

Leicester North Circuit Dates 2016/2017

All meetings at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise

Circuit Meeting

22nd September 2016	Thursday	Syston
4th April 2017	Tuesday	Claremont
14th June 2017	Wednesday	Birstall (if required)

Local Preachers and Worship Leaders

7th September 2016	Wednesday	Rothley
5th January 2017	Thursday	Syston
16th May 2017	Tuesday	Claremont

Church Councils

Birstall

12th October 2016	Wednesday
15th March 2017	Wednesday

Claremont Street

25th October 2016	Tuesday
2nd March 2017	Thursday

Edgehill at All Saints

19th February 2017	Sunday after service
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Harrison Road

1st November 2016	Tuesday
8th March 2017	Wednesday

Rothley

27th September 2016	Tuesday
28th March 2017	Tuesday

Syston

29th September 2016	Thursday
21st March 2017	Tuesday

Rachel's Last Service @ Edgehill All Saints

On 29th May Rachel took her last service at Edgehill before leaving the Circuit. We took the opportunity to thank her for her work with us and, in particular, for her help in keeping the 'Edgehill Family' together when we faced the difficult decision to leave our much loved home in Edgehill Road and move to All Saints. To mark the occasion we gave her a Blacks Gift Voucher with the suggestion that she might like to use some of it to buy a head torch to help find her way around the Black Country!

Deadline for next Plan and Connexions is end of October



THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEICESTER NORTH CIRCUIT

Connexions August 2016

Welcome (Dave Warnock)

A new edition of Connexions with lots to welcome and celebrate. If you are reading this before the end of August we hope you will join us at Birstall Methodist Church on Tuesday 30th August at 7pm for Rev'd Paula Hunt's welcome service led by Rev'd Peter Hancock, our District Chair. We also have planned a Circuit Service at 10:30am on Sunday 25th September at Birstall where we will welcome James as our "Messy Church, Schools' & Community Worker" based at our Churches in Birstall and Rothley.

With this Connexions you will find a couple of extras. Firstly, as a separate "appendix" a summary of farewells to Rachel. Secondly, within Connexions dates of all the Circuit Meetings, Preachers and Worship Leaders Meetings and Church Councils for the year. Get them in your diaries now! :-)

Introducing James

Hi I'm James. I'm really excited to be moving to Leicester in less than a month's time. I originally come from Berwick-upon-Tweed. I've been a Christian since I was about 11 having heard a school assembly that led me to realise I wanted something that the vicar had who spoke. I became a member of the Methodist Church at age 16 and am passionate about serving God. I have just finished an MA in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds where my main research interests have been the Methodist Diaconal Order, the theology of asylum and gender issues in religion. When I'm not "doing" theology my main hobbies are reading, walking and attending fitness classes (you'll see me rocking a Zumba class near you soon!). I have been passionate about Messy Church and the impact that can have on children's lives since I first came across it around 6 years ago and look forward to being part of that journey in Leicester (see mug shot so you can identify James!)

Circuit Meeting

Our September Circuit Meeting (now on Thu 22nd September) will include the final vote on merging with the Leicester Trinity Circuit from 1st September 2017. All are welcome and will be given opportunity to speak but only official members of the Circuit Meeting can vote (governed by Charity Law as they are the Trustees). Both Circuits need to vote in favour for a merger to happen. If agreed we will be looking for a new Superintendent for the new Circuit to start 1st September 2017 (Dave will stay but not as Superintendent).

Rev'd. Sunny George – Ordination

We were pleased that we (the “Edgehill Saints”) were able to be represented at Sunny’s ordination at Leicester Cathedral on 2nd July He is now confirmed as the priest in charge at All Saints. Sunny and the congregation at All Saints have been extremely helpful to us since we moved there in 2013. Sunny moved to Leicester ten years ago with his wife Pawan and their three sons. At Easter 2007 he helped form the Leicester United Christian Fellowship, a multi-lingual and multi-cultural fellowship, who worshipped at Harrison Road Methodist Church. In June 2012, the Leicester United Christian Fellowship officially became a Church of England congregation, and moved into what was then the closed church of St Gabriel on Kerrysdale Avenue, which is now The Church of All Saints.

Birstall Methodist Lunch Club celebrates the Queen’s Birthday

By Eileen Molesdale: Forty people celebrated the Queen’s Birthday. Mary Downs organised the event with the support of many volunteers. We were treated to a traditional meal of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding (provided by our regular supplier, Choo Choos in East Goscote). We were encouraged to wear Red, White and Blue and there were balloons and bunting which enhanced the Royal theme. We had a special red, white and blue cake washed down with some (non alcoholic) bubbly to toast the Queen; followed by a sing-song when we sang Happy Birthday to Her Majesty. There were lots of smiles and laughter. Thanks to everyone involved in the organisation of this very special afternoon.

By Mary Downs: Birstall Lunch Club celebrated the Queens 90th birthday in style with a roast beef lunch & a red, white & blue gateau. The hall & tables were decorated with bunting, flags & red & blue flowers & members all dressed appropriately. Eileen, Joan & Jane playing guitars led us in singing some well known songs ending with Happy Birthday & a toast to Her Majesty. At Lunch Club we take every opportunity to celebrate special occasions -- only recently we were in blue & white mode celebrating Leicester City Football Club’s victory. - we look forward to a Harvest Lunch in September.

Syston Hub Café

We are now fully staffed with Lauren Hollwell and Bev Plume both working four shifts each week as Baristas’, Jo Leatherland combining Evangelist and Barista roles and Jane Warnock as the Manager (and Barista). They are ably supported by a team of volunteers. The Café now has lots of regular groups and individuals. We serve the best drinks in the area (widest variety too) with the most welcoming service and keenest prices :-) Great cake too!

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm every week. Why not pop in, say Hi and stay a while. Or just come to checkout our beautiful new coffee machine.

Edgehill Coffee Shop

In the spring the circuit were kind enough to make us a grant to enable us to buy three sets of patio furniture so that friends joining us for coffee on a Thursday morning could sit outside in the sun to enjoy their refreshments. Unfortunately at the time of writing these occasions have been rarer than hen’s teeth!

Claremont Senior Friendship Group (Marlene Cant)

Claremont Senior Friendship Group was started by Rev. Charles Dyer and his wife Margaret in 1975 with Ernie Martin as leader and a membership of 80+. It still meets on alternate Wednesdays starting at 2.30pm and ending at approximately 3.45pm with tea and biscuits or cake. There are 18- 20 loyal members who have enjoyed a varied programme throughout the year.

Donations of £50 - £100 have been made to local and National Charities after excellent, informative visual presentations have stimulated a good response.

In May a day trip on the canal was planned to take place on the Baldwin Canal Trust boat St Clare. It was so cold, wet and windy, the boat would not start! What a disappointment. The three volunteer crew members ferried us in their own cars to Mountsorrel where the lunch was booked, waited for us to eat the lunch and then ferried us back to Claremont.

In June the trip was to Roots Farm at Barkby Thorpe. It never stopped raining all day. The Staff made us very welcome and provided a cream tea with freshly baked scones. It was very enjoyable though too wet to tour the farm.

Also in June, the Queen’s 90th birthday was celebrated with an afternoon of music, quizzes and a typical English tea, of sandwiches. Desert. Scones. Fancy cakes and the Celebration cake “Congratulations Your Majesty” was accompanied by an English Apple Juice Toast and the singing of the National Anthem. A visit to the Curve Theatre to see “Sister Act” is planned for August 3rd , that will end this year’s programme.. The 2016/17 session commences on Sept. 7th, and this friendly ecumenical group welcomes anyone . So why not come along to “Taste and See” and if anyone in the circuit is able to entertain us for 30/40 minutes it would be most appreciated.

Squeezed News

Syston and Rothley Messy Churches have had a busy year and restart in September.

Syston’s Holiday Club “Guardians of Ancora” (which is free game for Phones and Tablets from Scripture Union) went really well with between 22 and 32 children.

Rothley had another enjoyable and successful Quiz night with Fish and Chip Supper.

The Circuit Leadership Team are working on options for the Birstall Manse.

We were presided over with graciousness and skill, wonderfully cared for by a myriad volunteers and I continue to be amazed at the organisation and dedication required to enable this gathering to take place. An outward looking conference, in which we rejoiced at the good things that are happening, and at peoples' response to God's call to ministry in so many different ways.

Gareth Powell, at the end of his first year as Secretary to the Conference and reflecting upon the reality that in many places a Christian presence is diminishing or extinct summed up our task -"Our only tasks are to worship God and proclaim the gospel with confidence and imagination. We are resourced by the love of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit."

And a final word from John Wesley "Proceed with much prayer and your way will be made plain."

What more do we need! The Strawberry Fair Harrison Road Methodist July 9 at 2.30 pm

By Beverly Sweetman: Saturday dawned, and the rain began to fall, fast and furiously. We usually have this event in the garden, but this was looking doubtful. It was eventually decided we couldn't risk the weather not getting any better, and that the event would be held in the hall, and wouldn't you know, by the time we were ready to open the doors, the sun was shining as if nothing had happened.

People began to arrive, and by the middle of the afternoon the hall was full. It was lovely to see some members, who cannot come regularly to the services, brought by their relatives and friends. Everyone seemed to be having a lovely time meeting each other, and buying from the stalls.

The strawberries and cream were very popular, and it was the first time the event eventually ran out of strawberries.

People took their teas out into the garden, and enjoyed the sun. The children enjoyed the ice cream on a hot afternoon.

We had various stalls, a Tombola and Guessing Games. The raffle was drawn at 4pm and we closed at 4.30pm.

A good time was had by all, and we look forward to next year.

Claremont (Pat Freer)

Our Christian Aid contribution amounted to £292.60 which includes the Christian Aid Coffee morning on May 13th. The Gilbert and Sullivan concert and supper at Claremont on June 4th was well supported and raised £70.00 for the Church.

Syston Gala

The sun was shining as people arrived to prepare for Syston's "Right Royal Do", the theme for this year's summer gala. Red, white & blue was everywhere, on the bunting outside, wrapped around the decorated stalls, even the cakes were appropriately coloured & decorated. There were life sized models of Her Majesty & Prince Harry, with cut outs for people to put their faces & take photos. There were stalls with home-made sweets, plants, cakes, books, preserves, cards, crafts and games for children, not forgetting the stocks to "Soak the Rev!" Dave got his own back when Fiona had a turn in the stocks!

The Hub Café served bacon & sausage cobs cooked on the barbecue with coffee & teas in the morning and jacket potatoes with a selection of toppings & salad for lunch. The café was permanently full and there was a real atmospheric buzz as people shared conversation and fellowship over their refreshments.

Birstall Messy Church (Rachel Parkinson)

The Lost Son is found and everyone has a party! Great theme for last Messy of this school year and my last one on the team. Lots of pigs, a farm, a forgiving father, a welcome home banner, rings for his fingers, and potato printing. The thing that most delights me about our Messy Church is that we have created a real community over the last six years. Numbers have risen and fallen; but most of the people with us today have either been with Messy for a very long time or right from the beginning. We are friends. We support one another. We pray together. We create together. We eat together. We explore the great truths about the Christian faith together in very approachable ways. I shall miss this wonderful community of which it's been a great privilege to be a part. God bless you all x

Bradgate Summer Fair (Eileen Molesdale)

The sun was splitting the trees for the Bradgate Summer Fair on 4/5 June. It was a very enjoyable weekend and very well organised. There were various stalls of arts and crafts, food, glass and ceramics. Joy's Jewellery Stall (for the HOTPEC Orphanage) was very popular and Joy raised over £600 which will fund University fees for the older children in the Orphanage. The Morris and Maypole Dancing had everyone on their feet! There was a Brass Band from Enderby and also music from the very talented Soar Valley Music Centre. Breeze, the gentle shire horse was demonstrating how they clear logs in the park and there was wood carving and lots more! So a lovely weekend was spent by all.

Christian Aid Walk into Leicester – 14 May 2016

Friends from various churches joined in with the Christian Aid Walk. Twelve of us from Birstall and Syston churches dusted off our walking boots and set off through the lovely tranquil Watermead Park, along the canal and through Abbey Park. We stopped for refreshments at St Margaret's Church in Leicester and then made our way to the Cathedral where preparations were under way to welcome the new Bishop of Leicester, Martin Snow. From the Cathedral we walked to Town Hall Square and Bishop Street Methodist Church. It was a lovely day; we had plenty of fresh air: you may notice some familiar faces in these photographs.

Learning by doing

Around the Circuit at the moment lots of people are learning new things through trying to do them. There will be times when we fail (yes lots of mistakes in the last Connexions), however, it can also lead to exciting growth. So we would like to encourage you to support all those doing new things (Juliet and Graham as Local Preachers, James as a Layworker, Dave as a Superintendent, new Church and Circuit Stewards.

We also wonder what new things God is calling you to try, please share them so we can support and encourage you.

Picture Index

1. Birstall Lunch Club celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday
2. Rev'd. Sunny George from All Saints
3. Jane Warnock learning the art of the Barista
4. Royals at the Syston Right Royal Gala
5. The first Cappuccino at the Syston Hub Café
6. Constructing a BBQ for Syston Methodist's Gala
7. Messy Church at Birstall
8. Queen's Birthday Party at Birstall
9. Christian Aid walk into Leicester
10. Coffee morning at Edgehill Saints
11. Rachel's last service at Edgehill
12. James our new Layworker for Birstall and Rothley
13. Wilf and Jean Driver's 70th Anniversary @ Holy Communion
14. Dave in the docks—oops stocks
15. Miriam celebrating her success
16. Strawberries and pie at Harrison Rd
17. Ken quietly looking after the plant stall
- 18–21 Various pictures from Rachel's Farewell Service (more in the separate supplement).

The Methodist Conference 2016 (Dorothy Hutchinson)

For a second year I was, with 11 others, privileged to represent the Northampton District at the Annual Methodist Conference held this year in London at Methodist Central Hall.

Commuting from Greenwich University Halls of Residence, manipulating suitcases, Oyster cards, tube maps and crowded trains just added to the experience and made me thankful it was not something I have to do over a long period.

So –what impressions am I left with this time.....

We met at a time of huge national upheaval and it felt appropriate to be meeting in a church building right in the heart of Westminster – neighbour to Parliament, the Abbey, Supreme Court of Justice; Department of Work and Pensions: a reminder of where the church and Christians ought to be in this messy world, not tucked away in isolation. This was underlined in many ways :-

As we gathered for the opening session, a nearby peaceful demonstration supporting unity in the face of the referendum result was taking place; later in the week the Communion service coincided with noisy protests outside as the Chilcot report was unveiled in the conference centre next door. Conference members had opportunity to mingle and talk with people gathered outside during the lunch break. Lots of emotion and passion – and passion was something which was in plentiful supply during Conference.

- Methodist youth presenting their Manifesto, once again urging the Church to listen and adapt.
- Letters of concern, emergency notices of motion being tabled and sent for example in response to the Chilcot report findings, the plight of sanctuary seekers, refugees and migrants; the increase of divisive words and actions following the referendum.
- continuing pressure for Government to rethink benefits sanctions in the light of evidence on hardship caused by these.
- concern at present day slavery

But this is also a place to confer and it all took place within the context of thoughtful worship with space and silence to listen to the voice of God, and the Presidential (Roger Walton) and Vice President's (Judith Lampard) joint theme of Holiness and Justice, connecting us to our Methodist roots and calling us To do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. They will be sharing this message throughout the Connexion in this very busy year – please pray for them.