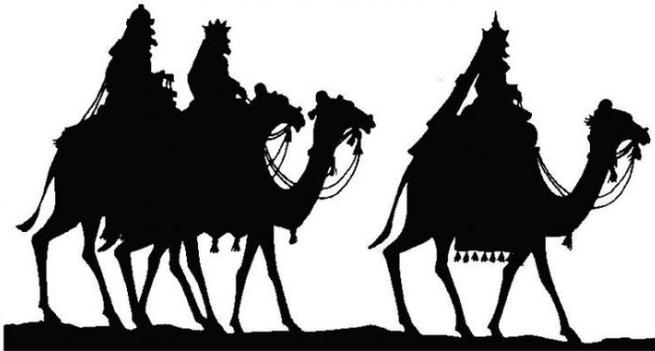


# Circuit News

Wise men  
still seek  
**HIM**



## Calendar

### December

2	Radcliffe on Trent Methodist Church	Advent Fair and Community Cafe
2 & 3	Keyworth	The Bridge Singers perform 'Scrooge' in Church on Sat at 7.30pm & Sun at 3pm – a Keylink event
24	Keyworth	Midnight Christmas Eve Communion 11.30pm
25	Keyworth	Christmas Day worship 10am all welcome

### January

18	Tollerton	Circuit Executive
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### February

8	S Nicholson's	Circuit Steward Meeting
17	Bradmore Community Hall	Pancake Praise

Please send any articles, dates and other information for the March to May 2018 Circuit News to Nikki Geeson by **31<sup>st</sup> January** via email [nottinghamcircuitnews@gmail.com](mailto:nottinghamcircuitnews@gmail.com)

The next edition is expected to be available in churches on **Sunday 18th February**.

**Would you like to get the Circuit News up to a week earlier?**

The Circuit News is also available electronically as a PDF file. If you would like to receive a copy please send an email to [nottinghamcircuitnews@gmail.com](mailto:nottinghamcircuitnews@gmail.com) and you'll receive an electronic copy up to a week before the paper copies arrive.

## From the Superintendent Minister

On the filing cabinet I have souvenir magnet from Sherwood Forest which shows its Major Oak. If the legends are true then Robin Hood hid from his enemies inside it. Even if he didn't it's a fabulous tree. They've estimated that it weighs 23 tons and it is about 1,000 years old - and it's still growing!

Trees have a lesson for us, because we should never stop growing too. We may not want to reach 23 tons or 1,000 years, but physical growth isn't everything. Whatever our age, each of us has the potential to grow as a person: in our experience, in our maturity, in our relationships, in wisdom. It is not just the quantity but the quality of the growth that matters. In the Bible, writing to the church in Ephesus, Paul says that we should grow up healthy in God, robust in love. Healthy, loving growth is something to which we should all aspire.

What goes for people should also be something that we aspire to in our churches. Sometimes good growth will just happen, often it

needs to be encouraged and worked at. In this circuit we want to encourage growth. That is why at the last circuit meeting we approved a new circuit vision statement.

This says that our vision is to become a growing circuit:

- Growing in faith
- Growing in numbers
- Growing in engagement with our communities

The growth of the Major Oak is not the same as the growth of an acorn and what growth looks like in each church will be different, because every church is unique. But I hope that over the course of the coming months, every church will have the opportunity to discuss what growth would look like in their context, and what would need to be done to achieve it. Our next circuit meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March will be open to all who want to share in conversation about how we take things forward together.

In the mean time I wish you all a blessed Christmas and New Year.

Mark

## News from around the Circuit Clifton

### Clear, Clean, Colour

*Skipping* for joy as we completed our much-needed redecorating. Finding items new and old, cleared out the stage and found some interesting things dating back to the dinosaurs (Might be exaggerating) Finding hobby horses, drums and asking superintendent Mark Roberts to remove some (Toy) Muskets, led to some concerned faces from drivers entering the car park. It was not all work and no play, enjoying the possibility of chocolate and fish and chips (Not combined) over lunch breaks we shared interesting anecdotes and viewed old photos from when Sunday school had rules. Occasionally, our leadership team would disappear to have a “Meeting” they promised it wasn’t a cup of tea. After using the advanced electronics fixing method (not kicking and screaming at something to work) we got the speaker loop back on line – Still working on the loop system. Dust was a big issue, so we flooded several buckets and

started scrubbing, after finishing, every wall, floor and window was clean and we stayed dry (Almost). Over the final few days, we popped out the paint and gave the walls a new lease of life whilst using possibly miles of masking tape. The skirting boards were interesting having to lie on the floor and paint sideways on, without falling asleep. For the stage, we could not paint the thin blue line, so we went for yellow instead.

Finishing touches were put in for a few weeks after the clear-out, we varnished the floor and welcomed the arrival of the new Hobbit coloured chairs (blue) – They’re very comfy... Come and try. Big thanks to everyone who supported the clear out, either physically or mentally.

Our next mission if we wish to accept it!  
is our all-inclusive nativity, bound to include a ton of laughs and interesting cast?

James

## News from around the Circuit Bradmore

Our Harvest Festival, Supper and Auction was again a very happy event and we raised over £320 for the Friary Drop-In Centre – many thanks to all who came to join us! The auction as usual caused considerable amusement, and after determined bidding carrots reached an all-time high! Now we are turning our attention to boosting our own church funds after an expensive year refurbishing chairs and chapel windows, so we are holding an evening of reminiscences about former village people and way of life on Remembrance Day, including snippets from the Randalls' farm diary of the late 1800s, tales from the village Constables' records of the 1700s, and closing with an extract from George Randall's recollections in his booklet "Village Changes". We are hoping for a good turnout! Thanks to Andy and Simon, the new Super Saturday toddler group has had a brilliant launch and after 2 sessions we are getting into the bacon-baps and toddler toys-and-praise routine. The next session is on December 16<sup>th</sup> and then we settle into a regular 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday slot, 9:30-11:00. All toddlers and carers welcome. On 17 February

the toddlers group will be followed by Pancake Praise, our annual fling including pancake tossing. We had a very special Chapel Anniversary service on 28<sup>th</sup> October, when we welcomed four of eight new members to our church's membership. In our small village community, this almost doubles our numbers and reflects the growth in our congregations over the past two years. It is a delight to acknowledge the dedication and support of good friends from the village community with a formal welcome into our church's family. (And we can do it all over again with the other four of the eight who weren't able to come on the 28<sup>th</sup>.) The usual round of carol service, carol-singing around the village with the Salvation Army, and joining with Bunny St Mary's for their carol service is enhanced this year by our first Christingle service which will be on Christmas Eve, in our normal 10:15 morning service. Then before we know it we will be into spring, and we already have the date for our 2018 Rainbows Quiz Evening – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, at 6:45 in Bradmore Community Hall. Be sure to put the date into your new 2018 diary!

## News from around the Circuit Ruddington

The new Methodist year began with a successful Holiday Club just before the children went back to school, based on the film 'Finding Nemo' and telling the 'Lost and Found' stories of Jesus. The First Steps Toddler group meets on a Thursday morning, introducing the little ones to the Christian faith with action songs, Bible stories and craft, followed by fruit, a drink and free play. About 20 babies and children attend each week. The Tuesday Toddler group is a free-play morning, with toys brought out on a rota system. Women's Fellowship and Men's fellowship have started up again, with interesting speakers and activities, and the monthly 'Explorers' Bible Study group has been studying Mark's gospel. Saturday's Coffee Morning is always well-attended by people from the church and the village. 'Impact', the Youth Club, meets every Thursday evening, staffed by Youth workers and volunteers from the three village churches, including Andy, who is

also a leader in First Steps and the Tuesday Toddler group. We had a wonderful Harvest weekend, with a splendid lunch prepared for us by Ruddington W.I. followed by delightful entertainment from 'The Pink Notes', four ladies making their debut as a concert group. This year's theme for decorating the Church was 'Farming', and some interesting (and rather dangerous-looking!) old tools were on display among the model sheep, ducks, scarecrows, plentiful fruit, vegetables and tinned/boxed goods! The food was taken to the Friary afterwards. Simon gave us much to think about in his Harvest Service. Now we look forward to the late Autumn and Winter events - Ruddington Christmas Fair will take place from 12 noon until 5 on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, when our Church will have stalls and refreshments - all are very welcome! We thank God for our Church and community, and for opportunities for worship and service.

## News from around the Circuit Radcliffe on Trent

Our Harvest festival weekend was really good with workshops on the Saturday afternoon in preparation for Sunday worship which was led by Mark.

We had a successful Barn dance on the Saturday evening of the Church Anniversary weekend, followed by a service on Sunday morning led by Simon.

Half-term week saw us starting to improve the premises by gardening, tidying, clearing, painting and DIY etc.

At the time of writing, preparations are taking place for an Art Exhibition on Saturday 28th/Sunday 29th October in aid of Church funds.

The Nottingham South Circuit month of prayer will be starting here in Radcliffe at 8.30am on

Saturday 4th November with a prayer breakfast followed by a time of prayer.

A group of leaders and young people aged 8 to 23 from this church and others in our circuit will be heading to Southport on November 24<sup>th</sup> to November 26<sup>th</sup> for 3Generate.

The Advent fair will take place on Saturday 2nd December from 9.30. - 12 noon - in conjunction with Community cafe.

Our usual Christmas services will take place on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, then on Sunday 31st December we will join in worship with our Anglican friends at St Mary's.

Please pray for our church as we seek God's will for the future.

## News from around the Circuit - Keyworth

All of our church committees have now met and reported to Church Council. In our discussions and reports it is considered all is well with property, finance, worship and ministry etc. However, we know that developing discipleship and spreading the gospel is an integral part of our mission. The Circuit Vision is our vision - that we will grow in faith, grow in numbers and engage with our community. By growing our own faith, we can use this to more confidently engage with individuals and our community. While faith development at Keyworth is primarily achieved in Sunday worship and the availability of the Prayer Group and Time to Discover, we feel we should commit to searching for other initiatives. One of these is the programme being developed by our ministers of 'Intentional Faith Development' and we look forward to being involved with this as we look for ways to engage with new members and bring them fully into the life of the church.

Discussion of the Circuit Vision Statement agreed that while our church falls into the category of "a church that is already healthy and needs continued growth" we should not be complacent. We are fortunate to have growing numbers, growing engagement with our community, a concern for

world issues reflected in disaster relief and our support for the charity Self Help Africa. But we are aware that there is a need for continued encouragement for potential, new and existing members to grow in faith and spirituality. The proposed Keyworth Churches Together Ecumenical Alpha course may become part of this.

Also in our discussions we noted that one of the elements of growing churches is that we should be welcoming churches and it was felt this is the case at Keyworth, as some new members commented how welcome they were made when they first attended. We pray this may be the start of further growth at Keyworth.

To paraphrase a well-loved hymn 'Lead us O thou great Jehovah as we pilgrim through this broken world,

We are weak but you are mighty  
direct our faith with thy powerful hand'

November was a month of prayer in the circuit with a prayer event being held at each church. This was in response to the Presidents Day of Prayer and Fasting. Our Prayer Group meeting on Thursdays in November was open to all who wished to pray for others, the life and witness of the church and the vision of the circuit.



Nottingham & Derby District

*District Youth Event*

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**28.01.2018**

at Arnold Methodist Church

[Next Stop: Arnold Methodist Church...](#)

Well, nearly. Just a couple of small things like 3Generate and Christmas to overcome first... But then we'll be in Arnold!

Last time round in Clifton we were really encouraged by the turn out from across the District - from Ashbourne to Grantham and many a place in between - with representation from 50% of the Circuits within our District. The

120+ of us who gathered enjoyed getting to know each other, plenty fun and games, pizza, and a good time of teaching and worship.

On Sunday 28th January we're hoping to repeat and improve the great time we had together.

Details are still to be finalised, but it's likely we'll be meeting from 4.30pm, starting with some games, crafts and activities. At 5.30pm we'll aim to eat together - be sure to let us know how many people are coming with you so we can cater accordingly... (The more the merrier, but you know what they say about hungry young people and their leaders...)

From 6pm we'll be gathering for:

- Worship: Which will be led by the youth band from Arnold Methodist Church;
- Discussion groups: Based on the themes which will be coming out of this month's 3Generate gathering in Southport;
- Teaching: To encourage us and our young people

We'll finish up the evening around 7.45pm.

RSVP to let us know if you and your group will be joining us for any or all of the event, how many we need to cater for, and if there are any dietary requirements.

We're looking forward to seeing you there

## News from around the Circuit West Bridgford

Messy Church – not normally two words that go together in many people’s experience, but in ours now, at West Bridgford, these two words are forming part of our exciting and outreaching ministry! For the uninitiated, Messy Church has four fundamental elements. Just like church on a Sunday, worship and fellowship are important parts. Added to these, we have creative time with a number of craft activities- some of which can be quite messy! These are all based around a theme which is then developed further in our celebration of worship. At the end of the celebration, which includes a story, songs and prayer, we share a meal together and of course spend plenty of time chatting!

To date, we have held two Messy Church services. Our first one was on the theme of New Beginnings when we heard the story of Noah and his Ark. We made a massive rainbow (not quite as big as the

real thing!) and all sorts of other crafts, including doves, animal masks and edible arks! We welcomed many new families into our church and the atmosphere was so ‘alive and buzzing’!

Our second Messy Church was on the theme of ‘I am the Light of the World!’ Jesus describes himself as the light for the world and we encouraged the children to take Jesus’ light with them, wherever they go. Our craft activities included lanterns, stained glass windows and glittery stars, all of which help to make our church shine with the light of Jesus.

On each occasion we have shared a delicious meal, which has been a marvellous feat by our catering team, making sure that everyone was fed and watered!

All in all, it has been very uplifting to see how members of our church have worked and grown together to welcome so many into this new and exciting and purposeful ministry.



### **Being a Circuit Steward – what's it all about?**

We've started a new Methodist year in September and, with each new year, we have a change of some of our circuit officers. This year Margaret, Chris and Ann have stood down as circuit stewards, and Douglas has relinquished the role of Manses & Property Steward. In their place, we have welcomed Steve and Nikki as new circuit stewards, and John as our Manses Steward. We are grateful for those who have given their time in helping the circuit run efficiently over recent years, and are delighted that Steve, Nikki and John have felt called to join the circuit team of volunteers . . . . . However, we still have room for more and continue to invite anyone who would like to get more involved in the life of the church and circuit to prayerfully consider what they could offer.

Three years ago, we provided an article in Circuit News aiming to give readers a better appreciation of what being a circuit steward involves. We thought it would be helpful to repeat this but giving a little more of the context of how we fit in to the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Many of you may have a good idea already, but it is surprising how often we find people's knowledge is more limited than expected, and also, we know we have new members who perhaps have come from a different Christian denominational background, or even no regular background at all. So hopefully this article will help set the context and explain the role of a circuit steward.

### **The Methodist Church – where do we fit in?**

The Methodist Church in Great Britain is still organised in a methodical way using many of the structures introduced by its founder, John Wesley, but believes in consultation and making changes where desirable.

Methodists are linked together in a 'Connexion' of churches, circuits and districts and led by The Methodist Conference which meets annually and is the supreme decision-making body.

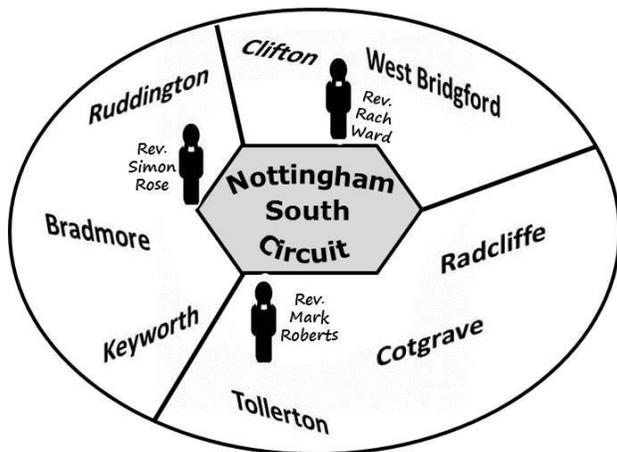
- Each local **church** is the congregational place of worship, where Methodist members and attenders are nurtured.
- A group of local churches form a **circuit** and are served by a team of local preachers and ministers including the superintendent minister.
- A geographical group of circuits are served by a **district** team, led by the district chair.
- The Methodist Conference meets in different places around the country each June/July. At the start of Conference, a new President and Vice-President are appointed to preside over that Conference and spend the year travelling around the Connexion, and abroad representing the Methodist Church.
- Currently, there are 31 districts, 368 circuits and just over 4,500 churches in Great Britain

## The Methodist Conference

### The Districts

### The Circuits

### The Local Churches



We are part of the Nottingham South Circuit consisting of eight churches – West Bridgford, Radcliffe, Keyworth, Cotgrave, Riddington, Tollerton, Bradmore and Clifton\* (\*including Gotham). The circuit is served by our 3 ministers (or presbyters) - Mark (superintendent), Rach and Simon – each having

their own section to look after.

Our circuit is part of the Nottingham & Derby district which is made up of 16 circuits and 220 churches / worshipping fellowships. Currently our Chair of District, Rev. Loraine is President of the Methodist Conference.

The Circuit is led by our Superintendent Minister, Mark, through a leadership team - the Circuit Executive – which is made up of the ministers, circuit secretary, circuit treasurer and several circuit stewards. This group meet to review current status and plan strategies for facilitating and encouraging mission throughout the circuit.

The trustees of the circuit are members of the Circuit Meeting. These include the members of the Circuit Executive and key representatives from each of the circuit churches. Proposals from the Circuit Executive are raised, discussed, and actions taken, through the Circuit Meeting who are the decision-making body of the circuit.

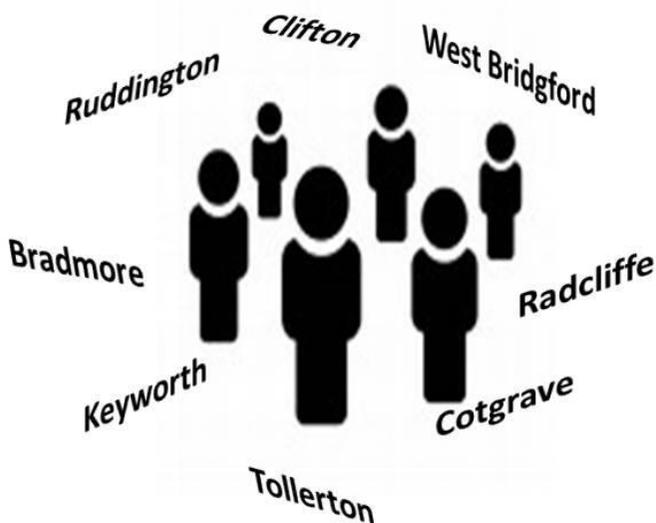
### **Who are circuit stewards?**

Circuit stewards come from various churches in the circuit and help bring different perspectives and skills to the leadership team to support the paid and lay staff, and share some of the work needed to help make the circuit run effectively. It's a voluntary role but very rewarding as it brings you into the heart of what the circuit is doing and how we seek to improve our outreach and mission in the coming months and years.

### **So, what does a circuit steward have to do?**

Normally we have 6 circuit stewards plus a Manses Steward, Circuit Secretary and Circuit Treasurer, as well as an HR adviser who ensures we meet all connexional and legislative requirements for our circuit paid staff. We are currently two

stewards short as we only have 5 circuit stewards and have been without a Circuit Treasurer since September 2016.



The role of a circuit steward involves:

- Attending meetings of the Circuit Executive (6 p.a.) and Circuit Meeting (3 p.a.)
- Supporting churches by attending their church council meetings to listen and update them on circuit matters, and also to be aware of church's activities and support these
- Providing pastoral care for circuit staff and volunteers, and their families
- Keeping up to date with the finances of the circuit, which is led by the Circuit Treasurer
- Keeping up to date with the status of church manses, which is led by the Manses Steward
- Being involved with the invitation process for new ministers or a minister's request for an extension to their ministry (the normal period is 5 years).

After a new minister is appointed, facilitating their move into the Circuit and providing support as they get established.

- Planning circuit services and circuit events to help promote fellowship and mission across the circuit churches

### **Could I be a circuit steward?**

Circuit stewards work together as a team and, as in most good teams, a mix of skills, experiences and attributes are needed – not everyone is the same and have all of these to offer! As a team, we share out the responsibilities for who attends each church council and who oversees the pastoral care responsibilities for staff and volunteers.

So what do I need? Being a circuit steward means you should:

- be a member of the *Methodist Church*\* (\*please discuss if interested, but not a member)
- have a Christian faith, and a keen desire to support initiatives for outreach and mission
- have integrity, personal credibility, and commitment to work voluntarily for the Circuit

- be able to lead when necessary, but also work collaboratively within the Circuit team
- be willing to meet and create friendships and relationships with others across the Circuit and promote the benefits of being circuit-minded
- be able to listen with understanding and sensitivity, as well as convey information
- be enthusiastic and positive in your approach to helping the Circuit in mission
- be willing to learn on the job!

In addition, it is also helpful – but not essential - if someone thinking about being a circuit steward:

- has some awareness of business functions (e.g. finance, computer literacy, HR) (*although as part of a team, we don't all have to have the same level of skills*)
- has some knowledge of Methodism (although we all feel we learn more as we go along!)
- is keen to share their vision and ideas and has a desire to help shape the future direction of our circuit
- is flexible, accepting of change and adaptable while keeping focused on the vision

### **What sort of commitment is it?**

Circuit stewards normally take on the role for a period of six years, acting as Senior Steward during the fifth year and supporting the new Senior Steward in their last year. The aim is that as one steward retires, another steward comes on board each year – usually from September –although we have struggled recently to find new volunteers.

Being a circuit steward doesn't take up a huge amount of time but, like most activities and jobs, it depends upon how much you want to get out of it and therefore how much you are willing to put into it!

All of our churches benefit from the shared staff and resources that the circuit provides and being part of the team that helps make the circuit work more effectively and harmoniously is an important and rewarding role. Gaining a better understanding of how our circuit brings together and uses its resources for mission and growth, and being able to influence this, can be a very fulfilling and worthwhile use of your time.

### **Is it for me?**

Only you can decide but there are plenty of people that you can ask about the role should you be interested - either now, or sometime in the future.

If your interest lies in handling finance, we would welcome and encourage you to find out more about the stewardship of the circuit's funds and the role of Circuit Treasurer.

We all benefit from the smooth operation of our circuit and it would not be able to function if it were not for the support of its circuit stewards. So, if you feel it is something you want, or feel you ought, to volunteer for and would like to find out more about the role, please talk to Mark, Simon or Rach or one of the current circuit stewards (*for details see the Preaching Plan in this edition*).

### **Finally, . . .**

If you feel unsure about whether or not you could be, or want to be, a Circuit Steward, then it is always good to pray. You may find this prayer a useful starting point

Lord

I am blessed with many skills, talents and abilities for which I thank you.

I am called to share your love and grace with those around me.

I am encouraged to support and nurture others as they journey through Christian life.

Help me now to know if being a Circuit Steward is the right way for me to serve you and the community in which I live and worship.

Amen

### **Malcolm**

*Circuit Steward*



## **METHODIST WOMEN in BRITAIN**

During the **CIRCUIT EASTER OFFERING SERVICE 6.30pm at Radcliffe on Sunday 21st May 2017** we were encouraged to 'Shine like stars' in our own communities, and discover the light of Christ in others, featuring stories from Brazil, Ghana and Pakistan, supported by the World Mission Fund.

At our **DISTRICT DAY on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2017** at Ashbourne Road Methodist Church, Derby we were inspired by a talk from Chandra about the Derby Churches' Rolling Night Shelter and other projects organised by Derby City Mission to raise awareness of, and help the plight of homeless people in and around Derby. 7 churches open in turn one night each week to provide a hot meal, a bed for the night on the church floor, and breakfast, from 1<sup>st</sup> December to 31<sup>st</sup> March. 25 people, aged 18 and over, can be accommodated each night and last winter 265 different people were helped. As well as the practical help and support, friendship and a listening ear have resulted in lives being transformed, some coming to faith, and most being found accommodation. But there are always new people to serve, since the 'Homeless' budget by Derby

City Council has been cut by 85% since 2013.

Our afternoon speaker at our **District Day on 17<sup>th</sup> October** at St John's Church Carlton was Barbara whose energy and enthusiasm inspired us as she recounted the background and development of the National Council for Women and her involvement with it. Their campaigns and concerns are parallel to those of MWiB, but unlike us they have been able to engage successfully with younger women, and in Nottingham have a close association with the Girl's High School for example.

### **DIARY DATES**

**District Day Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 at Ashbourne Road Methodist Church, Derby;** Coffee, devotions and business meeting from 10am, speaker at 11.30 Dean from All We Can.

**Willersley Week 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018;** speaker Sandra Goodwin, national President of MWiB.

**Swanwick Residential Conference 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2018**

**District Day 18<sup>th</sup> July 2-18** at Ashbourne Methodist Church with commissioning of new District President Sue.

## Can You Find a New Circuit Manse?

No - this isn't a new Christmas game to keep folks amused over the festive period. (... *Though it could be!*)

A small Task Group has been assigned to identify and purchase a manse to replace the one recently sold in Ruddington.

Can you help?

Are you aware of any properties available for purchase that might be suitable as a new manse?

The main requirements are 4 bedrooms, 2 receptions, study, garden and parking.



Ideally located in Keyworth, Ruddington, Tollerton or Bradmore.

If you have any observations, thoughts or recommendations please contact Steve

Your help is always appreciated. Thank You.

Steve



Funds for the  
Opening Doors  
Community  
Engagement  
Project

# "A Christmas Journey"

## Christmas Fayre

Saturday 2nd December

10:30am-2pm

Begin your Christmas Journey with us!  
Contemporary visuals, Craft activities,  
Nativity displays and lots of trees!

Light lunches available from 12 noon, mince  
pies and a cuppa anytime. Gifts, Cakes and  
Tombola and much more...

Church open for Viewing

Saturday 9th December  
& Saturday 16th December

10:30am—12 noon.

**Cotgrave Methodist Church**  
 **Bingham Road**

