

July 2019

## Circuit Newsletter ... Issue 4

Good news! The Methodist Conference in June finally approved the formation of the South Warwickshire Circuit, from 1st September 2019. In this issue, we are delighted to welcome Rev Mark Rowland to the Circuit, David Witham as the new Circuit Treasurer, and to profile Rev Barbara Greenwood. Our main feature is the Gold Eco Award for Stratford, the first Methodist Church in Britain to gain this accolade.

*There is still time to send in feedback about your logo preference (mwc.katetennyson@gmail.com, 07578 640013).*

### Gold Eco Award for Stratford

Stratford-Upon-Avon church has become the first Methodist Church in the country to receive the top Gold Eco-Church award from A Rocha. A Rocha is an environmental charity which encourages churches to make changes to improve their climate impact and take action for the environment.

Stratford Church started the Eco-Congregation programme in 2003 and was given 3 awards in the following 12 years. In 2014, the building was

refurbished with the aim to be more energy efficient, successfully reducing the carbon footprint of the church premises from 40 to 16 tonnes CO2 annually. The church has also installed solar panels, a



*The photo shows Lim Ho from Stratford Church receiving the Gold Award from Rev Jennifer Potter*

ground source heat pump and a rainwater harvesting system to flush the toilets.

Church members are particularly proud of their wild flower garden which they developed on a small strip of land behind the church building to encourage biodiversity.

Stratford Church are instrumental in the Stratford Climate Action Network and were joint organisers of the Stratford Climate Action Day in June.

### Warwick University Chaplain

Warwick University are delighted to announce the appointment of a new Free Church Chaplain —Rev Mark Rowland.

Mark will also undertake doctoral study with the University of Leeds exploring 'a queer theology of holiness'. As a Stonewall Faith role model and active campaigner for LGBT+ equality within the church, Mark is well placed

to help Warwick University build on their inclusion, engagement and wellbeing priorities. Mark has recently moved into Whitnash manse with his partner Rev Sam McBratney, and we look forward to seeing him leading worship in the Circuit.

**The Welcome Service for Mark will be at Warwick University on Wednesday 16th October at 3:30pm.**

**Rev Peter Powers'** 5 year appointment in the Mid-Warwickshire Circuit is due to finish in August 2020. After prayerful consideration Peter has decided not to seek an extension, but will enter stationing to look for a new appointment elsewhere. Likewise the Mid-Warwickshire Circuit, soon to be the South Warwickshire Circuit, will enter the stationing process to find a new Superintendent from September 2020.

Meanwhile, over the next year, Peter will be leading the development of the new circuit as planned and would like to reassure you that he will devote his full energy and attention to making it a success. Please hold Peter, Deborah and the girls in your prayers.

### Meet Rev Barbara Greenwood



Hello! I have been a minister since 2007 and joined the Mid-Warwickshire circuit in 2016 with responsibility for Warwick, Whitnash and Wellesbourne churches.

I see my role as encouraging churches and individuals to keep God at the centre of their thinking while attempting to cope with

the challenges of being church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Structures and processes are the servants of mission, not its master!

I believe welcome and acceptance are key, even if that sometimes makes us uncomfortable.

I am married to David, who is also a presbyter. He works part-time as the chaplain at MHA Cedar Lodge and also volunteers at Myton Hospice and Warwick Town Council. We enjoy music and theatre and are delighted to be stationed so close to the RSC and Warwick Arts Centre.

### Introducing David Witham—our new Circuit Treasurer



I have been worshipping at Northgate, Warwick since late 1987 having moved to the town on getting

married that August. Being a recently retired Chartered Accountant was probably a significant factor in being asked to take on the job of Treasurer for the new circuit. Over the years I have had quite a bit of exposure to church and charity accounting, so I won't be allowed to put down my abacus quite yet. In my spare time I like walking and fiddling with cars. Of the 9 circuit walks so far, I have done 6 which may put me in the lead!

### ... And speaking of the walks...

The number attempting each walk has varied (between 7 and 18 including David!). The walks have been enjoyable, not least as a chance to get to know people from other churches. It has been heartening to see additional people joining in with the worship parts of the walk. And the refreshments for the walkers have been superb!

Do remember our final walk between Wellesbourne and Stratford on **Saturday 7th September, starting at 2 pm**, the day before the Circuit Opening Service on 8th September at 3 pm.