

District newsletter,

Hallo everyone,

The year 2008 seems to be progressing at a great speed. We are now past the longest day; the gardens are bursting with colour; thoughts of holidays are being enjoyed.

In the Methodist Church there has been much 'journeying' in every sense of the word!

A visit to the web-site <http://www.methodist.org.uk> will give a lot of detail of changes at Connexional level, as well as of work being done throughout the Connexion.

The 2008 Methodist Conference is about to take place. This year it is being held in Scarborough. Our representatives are :- Mr Sandy Laurie, Mrs Tricia Laurie, Mrs Margaret Walker, Rev Alan Anderson, Rev Angy Long. Our Chair of District, Rev Lily Twist, will be there in the capacity of being 'Chair'.

Meetings of the Co-ordinators team have taken place both at the Bield and in Dunblane. At one meeting an appraisal was made of the work in the District, and a sharing with our Chair, Rev Lily Twist of her vision for the coming months.

Rev Lily Twist gave voice to her vision for the District by saying that it is to be supported and strengthened, resourced and renewed, and infused by the Holy Spirit for itself and others. That people will find deeper joy and meaning in their faith and that there will be increased opportunities to see faith in evidence and action.

Spring Synod took place in Clydebank where there was a day of sharing information, discussion of issues within the District, Fellowship and Worship. The presence of Ecumenical guests was a welcome way of showing how we are part of the bigger picture of the work and witness of Christians here in Scotland. Contributing to this bigger picture was the thought that we as Methodists could do well to think through what it is that is distinctive in our own contribution to that work.

In our time for Pastoral news we shared the sadness of those for whom life had brought some times of difficult adjustment, and the joys of those who could celebrate new directions, additions and accomplishments. Mr David Nichol was one of the latter, having received a 'Bevan boy' medal.

News of Ministers who are to be moving from the District told of Rev David Cooper moving to Shetland, Rev Angy Long moving to Durham, and Rev Eric Potts who is 'sitting down' but remaining in Scotland. Synod expressed their thanks, good wishes and promise of prayers for each of these in their time of transition.

Miss Emma Haggis gave an encouraging account of her experience at the Methodist Youth Conference. It was held in Cardiff last November. The theme of the Conference had been 'People Trafficking' and 'Let my People go'. There had been meetings

focussing on issues which included, - Youth violence; The Trade and slave labour resolution; and Hope08.

Emma had found times of Worship to be particularly meaningful. The week-end had given her encouragement to answer the call to preach. She thanked Synod for giving her the opportunity to go to Cardiff for the Youth week-end, and looks forward to being a Youth representative at the Methodist Conference in Scarborough.

The situation of the Homeless was highlighted by Mrs Janice Clark. She spoke of her work through Scottish Churches Action Group and gave practical ways in which help could be given. She spoke of two programmes which are aimed at helping the situation of the homeless,- (1) CHIP Churches Homeless Initiative Programme.

(2) Making it happen, - Churches for houses.

Synod was given three challenges –

To find out what is happening.

To find useable properties.

To improve the subscription from the District.

Thirteen Churches combine to help fund this work. Methodists donate 35p per member.

Rev John Butterfield is now Connexional representative from The Scotland District. He replaces Mrs Jenny Easson. It was agreed that Jenny has served the District well in this capacity.

Since Synod there has been some clarification of the changes in District appointments. The post of District Training Officer comes to an end at the end of this year. New positions are to be created, and one of these has now been filled by Mrs Helen Wareing, who previously was the District Training and Development Officer. Helen is to be congratulated on this appointment.

There is activity in many areas of the District and as we share news with each other we have the privilege of holding their various needs in prayer. Together we can seek to know and to do the work that is laid before us.

May we be sensitive to what God would wish to do through us.

With best wishes,

Janet Murray.