

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

NEWSLETTER

February 2014



Minister: Revd Bernardino Mandlate

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

OUR MINISTER
REVD. BERNARDINO MANDLATE.

Friends

I hope you had a good festive season, and that God saw you through those days with their ups and downs. I know some families had a good time and others did not have so much of a good time. Audrey Runeckels was called by God to higher services just before Christmas , and that meant her family and friends spent the festive season planning her funeral. Our prayers continue to be with them. Her funeral service was well attended by family and friends and the church family was there too.

The new year is well afoot and the weather has not been consistent. We had too much rain and not so much cold. The USA had too much cold in many areas and it is dry in California. It has been wet here and many families were flooded and continue to live with the possibility of more rain and flooding. Our hearts go to all of those affected by the weather uncertainties.

A new year always begins with new challenges and expectations. I pray that each of us is able to face whatever challenges come our way and our expectations can be met in as much we try to meet the expectations of others from us, God being our helper.

A few churches in the circuit have had to change their service starting times so as to enable ministers and preachers to offer/take more appointments and cut down on 'own arrangements'. It is highly appreciated that The Drive compromised and joined the changes. This has allowed me to spend more time and be more visible with the churches I am responsible for. I am grateful to you all for taking on this challenge and so far it's been working well. I will appreciate any feedback.

One of the challenges we have this year among other things, is to open ourselves more to new comers, people who are joining us and others shopping around for a place of worship. Let us make them feel at home and allow/give space to engage with the life of our church. Let us take on board any suggestions they may bring with them. Church life is passed on from one generation to another and there is no set time when that is supposed to happen. It just happens as we engage and fellowship with each other.

As I write, it's the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It 's a time when church around the world come together, pray together for Christian unity. Some people talk of organic unity which is possible, but generally is about working together for the good of the kingdom of God. We join efforts in pursuing the proclamation of the kingdom of God on earth, sharing resources where possible, caring together for God's creation, otherwise known as the environment.

The more the churches work together, the more the kingdom is proclaimed. Let us play our small part in that endeavour.

May the good Lord continue to bless you all.

Dino

OUR THANKS.

Leslie and myself would like to say thank you for the words of comfort sent to us on the passing of our son Mike.

Josie Jiggins.

AUDREY RONECKLES - 1927-2013

After managing to survive tripping over a pavement and looking like she'd gone a few rounds in the boxing ring, a fractured shoulder after another fall and a tumble down the stairs at her old house; we finally lost our mum to Crohn's disease in December.

Sometimes it's only after seeing the reaction to someone's death that you appreciate how much that person was loved, and we could see how much our mum was loved by the people who knew her and were mourning her passing.

On behalf of the family we'd like to thank everyone for the cards and messages of sympathy that we received after mum's passing. A collection at the church, social centre and other donations raised £580 for The National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease.

Ian, Colin and family

AUDREY RONECKLES EULOGY

I have known Audrey for something over 40 years since Ian and Colin joined the Cubs.

Having originally been members of Gants Hill Church, Bert and Audrey became members of Eastern Avenue Church, as it was

known then, and took an active role in many positions over the years.

Audrey was, for many years, a Pastoral / Class Leader and as a representative of the Pastoral Committee, she also served on the Church Council. The non-committee roles she undertook included being a member of the Catering team, a regular flower arranger, and organiser for the Magnet magazine. She also regularly attended the Women's Meeting, the Church Fellowship and, more recently, Share a Skill.

The Junior Church also had the benefit of Audrey's presence from time to time, as a helper, to enable us to have the appropriate number of adults to conform to the Safeguarding of Children legislation.

Audrey was a staunch supporter, with Bert, of the Scout and Guide Group, particularly when Bert was Chairman, and she also helped Pat in the preparation and serving of the AGM dinners.

Since her failing health she has not been able to carry on with most of these roles, and it is, as a Church, we thank God for Audrey's dedication to all the tasks she undertook.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Audrey for the friendship we have had. Some fifteen years ago, after Bert had died, Pat used to take Audrey to Sainsburys each week to do the shopping. I could never understand how it could take up to 4 hours. When Pat became unwell I started taking them both and then I understood – maybe an hour and a half to do the shopping, stopping from time to time for a chat with other shoppers, and then into the café for a coffee (or two) and more chat!

Brian Grinham

CHRISTMAS AT THE DRIVE.

This year, Christmas has been a delight for a number of us. I will not be able to put everything in detail, but Janet and I have enjoyed the festive season enormously.

Jeremy and his team again transformed the Church by erecting and decorating a Christmas Tree.

The season started with a very enjoyable concert in the Church by The New Essex Choir, just a week before the tree was put up.

During the lead up to the festive period Andrew successfully invited anyone who wanted to join him after the Sunday Services to develop a choir to provide input to our festivities over Christmas and beyond. This group is very successful and has named themselves "The Chorales"(I hope I have spelt it right) Two of those who came forward are two of our young people, Folake and Ololade Fadojutimi, daughters of Olamide, and can be heard on the net under the name "The Fab Sisters".

Jo Wright led a wonderful Nativity was enjoyed and Toy service, which we enjoyed, and the junior church was and is so well led by Jo and her team. Our thanks to all the junior church members and teachers for organising it.

The Carol service was fairly well attended and again led by Bernardino, with the assistance of Andrew, our choir, and the Chorales.

We are very blessed, having Andrew who leads our music, and members who are always willing to help with the practical tasks which make church attendance such an enjoyable experience.

Roy Brunnen.

THE NATIVITY

I would like to thank all the young people at The Drive for yet another wonderful Nativity. We are so lucky to have such a talented bunch!

Their talents were also shown at the Junior Church Christmas party where we had street dancing, poetry, singing, jokes and a piano recital. We also enjoyed a wonderful version of "Father Christmas, he got stuck", by Tobias who is only three and a half.

All of this couldn't take place without the support of parents and carers and of course all the people in the Junior church team, so thank you to them as well.

Jo Wright

JESUS.
WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR
MIGHTY GOD.

On Sunday 8th December 2013 Janet and I attended a "Traditional Carol Service" at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster.

This was organised between the Methodist Church and Premier Christian Radio.

Apart from the tickets indicating that this event was to start at 6pm, it was actually timed for 6.30pm, so with us and many others turning up in good time, there was a long queue from the front door of the hall, along the street and round the corner. This did however have some good points as we had a chance to meet some of the other people from many parts of London and the home counties. We also of course saw a few people from our circuit.

Once inside we found seats upstairs with a good view of the choir and organ.

There were 6 Readings, 8 Carol's, 6 Choir Items, a meaningful sermon from the Revd. Martin Turner, entitled "Certainly not on line".

Prayers from various people, and a reflection from the well known broadcaster Pam Rhodes.

As we approached the final hymn there was a well organised arrangement for the candles handed to us on entry to be lit. Bearing in mind that there were in excess of two thousand of us, that was quite an event in itself.

We then all stood and sang Hark the Herald Angels Sing with all but the necessary lights turned out. This was a wonderful poignant as well as a sight to behold ending to a wonderful service.

We can thoroughly recommend this as a date to watch out for, if it is repeated next Christmas.

Janet and Roy Brunnen

MY CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY IN SRI LANKA

On the night of December 17, Mum, Dad and I flew to Sri Lanka. It was a long 11 – hour flight (yawn!) but we finally made it to the Colombo B.I.A Airport (the landing was scary). The airport was packed with families, cabin crews, passengers and a whole lot of suitcases. Outside, it was suddenly blazing hot!! I can't describe it. We met my grandmother, two cousins and my uncle (my aunties were at work). It was yet another one hour drive from the airport to

my grandmother's home in Colombo. We were in for some fun now! We visited some of our family and friends. I enjoyed going to the beach. And Mummy did a lot of shopping!

On the 22nd, we went to the carol service. My two cousins Ashvin and Herman were singing a song with the Sunday School. Christmas Day was fun. I woke up and received many presents, two necklaces, two pairs of earrings and two books called *Penicillin: A breakthrough in Medicine* and *A sustainable future*. We all went to church – the service there starts at 7.30 a.m.! After the service, everyone was invited for cakes and tea. We went back home and my two aunties cooked us a lovely Christmas lunch. In the evening, we went to the cinema to watch the *Disney film Frozen* in 3D. It was fantastic. I enjoyed Christmas day.

It was the day before our journey back to London (Saturday 28th) and I also had something else to enjoy, we went to Leisure World -a water theme park in Sri Lanka. The water was cool and I slid on the exciting water slides that seemed to go round and round forever, with Ashvin and Herman.

It was leaving day and I hugged everyone and thanked them. There was the usual packing chaos, which I am sure most of you have experienced. It was strange how my sandals appeared from under the shoe rack and my socks were buried at the bottom of my suitcase! The journey back took longer and I was wondering when we'd land. It seemed like forever! We did land later and it took around another hour for my uncle to bring us home. It's true what they say, time flies when you're having fun!

Overall, Christmas 2013 has been fun but now – it's back to reality and back to school. Ho Ho Ho...

Rochelle Inbakumar

FIVE ITEMS FROM SUSAN.

The three Churches Christmas card.

This card, which gives details of services at St Andrew's, St John the Baptist and The Drive Methodist, is a good way of telling the neighbourhood that "We are here"! The greetings have been welcomed by people I have met "on my beat".

Returning home after delivering my first batch, I found that someone had left a card at my house. I used it in the hallway to highlight certain days.

St John the Baptist RC Church had a carol service on Friday 27th December. This service was led by the Parish Priest, Father David Waller. There were familiar Bible readings and Carols. The organist came from St John Vianney – the Church with the unusual roof near Woodford Avenue. The Compton organ came from a cinema in Nuneaton and is often used for organ recitals by very famous people.

The Drive Christmas card board.

For several years, some of us have put one card for the whole congregation on the board, instead of sending individual cards. People from outside The Drive Church also send greetings this way. I hope that next year there will be the chance to do the same again.

Town centre Christmas shop.

Ilford town centre Churches were given the use of a vacant shop in the Exchange shopping centre on the three Saturdays before Christmas. There were activities for children, representatives of different churches to chat to visitors and Joy Sadler had her traidcraft stall. There was a notice board giving details of services and special events. (I made sure that the yellow notice advertising our carol service was displayed prominently!) People would call in for a few minutes or an hour or so. We are grateful for all the Exchange who made these Saturday openings possible and gave us assistance.

Christmas at the Hospital Chapel

On Saturday 28th December there was an excellent Christmas concert given by Chapel End Savoy Players. I usually see them performing Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, so don't always recognise them out of costume. The singing and readings were a pleasure to hear.

On Sunday 29th December there was a Concelebrated Pontifical Mass in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury. A number of Bishops attended as well as the Hospital Chapel chaplain, Father Mervyn Jennings.

The organist of St Margaret's Barking was the music director. Several of us joined the choir of St Mary's (High Road Ilford) to lead the hymns and sing an anthem.

Apart from "The Lord is my Shepherd" sung to "Crimond" most of the words were unfamiliar but sung to fairly familiar tunes.

The service ended without the anthem, but the choir sang it anyway, while the congregation was enjoying some refreshments.

Christmas at Marks Tey, Colchester.

At last Marks Tey Methodist Church is displaying a list of Christmas Services on the notice board. It is not as clear as Frank's lovely notices at The Drive, but it is progress.

The Parliament choir concert was on classic FM on Monday 23rd December leaving Christmas Eve free. I was able to attend the 11.15pm Christmas eve service at Marks Tey Methodist Church, where I always receive a warm welcome.

Peter Sharp and I attended St Andrews Church of England, Marks Tey on Christmas morning. Once again we received a warm welcome.

Susan Ruckes.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Our February meeting is on Tuesday 4th when we are pleased to say that Tim Wright and Tabitha Shepherd-Jones will show pictures of and tell us about the Wanstead High School summer trip to Tanzania to help furnish a school. The meeting begins at 8 00 pm. Refreshments are served.

Even if you don't usually come to these meetings, make an exception this month for what will be an interesting time.

Our next meeting is on May 6th when we shall enjoy another evening of Handbell ringing with Andrew Taylor. These evenings are always great fun!

Frank Sayers

CHURCH TEA PARTIES

The first of our tea parties will be on Tuesday February 18th at 2.30pm, in the church parlour. All are welcome.

Catherine Sayers.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2014.

This year the fortnight runs from 24th Feb to 10th March and there will be activities (centering around food!) up and down the country. We will be marking the occasion with our own event in March, where there will be refreshments, including delicious cake - all offers of baked goods will be gratefully accepted!! Please see me for more information.

Michelle Garner.

WOMEN'S WORLD OF PRAYER

This interesting and informative service is being held in our church on Friday March 7th at 2pm. The country which is the subject of our studies is Egypt. Further details are on posters on the premises. Do come and join us!

Catherine Sayers.

REMINDER

Our 22nd Annual JMA Family Beetle Drive and Tea is on Saturday 15th March 2014. – Save the date.

Diane Foster.

GIFT AID

Towards the end of 2012 The Church Council appointed me as Gift Aid Secretary for the Church, as Frank Sayers was unable to continue because the Methodist Church, through whom he used to claim the refunds on members donated gifts, required them to be submitted via the internet, which Frank did not have.

At that time we decided to claim direct from the Inland Revenue, which, we understood, would speed up the receipt of our refunds, and save us the charge of £1.50 per claimant levied by the Methodist Church for handling the claim. Unfortunately it has taken a long time to get the system set up, but we are now in a position to claim for the last two tax years in the very near future.

Any records of the actual declarations people had signed are not immediately available, and in order to update our records and have them available, should the Revenue require to see them, I shall be asking all those who have signed a declaration to sign a new up-to-date one to keep within our control.

This will, of course, also be an opportunity for anyone else who does not at the moment gift aid their donations to do so if they wish. It

does not cost you anything and, providing you are a taxpayer, the Church can claim back 25 pence for every pound you contribute, from the Inland Revenue.

I will be contacting all our present contributors over the next few weeks, and if you want to join the ranks of our Gift Aiders, please see me.

Brian Grinham, Gift Aid Secretary.

GOD TALKS TO ST FRANCIS

God

Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet?. What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand draught and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expect to see a vast garden of colours by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles.

St Francis

It's the tribes that settled there, Lord, the suburbanites. They started calling your flowers weeds and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

God

Grass? But it's so boring, it's not colourful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

St Francis

Apparently so Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

God

The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

St Francis

Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it – sometimes twice a week.

God

They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

St Francis

Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

God

They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

St Francis

No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

God

Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

St Francis

Yes, Sir.

God

These suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

St Francis

You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

God

What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring and provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground to form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

St Francis

You better sit down, Lord. The suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

God

No? What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

St Francis

After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

God

And where do they get this mulch?

St Francis

They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

God

Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

St Catherine

Dumb and Dumber', Lord. it's a story about.....

God

Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St Francis.

Submitted by John Higgins.

MUSIC MATTERS

Many thanks are due to all those who made the music in our worship over the Christmas season so special, and especially to the Choir and the Chorale (the new name for our all-age singing group). Anyone is welcome to join either of these groups – the Choir practises on Thursday evenings at 7:30 in the Church Parlour (check with me or any choir member which Thursdays!) and the Chorale practises after church services on a Sunday morning when we are preparing for an event. Listen out for details of the Chorale's next venture.

Our Choir will once again be taking part in the annual Small Choirs Festival. This year it is being held at Central Baptist Church in Bloomsbury (235 Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2H 8EP, nearest tube Tottenham Court Road) on Saturday 8th February. We are being joined at our rehearsals by singers from the Ilford Methodist Church,

which is a delight. Anyone is welcome to come along to the service which starts at 5pm and lasts about one hour.

Andrew Taylor

BARBARA FOSTER

As we were about to go to press we received the sad news from Jeremy that Barbara died on Monday 20th January. We extend our sympathy to Peter and all her family.

Barbara was long time editor of the Church Newsletter and would often ring Frank Sayers (who typed her copy) late to fit in a stop press item – so maybe it is fitting that she has the last word this month.

Audrey Taylor

FEBRUARY DIARY

Sun	2nd	11.15am	Morning Service led by Mrs Sharon Grundy
Mon	3 rd	8.00pm	Finance committee meeting
Tue	4 th	8.00pm	Church Fellowship
Thu	6 th	7.30pm	Choir practice
Sat	8 th	5.00pm	Small Choirs Festival
Bloomsbury Baptist Church, London			
Sun	9th	11.15am	Morning Service with Holy Communion. Led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate.
Wed	12 th	8.00pm	Church Life committee
Fri	14 th	10.00am	Coffee Morning in the Gardeners Cafe
			Valentines Mansion
			Pre School term ends
Sun	16th	11.15am	Morning Service led by Revd. Stephen Pool
Tue	18 th	2.30pm	First Church Tea Party in the Church Parlour
Sun	23rd	11.15am	Morning Service led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate
Mon	24 th		Pre School term starts.

**The last day for items to be included in the March newsletter
is February 16th.**