23rd May 2024 at Newbury.  
Any following ones to be under the new Circuit arrangements.

Helen Cook, Rosemary Greenhalgh, Helen and Roy Batterby.  
February 2024

We invite you to join us at

### Vintage Adventure

A time of fun, making friends, singing, informal Christian worship, activities, drinks and homemade cakes

For the young at heart in our community

Inclusive and dementia friendly

Led by the Churches in Thatcham

**Theme: Life in Pictures**

(with members of Thatcham Photographic Club)



**Thursday, 18 April 2024**

**2.30-4.00pm**

**Thatcham Methodist Church**

(Chapel Street, RG18 4QL)

Book your place: contact Revd Brenda Harland on 07968 136962

## ☕ Cuppa & Chat 🍰

The kettle will be on for Cuppa and Chat on Friday 19th April from 2pm until 3:30pm Come and join our friendly group, catching up with friends and meeting new ones. We look forward to welcoming you!

A £1 donation to our church funds is suggested.

*Jane*

## Thank you!

A BIG thank you to all at TMC for the messages, cards and gifts that I received at my Farewell Service. It was a very special occasion. Thank you to those who took the time to come to the service. I am only sorry I was not able to thank all of you personally.

We are settling in to our new home in Melksham. I am finding plenty of DIY to keep me busy at the moment but I am looking forward to exploring the area on bicycle and on foot. The Kennet and Avon Canal passes about a mile away from here on its way to Thatcham so we are still very much connected.

Here is a photograph of the gifts and cards we received, now on display in our home.

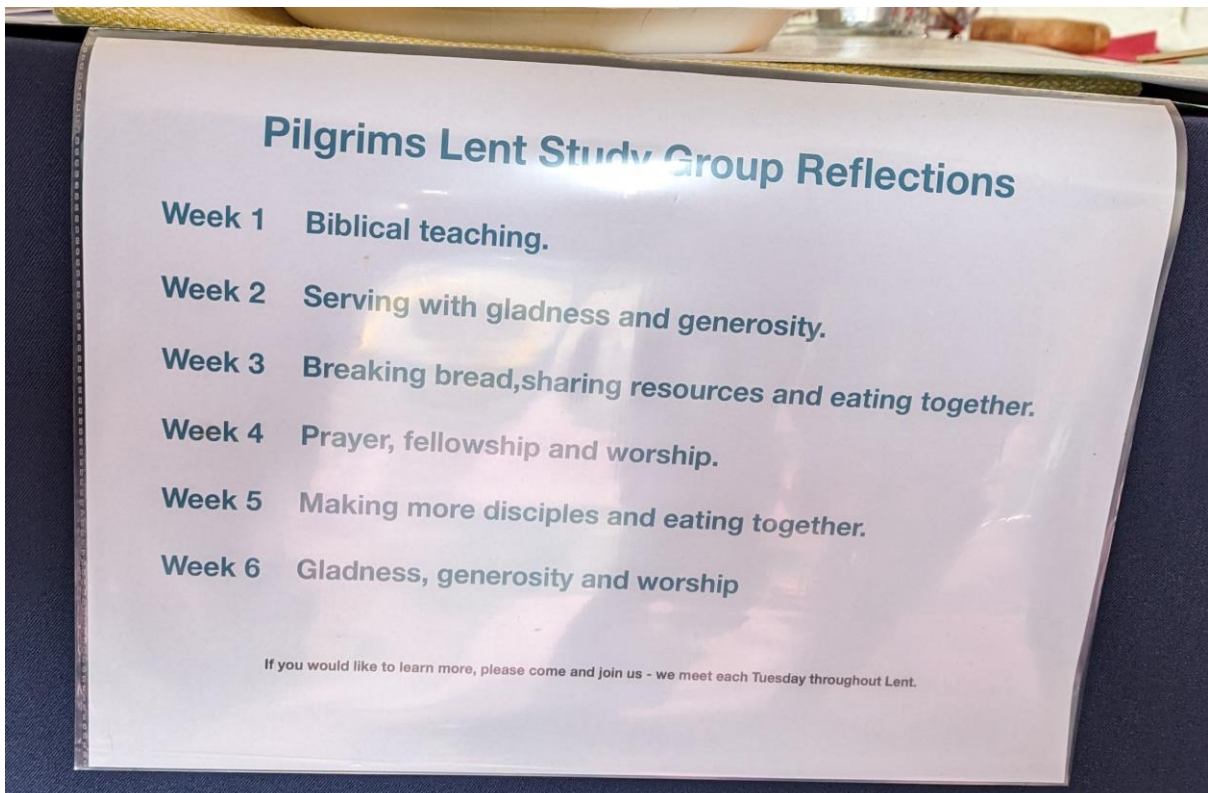


Every blessing

*Peter*

# Pilgrims

During the six weeks ending on 26th March Pilgrims made their Lenten journey using the book *Holy Habits: Following Jesus* by Andrew Roberts. We all found the issues raised and the discussions which emerged interesting, stimulating and enjoyable in equal measure. Before each session we gathered together various objects symbolic of the topic being covered and a selection of these is shown in the photograph below (displayed in the foyer), also a list of the topics covered.





Starting on 7th May (NOT 2nd April as shown on the poster in the front hall) we will commence our regular monthly meetings. New members will be very welcome so why not give us a try?

To repeat, THERE WILL BE NO PILGRIMS IN APRIL- we meet again on Tuesday 7th May. Our subject is reviewing the Holy Week daily studies.

We return to our normal monthly meetings in June.

*Jane*

## **CTiT**

Pentecost this year is on Sunday 19th May.

There will a United service at 6.30pm at Thatcham Baptist Church.

*Helen and Mary*

## **Christian Aid:**

The Beetle Drive has a final profit of £186 + we were given a donation of £50 by people who could not come.

We received £111 at the Lent Lunch held at our church.

Christian Aid Week is Sunday 12th to Saturday 18th May. There will be envelopes available on preceding Sundays for anyone wanting to donate. On Saturday 18th, we will also be setting up a stall and chairs outside St Mary's, as we have done for the last two years, to advertise and to collect some donations from passing folk. We are looking for volunteers to cover this between 10am and about 4pm-ish. If you are willing and able to help for an hour or so please have a word with me.

I am also wondering about having cakes for sale, to eat or take home, at coffee after the service on 19th May (Pentecostal Sunday). We did this last year with good results, but I will be looking for volunteer cake makers in early May to help with this.

*Helen*

## **Changes to Rear Garden**

Pied Piper would like to install hard standing (flags of some sort) across the end of the garden, to be paid for from their own income/donations plus, hopefully, match funding from TGE. Total cost of the project will be c. £6,500 and will probably be undertaken by a parent who does this for a living.

The plan is essentially to replace the timber decking and two existing (and deteriorating) sheds with flagstones and new sheds.

The Property committee have indicated to Stewards that they have no objections, and the feeling is that, since the project is cost-neutral to the Church, we should support the project.

More details, if required, are available from members of the Property Committee (Mike, John, Stuart, Richard and Pete)

## Foodbank

Lots has been happening involving the Foodbank during March. The trustees invited all past and present volunteers to a celebration tea at the beginning of March. West Berkshire Foodbank first opened its doors to clients in food crisis in 4 towns across West Berkshire in March 2013 – ten years ago. It was a lovely afternoon, lovely tea, (sandwiches and cakes), some history, and meeting past colleagues and having a good old catch up. It was a great get-together.

Sadly however, we did also recognise that the need for Foodbanks is still there. Many of the systems have been updated and the West Berkshire community were thanks for always being there to call upon during times when stock has been low as we have tried to reach out to those in need at particular times. The Hungry Holiday scheme is one example.

At Thatcham, we are continuing to see a rise in the number of clients, not just in food crisis but also other areas of difficulty too. However, we have started our cookery sessions. We made black bean burgers – with different vegetables and spices – they were delicious and to the surprise of some clients, we were able to share tasters. We know we will be running more sessions. Thank you to the Baptist Church who let us use the kitchen upstairs.

Recently too, all Thatcham listeners went on a Safeguarding session. As volunteers we appreciate that our training needs have to be met and it proved to be a very interesting morning. We know there are many types of abuse, and it was good to be reminded of them so that we can listen and observe well.

Our **urgent shortages** are UHT milk, spreads like jam, honey, marmalade and marmite, sugar, long life fruit juice, rice pudding/custard pots for rough sleepers and wet dog food. We are also **low in stock** in instant mash, pepper, tinned meat meals, stewed chicken, hotpots,

cereal bars, tinned ham or corned beef. Also deodorant, size 7/8 nappies, ladies' razors and sanitary products. You have always been so generous, and clients do appreciate it. Without you, they would go hungry. Thank you for what you have given and will give in the future.

**Marilyn**

## **Local Arrangement on 5th May 2024**

The worship planned at Thatcham for 5<sup>th</sup> May is a local arrangement. Members of the Worship Consultation team will be leading the worship. It was suggested and agreed that we use the resource provided by Methodist Women in Britain on behalf of the World Mission Fund. Their motto is 'for women, for justice, for Christ'. The worship is called 'Let Justice Roll' with the text taken from Amos 5: 24. "But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"

For the two Sundays beforehand (21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April) we shall be distributing envelopes for donations and/or we can use our sumup machine. We don't think we have used a MWiB resource for a long time and hope that we are able to support their work of mission. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us.

***Worship Consultation team. (Dorcas, Janice, Jeff, Mary and Marilyn)\* Not the complete team but it is a bank holiday weekend.***



**The Nest** ★  
**Toddler Group**  
Free, drop-in playgroup for  
adoptive and foster families

Friday mornings, 10.30am-12noon in Newbury  
For venue details please email:  
[revangelabrennan@gmail.com](mailto:revangelabrennan@gmail.com)

Spring/Summer 2024 dates:  
February 23rd, March 22nd,  
April 26th, May 24th, June 28th

## Beenham Wind Orchestra Spring Concert

I'm playing in Beenham Wind Orchestra's concert on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 7:30pm at St Mary's Church in Thatcham. I would love you to join us if you can.

The theme is A Tribute to the Wonders of the Natural World (more details of the programme below). *We're delighted that this event will be part of Plastic free Thatcham and Thatcham and Newbury Ecofriends. Thatcham Photographic Society are also coming along.*

Tickets are £12.50. Groups 9+ £10. Children 5-16 £2.50. Under 5s Free.

For tickets, ask Lynn or visit our website [www.beenhamwindorchestra.org/events](http://www.beenhamwindorchestra.org/events)



The programme includes a rich, varied programme – from popular tunes to a short symphony for Wind Ensemble:

- *Vesuvius (Frank Ticheli)*
- *Earth Dance (Michael Sweeney)*
- *Blue Moon (Richard Rodgers, Arr. Warren Barker)*
- *Scenes from an English Landscape (Adam Gorb)*
- *Give us this Day (David Maslanka)*
- *Hymn to the Sun with the beat of Mother Earth (Satoshi Yagisawa)*
- *Over the Rainbow (Harold Arlen, arr. Warren Barker)*
- *Sun Dance (Frank Ticheli)*
- *When You Wish Upon a Star (Leigh Harline, Arr. Sammy Nestico)*
- *Joy of Life*

And some future dates for your diary:

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Newbury Bandstand 3pm. Relax and enjoy a free performance in Victoria Park, Newbury.

Friday June 21<sup>st</sup> 7:30pm - Band on the Rec  
Beenham Village Recreation ground

*This will be part of Make Music Day - an annual, international celebration of music held every year on 21 June, now in 125 countries and over 1,000 cities*

*Summer picnic*

*Barbecue by the Six Bells and Ice creams by Dave's Ices.*

*Bring family, friends and chairs/ rugs.*

Lynn

## Church Anniversary Weekend



**Saturday, 6 July 2024**

**1.30pm-5.00pm**

**Join us for an afternoon retreat**

**Theme: Be restored, be refreshed**

led by Major Sharon King, Salvation Army

Worship, prayer and activities

finishing with a Cream Tea.

20 places only

To book, please contact Karen on [kafrost@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kafrost@hotmail.co.uk) or 01635 868280 or sign up on the booking list in the church foyer by 29 June.

Then on Sunday, 7 July, Major Sharon will lead our Church Anniversary worship followed by a shared lunch.

# Puzzle Corner

## Solution to March Encode

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
M	S	E	V	H	R	T	U	K	X	Y	L	G
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
I	Z	O	N	C	B	Q	A	P	W	D	F	J

### WORD FIT

3 Letters	4 Letters	5 Letters
Sat	Bets	Lusty
Sty	Host	Moist
	Lest	Sauté
6 Letters	Nets	Shoot
Astral	Salt	Staff
Esprit	Stab	Stall
Foetus	Stan	Stark
Satire	Star	Steal
Theirs	Stay	Taste
Thrust	Stop	7 Letters
8 Letters	Stun	Biscuit
Castaway	Tots	Bustard
Forestry		Destiny
Holistic		Earshot
Straddle		Gunshot
Suitable		Stewpan
Touristy		Upstart
9 Letters		
Assiduity	Austerity	Eightsome
Intrusion	Sectarian	Stockinet

