

# *Southend & Leigh* CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER



Summer Edition 2023

*Third 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.



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[Southend and Leigh Circuit Facebook Page](#)

[Southend and Leigh Circuit Website](#)



# Message from a Local Preacher

*Dear Circuit friends,*

Hooray...Summertime is here...The cold temperatures are (hopefully) behind us, the garden flowers are in full bloom, school examinations are thankfully all in the past and our thoughts are turning now to enjoying the longer daylight hours, going away on holiday, spending time with friends and family, and taking part in other enjoyable summer pursuits.

Winter sometimes does seem to be a “long haul” doesn’t it, and for us in the “Beds, Essex and Herts District” and in the “Southend and Leigh Circuit” this past period of early 2023 also brought with it an extra poignancy of being the 70th Anniversary of the terrible East Coast Flooding of 1953. We recalled how, on the evening of Saturday, 31 January, 1953 a combination of low atmospheric pressure, high tides and high winds created a tidal storm surge down the East Coast of Britain, travelling swiftly and relentlessly from “the Wash”, Lincolnshire all the way through to Suffolk, Essex, and Kent and then on to Holland. Extensive flooding of coastal low-lying areas resulted. Places such as Jaywick, Great Wakering, Foulness, and Canvey Island were inundated. 160,000 acres of eastern England were flooded by sea water and 307 people died across the region (including 58 on Canvey Island and 35 at Jaywick. Across the North Sea, 1800 people died in Holland as a direct result of the storm surge).

As we reflect on such occasions, we not only honour the lives of those lost but we also give tribute to those who answered the call to help their neighbours in distress. It is also with a sense of immense gratitude to see how such communities and regions have recovered and moved on to rebuild homes, towns, lives and livelihoods.

My prayer is that residents of the region in Ukraine, recently also devastated by the destruction of the kakhovka Dam and reservoir, may discover a similar resilience that will see them through this crisis.

When Noah and his family first looked out at the receding flood waters in ancient times, they were faced with rebuilding the world and its society back again from scratch. A very tall order! What came to them was a divine promise that life would go on. Genesis 8:22; “As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

It seems to me that with testing of various kinds, often comes an unexpected strength that was not there beforehand and, which can help us to recover and even to move on; Winter frosts prepare the soil, The fiery annealing process of glass manufacture strengthens the glass bottle so it does not break as it cools and the household task of “Ironing our garments” smooths out creases from our clothes.

As summer arrives then, the challenges of winter are behind us. Now in our churches, there is no longer the need to create physical “warm spaces” for our communities. Rather, we can fling open the doors take the gospel outside and offer the warmth of the kingdom of God to our neighbours and communities.

May God Bless us all as we serve Him across our circuit and beyond,

*Colin Turner*





# Circuit Calendar 2023

## JULY

Sat 1st – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Wed 5th – Worship Academy, 7pm-9.15pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sun 9th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7:30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Wed 12th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Thu 13th – Circuit Leadership Team, 7.30pm

Wed 26th – Wholeness and Wellbeing Service, 7.45pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

## AUGUST

Sat 5th – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Wed 9th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Sun 13th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7:30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

## SEPTEMBER

Sat 2nd – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Mon 4th – Welcome Service for Rev Heather Simmons, 7.30pm, Highlands Methodist Church

Tue 5th – Circuit Leadership Team, 7.30pm, Zoom

Sun 10th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7:30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Wed 13th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Wed 13th – Circuit Meeting, 7.30pm, Chalkwell Park Methodist Church

Mon 25th-Tue 26th – Superintendents' Meeting, Pleshey Retreat

## OCTOBER

Sat 7th – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Sat 7th – District Circuit Stewards' Meeting, 10am, Zoom

Wed 4th – Worship Academy, 7pm-9.15pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sun 8th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7:30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Wed 11th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

## NOVEMBER

Wed 1st – Worship Academy, 7pm-9.15pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sat 4th – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 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

Sun 12th – Remembrance Sunday

# 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@tvmchurch.org](mailto:office@tvmchurch.org))

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

(booking required with [office@tvmchurch.org](mailto:office@tvmchurch.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 July-September

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

## JULY

Prayer for Sunday 2nd – Worship Leaders  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 27 – Toddler Groups, Preschools and Nurseries in our churches  
Prayer for Sunday 9th – Rochford Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 28 – Rev Dr Calvin Samuel and family  
Prayer for Sunday 16th – Chelmsford Circuit  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 29 – Church Volunteers  
Prayer for Sunday 23rd – Castle Point Council, Councillors and Leaders  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 30 – Fishermen's Chapel  
Prayer for Sunday 30th – Methodist Women in Britain



## AUGUST

Mid-Week Prayer of Week 31 – Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship  
Prayer for Sunday 6th – Thorpe Bay Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 32 – Inspire at Wesley  
Prayer for Sunday 13th – Rev Zena Smith and family  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 33 – Mid-week Communions  
Prayer for Sunday 20th – Action for Children  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 34 – Westerley Christian Care Home  
Prayer for Sunday 27th – Thundersley Methodist Church  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 35 – Children's Workers



## SEPTEMBER

Prayer for Sunday 3rd – Rev Heather Simmons and family  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 36 – Circuit Officers  
Prayer for Sunday 10th – Hirers and external groups that use our community halls, facilities and premises  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 37 – Whittingham Mission Centre  
Prayer for Sunday 17th – Church Councils  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 38 – For the Harvest and Farmers  
Prayer for Sunday 24th – Circuit Treasurer  
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 39 – Rochford Section



# Trinity Community Garden



In partnership with Trust Links and Greening Southend project we are developing the church garden as a community garden with benches for people to sit, reflect. It will also provide space and opportunity to engage with the community. Children at TFC's Family Club have been planting seeds and will be doing a bat box workshop. Anyone who enjoys gardening is welcome to join in.



TrustLinks  
Greening  
Southend





# Chalkwell Park Church Anniversary

For our Church Anniversary members and groups of the church were invited to contribute items for an exhibition inspired by 'Songs of Love & Hope' (or songs that made you feel happy). As you will see from the photos below, there was a variety of inspired exhibits (unfortunately I can't show them all) that made up this Church Anniversary Exhibition. Each exhibit was based on a song which was played over the anniversary weekend so we could listen and watch. The Church was then open on the Saturday morning to allow people to visit, view and listen whilst enjoying some refreshments.



On the Beach



Can't stop the feeling



Love is in the air



Morning has broken

*With thanks to Jo Malcolm*



# Trinity Family Centre Coronation Celebration

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 40 pensioners enjoyed a roast dinner, dessert and afternoon cream tea courtesy of a grant from ASDA. With a group of volunteers there was also entertainment with a quiz and a sing-along. All of our regular members of our Monday afternoon Pop In group were delighted to have the session open, having had 2 other bank holidays in May.





# United Methodist Church Coronation Celebration



Our big event to celebrate the King's Coronation was our village service held on Sunday May 7th at 3.00pm. It was led by our minister, Rev Agnes, and included hymns that were sung at the King's wedding and his late mother's Coronation. Other clergy from the village took part in the service which was attended by the Chair and Vice Chair of our local council and other councillors, as well as the Chair and Vice Chair of Rochford District Council.

We enjoyed duets from our own Rachel and Michelle, an organ arrangement of traditional English folk songs and waved our union flags around to accompany our 'Last Night of the Proms' singalong after the blessing. This consisted of 'Land of Hope and Glory,' 'Jerusalem', and 'Rule Britannia'.

The afternoon ended with tea/coffee and Coronation cake in the hall where village folk, councillors and clergy all enjoyed informal chats and fellowship.

This was a wonderful time of sharing. The inside as well as the outside of the church was festooned with bunting and flags, all of which reminded the village that we are here and looking to show outreach.

# THE EXPERIENCE PROJECT



## Easter Party 2023

At Easter, we were able to host an Easter Party, which received over 100 children plus adults. There were games and activities including an egg hunt. We were able to serve refreshments and cakes to the guests, and we saw lots of new faces so were able to build a relationship with people and show them a safe space they could come to.

## Refrigerated Van

We are so very grateful to Yanto for donating a refrigerated van to our Project. This will enable our logistics of collection, transport and distribution to run far more efficiently.



## Our Work

The Project continues to run at full-steam. Tuesdays is our games and coffee morning which caters for people of all ages, and in school holidays we get an influx of children brought along by their parents. Thursdays is our community Fun-Food Bank Day, where we serve food parcels. We peaked at over 200 visitors one week, though on average we are getting 120 visitors a week supporting them and their families. We continue to support a number of local charities, schools, and organisations with food packages, hygiene supplies and referrals / signposting. Our relationship with Ocado continues and we make three trips a week to their distribution centres in Kent and Purfleet. We have received a number of warm-space and food supply grants which have helped us get through the coldest periods of the year and maintain stock-control. Now as we head toward Summer, we are awaiting to hear back from a Lottery Grant to secure funding for the project and its workers for a further three-year period.





# Thundersley Pre-school Grant



*Left to right - Councillor Michael Dixon, Margaret Malins (Acting Manager of Happy Stars TM Pre-school), Revd. Zena Smith, Susan Dixon (Benfleet Rotary Club) and Lewis Johnson (Benfleet Rotary Club).*

Since 2019, Thundersley Methodist Church and Happy Stars TM Pre-school, has had the idea for a soft play area and replacement car park spaces. Of course, everything stopped for a couple of years but we were galvanised into action when Revd. Zena Smith came to be our next minister. At the moment the pre-school children play on the car park. When this is happening, no cars can come in for other groups meeting in the foyer. With the new soft play area – this will be fenced off and the rest of the area can be used by visiting members to the groups meeting in the foyer.

A projected cost for August 2023 is £40,639.68 - this has increased substantially since the first quote back in 2019 with the effect of Covid-19 and the rising cost of building items.

Thundersley Methodist Church gratefully received £500 from the Rotary Club – Benfleet, to go towards the soft play area/replacement car park spaces project on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April.

The fundraising is now complete and the church/pre-school has raised the projected amount for August from various grant-making trusts including the Circuit and District and all being well, works will start at the end of July 2023.



Theme: Repair and Restore



The replaced Stained glass windows at UMC Shoebury, were another focus and the history of them could be read. There were also a selection of books to inspire thoughts available on another table.



The opportunity to make and sew items to create something new, was also available, along with various paints, card and paper to use for collage, design or image or creative writing.

Holding an oyster shell, comfortably cupped in our hands enabled us to draw, paint or write inside on the smooth surface.



Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 at UMC Shoebury .

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> at UMC the second of our Circuit Prayer days took place. The theme of the first one last year was 'Refresh & Recharge'. The theme this time was 'Repair & Restore' where we offered a range of options for the twenty people who came to engage in, as and when they were ready.

Rev. Agnes welcomed everyone, Rev Zena led the worship and Deacon Sarah shared a reading before Anne explained the options for the day.



Taking time to repair something that has been broken, was one option. The vase was broken by the force of the plant growing in it, nature's strength. Not all the fragments were there.

Using the plasters provided the restoration began. We were invited to consider: What are the missing pieces in our hearts/ lives – and then spend time with God telling him.



Taking time out from our busy lives for even a few hours, in a place that is less familiar to us enables us to just pause and take time to rest in God's presence and listen out for his voice in maybe, new and surprising ways.





For those who appreciated an outdoor option, there was a round trip to the lake in Gunners Park. Some saw the Swan family with three Cygnets, the seven Ducklings and parents. It is a lovely peaceful place to walk and sit if you have never been there!



The challenge to make a mini car from a template was taken up by some, patience was required!



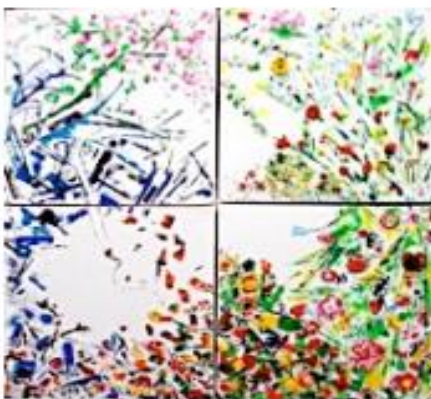
Restoration – from old paper: sewing a mini books to use was also offered



Around the venue were a selection of Art pieces where people were invited to stop and reflect.

'There is a time for Everything' - Ecclesiastes 1

These 4 canvases show the Seasons moving from Winter – Spring, Spring – Summer, Summer –Autumn, Autumn-Winter, they could be placed in a block of 4, or a line. Our lives have seasons of change - we were invited to think on the phrase 'A time for everything'



A big thank you to all who came and we pray that God will continue to enrich and restore their Faith Journeys.

If you missed this one and would like to hear more catch up with Anne and Bob, Deacon Sarah or Rev Zena.

Deacon Sarah led two guided meditation slots in the darkened prayer space during the course of the day. The room was also available for personal space and quiet.





# Worship Academy 2023-2024

## Season 11

First Wednesday of the month except January, August and September, 19:00-21:00 at Benfleet Methodist Church.

Worship Academy is a training programme particularly for leaders of worship in the Methodist Church but it is open to everyone.

Outline of the Evening:

19:00 meal

20:00 worship led by the circuit

20:15 worship academy

c.21:15 depart

If you are interested in joining the mailing list for an invite please contact: [southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com)



*Book via Eventbrite*

## Worship Academy 2023/2024 Season 11

First Wednesday of the month except August, September 2023 and January 2024

Date	Topic	Speaker/Facilitator	Church leading worship
<b>TERM ONE: All age / Intergenerational</b>			
4 October	Faith and Worship in Retirement Homes	TBC	TBC
1 November	Intergenerational worship	Gail Adcock	TBC
6 December	Gen Z/Asbury revival/University worship	TBC	TBC
<b>TERM TWO: Creative</b>			
7 February	Singing and choirs in worship	Heather Simmons	Heather Simmons
6 March	How to use the Psalms creatively	Pete Moorhouse	TBC
3 April	Art in worship	Anne Briant	Anne and Bob Briant
Special?	Glass workshop	Michaela Youngson	TBC
<b>TERM THREE: Use of scripture</b>			
1 May	Gospel for Year B: Mark	Dave Chapman	TBC
5 June	Controversial texts	Calvin Samuel	TBC
3 July	Bible stories theatre workshop: come and have a go	Wesley Theatre Group?	TBC
Saturday?? July *SPECIAL*	Walk through the Bible	Tom Greene	TBC

**What to teach – How to teach – What to do**

# Southend and Leigh Discipleship Pathway: *travelling together*

## Service



### Serve

We help people in our communities and beyond

## Evangelism



### Tell

We tell of the love of God

## Learn & Care



### Open

We practise hospitality and generosity

## Worship



### Notice

We notice God in Scripture and the world



### Flourish

We care for creation and all God's gifts



### Live

We live in a way that draws others to Jesus



### Learn

We learn more about our faith



### Worship

We worship with others regularly



### Challenge

We challenge injustice



### Share

We share our faith



### Care

We care for ourselves and those around us



### Pray

We pray daily

For more information visit  
[A Methodist Way of Life](#)

# EDI Training

## *Equality, Diversity, Inclusion*



The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Training is designed to support the discipleship and mission of the Methodist Church and enrich the life of the Church.

**We are all made in God's image and are all equally precious to God**  
**We are committed to being a church which witnesses to this inclusive love of God**

This means we aim:

- to celebrate the rich diversity of people within the Methodist Church
- to eradicate all discrimination, to treat all people justly and with dignity across the breadth of the Methodist Church
- for a profound change in the culture, practices and attitudes of the Methodist Church so that all Methodists are able to be full participants in the Church's life.

We invite all Methodists to be part of this work of God, as we develop our mission and ministry together.

The Conference of the Methodist Church has enacted mandatory EDI training to be completed by all Methodist Circuits and churches by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. The Circuit Leadership Team of the Southend and Leigh Circuit is proposing the Circuit comes together for the day for as many people to do the training together. Preparations are being made for this to take place in the Autumn. In the meantime, should anyone wish to look at the resources available, please see below:

[Mandatory EDI Training \(Equality, Diversity and Inclusion\) \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://methodist.org.uk)

[Introduction to Unconscious Bias – \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://methodist.org.uk)

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## 10 Years of Worship Academy: A Celebration Party



Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 7pm  
Benfleet Methodist Church

Click below to:

[Book via Eventbrite](#)





# Bible Month

An Invitation to join with  
Jane Fulford & study

## The Book of Revelation

Thursdays between 2.30pm-3.30pm on Zoom

Please contact Jane Fulford via email if you are  
interested in attending:

[fulford.family@btinternet.com](mailto:fulford.family@btinternet.com)

### Dates

6<sup>th</sup> July



Week 1: The Church Then and Now (Chapters 1-3)

13<sup>th</sup> July



Week 2: The Triumph of the Lamb (Chapters 4-5)

20<sup>th</sup> July



Week 3: Witness, Worship and Waiting (Chapters 10-13)

27<sup>th</sup> July



Week 4: Heading Home (Chapters 17-22)



CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

# *Inspire*

EVERY 3RD SUNDAY  
5.30PM  
WESLEY METHODIST  
CHURCH  
ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA  
SS9 1SJ

Inspire is a contemporary worship service that takes place every third Sunday of the month at Leigh Wesley Methodist Church, from 5.30pm-6.30pm.

We are always looking for musicians to lead Inspire – please get in touch if you are interested, please email: [info@weslemethodist.org.uk](mailto:info@weslemethodist.org.uk)





Charity No. 1118094

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



# CAN YOU SPARE 3 HOURS A WEEK?

We need volunteers to help with running our charity shop and supporting other vulnerable volunteers. Open Tuesday - Friday 10-4 & Saturday 11-2

**Trinity Family Centre Shop**

**11 West Road, Westcliff On Sea SS0 9AU**

Contact [Sarah@trinityfamilycentre.org](mailto:Sarah@trinityfamilycentre.org) 01702 436228