

# *Southend & Leigh* CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER



Spring Edition 2024

*Second Quarter*

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## Welcome to our Circuit

We are a group of 15 Methodist Church fellowships, including a Zimbabwean fellowship, on 17 sites in the southeast corner of Essex. Our Circuit also incorporates 'Westerley', a Christian care home.

Our churches provide traditional services alongside an increasing number of contemporary and family-friendly expressions of worship.

We have a growing sense of service and mission to our communities, with a desire to love our Lord, and our neighbours.



## **FOLLOW / CONTACT US**



[Southend and Leigh Circuit Facebook Page](#)

[Southend and Leigh Circuit Website](#)



# Message from a Supernumerary

*Dear Circuit friends,*

Greetings and welcome, from a newbie to the circuit.

If you have noticed a 'Spinks' popping up on the plan, then newsflash! It is not just me the newly retired Deacon but also my daughter Deborah, local preacher for more than 20 years, who has moved with me and she is doing more appointments than me this year!

We have received a warm welcome in this circuit and at Hadleigh Methodist, our local church congregation. For the last 30 years I have been moving around the country as the church has directed and have now come home, well nearly! I lived for my first 35 years in Laindon and Basildon.

It was in St Paul's Methodist Church Basildon that I came to faith at 15 from a non-churched family and from the very beginning I found the church a very strange animal indeed. From early days I have always understood why the church is not always as easy to relate to as church folk think.

I have spent most of my 30 years of ministry trying to help churches invite people into a living relationship with Jesus which is the only thing that kept me going to church when I bumped into the church culture I didn't understand or relate to very well, especially the unspoken rules and expectations that are never explained.

As Deborah and I get around the circuit I am sure we will bump into a few more of those. I sometimes think the church should employ a mystery shopper to help us grasp what we are too familiar to notice. I still believe the church is the most important way of helping people to come to a living and growing relationship with God.

I look forward to sharing with you in going out into our community with the good news of Jesus and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, being part of a church community that works to warmly welcome strangers in our midst.

God bless,

***Maureen Spinks***

Supernumerary Deacon



# Circuit Calendar 2024

## APRIL

- Wed 3rd – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church
- Sat 6th – Circuit Prayer Breakfast, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)
- Wed 10th – Circuit Meeting, 7.30pm, Zoom
- Sun 14th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel
- Wed 17th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm
- Sat 20th – Synod, All Day, Hitchin
- Wed 24th – Wellbeing and Wholeness Service with Communion, 7.45pm, Benfleet

## MAY

- Wed 1st – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church
- Sat 4th – Circuit Prayer Breakfast, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)
- Wed 8th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm
- Sun 12th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel
- Tue 14th – CLT, 7.30pm, location tbc
- Sun 19th - Pentecost

## JUNE

- Sat 1st – Circuit Prayer Breakfast, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)
- Wed 5th – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church
- Sun 9th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel
- Tue 11th – Circuit Meeting, 7.30pm, Thundersley Methodist Church
- Wed 12th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm
- Thu 27th June ~ Wed 3rd July – Methodist Conference

## JULY

- Sat 6th – Circuit Prayer Breakfast, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)
- Sun 14th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel
- Wed 10th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm
- Thu 11th – Local Preachers Meeting, 7.30pm, Canvey Methodist Church
- Wed 17th – CLT, 7.30pm, location tbc
- Sat 20th – Worship Academy, 10am-4.30pm, Wesley Methodist Church

# Churches Mid-Week Activities / Events

## BENFLEET METHODIST CHURCH

Bible Study - Thursdays, 3.30pm

Wesley Art Group - Mondays, 7.30pm in Wesley Hall

Light Worship - third Tuesday of the month, 12noon

Sunday Lunch - second Sunday of the month, 12.30pm (book in advance with John Stokes at [johnstokes660@yahoo.com](mailto:johnstokes660@yahoo.com))

Coffee Mornings - Monday-Saturday, 10am to 12 noon (with a Beading Craft session on Wednesdays)

Ladies' Thursday Club - first Thursday of the month, 7.45pm

Women's Fellowship - first and third Wednesdays of the month, 2.30pm

Wives' Club - Tuesdays, 1.45pm

Benfleet Hope Group - Mondays, 10am-2pm

Messy Church - third Saturday of the month, 3.30pm-5.30pm

Little Bunnies (Mother & Toddler group) - Mondays, 9.30am-11.30am

Fusion Children Groups - Fridays, ages 5-11 yrs 5.30pm-7pm & 11+ yrs 7pm-8.30pm



## CANVEY ISLAND METHODIST CHURCH

Bible Study - Tuesdays, 8pm

Wives Club - Thursdays, 2pm

Coffee Morning - Wednesdays, 10.30am-12noon

Coffee Morning - Saturdays, 10.30am-12noon

Wednesday Fellowship - first two Wednesdays of the month, 2.30pm

Midweek Communion - third Wednesday of the month, 10am



## HIGHLANDS METHODIST CHURCH

Coffee Morning - Saturdays, 10.00am-12noon

Lunch Club - second Tuesday of the month, 12noon (registration essential)

Chatter (Fellowship Group) - Tuesdays, 10am-12noon

Hobbies - first and third Thursdays of the month, 10am-12noon

Prayer Meeting on Zoom - Tuesdays, 9am-10am

Toddlers - Mondays, 9.30am-11.30am



# Churches Mid-Week Activities / Events

## ROCHFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Cake and Kindness (Tea and homemade cakes) - Mondays, 2pm-3.30pm

Bible Studies - Tuesdays, 7pm

Prayer time on Zoom - Wednesdays, 7pm

Housegroup - third Wednesday of the month, 8pm

'Happy Cup' Breakfast Club for children under 5 and carers – Fridays (term-time), 9.30am



## THORPE BAY METHODIST CHURCH

Mid-week communion - third Wednesday of the month, 12pm

(lunch afterward – booking required with [office@tbmchurch.org](mailto:office@tbmchurch.org))

Bible Study & Soup - 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month

(booking required with [office@tbmchurch.org](mailto:office@tbmchurch.org))

Community Cafe - Wednesday, 10am-12pm

Memory Worship Service & Activities - first Monday of the month, 2pm-3.30pm



## THUNDERSLEY METHODIST CHURCH

Coffee Morning - Wednesdays (term-time), 9am-12noon

Coffee Morning - second Saturday of the month, 10am-12noon

Afternoon Club - Tuesday fortnightly, 2.30pm



## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'Brew, Chew, Renew' (Bible Study with refreshments) - Fortnightly on Monday, 10.30am  
(at UMC Great Waking site)

Home Group – Tuesdays, 7.30pm (contact [office@umcsouthend.org.uk](mailto:office@umcsouthend.org.uk))



# Circuit Prayer Diary April-June

*On the following Sundays and during the week  
we ask you to pray for:*

## APRIL

Mid-Week Prayer of Week 14 – Deacon Sarah McDowall and family  
Prayer for Sunday 7th – Hadleigh Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 15 – Memory Worship  
Prayer for Sunday 14th – Church Stewards  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 16 – Mid-week Communions  
Prayer for Sunday 21st – Supernumeraries  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 17 – Rochford District Council, Councillors and Leaders  
Prayer for Sunday 28th – Pastoral Leaders, Carers and Class Leaders



## MAY

Mid-Week Prayer of Week 18 – Highlands Methodist Church  
Prayer for Sunday 5th – Methodist Homes (MHA)  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 19 – Church Council Secretaries  
Prayer for Sunday 12th – Prayer Groups and Chains  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 20 – Pastor Steve Mayo and family  
Prayer for Sunday 19th – Children's Workers  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 21 – The Experience Project, its staff and volunteers  
Prayer for Sunday 26th – Hockley and Hawkwell Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 22 – Chelmsford Circuit



## JUNE

Prayer for Sunday 2nd – Westerley Christian Care Home  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 23 – Leigh Section  
Prayer for Sunday 9th – Mission Planning Groups  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 24 – Methodist Women in Britain  
Prayer for Sunday 16th – Rayleigh Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 25 – Rev Norman Hooks and family  
Prayer for Sunday 23rd – Church Cleaners and Caretakers  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 26 – Church Administrators  
Prayer for Sunday 30th – Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship



# ECO AWARDS

The Methodist Church's plan is to reach net carbon-zero by 2030. Many of our churches have signed up to A Rocha for achieving Eco Awards. It is an online survey that encourages churches to review what they are doing for the environment locally, nationally and globally, centered around 5 keys areas:

- ~ Worship and Teaching
- ~ Buildings
- ~ Land
- ~ Community and Global Engagement
- ~ Lifestyle

<https://arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/eco-church/>

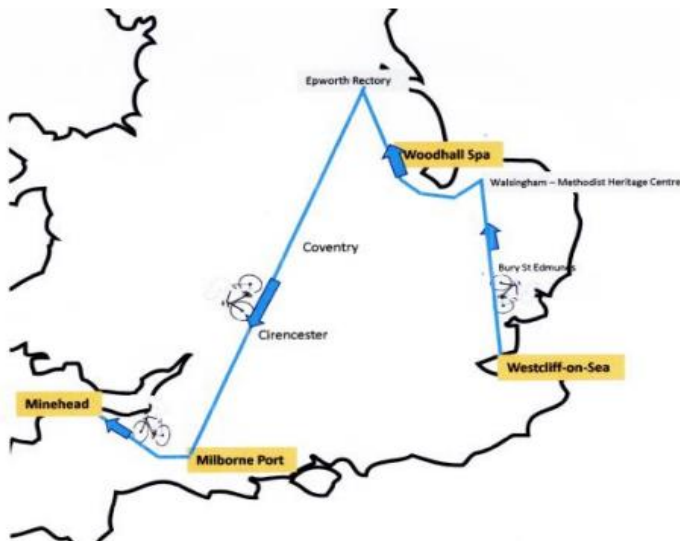
Churches that have completed can qualify for Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards if they secure enough points. Huge congratulations to Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley Methodist Churches who have achieved their Bronze Awards and are now aiming for Silver!



# WESTERLEY CYCLE RIDE

Westerley are celebrating their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Robert Davie is cycling around the 4 LWPHomes in the country to celebrate. The send-off for Robert will take place on **April 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 from Westerley, Westcliff, 10.15am**, and we would be so grateful if members of the Circuit could be there to cheer him on.

## Why cycle 550 miles?



## In Celebration of 75 Years of Christian Care!

LWPHomes (formerly LPMA Homes) has been supporting Leaders of Worship and Preachers in need for 75 years – the first Home was opened at Westcliff-on-Sea in 1949. Our celebrations for this special anniversary include a 550+ mile cycle ride to visit each of the LWPHomes, starting at Westcliff on Tuesday April 16, 2024.

Our cyclist, Robert Davie, is asking for your support to make people aware of the care given to our residents in LWPHomes.

To read more, and to donate if you wish, please go to [JustGiving](#) and search Robert Davie, LWPH or scan the QR code below.





## BOOK REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

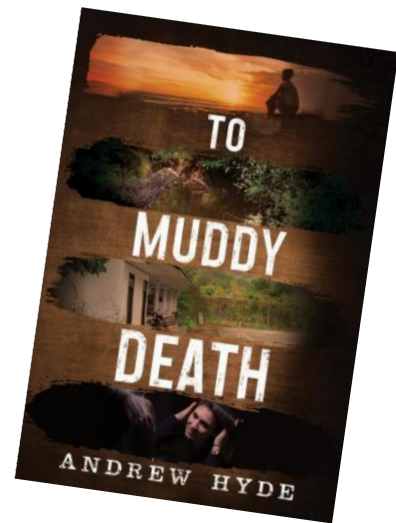
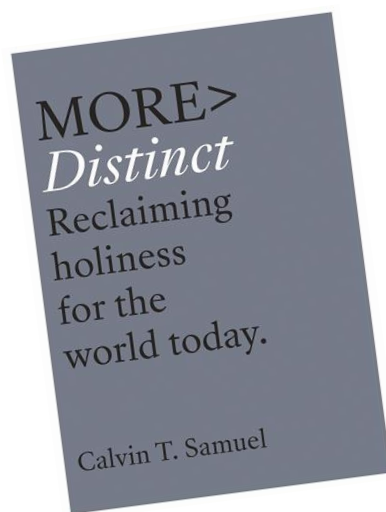
I wonder how many published authors there are in our circuit? Looking at my bookshelf I can see '*More Distinct Reclaiming Holiness for the World Today*' by Revd Dr Calvin T Samuel.

However, we now have '*To Muddy Death*' by Andrew Hyde, published by Vanguard Press. It is a weighty book, 383 pages long – a mystery story based in Essex. My intention was to take it with me on holiday, but I started to read it and Dear Reader I could not stop.

Anything that could distract me from the pain of my shingles has to be a real page turner!

I have already ordered another copy for a friend's birthday. I recommend it to you.

Eileen Simmons



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## BABY NEWS

On International Women's Day Sanya Strachan and her husband, Stephen Jessup-Peacock, welcomed their first child, a boy into the world.

His name is Casey.

Sanya says: "I really look forward to bringing Casey to church soon so that he can meet his Methodist community. Thank you so much for all your prayers - truly, it has meant the world to us".



INTERACTIVE - MEMORABLE - FUN - ENGAGING

# Old Testament

in a...



## VENUE

Wesley Methodist Church  
Elm Road  
Leigh - on - Sea  
Essex  
SS9 1SJ

[wesleymethodist.org.uk](http://wesleymethodist.org.uk)

**Saturday 20th July 2024**

**10am - 4.30pm**

Arrive from 9:30am

Please bring a packed lunch,  
or eat in many cafes in Leigh.

**Cost £5**

Subsidised cost by Southend on Sea  
and Leigh on Sea Methodist Circuit

- FREE for children aged 11-17-

## PROMOTER

Jane Fulford  
Wesley Methodist Church  
01702 714213  
[fulford.family@btinternet.com](mailto:fulford.family@btinternet.com)



The Old Testament is massive, often hard to understand and difficult to navigate.

Relax and enjoy the journey as an experienced presenter encourages you to see God's Word through the 'Big Picture'. Our **ENGAGING** and **MEMORABLE** sessions will help you learn with such **CLARITY** you'll be able to retell the whole **STORYLINE** to a friend. We will also do our best to **INSPIRE** and **EQUIP** you to keep digging deeper with fresh insight.

Join us as we go from Genesis through to Moses and the Promised Land, the Kingdoms of Saul, David and Solomon, and onwards to the Exile and the coming of the Prophets.

ENCOURAGING - INSPIRING - HELPFUL



# THE EXPERIENCE PROJECT



We extend huge congratulations to the Experience Project for their recent achievements, as well as grateful thanks to the Essex Community Foundation (ECF) for awarding us a grant and the High Sheriffs' Awards for the fantastic evening in Chelmsford. This grant has been awarded from the High Sheriffs' Fund (£1,000), the Leeze Charitable Fund (£1,667) and the Police Property Act Fund (£2,300) which are administered by ECF. This will help us educate vulnerable children and young people in the Southchurch area of Southend about the dangers of involvement in drugs and gangs.

The Southend and Leigh Methodist Circuit and The Experience Project would like to acknowledge and offer sincere thanks to the Garfield Weston Foundation for their support in awarding us a grant for the work we do in Southend. The fund provided will enable us to continue the vital work amongst our communities.



## Supporting the NHS at The Experience Project

Our team have been out and about again. This time they visited Southend Hospital. We delivered 65 food parcels to various wards to show our thanks and appreciation to the wonderful NHS staff. They were overwhelmed and very grateful for their goodies.



## Christmas at The Experience Project

The Christmas spirit was well & truly entered into at The Experience Project Christmas Party. Food was shared, games were enjoyed, faces were painted, crafts were created, carols were sung & joy was all around. The volunteers & staff at The Experience Project really go above and beyond to create a beautiful & happy event where everyone is welcome.



## UMC Easter Craft Afternoon 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March we held an Easter Craft Afternoon at the Shoebury site, where we offered a range of craft activities including Scratch Art Easter shapes, Felt colouring Bookmarks, making Easter Cards and Sun catchers, Easter baskets, Biscuit decorating, Glass pot designs, Easter Bonnets, Easter Egg decorating and picture stamping, all for our local Community. The event was totally free, which included cakes and drinks.



We also had a colouring the egg competition and an Easter Bonnet hat parade (see photo below).

The 'Balloon Bunny' was kindly loaned by Dave and Sharon at 'The Card Shop' in West Road, and the young people could have their photo taken beside it.

The event was attended by 38 young people who were accompanied by their Parents/carers, some had not been in our church before.

We had young people from several local schools attend.



The adults were extremely grateful and amazed at what was on offer for their youngsters. They appreciated having time to sit and chat whilst we worked with their youngsters on the crafts.

Goodie bags with the Easter Story and sweets were given to all who came.

We invited folk to donate an Easter Egg for the 'The Shoebury Ark Project.

These are given to local families for Easter. You can see how many were kindly donated, along with Refreshment donations too. 😊

Thanks go to...

Bob, Anne Elspeth and the whole team, for such an successful afternoon.



# EASTER AROUND THE CIRCUIT



At Belfairs, we hold a monthly club open to all called A.C.T.I.O.N. This stands for Afternoon Club on Thursday In Our Neighbourhood, offering speakers, crafts, refreshments and friendship. In recent years the crafts have involved Easter bonnet making, crowns for the coronation last year and – this March –the club made Easter bunnies. Anyone interested in attending would be very welcome to just come along – 2 to 4 pm on the fourth Thursday in each month (except August).

On Easter Sunday, Pastor Steve Mayo had the great pleasure of presenting a small token of recognition to two of our congregation here at Belfairs. Sylvia Smith, after several decades as one of our pastoral visitors, decided to retire earlier this year. Anthea Meek, first tinkled the ivories at the church when her dad had just installed a new organ in the mid-sixties. She reluctantly decided to retire from playing for us earlier this year. We hesitate to calculate the number of decades these two ladies have served Belfairs. So many people give tirelessly of the own time over the years and it is always good to recognize their efforts publicly.



Thundersley Methodist Church  
is celebrating their  
100<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary.

The Circuit members are invited  
to come and help celebrate with  
them at their May Coffee  
Morning.



**When:** Saturday 4 May

**Where:** TMC, Kennington Ave,  
Benfleet, SS7 4BS.

**Times:** 10 am - 12 noon

**All welcome.**





# At Highlands Methodist Church

## EXPLORING SPIRITUALITY



# COMING UP

MORE INFO: [WWW.CLIVEJOHNSONMINISTRY.COM](http://WWW.CLIVEJOHNSONMINISTRY.COM)  
OR CALL CLIVE ON 07956 942980



SCAN ME!

21 April  
130-4pm



*Call me  
Spiritual  
but not  
religious!*

### What Can I Do?

News stories that pull out our heart strings...wars and wild fires, famine and flooding. But what can we do being here about what's going on over there? A look at the power of intention and ways of getting practical in making a difference.

2 ½ hours talk and workshop (with break) FREE

### Understanding Interfaith

What do people of different faith traditions teach?  
What about different Christian denominations?  
Where do they agree, and where do they differ?  
Interfaith minister Clive Johnson hosts a full-day  
FREE workshop offering some answers!

10am to 4pm (with breaks!)

27 April

1030am-  
430pm



4 May  
1245-145pm



### Labyrinth Walk

4 May is World Labyrinth Day, when thousands of people around the world "walk as one at one" (1pm in their time zone). Join us to walk a canvas labyrinth based on a famous one found in Chartres Cathedral.

1/2 hour to 1 hour (leave when you want) FREE

# Worship Academy 2023-2024

## Season 11

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH EXCEPT AUGUST,  
SEPTEMBER & JANUARY

BENFLEET METHODIST CHURCH SS7 5LH

7 PM FOOD & FELLOWSHIP

8 PM WORSHIP & LEARNING

### Use of Scripture

1st May - Gospel for Year B: Mark  
DAVID CHAPMAN

5th June- Controversial Texts  
CALVIN SAMUEL

Saturday 20th July- Walk Through the Bible  
TOM GREENE AT WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH  
10AM-4:30PM

[www.southendandleighcircuit.org](http://www.southendandleighcircuit.org)

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## WELLBEING AND WHOLENESS SERVICE

Wednesday 24th April  
with Communion  
7:45pm at Benfleet Methodist  
Church

*For more details contact [southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com)*

# Parents, need support with children avoiding school?

No judging. Just listening.



Come to chat with other parents/carers having similar experiences. Every 3rd Wednesday of the month 8pm-9.30pm @Highlands Methodist Church. FREE to attend. Refreshments available. All are welcome. More info call Heather 07879 232231

# Trinity Family Centre Westcliff, Southend-on-Sea SS0 7HL



## Opening Times:

**Monday:** 09.30-11.30am Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group Admission £1.50 plus snacks  
12.30 - 16.00pm POP IN (People on Pensions) Admission £1.50 plus lunches

**Tuesday:** 09.30-11.30am Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group  
11.50am-1.15pm Eat In, Community Cafe-low cost home cooked meals. £5 for 2  
course lunch, with tea/coffee.

15.30-18.30pm Family Club Admission £1.50

**Wednesday:** 09.30 - 12.00 Trinity Gems, a group for over 18's with special needs.

**Friday:** 09.30 - 12.00 Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group Admission £1.50

We are on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?>