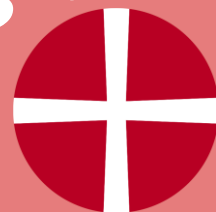


Southend & Leigh CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER



Winter Edition 2025

First Quarter

Contents

- Celebrations
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- Church Activities
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Welcome to our Circuit

We are a group of 15 Methodist Church fellowships, including a Zimbabwean fellowship, on 16 sites in the southeast corner of Essex. Our Circuit also incorporates 'Westerley', a Christian care home.

Our churches provide traditional services alongside an increasing number of contemporary and family-friendly expressions of worship.

We have a growing sense of service and mission to our communities, with a desire to love our Lord, and our neighbours.



FOLLOW / CONTACT US



[Southend and Leigh Circuit Facebook Page](#)

[Southend and Leigh Circuit Website](#)



What is the Covenant Service?

The covenant service, often celebrated on the first Sunday of the year, is at the heart of Methodists' devotion and discipleship, and our dedication in working for social justice.

In the service the Church joyfully celebrates God's gracious offer that He loves us unconditionally, no strings attached.

The Covenant is the means of grace by which we accept the relationship and then seek to sustain it - not acquiring a relationship with God but living in it.

Where did it begin?

The Covenant was key to John Wesley's understanding of discipleship as a Christian. He believed that we need to not only accept a relationship with God but also to grow in that relationship.

He saw a need for a regular opportunity for people to open themselves to God more fully. He looked for a way to help them to hear God's offer and challenge ever more deeply, and to allow God to prompt and enable them to respond.

The Covenant is not a contract in which God and human beings agree to provide particular goods and services for each other.

God's gracious offer to us is also a challenge. Are we prepared to commit ourselves in return to God and how can we manage to live out our commitment adequately, frail and human as we are?



Circuit Calendar 2025

JANUARY

Sat 4th – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Mon 6th – Epiphany

Fri 10th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Sun 12th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Tue 14th – CLT, 7.30pm, Zoom

Wed 22nd – Wholeness & Wellbeing Service, 7.45pm, Zoom

FEBRUARY

Sat 1st – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Wed 5th – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sun 9th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Wed 12th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

MARCH

Sat 1st – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Wed 5th – Ash Wednesday

Wed 5th – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sun 9th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Wed 12th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Wed 12th – CLT, 7.30pm, Zoom

Thu 20th – Circuit Meeting, 7.30pm, Zoom

Wed 26th – Local Preacher's Meeting, Canvey Methodist Church

Sun 30th – Mothering Sunday

APRIL

Wed 2nd – Worship Academy, 7pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Sat 5th – Circuit Prayer Meeting, 8.30am, Zoom (details available from Circuit Office)

Wed 9th – Minister's Staff Meeting, 2pm

Sun 13th – Gospel Vespers 7pm for 7.30pm, The Fisherman's Chapel

Sun 13th – Palm Sunday

Thu 17th – Maundy Thursday

Fri 18th – Good Friday

Sun 20th – Easter Sunday

Wed 23rd – Wholeness & Wellbeing Service, 7.45pm, Benfleet Methodist Church

Churches Mid-Week Activities / Events

BELFAIRS METHODIST CHURCH

Boys Brigade – Mondays, Anchor 5:30pm, Junior 6:30pm, Company 7:30pm
Badminton -Tuesdays, 8pm
Parent & Toddlers – Wednesdays, 10am
Girls Brigade – Wednesdays, Explorers & Juniors 5:30pm, Seniors & Brigaders 7pm
Thirsty For? (Café Worship) - second Thursday of the month, 7pm
A.C.T.I.O.N. (Fellowship) - fourth Thursday of the month, 2pm



BENFLEET METHODIST CHURCH

Bible Study - Thursdays, 3.30pm
Wesley Art Group - Mondays, 7.30pm in Wesley Hall
Light Worship - third Tuesday of the month, 12noon
Sunday Lunch - second Sunday of the month, 12.30pm (book in advance with John Stokes at johnstokes660@yahoo.com)
Coffee Mornings - Monday-Saturday, 10am to 12 noon (with a Beading Craft session on Wednesdays)
Ladies' Thursday Club - first Thursday of the month, 7.45pm
Women's Fellowship - first and third Wednesdays of the month, 2.30pm
Wives' Club - Tuesdays, 1.45pm
Benfleet Hope Group - Mondays, 10am-2pm
Messy Church - third Saturday of the month, 3.30pm-5.30pm
Little Bunnies (Mother & Toddler group) - Mondays, 9.30am-11.30am
Fusion Children Groups - Fridays, ages 5-11 yrs 5.30pm-7pm & 11+ yrs 7pm-8.30pm



CANVEY ISLAND METHODIST CHURCH

Bible Study - Tuesdays, 8pm
Wives Club - Thursdays, 2pm
Coffee Morning - Wednesdays, 10.30am-12noon
Coffee Morning - Saturdays, 10.30am-12noon
Wednesday Fellowship - first two Wednesdays of the month, 2.30pm
Midweek Communion - third Wednesday of the month, 10am



CHALKWELL PARK METHODIST CHURCH

Ladies Monday Club - 2nd & 4th Mondays (except BH & August), 2-4pm
Caterpillars Baby & Toddler group - Wednesdays, sch. term only, 9.30am-11.30am
Coffee Morning - 1st Friday of the month, 10am-12noon
Crafty Friday (for adults) - 2nd & 4th Fridays, sch. term only, 10am-12noon



Churches Mid-Week Activities / Events

HIGHLANDS METHODIST CHURCH

Coffee Morning - Saturdays, 10.00am-12noon

Lunch Club - second Tuesday of the month, 12noon (registration essential)

Chatter (Fellowship Group) - Tuesdays, 10am-12noon

Hobbies - first and third Thursdays of the month, 10am-12noon

Prayer Meeting on Zoom - Tuesdays, 9am-10am

Toddlers - Mondays, 9.30am-11.30am



ROCHFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Cake and Kindness (Tea and homemade cakes) - Mondays, 2pm-3.30pm

Prayer time on Zoom - Mondays, 7pm

Bible Studies on Zoom - Tuesdays, 7.30pm

Housegroup - third Wednesday of the month, 8pm

'Happy Cup' Breakfast Club for children under 5 and carers - Fridays (term-time), 9.30am



THORPE BAY METHODIST CHURCH

Mid-week communion - third Wednesday of the month, 12pm

(lunch afterward – booking required with office@tbmchurch.org)

Bible Study & Soup - 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month

(booking required with office@tbmchurch.org)

Community Cafe - Wednesday, 10am-12pm



THUNDERSLEY METHODIST CHURCH

Coffee Morning - Wednesdays (term-time), 9am-12noon

Coffee Morning - second Saturday of the month, 10am-12noon

Afternoon Club - Tuesday fortnightly, 2.30pm



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'Brew, Chew, Renew' (Bible Study with refreshments) - Fortnightly on Monday, 10.30am

Funtime Toddlers – Tuesday 12.30-2.30pm & Wednesday 9-11.30am (term time)

(at UMC Great Wakering site)

Home Group – Tuesdays, 7.30pm (contact office@umcsouthend.org.uk)



Circuit Prayer Diary January-March

*On the following Sundays and during the week
we ask you to pray for:*

JANUARY

Mid-Week Prayer of Week 1 – Rev Dr David Chapman (Chair of District)
Prayer for Sunday 5th – Adventure Island Chaplaincy
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 2 – Belfairs Methodist Church
Prayer for Sunday 12th – Anna Chaplains
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 3 – Coffee Mornings in our churches
Prayer for Sunday 19th – Worship Leaders
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 4 – Methodist Homes (MHA)
Prayer for Sunday 26th – All We Can



FEBRUARY

Mid-Week Prayer of Week 5 – Castle Point Section
Prayer for Sunday 2nd – Benfleet Methodist Church
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 6 – Toddler Groups, Preschools and Nurseries in our churches
Prayer for Sunday 9th – Fellowship Groups and Home Groups
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 7 – Superintendent Pete Moorhouse and family
Prayer for Sunday 16th – Guiding, Scouting, Boys & Girls Brigade and Uniformed Organisations
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 8 – Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, Councillors and Leaders
Prayer for Sunday 23rd – Church Volunteers
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 9 – Worship Academy



MARCH

Prayer for Sunday 2nd – Canvey Island Methodist Church
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 10 – Lent Courses
Prayer for Sunday 9th – Gospel Vespers
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 11 – The Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District
Prayer for Sunday 16th – Safeguarding Representatives
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 12 – Action for Children
Prayer for Sunday 23rd – Deacon Sarah McDowall and family
Mid-Week Prayer of Week 13 – Church Sunday Schools and Youth Groups
Prayer for Sunday 30th – Chalkwell Park Methodist Church



Activities, News & Events

Wellbeing Centre Manager

Thundersley Methodist Church is looking for a Wellbeing Centre Manager to set-up and run this exciting new project.

The vision for the project includes a one-stop shop for a holistic approach to wellbeing, specifically aimed at the older members of the community. The chosen applicant will work alongside existing wellness users of the building and create new links with other service providers and groups.

Salary: £30,000 plus pension
Hours: 35 per week (may include weekends)
Holiday: 4 weeks plus bank holidays

Closing date: 31 January 2025

Please contact Anne Lane at annelane8@btinternet.com for the Application pack including Job Description and Person Specification.

Hello Friend,

Wesley **Methodist** Church 

We are so excited to tell you about all the community activities taking place at Wesley and to invite you to join us for fun activities, fellowship, friendship and community! We look forward to welcoming you.

Leigh Wesley Methodist Church

THE SANCTUARY CAFÉ

FRIDAYS 10AM-12PM
SATURDAYS 10AM-1PM

Join us for hot drinks, cake and a good chat in a safe space. A play area, buggy park and quiet space for prayer/reflection are available.

FUSION YOUTH & KIDS

2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH
(TERM TIME ONLY)
6PM-7.30PM

Youth Club for children in school years 1 to 6. £1.50 entrance. Xbox's, craft, sports, circus skills, music, food and so much more!

HOUSE GROUPS

A RANGE OF MIDWEEK MEETINGS
DAYTIME AND EVENING

Explore faith and Christianity in these informal groups.

TODDLER GROUP

WEDNESDAYS
10AM-12PM

Playgroup for ages 0-4 and their parents/carers (older siblings welcome in school holidays). Playtime, storytime, parachute, crafts. £2 entry and free tea/coffee and homemade cake.

WESLEY THEATRE GROUP

MONDAYS
8PM

Welcoming all who love acting and/or working backstage.

MUSIC GROUP

SUNDAYS
DURING WORSHIP

Singers and musicians of all abilities welcome!

TALKING POETRY

WEDNESDAYS (FORTNIGHTLY)
2.30PM

Choose, read & discuss a different poet or subject each session.

Please get in touch or see our website for further details (including some restart dates) & details of activities run by our hirers.

LEIGH WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH IS AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH
AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY



Westerley Care Home - 75th Anniversary

On Monday 11 November Westerley, Westcliff celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a visit by this year's President of the Methodist Conference, the Rev Helen Cameron. The President led a service of thanksgiving and celebration, attended by residents, staff, relatives, friends and members of the Southend Circuit, both staff and lay. The hymns were sung with gusto, the prayers thoughtful and the talk meaningful. As well as leading the short act of worship Helen brought the greetings of the whole Methodist Church to the staff and residents of Westerley. There wasn't much room to move, but everyone was delighted to meet the President and share time with each other over a copious buffet lunch, all lovingly prepared by Westerley's cook, Steve. Steve also made and decorated the anniversary cake, all delicious, and the President did us the honour of cutting it, before it was distributed for all to enjoy. Musicians entertained us during the day and a visiting magician delighted the assembled company with his tricks! After coffee-time, the son of a resident played on the piano pieces representative of each decade. Westcliff was well-decorated - including an arch of balloons over the main staircase. Well done to the manager Jayne and the staff team for a wonderful day. God Bless Westerley!





**Shoebury Methodist Church
(2nd site of UMC)
Thanksgiving & Farewell Service
3rd November 2024**



At 3pm on 3rd November 2024, the final service took place at Shoebury Site after over 100 years of Worship. Family members related to the builder of the Church, Herbert Mann, joined us along with relations of other Church members who attended in the past or grew up in the Sunday School.

Anne Briant shared Greetings from previous Ministers at Shoebury: Rev. Celia McDonald and Rev. Brian Gameson, they were read out along with one from Rev Frazer Hawkes who grew up at the Shoebury Church. Rev Derek Lang and Robin Mann also attended in their younger days.



Rev. Agnes Sam our current Minister led the Service and Rev. Norman Hooks led the Intercessions {also a previous Minister) whilst Rev. Pete Moorhouse our Superintendent led the Sermon and closure prayers.

Between 70 and 80 people joined us to hear Memories and History from Bob Briant and the carefully crafted Service was well received especially by the family members of the Church builder Herbert Mann.

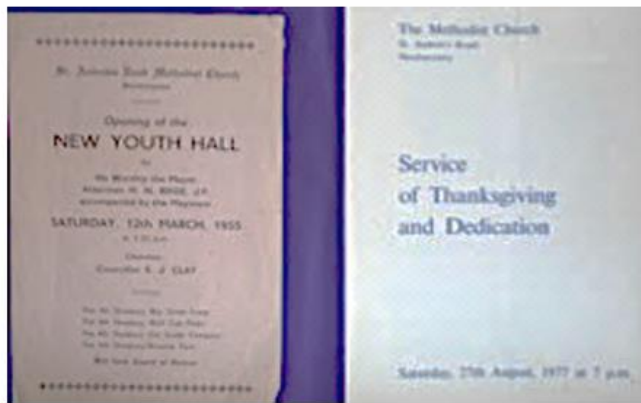


One Hymn we sang was written by a previous organist David Mann, who gave a words copy to Anne Briant some years ago. Terry Galley, our current organist found a tune to fit it. David's brother and two sons, who attended, had not heard it before so they were given copies to take away with them.

Shoebury Methodist Church - Some of the photos and items on display



Plans of the Current Building



Pulpit Paraments made in South Africa for the Church



Summer Holiday Clubs

It was great to catch up with those who had previously attended Sunday and Tuesday Seekers in their younger days, those who had attended Summer Holiday Clubs that had run, others who had been Brownies there in the past, along with visitors who had come to occasional Services over the years.



Model of the Church, Candle snuffer, Centenary mug and mini pulpit!
All wooden items made by David Sterling a previous member at Shoebury.



After the Service, people viewed the Historical displays of photos and artifacts whilst enjoying conversation, tea/coffee and cake!

There were plenty of resources for people to take away with them that were no longer needed at Shoebury.

It was a great send off celebrating the Life and Mission of Shoebury Methodist over the 125 years on the site. We are all now based at UMC Great Wakering, waiting to see how God will use us there in the future.





UMC
Crafty Christmas
23rd November 2024



From 2.30 – 4.30pm on Saturday 23rd November we welcomed a host of excited youngsters with their parent/carers, on a wet and very windy afternoon, to our Crafty Christmas event. About 50 children and their accompanying adults enjoyed a range of activities in the warm space. It was a hive of activity, many not sure which activity to do first!



We were collecting Christmas donations for 'The Shoebury Ark Project' which provides gifts for families in need.

See above, the calm set up before they all arrived!

Rev. Agnes Sam, our Minister, joined us with Baby Samuel.

The Adults really appreciated somewhere to bring their youngsters on such a wet and dreary day.

We ended the afternoon giving the Youngsters a 'Goodie Bag' with chocolate, a comic, pencils and a rubber, activity book and pictures to colour in, which was also big enough to put all they had created in as well!





Sun catcher decorations



*We were amazed to discover from the Donation box £60 for the Church!
We hadn't expected such generosity.*

Sharon and Dave from 'The Card Shop' in West Road Shoebury sourced these amazing Nativity balloons for us to hang in the Church windows – the first showing the Nativity that we have ever seen and these received a lot of comments from parents at the event.

Crown decorating



We offered:
Straw Stars, Scratch Art stars, Sharpie coloured Gu Jars with tealights, oyster shells to colour, card making with stamps, stickers and ones to colour, Icing Biscuits, and filling Baubles to hang on trees, We also had a Crown Parade with sweets as prizes.

There were cakes, Squash and refreshments 'on tap', or a small donation could be offered.

A **'MASSIVE THANK YOU'** to all who helped make the event so successful!

Circuit Service 8th December

The Circuit Band had the joy of leading this time of worship and together with others who led the readings, prayers and reflection, a great time was had by all. The refreshments shared afterwards added to the joy of the evening. A special thanks is given to those who gave their time to prepare, practice and lead our time of worship, and that is not just the musicians, I mean all who shared in this wonderful time together. I personally look forward to many more times like this in the coming years and not just at Christmas.

As many of the Circuit attended our last Circuit service, I have shown below a list of the songs shared in our evening of worship to help you and other readers discover new music or revisit favourites.

Songs:

- King of kings, majesty (Jarrod Cooper 1996)
- His name shall be (Matt Redman & Jonas Myrin 2016)
- Holy child, who chose the hearts of men (Keith & Kristyn Getty 2004)
- O come all you unfaithful (Sovereign Grace 2020)
- Glorious light, see the dawn of salvation (Keith & Kristyn Getty 2004)
- Praise is rising (Emmanuel) (Music: Brenton Brown; Christmas Words: Mission Conference 2022)
- You stepped down from heaven (Graham Kendrick & Martin Chalk 2015)
- Wonder of a newborn son (Noel & Tricia Richards 2009)
- Silent night (Christ the Saviour) (Arr by Ben Cantelon & Nick Herbert 2014 performed by Faye Streek)
- On a dark night, shone a star bright (Paul Oakley 2007)



We also shared 2 videos for reflection:

Make room in your heart - Casting Crowns – Video

No room for the King - Eric & Sharons Christian Music - Video



All of the songs (apart from 'Praise is rising' and 'On a dark night') can be found on YouTube in case you would like to hear them either for the first time or again.

With thanks to Mike Spaul, Circuit Steward & Christmas Circuit Service Co-ordinator



UMC Christmas Festival 14th December 2024



From 10am – 2.30pm on Saturday 14th November we hosted our Annual Christmas Festival.

We welcomed a choir from Great Wakering Academy of 30 children who sang for us from 11.30 -12 noon. They sang a wonderful variety of Christmas themed songs conducted by Mrs Lupton and accompanied by Terry on the keyboard, and the church was full of appreciative families and visitors. Each child received a certificate from UMC for coming to sing to us.

Down the two sides of the Church were a variety of displays made by people from the community and from within the Church. Some made from Natural resources, others sharing Church events.



The Great Wakering Community Centre promoted the range of activities and events that happen there.

The Lego club, who meet fortnightly at UMC created an amazing replica of our church building!



We served lunches, had a range of items for sale: Christmas jewelry, mugs, ornaments, jigsaws... and a raffle.

We raise over £500 for Church funds. A big thank you to all who helped and supported the event.



The Power of Prayer – with Carers in Mind

A prayer composed by Anna Chaplain Eileen Simmons struck a chord with a carer who tracked her down to ask for a copy! We asked Eileen to tell us what happened and to allow us to share it more widely.

In reply, she wrote: 'I am an Anna Chaplain in my sixth year and find belonging to the team a privilege and a pleasure. My own background is in education and I believe in life-long learning. I learn so much from other Anna Chaplains and the central team.'

In Methodism we have an annual prayer book, September to August and I have a prayer published in the current 2024/25 edition:

Dear Lord,

We pray for the elderly, housebound individuals, who are often very lonely.

We praise and thank you for their carers, who come into their homes and brighten their days by showing tenderness, kindness, and giving much needed practical support.

Make us more sensitive to the needs of both groups and move our hearts and minds to seek ways in which we may become more involved.

Increase our awareness of the conditions under which carers do their work, often earning so little for such a valuable contribution and help us seek social justice for them.

Amen

A couple of weeks ago I received via Marian Muskett, the Co-ordinator for Anna Chaplaincy for Older People, the following email. I always change the names to ensure privacy for the individual!:

'Dear Eileen,

Thank you for your lovely prayer for day 3 in the Methodist Prayer Handbook. My husband John, is a Supernumerary Minister and he has advanced Alzheimer's. I am still managing to look after him at home with the help of wonderful carers. As he has a sling hoist to move him from bed to armchair and back we have two carers three times a day. I was so delighted when I read your prayer last month so I read it to the carers who came that day and to each different one who came the following days. Their reaction was very moving. Two of them were near to tears and one Christian Zimbabwean said 'That's a Powerful Prayer'. They all appreciated it, including a Muslim brother and sister. I reminded them last Thursday that many people all over the country would be praying your prayer for them. Thank you. My daughter found you on the internet and we were able to read about Anna Chaplaincy as well as finding an email address! May God bless you in all you do.

Margaret'

'I replied to her email and said that if ever she wanted to chat then she could email me and we could fix something. At our Annual Anna Chaplaincy Gathering (last week) I told this story in one of our breakout rooms and was asked for a copy.'

We share it with pleasure and thank you!

Anna Chaplain Eileen Simmons



The Experience Project

Activities and Events



Our bookshop and pop-up charity stall are well-stocked and popular. Games and Coffee Mornings remain well-attended.



We held a sewing workshop at the Project and learnt to make fabric bags. For several people, it was the first time using a sewing machine, and learning a new skill is part of our outreach and mission.



Visit from Jansen Foundation, a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) offering a hands-on approach to help tackle the issues surrounding food waste and food poverty. They have been so impressed by our work that they have made regular contributions supplying produce of fresh fruit, vegetables and eggs.



THE HEALING SENSORY ROOM

- Reduces stress & anxiety
- Provides mental & physical relaxation
- Stimulates the brain
- Improves ability to focus
- Develops emotional regulation skills
- Encourages socialization
- Enhances creativity

Join us in a safe, peaceful environment

If you're interested please speak to a member of staff and sign up for the next session.



For further info see The Whittingham Experience Project Facebook Page

**Southend & Leigh Circuit invites you
to our**



**Wholeness &
Wellbeing
Services**

Wednesday 22nd January ZOOM

Wednesday 23rd April

Wednesday 25th June

7:45pm at Benfleet Methodist
Church

For more details contact southendandleighcircuit@gmail.com

Trinity Family Centre Westcliff, Southend-on-Sea SS0 7HL



Opening Times:

Monday: 09.30-11.30am Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group Admission £1.50 plus snacks
12.30 – 16.00pm POP IN (People on Pensions) Admission £1.50 plus lunches

Tuesday: 09.30-11.30am Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group
11.50am-1.15pm Eat In, Community Cafe-low cost home cooked meals. £5 for 2 course lunch, with tea/coffee.

15.30-18.30pm Family Club Admission £1.50

Wednesday: 09.30 – 12.00 Trinity Gems, a group for over 18's with special needs.

Friday: 09.30 – 12.00 Welcome In, Baby and Toddler Group Admission £1.50

We are one Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?>

Worship Academy 2024-2025

Season 12

**FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH EXCEPT AUGUST,
SEPTEMBER & JANUARY**

BENFLEET METHODIST CHURCH SS7 5LH

7 PM FOOD & FELLOWSHIP

8 PM WORSHIP & LEARNING

The Christian Calendar and Christmas

**2nd October - The Christian Calendar
PAUL WOOD and IAN WORSFOLD**

**6th November - What is the Methodist Connexion
offering for Christmas?
RICHARD ARMIGER**

**4th December - Planning for Christmas Services
COLIN and CATHY TURNER and WORSHIP ACADEMY
SUPPORTERS**

Easter

**5th February - Holy week Scripture
DAVID CHAPMAN**

**5th March - What is the Methodist Connexion offering
for Easter?
JONATHAN DEAN**

**2nd April - Planning for Easter Services
BOB and ANNE BRIANT and WORSHIP ACADEMY
SUPPORTERS**

Remembrance

**7th May - Remembrance Scripture
MOSES AGYEM**

**4th June - Planning for Remembrance Services
JANE FULFORD and WORSHIP ACADEMY SUPPORTERS**

2nd July - Fellowship, Feedback and Future Planning

**WORSHIP ACADEMY SPECIAL - SATURDAY 14TH JUNE
MICHAELA YOUNGSON**

At Highlands Methodist Church

www.southendandleighcircuit.org