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CIRCUIT NEWS AUTUMN 2015

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

Sadly we said farewell in July to Rev Clifford Newman and Linda, and Rev John Yap and Christine, but it was a happy occasion with a service on the lawn at Union Street, followed by a delicious bun fight in the hall. We will always be grateful for Clifford's part in bringing the four old circuit's together into the North Kent Circuit. John, with his superb language skills, has supported the Chinese Congregation in Gillingham, the Chinese community in the area, as well as students at the University.

On 30th August we were delighted to welcome Rev Bonni-Belle Pickard who comes to serve as Co-Superintendent, with pastoral responsibility for Bearsted, Tonbridge Road and Union Street churches. She comes from the Kingston Circuit, along with Alfred her husband, whom we also welcome. Rev. Kan Yu has also come to our Circuit as a Probationer minister, with responsibility for the Chinese congregation and she will also be supporting Tony in the Peninsular churches and Larkfield. It was good to meet Kan's husband Tim, sons Maxwell and Jonas.

Kan and Bonni-Belle, we hope you will be very happy with us.

Many of you from Maidstone and Medway remember Rev Bryan and Mrs Credwyn Tolhurst who originated from this area. Bryan candidate for the ministry from the Medway Circuit and since then has served in Nantwich and Southend before this summer returning to Medway as a supernumerary minister. Welcome back, Credwyn and Bryan.

HEXTABLE

We are very pleased to have our minister Rev Velma Campbell back taking services and supporting us again after her long spell of sick leave. It has been so nice to see her smiling face and to know that she is so much better.

We are again looking at the possibility of hosting Roughshod, part of Riding Lights Theatre Company. There was a disappointing take up of their shows and workshops in the Circuit last time but some very good work was done in our geographical area, however those that did attend gave very good feedback and were very impressed by the work of the young cast.

Our Brigades Awards evenings were well supported and parents were given an insight into all that is on offer to youngsters of all ages as they progress through the sections of the BB and GB. The combined BB/GB camp in Norfolk enjoyed very good weather and fellowship. Rev David Blacklock and his wife Kathleen, were able to visit from their retirement house in Kings Lynn with David taking the communion service on Friday morning.

We also met up again with the Rev Douglas Graham (another retired former minister of ours) and his wife Heather at our away day service, held at Rustington MC, after a very wet visit to Littlehampton on a Sunday in July.

Our Fresh Wineskins theatre group are rehearsing hard for their next musical/drama production based on John the Baptist which should be another entertaining and thought provoking view of John's life. This is about their fourth annual production which have all been on biblical themes and well received.

Our Craft Fair is very popular locally offering many unusual items for sale. Our Jumble Sale never ceases to attract the crowds of bargain hunters and must be one of the original methods of recycling.

Our regular weekly and monthly meetings can be found on www.hextablemethodist.org.uk—church groups.

Future dates; 7 November—Craft Fair 10.00—3om

ECCLES

We have a member of our congregation who teaches Music, including singing. With her leadership a Community Singing Group has grown in Church, meeting most Tuesday evenings at 7pm, to enjoy an hour of singing together.

Our Country Lunches are growing in popularity of late. All ages meet to enjoy a homemade soup and dessert, and chat with friends. This begins at 1pm on the first Wednesday of each month except January.

WORSHIP: LEADING AND PREACHING

Do you enjoy preparing or taking part in services of worship? Have you been thinking about training as a Worship Leader or Local Preacher? Three of our Local Preachers in training are already studying using the pilot scheme of Worship: Leading and Preaching, the new course for training both Local Preachers and Worship Leaders which is taking over from Faith and Worship.

Over the next few weeks we will be preparing to begin the course again, not as a pilot this time. If you are interested, have a chat with any minister or Local Preacher, or Monica Wilding who has been tutoring the pilot scheme, and look out for information coming in the next few weeks.

PRAYERS

Please continue to pray for Rev Velma Campbell and Rev Noreen Daley-Lee as they return to work after spells of ill health.

Also, we continue to remember Rev Clifford Newman and his wife Linda as they get used to retirement and for Rev John Yap and his wife Christine as they move on to a new circuit.

We pray too for Rev Bonni-Belle Pickard and Rev Kan Yu as they come to join us in the North Kent Circuit.

