



The **Methodist Church**  
South Warwickshire Circuit



## September 2019 Circuit Newsletter ... Issue 5

### The South Warwickshire Circuit now exists!

**Welcome** to the first newsletter of the new circuit. We cover the opening service in this newsletter, introduce one of our circuit stewards and feature Mickleton Church.

The Circuit Meeting on 12 September agreed a process for selecting a logo for the new circuit. You may have noticed that a third has crept into the panel at the top of the newsletter. Please consider these and write your comments on the A3 sheet put up in your church. These will be passed to the Circuit Leadership Team who will make a recommendation to the December Circuit Meeting, where a decision will be made.

### Circuit opens with celebration worship



The opening of the South Warwickshire Circuit was marked with celebration worship at Stratford Methodist Church on 8 September, with the congregation spilling into the Wesley Hall.

Chair of the Birmingham District, Rev. Ian Howarth, delivered a sermon

focusing on new beginnings and attitudes to change.

The K4 band led worship in song, the Stratford choir sang an introit, and all the circuit ministers took part in the service, which included The Lord's Supper. The collection raised almost £700 for MND, our circuit charity for the year.

### Introducing Kath Fraser—Circuit Steward



I had completed my full term of service as a circuit steward but was asked to take another year to cover the transition from Stratford

and Evesham Circuit into the new South Warwickshire Circuit. My role as a circuit steward has focused on the practical side of the job e.g. circuit celebrations, supporting all the smaller congregations, visits to places of

interest, organising an interesting and varied day for a large group of refugees and asylum seekers from Birmingham, plus organising Synod held in Stratford this year. I also support the presbyters and welcome new members of the leadership team.

My other interests include gardening, craft work, and as member of Samaritans, answering the phones and, as a face-to-face 'Sam', promoting the organisation in Warwick and Stratford Hospitals.

## MICKLETON METHODIST CHURCH :

*We believe in Faith in Action*

The roots of Mickleton Methodist Church go back to 1812, but the foundation stones of the existing chapel were not laid until 1891. At that time the Society had only 14 members – much the same as the congregation today – though in between times numbers rose to more than 50 with a Sunday School of more than 30 children.

Today, we do all we can to keep the church alive. A lively Church Fellowship meets on Thursday afternoons, and we host 'Open

House' – a Bible-based interdenominational discussion group - every month.

Despite our small numbers, we have recently achieved a Silver Eco Church Award for our



active concern for creation.

We have also converted the large lawn at the rear of the church into a community wildlife garden. We leafleted the entire village – almost 1,000 houses – and volunteers and church members worked together to raise the necessary funding. Now the garden attracts an

increasing number of visitors from church and community for picnics, relaxation and recreation.

We look forward to sharing ideas, listening to new preachers, and making new friends as we journey forward together in the new circuit.

### “Church Without Walls” is child’s play in Leamington



Dale Street Church took up the call to be “Church Without Walls” by taking the Gospel out to the local park in a “Summer of Play”.

With council permission, a team of volunteers led by Children and Families Missioner, Michael Sharman, ran a play and crafts area next to the playground in Victoria Park two mornings a week for five weeks. Families were also invited to a free lunch at the church.

Over the ten sessions 865 children and their parents took part, some responding to advertising on Facebook (which had engaged 24,000 people).

Michael said: “This was the start of an exciting new period of outreach to our local community. All families accessing the play provision were handed a leaflet outlining our autumn term programme of activities, including a new Saturday afternoon group called “Take 2”, which promises to do church differently through art, craft, play and of course – food!

“We wait to see the results of this, but we have certainly succeeded in putting ourselves firmly on the map with many families, and shown the love of God in a real and practical way.”



#### And Finally ...Inter-Church Walks

The walks have finished. Well done to those who took part physically or spiritually—and thanks to those who provided refreshments. Look out for other circuit initiatives.