

Blackwater Valley Methodist Circuit

Newsletter
EDITION 1

October 2025



Greetings!

Welcome to the newsletter for the Blackwater Valley Circuit. This is the first edition of the newly merged circuit. In this edition we reflect on the welcome service of Revd Wes Hampton, which marked the beginning of the new journey for the 17 churches who make the Blackwater Valley Circuit. Also: How do you get your hands on some circuit merch? And we share feedback from the young people who attended 3Generate 2025.

NEW BEGINNINGS

We give a warm welcome to Revd Wes as he joins the circuit. A service of welcome and new beginnings was held at High Cross Church in Camperley on Monday 1st September. Hosted by Revd Nick we were joined by many people from across the new circuit, to welcome Wes and to officially bring the Blackwater Valley Circuit into being. It was a privilege to be joined by Conrad Hicks, our new chair of district, and Sam Funnel, assistant chair for the western region of the district.



Conrad's message centred on the core values that the Methodist church is called to, that of worship, caring and learning, service and evangelism. Furthermore, what does it mean to be a justice seeking church at this time? Alongside prayers and worship, the staff team made promises with our Circuit Leadership Team to serve the circuit, reaffirming their commitment to their roles, each other and the churches they serve. If you would like to watch again to the service, or find out what you missed, go to High Cross's YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnT8waSDPgs>



IMPORTANT DATES

Circuit meeting - 19th January, venue TBC

District Synod:

Presbyteral Session - Thursday 12th March, St

Andrew's Methodist Church Folkestone

Representative Session - Saturday 18th April,

High Cross Church Camberley

Local Preachers and Worship Leaders

meeting: Wednesday 14th January at High Cross Church, Camberley

GET YOUR CIRCUIT MERCH!

Part of being a new circuit, is that we now have a new circuit logo. Revd Nick was keen that our identity is clear from the start. All the staff and CLT now have either a jacket, hoodie or sweatshirt. We also gave a hoodie to each of Conrad and Sam, as a gift to the district from their new circuit.

Would you like one?

Prices are as follows:

(Without print on back, will be slightly cheaper)

ADULTS HOODIE - £38

ZIP SWEATSHIRT - £40

SWEATSHIRT - £35

TEESHIRT - £20

Please contact Anne Day at anne.day@methodist.org.uk to register your interest and she will send you details of sizes and how to pay. Orders need to be in by **Wednesday 12th November** (Melon cup and funky visor not included!)



MEET WES HAMPTON



I grew up in Hastings in a Methodist family, attending the local boys' comprehensive school, where I learned Latin and Greek. This foundation led to my interest in philosophy and ancient history. I also developed a deep appreciation for the Christian faith and began supporting the local football team—both remain important to me. And, of course, I met and married Cherry there.

My ministry journey has mainly been in the South-East, with a brief stint in the East Midlands. I've valued strong ecumenical relationships and have adapted to changing circumstances within the circuits. I also spent three years as an associate tutor, training for ministry across three denominations. During this time, I ran the London Marathon twice and played guitar.

As for what's next, who knows? "The Bible for Grown-Ups" by Simon Loveday and Robert Schnase's "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations: Revised and Updated" suggest possibilities for church life and ongoing reformation. However, I'm more interested in preaching and worship.

The clock on my study wall humorously marks time with "ish," reminding me to wrap up. **Revd Wes**



On Friday 3rd October the circuit took 24 young people, aged from 8-17 years old to 3Generate, the Methodist Children and Youth Assembly. Hosted at the NEC, our Blackwater Valley children enjoyed a range of activities, worship, music and experiences.

Based around "The journey of a lifetime" our young people were able to play sports, make and create, worship, discuss topics which are important to them. Including performances from Folk On to making your own music, the young people were able to engage with faith on their terms. Not only that, they also are given the opportunity to vote for the next Youth President. (Results to be announced). Our under 8's didn't miss out either, as they had their own venue for the Saturday, where they played, sang, danced, created and explored faith with their parents or a significant adult. Clara said she didn't want to go home! And it's not just the young people who get a lot out of 3Gen. The leaders get to make memories with the young people, creating stronger bonds with them, which can be built on after the event.



Helen, one of the leaders said "The nice thing about 3Gen though is that even though is exhausting...its one of the places where im my favourite version of myself....and that aligning with the time with God is very restorative."

What then of the young people? When reflecting on what 3Generate means, one young person said "the event changes us, by making us better people learning from other people's experiences." I would encourage you, if you go to Fleet Methodist, The Church at the Pines or North Camp Methodist, why not talk to one of the young people was there, and find out what the impact has been? Perhaps you can support them as they take the next steps on their journey of a life time. *Revd Anne*

New website

Keep an eye out for our new website, which is shaping up nicely, thanks to the technical expertise of Rowan Handford. We hope the big unveiling will be at the end of October.

If you have any photos or news of any events happening at your church, why not let Anne Day know, so it can be included? We are especially interested in one off events or plans for Christmas.

Paying our respects



It is with great sadness that we have to announce the death of David Morgan. David was a local preacher and dedicated member of the circuit leadership team for the BSB Circuit as the circuit treasurer, and had volunteered to serve with us on the Blackwater Valley Circuit Leadership team. Unfortunately, David died on 3rd October. He will be greatly missed and we continue to hold Christine and the family in prayer. There will be a thanksgiving service for David on Tuesday 21st October, 2.30pm at Wokingham Methodist Church.



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