

As I get older, time seems to get faster by the day, September has come around again and a new Methodist year is upon us. It is in this Connexional year we prepare to say goodbye to John Swarbrick and give thanks for his ministry amongst us over the last 13 years. We continue to support and pray for Ken Kingston as we look forward to his anticipated Ordination at Conference 2020 and offer our warmest congratulations and prayers to Jonathan Hustler and Ruth Gee on their new responsibilities in the roles of Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Conference. We are so blessed in this Circuit to have the support and wisdom of such great colleagues from the Connexional Team.

I offer my thanks to everyone across the Circuit for engaging so positively in the special MAP (Mission Action Plan) Strategy service which took place in every Church over our rather hot and sticky summer. All the feedback received will be collated and analysed by the staff team, CLT (Circuit Leadership Team) and CM (Circuit Meeting) and an integrated Circuit Mission Strategy will be formed. Please pray for this.

There are so many wonderful activities and events happening all across our Circuit. It is such a joy and privilege to come and visit the Churches and gain an insight of all these great things. I am so encouraged and give thanks to everyone and encourage you all to keep up the good work.

In this quarter there are 2 Circuit Celebration Services planned to demonstrate how over the years God has worked in amazing ways across the Circuit. On 29th September at Wealdstone, 6pm, we will be giving thanks for the work of a Local Preacher and commending Helen on her dedicated service to our Circuit. On 13th October we will be having a Thanksgiving and Celebration Service at South Ruislip at 3pm as they prepare to cease worship. I warmly encourage you to support both of these services as we seek to give thanks for all that God calls us to as a Circuit and share in fellowship together.

I wish to pay tribute to the ministerial staff team who work tirelessly on your behalf, do please encourage them in their ministries. Americans hold a “thank your pastor month” (in October) as it is recognised that ministry is tough and demanding. A kind word, thought or act of encouragement goes a long way.

Finally, I am reminded of that scripture from Matthew 9: 35 – 38 which says that:

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

This scripture often appears true, but as we faithfully labour in the Lord’s Vineyard remember we are working towards building a United Church for a United Kingdom (of God). As Methodists, but ultimately as we serve across boundaries both theological, geographical, denominational and otherwise, we find more unites us in Christ than divides us; so as we look to the future let us hold firm to the promise especially in this season of harvest, that we bear fruit and yield crops for God’s eternal purposes. It is in Jesus Christ, we have our hope and our future, and whatever happens that truth will never change.

This year, this harvest and in this circuit may the Lord of the Harvest, be our guide, our lead and our ever-loving presence,

Every blessing in His Name,

Andrew