

The Drive Methodist Church  
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

# NEWSLETTER

July / August 2012



Minister: Revd Bernardino Mandlate

<http://www.the-drive-methodist-ilford.org-uk>

## **From Bernardino Mandlate**

Friends

Summer is here with all that it brings, the joy of 'warm sunshine?!' and the nice smell of barbeques around us, watching wet Wimbledon and of course this year we have the Olympics on our doorstep to enjoy.

I don't have any tickets for the games but I intend to watch as much as I can on TV and may be feel the ambiance through visits to Westfield; who knows one may come across some of the athletes doing their shopping or even having a McDonalds or a decent coffee in the many coffee shops available. I hope some of you will do the same. I know some amongst you have tickets for some of the events. When you do go, have fun and enjoy yourself. Stay safe and I pray that God will be with you in the joyful noise of the stadium.

As it warms up, I pray that those of you who find it difficult to come out when it is not so warm will take the opportunity to venture out and feel the fresh air outside, mingle with others and catch up with what's happening around our community and town. Take it easy though, don't rush yourselves.

Those of you taking a break from Ilford and going somewhere nice, I pray for travelling mercies and that God will allow you to have the fun you are looking for and the rest we all deserve. I also pray that the sun may shine more days and be warmer for all to enjoy and find an opportunity to wear short sleeves. As you do whatever it is that you may have chosen to do this year, remember that God is making it possible for you to do that. Be grateful to Him and be mindful of those less fortunate.

During this summertime I am asking all of you to spare a thought for the life of the Circuit to which belong as it goes through challenging times. A copy of the circuit policy is in one of the pages of this newsletter. Read it carefully and weigh the implications thereof for the circuit and for each of the churches in the circuit. There is a shortage of local preachers which places a burden on the few still available. The number of preaching appointments that can be filled each quarter is decreasing. Some of the churches may be challenged to change their worshiping times on Sundays so as to enable staff members to do more than one service some Sundays to cover all the preaching slots.

God willing, we will be able to adjust to new ways of doing things for the benefit of the circuit as a whole. It will be tough at times, but not the end of the world. Things will get better at some point when we get used to the adjustments we will have to make.

I pray for God's bless and every one of you as individuals, as families and as a church community. Please pray for each other and for those who pray for you too.

May the peace of God be always with you.

Have a good summer

God bless

**Dino**

### **Holiday Time ?**

This is a two month edition which covers July and August. A time when some of us will be travelling and holidaying either in this country, or abroad.

If you are travelling in Britain, and intend to visit a Church whilst away, please give our regards and good wishes to them, and if you wish, please take them a copy of our newsletter. If you were to bring a copy of their newsletter back, I would be pleased to see it.

Once you have enjoyed your break, why not write a short article telling us about the places you visit, and your experiences.

**Roy Brunnen.**

### **Family News.**

#### **Birthdays.**

29<sup>th</sup> July is the birthday of Tim Wright

19<sup>th</sup> August is the birthday of Bambo Banjo

We have received news that Pamela and Gerry Murphy's son Toby and his wife have a new baby boy called Louis. Pamela was a member and local preacher here until she and Gerry moved to Devon.

**Roy Brunnen.**

## **Junior Church**

During the school summer holidays there may be times when it won't be possible to have a Junior church or crèche. This is because many of our staff will be away,

Please feel free to either sit with your children at the back of the church or stay in the parlour so your children can play whilst you listen to the service through the loud speaker. Please note children must be supervised at all times.

Jo Wright

## **BBQ 1<sup>st</sup> July at the Rodings**

Please come along to the annual church BBQ at the Rodings. It will start at approximately 1pm after our anniversary service.

There is a list at the back of the church for you to let us know what food you will be bringing.

If you require a lift to the Rodings then please speak to Jo or Michelle and bring a garden chair if possible.

Jo and Michelle

## **CHURCH FELLOWSHIP**

Carol Dawson, our Circuit Key Worker came to our June meeting and presented an inspiring account of her work in Redbridge schools, introducing the Christian Faith. She gave us a moving and thought provoking demonstration of "Godly Play" involving the Old Testament account of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea. The children respond with interesting comments. Carol is prepared to come and take part in a Sunday morning service.

On Tuesday July 3rd, our last meeting of the 2011/2012 programme, Janet and Roy Brunnen will share some of their favourite music with us. Do come along at 8.00pm for a relaxing evening. Refreshments and lifts are available.

We shall also spend a little time planning what to do for the 2012/2013 season. I think it is sad that there are no other meetings here of a Christian and sociable nature during the week, and we are keen to continue to meet.

The 2011 celebrations of the publication of the tercentenary of the publication of the "King James Bible" revived interest in reading it. Perhaps we should engage in some Bible Study evenings and talk about our faith?

**Frank Sayers**

**Celebration in Song**  
**Saturday 14th July 2012 at 7.30 pm**

The New Essex Choir will be giving a concert of light music in the church, followed by a buffet supper in the hall. The programme continues the summer of celebration theme with music from Merrie England, My Fair Lady, Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and folk songs. The conductor will be Lawrence Tatnall whose grandmother was once organist at The Drive.

Tickets £12 (children £6, under fives free) available from

**Brian Taylor**

**CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

I am so pleased to report that here at The Drive those who lead or assist in the care of children or vulnerable adults have made a huge effort to respond to the call from the Methodist Conference to undertake Foundation Training in Safeguarding. In all 24 people attended the training which was kindly hosted by Gants Hill, Becontree Heath and Ilford Lane churches.

Feedback from the training has been positive with many people requesting more information. On behalf of our church I would like to give our thanks to Reverend Jan Atkins for her time and commitment in providing this valuable training.

Great effort everyone. Thank you

There are plans for further training so watch this space!

**Lorraine**

## **Diamond Jubilee Afternoon Tea**

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June we at the Drive celebrated Her Majesty the Queen's 60 Years as our Monarch. This day was also her Majesty's official Birthday, which marked her 86 years. It was also very good to see His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh back at her side after his illness.

Our celebration officially started at 2pm with games outside and in for both young and older people. Andrew took some of the young people off to play games, a session of making items was led by share a skill leaders, live music was played throughout by the Earl Gray Swing Band led by Jeff Wragg.

A raffle was organised by Corinne Smith who was helped by Alan Spennock to sell the tickets. The whole afternoon was organised by Janet Wragg who talked many of the Church members into helping. Jo Wright deserves a particular mention, as she had the task of providing the teas.

The afternoon was well supported, and all tickets for afternoon tea were sold. At 3pm the National Anthem was played and sung, which marked the start of afternoon tea which was enjoyed by all those who had bought tickets. It was a pity that a few people had to be turned away due to all tickets having been sold.

At 4pm the bonny baby competition was held, but Bernardino found it impossible to make a choice for a winner from the four little ones who were entered, so they all got a prize. They were then presented with a certificate each during the Service on Sunday morning. The final activity was the drawing of the raffle, which took some time, as there had been many prizes donated.

Our sincere thanks to all those who gave their time to make the event happen.

**Roy Brunnen**

### **Thank You**

Thank you to all those people who donated cakes, gift vouchers and their time to make the Jubilee tea party a success.

**Jo Wright**

## **A Diamond Jubilee Thank you**

Many, many thanks to everyone who helped make the Diamond Jubilee Celebration a success.

From the initial printing of the tickets to the final raffle draw, everyone involved worked hard to ensure that everything went smoothly, and all the guests enjoyed themselves.

Stars of the day were the contestants in the baby and toddler competition, well done all of you.

My thanks once again, to you all.

**Janet Wragg (Mrs Bossy Boots !!)**

## **We Braved The Weather - 1 Stan Singleton and Ruth Joyce.**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June, Dad and I decided to enter the Diamond Jubilee spirit and go to watch the pageant. Armed with 2 tickets for the Westminster Disabled viewing area, plus the Church wheelchair, we ventured forth. Making full use of the lifts at Hainault, Stratford and Westminster, we arrived to find a lot of other people had the same idea! Unfortunately, we encountered some rather mean spirited able bodied people who had taken up residence in the disabled area. However, once we pointed out the error of their ways, it was all systems go. The flotilla with the thousand boats was an amazing sight, we sang 'Land of hope and glory' with gusto and waved our hats at the Queen and Prince Philip and she definitely saw us and waved back! There was a fantastic patriotic atmosphere, un dampened by the cloudbursts, which was made all the more enjoyable when a kind lady near us passed Dad a glass of champagne with a strawberry in it so he could toast the Queen's health. So incredibly kind.

Needless to say, we joined thousands of people heading home at the same time and this was when we saw the best in everyone, as once people saw the wheelchair, without exception they opened a path for us to go first. Consequently, we got home at a civilised time and happy to look back on a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity.

**Ruth Joyce.**

## **We Braved The Weather – 2 Flagging beside the Thames**

After church on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, Thea and I met friends and travelled to Waterloo to catch a glimpse of the pageant. We had researched the area, the placement of the large screens, picked out places that were elevated and would give us and the children a good vantage point. We had decided to try and find somewhere to see the flotilla with our own eyes and then agreed that if we couldn't, we'd cross the river and find a screen to watch it on.

Along with quite a few others, we left the tube at Waterloo station; it was only then that we realised how many people were there with the same idea as us. Once on the concourse it took us about 5 minutes of shuffling along before we could get out of the station! We made for County Hall, planning to have a lovely view and perhaps a drink while we watched and waved our flags. Unfortunately many, MANY others had gone that way before us and so we were held in a corral by security guards before eventually being let through and being held again. That was when the police told us it was too crowded and my friend told me that she was frightened of crowds, so we set off walking!

The embankment was piled four deep all along and people hung from every available stairway and walkway of the Royal Festival Hall, so we hurried down to Waterloo Bridge which would take us over to the Southbank where there were big screens. But time had marched on and the bridge was closed for safety reasons because it was less than 90 minutes until the queen sailed beneath.

When we arrived at Temple station tired but ready for the walk to the nearest screen, we turned out of the station and saw hundreds of people standing at the top of the road – it was built on a hill and we managed to stand halfway up the road, cracking open the sandwiches, chatting to our neighbours and sipping a very grown-up, British drink to wait for the Queens boat. Sadly we spent quite a while watching the barest tops of boats sailing by, then suddenly we saw a special flag – the Royal standard! The boat passed along quickly and then suddenly we saw the figure of a woman, near the back of the boat in a yellow-ish outfit and looking out at us – the whole crowd shouted, cheered and waved flags, the children



dancing around excitedly. In all the excitement i shouted to Thea to get her camera out but she misheard me and waved a flag that was still rolled up in it's plastic sleeve!! We fell about laughing while the crowd dispersed but something nagged at me; the Queen wouldn't have been standing at the back of her own boat. My friend disagreed with me and remained certain that we had seen the Queen.

We left as the rain began to fall in earnest and chatted about our experience on the ride home. We agreed that we would do it again, half the fun had been in trying to find a position to view the pageant, and the atmosphere was brilliant. It was good to really be a part of something that was historic. Even if the evening news did show that it was not the Queen but Camilla who wore a yellow-ish outfit...!

**Michelle Garner**

### **Raysin Hope.**

The brain tumour support group has been meeting for over 6 months now and volunteers are pleased to be told how important the monthly meetings have become to both patient and carer. There are opportunities for speakers to talk about various health issues and should they wish, people can also share personal experiences on life after diagnosis. The venue in Romford is not too far from Queens Hospital and offers excellent facilities for our group.

The need for more funding into the research of brain tumours is a priority and to this aim the Brain Tumour Consortium, including Brain Tumour UK, invited people to join them at the House of Commons on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June to lobby our MPs. I accepted the invitation and was pleased to meet my MP Lee Scott who was most informed and responsive to our campaign.

The Raysin Hope newsletter will be available shortly.

Thank you for your support.

**Anne Dellow.**

## MUSIC MATTERS

The Drive provided singers from our choir and Junior Church for a slot at Fun in the Park, a fun activity day at Barkingside Recreation Ground organised by the North Ilford Fellowship of Churches. Joining singers from Gantshill Methodist and St George's Anglican churches, they sang a variety of Christian songs to an appreciative audience. You may have seen the photographs of this event on display in the church.

At 8:30pm on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July, the Choir will mark the end of their summer term with a short service of Evening Prayer in the church. Everyone is welcome to join us and there will be refreshments served after the service. This is becoming an annual fixture and coming as it does around the start of July, we like to think of it as part of the celebration of our Church Anniversary each year.

I've been keeping an eye on the hymns and songs chosen for worship since we started using *Singing the Faith* in January, and the statistics show that we have already used over 100 different hymns and songs in those six months, and more than a third of those are songs that were not in *Hymns and Psalms*. The most used hymn so far is no. 323 *I will sing the wondrous story*, which has been chosen four times.

It is good to see our church being used by local groups for concerts – the New Essex Choir have an evening entitled *Celebration in Song* on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July with a varied and entertaining programme conducted by their new musical director Lawrence Tatnall (grandson of a former Eastern Avenue Methodist organist). Do support them if you can – Brian and Kathleen Taylor will be happy to sell you a ticket!

**Andrew Taylor**

## Queen's Jubilee "Big lunch"

On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June we were all invited to attend the "bring and share" buffet at Ilford Methodist Church. (Notice on board near Drive Entrance)

Corrine and I attended this wonderful event. We arrived just in time to sing the National Anthem (2 verses) Calmeta Claxton had asked several people to talk of their experiences of meeting or seeing the Queen.

Meanwhile pictures of flag of Commonwealth Nations appeared on the screen. Young people read poems and prayers.

The church was decorated with red, white and blue flowers, ribbons, flags and bunting. There were pictures of The Queen. Some people wore red, white and blue.

After the service we went to the back of the church for the buffet.

I was grateful to be participating in an indoor event when so many gallant souls braved the elements for their street parties.

If plans go ahead for the Ilford church, it sounds as if we shall all be sentenced to endure a street party in the future Ilford Methodist church.

Many thanks for inviting us to your celebration.

**Susan Ruckes.**

There was also a short quiz about the Royal Family and main events in the Queen's life and reign. Three of us including Susan and myself were joint winners. The final tie break question was answered first by a member of the Ilford Methodist church. She received a lovely bone china cup and saucer as her prize.

**Corinne Smith.**

### A Little Girl's Prayer

[Helen Roseveare, a doctor missionary from England to Zaire, Africa, told this as it happened to her in Africa].

One night I had worked hard to help a mother in the labour ward; but in spite of all we could do she died leaving us with a tiny premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter. We would have difficulty keeping the baby alive, as we had no incubator (no electricity) and no special feeding facilities. Although we lived on the equator, nights were often chilly with treacherous drafts.

One student midwife went for the box we had for such babies and the cotton wool the baby would be wrapped in. Another went to stoke up the fire and fill a hot water bottle. Then she came back shortly in distress to tell me that in filling the bottle, it had burst. "And it is our last hot water bottle!" she exclaimed. As in the West "it is no good crying over spilled milk", so in Central Africa it might be considered "no good crying over burst water bottles". They do not grow on trees, and there are no chemists down forest pathways.

"All right," I said, "Put the baby as near the fire as you safely can; sleep between the baby and the door to keep it free from drafts. Your job is to keep the baby warm." The following noon, as I did most days, I went to have prayers with any of the orphanage children who chose to gather with me.

I gave the youngsters various suggestions of things to pray about and told them about the tiny baby.

I explained our problem about keeping the baby warm enough, mentioning the hot water bottle.

The baby could so easily die if it got chills. I also told them of the two-year-old sister, crying because her mother had died.

During the prayer time, one ten-year-old girl, Ruth, prayed with the usual blunt conciseness of our African children. "Please, God," she prayed, "send us a water bottle. It'll be no good tomorrow, God, as the baby'll be dead, so please send it this afternoon." While I gasped inwardly at the audacity of the prayer, she added by way of corollary, "And while You are about it, would You please send a dolly for the little girl so she'll know You really love her?" As often with children's prayers, I was put on the spot. Could I honestly say, "Amen"? I just did not believe that God could do this. Oh, yes, I

know that He can do everything. The Bible says so. But there are limits, aren't there?

The only way God could answer this particular prayer would be by sending me a parcel from England. I had been in Africa for almost four years at that time, and I had never, ever received a parcel from home. Anyway, if anyone did send me a parcel, who would put in a hot water bottle? I lived on the equator!

Halfway through the afternoon, while I was teaching in the nurses' training school, a message was sent that there was a car at my front door. By the time I reached home, the car had gone, but there, on the verandah, was a large twenty-two pound parcel! I felt tears pricking my eyes. I could not open the parcel alone, so I sent for the orphanage children. Together we pulled off the string, carefully undoing each knot. We folded the paper, taking care not to tear it unduly. Excitement was mounting. Some thirty or forty pairs of eyes were focused on the large cardboard box. From the top, I lifted out brightly coloured, knitted jerseys. Eyes sparkled as I gave them out. Then there were the knitted bandages for the leprosy patients, and the children looked a little bored. Then came a box of mixed raisins and sultanas - that would make a nice batch of buns for the weekend. Then, as I put my hand in again, I felt the . . . could it really be? I grasped it and pulled it out - yes! A brand-new, rubber hot water bottle! I cried. I had not asked God to send it; I had not truly believed that He could. Ruth was in the front row of the children. She rushed forward, crying out, "If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the dolly, too!" Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out the small, beautifully dressed dolly. Her eyes shone! She had never doubted! Looking up at me, she asked, "Can I go over with you, Mummy, and give this dolly to that little girl, so she'll know that Jesus really loves her?"

That parcel had been on the way for five whole months! Packed up by my former Sunday school class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God's prompting to send a hot water bottle, even to the equator. And one of the girls had put in a dolly for an African child - five months before - in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year-old to bring it "that afternoon."

***"Before they call, I will answer!" Isaiah 65:24***  
**This was submitted by Rochelle Inbakumar.**

## **Redbridge Faith Forum Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

Redbridge Faith Forum organised an information sharing event on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June at King George Conference Centre.

The first speaker was Ramesh Verma OBE, the chief executive of the EKTA project based at the Ford centre in Manor Park. EKTA is a charity for befriending, founded in 1986 for older Asian people. EKTA means "unity" or "solidarity".

The second speaker was James Monger of age UK Redbridge. His theme was: "What can I do as an individual?" He emphasised the importance of us all working together and reporting a safeguarding concern to Redbridge Social Services stating that it is a safeguarding concern.

Both speakers have had first hand experience of dealing with elder abuse. They gave practical advice on safeguarding. Following on from Monday's "Creating a safer space" meeting at Becontree Heath Methodist Church, I was able to report on procedures to be followed by our church.

The general feeling was that we all needed to be vigilant and take the correct action if we think something is wrong.

**Susan Ruckes.**



## **This is a reflection by Maralyn I Fawcett – Smith**

"Have I ever really thanked you Lord for the fact that I can see a clear blue sky, a bird in flight, a child upon my knee, a sunset's glow at eventide, a cloud so full and white, the never-ending gratitude – the wondrous gift of sight."

Have I really thanked you, Lord, for the fact that I can hear a bird in song, my children laugh, a spoken word so clear, a welcome knock upon my door, rain on my window pain? It means that I am part of things and have so much to gain.

Have I really thanked you, Lord, for the fact that I can walk a country lane, a city street, meet friends and stop and talk.

To climb upon a hillside and marvel at the view?  
All these things are blessings, gifts sent down by you.

We walk along life's highway, and it seldom stops to say thank you, Lord, for all these gifts so dear to us each day.

**Submitted by Betty Griffiths.**

### **A Happy old age.**

A little more tired at the end of the day,  
A little less anxious to have our own way  
    A little less care for gain or gold  
    A little more zest for the days of old  
    A broader view and a saner mind  
    A little more love for all mankind  
A little more love for the friends of youth  
A little more zeal for established truth  
    A little more charity in our views  
    A little less thirst for the latest news  
    A little more leisure to sit and dream  
    A little more real the things unseen

**Submitted by Betty Griffiths.**

## Diary for July.

<b>Sun</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Church Anniversary Led by Revd. Peter Hudson Followed by a BBQ at The Rodings.</b>
Tue	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8.00pm	Church Fellowship
Sat	7 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Share a skill in the Church Parlour
<b>Sun</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service with holy Communion led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate</b>
Fri	13 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Coffee Morning at The Gardeners Cafe, Valentines Mansion.
Sat	14 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	New Essex Choir Concert
<b>Sun</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Mr Geoffrey Freeman</b>
<b>Thu</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8.00pm</b>	<b>Special Church Council See Circuit Proposal paper</b>
<b>Sun</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Revd. Jan Atkins</b>
Tue	24 <sup>th</sup>	1.00pm	Church Lunch in the Cranbrook Room
<b>Sun</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Church Members</b>



### Diary for August.

<b>Sun</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service With Holy Communion Led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate</b>
<b>Sun</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Church Members</b>
Fri	17 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Coffee morning at the Gardeners Cafe, Valentines Mansion.
<b>Sun</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by Miss Janet Tweedale</b>
Tue	21 <sup>st</sup>	1.00pm	Church Buffet in the Church hall.
<b>Sun</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10.45am</b>	<b>Morning Service led by The Junior Church.</b>

### **Early Warning -- A Date for your Diary**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September – Macmillan Coffee Morning @ The Redbridge Social Centre

### **A Greener Drive**

Please put your waste paper, cardboard, cans and bottles. in the recycling boxes outside the hall kitchen door, where the dustbins used to be kept.

**This document will be discussed at a special church council meeting on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012.**

**Barking Dagenham and Ilford Methodist Circuit**

**Proposed Circuit Policy**

Over a number of years now there have been concerns about the future viability of the Circuit and the maintenance of five Presbyters. In 2011 the decision was taken by the Circuit Meeting that in 2014 the Circuit would reduce staff to 4 Presbyters, at that time the Superintendent also stated that the reduction of staff would also have to come with a reduction of Church buildings.

The two Regrouping for Mission days held in 2011 highlighted concerns over the quality of Worship, concerns over Finance, (although we tried to avoid bringing finances in to our discussions) and a certain blindness to the realities of the situations of our ten churches.

Over recent years, although we have seen growth in the south of the Circuit we have seen continued decline in the north, and overall our Membership across the Circuit has dropped to below 580, there are other Circuits in our own District with only slightly smaller memberships and only one Minister.

At the beginning of this year we were faced with the curtailment of one of our members of staff from the 31<sup>st</sup> July, which has meant that the reduction of staffing will now happen from this year, also the loss of a number of Local Preachers has resulted in an ever growing gap between preachers and appointments on the plan, the changing of Worship times in two churches has been useful but has not solved the problem.

It is obvious to the leadership team that firm decisions must now be taken to reshape the circuit, to reduce the number of Church buildings and ensure that our resources are best utilised. With that in mind the following is now proposed:

**Step 1.** From the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012 Rev Jan Tate will take over Pastoral responsibility for Beacontree Heath. Rev Steve Poole will have Pastoral responsibility for Old Dagenham and Barking Churches.

**Step 2.** From the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 Seven Kings and Goodmayes will merge to create a new Church on the current Goodmayes site, a new name will be chosen for this new congregation and a joint leadership team will be created during the year. A decision about the building at Seven Kings will be taken when the results of the planning application are known.

**Step 3.** From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 Barkingside and Gantshill will merge together, the site for the merger will be discussed between the two Church Councils and the Circuit Leadership team, but will make use of one of the current sites, the new church will have a new name possibly Wesley Methodist Church, a new joint leadership team will be created as soon as possible to oversee the uniting process.

**Step 4.** The future viability of Grangehill will be considered, in the interim, Grangehill will become a class meeting of one of its sister churches easing the leadership responsibilities of the local congregation. The freeing up of resources from the sale of properties could allow us to employ a Church Mission worker for the Grangehill estate to build a new congregation for the church.

**Step 5.** We also believe that a decision will have to be made about the future of Ilford Lane, if the building scheme cannot proceed, then the future viability of the building will need to be considered. There are concerns that the Church has a declining Membership which relies on the lease of the shops and hall space which in itself rests upon one major letting. There are concerns over future leadership within the life of the Church. Possible talks with the Vine could be reconsidered.

**Step 6.** The nurturing of new Worship leaders and Local Preacher's for the Circuit, and improvements in all areas of our worshipping lives.

**Step7.** To assist with the problems faced with filling the appointments on the Plan Churches will be asked to consider the change of Service times.

The reshaping of the Circuit must not just be seen as the reduction of Church buildings but as the way to release resources so that we focus more on the growth of our Circuit Spiritually and numerically and we ensure that the Circuit we have in the future best meets the needs of the communities we serve.

We understand that some of the decisions that we need to take will be upsetting, but we must remember that we are called to be members of the Church of Christ here on earth and that Church is not about buildings but about Worship, Service and Fellowship.

Church Councils will have an opportunity to discuss and vote on the proposals, but we do believe that this is the only way forward through which we can ease the pressure on the Plan, a reduced staff, and strengthen our resources to meet the needs of the future.

**Steve**



**Read your Bible every day**

O Lord,  
As I open my Bible today  
Open my eyes to read your word  
Open my mind to understand your word  
Open my heart to love your word  
Open my life to the working of your Holy Spirit  
That through your word in the Bible  
I may come to a greater love of your Word Jesus.