

Welshpool & Bro Hafren Methodist Circuit



**Magazine & Plan
Dec to Feb 2018**

BIRTHDAYS

Recently, we had a holiday in Norfolk. At the top of our list of places to visit was Sandringham, a country home of the Queen. Everything was done very well. The gardens, the rooms in the house with guides filling in the details of what we saw.

In particular the museum was very interesting and informative about the Royal family, both present and past.

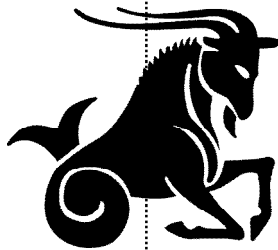
Right next to the Royal Estate is St Mary Magdalene Church, seen on our TV screens every year when the Queen and members of the Royal Family attend the Christmas Day service. A small country church which despite the many people visiting it, has a very inviting spiritual atmosphere.

As I sat in there in the church trying to imagine what it could be like on a Christmas Day, the thought of birthdays crossed my mind. I recalled last summer

watching Kris Kristopherson at Glastonbury on the TV. A country music legend performing on the day after his 81st birthday. A committed Christian who sung one of his own songs, "Jesus was a Capricorn". We celebrate his birthday on 25 December.

The Queen who is in her 92nd year will be in that church on Christmas morning thanking God for the greatest gift he could give, his Son.

But was Capricorn really the birth sign of Jesus?



I was reminded at Sandringham, the Queen has two birthdays – her real one in April and then another in June – her "Official Birthday" known as "The Queen's Birthday Parade". So should we consider that Christmas Day is the "Official Birthday" of Jesus whilst his real birthday remains unknown?

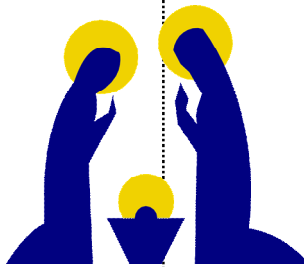
The origins of these two "Official" birthdays have two common factors, but one of these drew opposite

conclusions.

For Jesus, Pope Julius 1 in the mid 4th century declared the birth of Jesus would be held on 25 December. One theory for this date was that there was already a festival of merriment enthusiastically celebrating the God Saturn. It marked the Winter Solstice and new life with the days going to get longer – summer was on its way.

It made sense to use something which was already in place and which was an important event in the life of the people.

By 1748, George II had been king of Great Britain for 20 years when he made the decision it was too cold to have his Annual Birthday Parade in November and in future it would be held when it was warmer in the summer. In June, he had to turn up for the annual Trooping the Colour Parade – so why not put the two together!



George II meet Pope Julius 1
– great minds think alike!

The celebrations for the birth of Jesus are fixed for 25 December. Each British sovereign is free to choose when they have their birthday Parade. The Queen has chosen the second Saturday in June.

The Queen may be the Head of the Church of England attending a military parade, but for Jesus, it is **HIS** church – The Church of Christ.

George II chose to have his Birthday Parade when the weather should be warm. Pope Julius 1 chose the heart of winter to celebrate the Birth of Jesus. Though it is in the bleak mid winter, it marks the start of new life. The assured Hope God brings into our lives – not wishful thinking but the certainty, only God can bring.

But God is the creator of the whole world. Celebrating the

birth of Jesus on the beach in the southern hemisphere may have appealed to George II. The Queen has to go to St Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham on a cold bleak mid winter's day. But the joy of celebrating God's gift to us transcends weather, length of the days, being in paradise or squalor. All we have to do is know he is there and offer ourselves to serve him.

But our biggest challenge is that Jesus is not just for Christmas, he's there for each day of the year. He is not just a Capricorn, he is all

of the star signs rolled into one big sign.

**Jesus Christ
the Son of God
the Lamb of God**



John Harbron

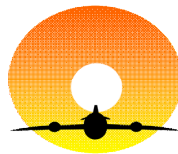
A Christmas Present List

Give to your enemyForgiveness
Give to your opponentTolerance
Give to your friendYour Heart
Give to a customerService
Give to all peopleKindness
Give to every childA good example
Give to yourselfRespect



*Submitted by **Phil-Eve Senior**, Newtown*

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 2018



Date: 29th October to 9th November 2018,
flying from Heathrow to Tel Aviv
6 nights based in Jerusalem and 5 nights based in
Tiberias, with half board hotel accommodation

Company: Israel Travel Service, Manchester

Leader: Rev Marian Jones

Cost: £2,345.50 (subject to change in taxes)
£782.00 Single Supplement
Deposit with booking: £200

Rev Marian is an experienced Leader, having led many previous pilgrimages to the Holy Land as well as others to places of religious significance.

For more details, Brochure and Booking Form contact Marian,
01978 810292 or email marian.jones@methodist.org.uk

Waiting watching wondering, counting
every day, wishing the excitement would
never fade away.



Christmas stocking by the bed, apple in the
toe, chocolate coins in golden foil, Christmas long ago.

Pantomime and party time. May we remember fairy lights
and shiny tights, magic in December.

Happy smiles and caring touch. Love which seemed to
grow, safely stored within our hearts, Christmas long ago.

Iris Hesselden



Submitted by **Doreen Robinson**
Newtown



Rev Bob's Letter

I have no doubt that chief among the gifts the Methodist Church has blessed me with, is the sheer luxury of '*The Sabbatical*'. The opportunity of having three months to think about just one thing is in direct contrast to the 'normal' life of a Circuit minister where so many things have to be juggled, moved on a little bit here and there, before going back to gather up some other things that are in danger of dropping off further back. May, June, and July was my third and final sabbatical before entering into that unending sabbatical which is more usually referred to as retirement.

It was good to share with some of you some of my thinking in early October when we met with friends of Newtown Cytun in united worship. My enjoyment of the Connexion's gift lingers as aspects of my now more general reading click together with my thinking about embodiment and spirituality. Perhaps the most delightful moments of the three months were

those spent in the Welsh National Museum of Art in Cardiff where I spent some thirty minutes sitting before Eric Gill's carving of ***Mother and Child*** - in which a mother cradles her child in her right arm and her breast in her left hand. The piece was carved in 1910, possibly his first creation as he moves from 'letter' to 'figure' carving, a piece believed to have been inspired by his wife's third pregnancy.

**Jesus' words,
'this is my body'**

Jesus' words, 'this is my body', work in both directions in this figure - the child's assertion of its 'right' to feed of its mother and the mother's recognition of her responsibility to feed and nurture the new life entrusted to her. Over time that relationship will change and a more equitable partnership appear as everyone ages and abilities develop and decline. Later again, the roles and responsibilities will reverse as the child takes responsibility for the life of the parent. Gill's figure could also be read as an echo of Michaelangelo's Pieta in which the adult Jesus, lately taken from the cross, lies collapsed over his mother's right arm.

These images shine in our more disorderly world where the words 'this is my body' are too often interpreted as conferring a right of ownership over another - often without their consent - as a piece of property. In *The Observer* of 08/10 I read of an Indian University where female students are routinely molested and their complaints ignored, at least until recently. A borough Council in London is taking steps to prevent the harassment of women seeking abortion by a pro life/anti abortion group after a complaint was made by a pro choice/pro abortion group - we might spend a long time working out the different ways in which 'this is my body' works in that particular context. The Henry Jackson Society has published a report on research conducted into ISIS' systemic use of sexual violence, slavery, forced insemination and pregnancies as means of "... attracting, retaining, mobilising and rewarding fighters . . .", punishing the unbeliever, and securing the next generation of jihadis. Research that points to a significant number of recruits coming with histories of domestic and

sexual violence.

Our interpretation of the words of Jesus is understood against the wider context of the record of the life of Jesus, a generous life, freely shared with those around him; the stories he tells encourage his followers into the practice of that same generosity, that same sharing of life with those among whom they live. Those stories make the case for the widest possible practice of generosity - 'Who is my neighbour?' is the wrong question, impossible to answer,

... the widest possible practice of generosity

the list too long to record. In our 'more' civilised times our stripping, beating and leaving for dead - the accidents that befell the traveller on the Jericho road - is only figurative - with the full consent of the rule of law we strip people of their homes, their dignity, their work. On our behalf the politicians close our borders to those who flee warfare and ethnic cleansing in their own countries with only the clothes they stand up in - regardless of their age or ability to protect themselves.

Every time we meet together in worship, every time we share a

meal – as little as a crumb of bread and sip of wine we meet in celebration of the generous, hospitable God who takes shelter among us. Every time we refuse to share what we have, however little we have, we turn our back on the God who in Jesus has given all that one can give to another.

Years ago we would periodically be visited by people in need – some of whom wanted only a pound for a poke of chips, others train fares to far flung places so as to visit ageing and ailing parents – some of whom we knew were trying to cheat us, some of whom refused the gift we offered. We never refused to comply with any request but have often had to be creative about the way in which we offered the help they sought. As I read the story of the end of the End in Matthew 25 in the certain personal knowledge of the human ten-

dency to error I believe it is best to err on the side of generosity. The loss of everything is but small change when considered against the gaining of eternity.

Our generous God is committed to the building of a generous 'kingdom', in which those who are willing and able to give of themselves – however little they believe themselves to have – will find themselves welcome and at home. As long as we seek to hold on to what we have as individuals, as congregations we will know only a sense of discomfort as we strive against the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the human heart.

Rev Bob

*Copies of the booklet
"This is my body"
reflecting Rev Bob's Sabbatical
Studies can be obtained directly
from Rev Bob.*


When Jesus went missing

After the Christmas morning service the baby Jesus was missing from the crib. The vicar was searching for him when a little girl arrived with a brand new doll's pram and started lifting the baby Jesus out of it. Putting him back in the crib she said "I told you that if I got a pram for Christmas you would be the first to get a ride in it".



Ministers

Chair of the Synod: Rev Dr Stephen Wigley
Superintendent: **Rev Bob Thomas** B Th

 01686 625690

Active Supernumerary: **Rev Marian Jones**

Supernumerary: Rev J Michael Taylor BD, BA

Supernumerary: Rev Penny Burkill

Supernumerary: Rev John W Newbury BA

Local Preachers

Mr T M Jobling OBE

Mrs E Jobling

Mr G Smith

Mrs E Williams

Mrs D McNulty

Mrs M Douglas

Mrs J Thomas

Mr J Harbron

Mrs Kat Bond (on note)

Mrs Andrea Davies (on note)

Worship Leaders

Mr A Bradburn and Mrs A Bradburn

Mr Derek Painter (in training)

Visiting Preachers

Rev Alun Chiplin

Mr Gareth Evans

Mr Nigel Evans

Rev Bill Rowell

Church & Hymn Books	Times	03-Dec	10-Dec	17-Dec	24-Dec	31-Dec
		1st Sun Sun in Advent	2nd Sun of Advent	3rd Sun of Advent	4th Sun of Advent	1st Sun of Christmas
		Mark 13:24-37	Mark 1:1-8	John 1:6-8, 19-28	Luke 1:26-38	Luke 2:22-40
Welshpool	9.00	Jones HC				
H ON	10.45	Jones Baptism	Harbron	Smith	P & P Carols	Jones UM Cov
SIF WB	6.00	B Thomas HC/Compline (7.30pm Choral Society)		4pm Jubilate: 'The Gift'	11.30pm Jones HC	
Cefn	10.00	T Jobling BC				
H ON	6.00		E Jobling	N Evans		B Thomas Cov
P Lliffor	2.30	AACG	B Thomas HC	AACG		AACG
H SIF WB						
Newtown	10.30	B Thomas HC	Burkill	G Evans	E Jobling	P & P
H SIF WB	6.00	Smith	Harbron	B Thomas CS	11.30pm B Thomas HC	
Llanidloes	10.30	Smith	B Thomas HC UM	P & P Carols	T Jobling	B Thomas
H ON WB					11.15pm Burkill HC	
Caersws	10.30	UP	Davies TS	B Thomas HC	N Evans	P & P
H WB				6.00pm Carols		
Trefeglwys	10.00	@ Llawr y Glyn	Chiplin HC	@ Llawr y Glyn	B Thomas	@ Llawr y Glyn
H M						
Llawr Y Glyn	2.30	J Thomas	@ Trefeglwys	E Jobling	@ Trefeglwys	Burkill
H WB						

Visit www.wbhmethodists.org.uk for any changes to the Plan

07-Jan	14-Jan	21-Jan	28-Jan
Covenant Sun	2nd Sun in Ord	3rd Sun in Ord	Homeless Sun
Mark 1:4-11	John 1:43-51	Mark 1:14-20	Mark 1:21-28
		Jones HC	
Jones HC	J Thomas	Jones	B Thomas
Rowell Compline	B Thomas WCT		4.00pm P & P ATS
E Jobling BC			
		Rowell	
T Jobling	AACG	B Thomas Cov	AACG
B Thomas Cov	Taylor	Smith	J Thomas
	T Jobling		B Thomas HC
Harbron	B Thomas Cov SS	N Evans	T Jobling
11.00am at Llanwnnog	Smith	B Thomas Cov	Chiplin
Burkill HC	@ Llanidloes	T Jobling	@ Llawr y Glyn
@ Trefeglwys	@ Llanidloes	@ Trefeglwys	N Evans

Church & Hymn Books	Times	04-Feb	11-Feb	18-Feb	25-Feb
		5th Sun in Ord	Sun before Lent	1st Sun in Lent	2nd Sun in Lent
		Mark 1:29-39	Mark 9:2-9	Mark 1:9-15	Mark 8:31-38
Welshpool	9.00			Jones HC	
H ON	10.45	Jones HC	G Evans	Jones	Jubilate
SIF WB	6.00	B Thomas Compline	WCT @ New Street		4.00pm Wigley ATS
Cefn	10.00	E Jobling BC			
H ON	6.00			B Thomas HC	
P Lliffor	2.30	E Jobling	AACG	Harbron	AACG
H SIF WB					
Newtown	10.30	N Evans	B Thomas HC	Harbron	Wigley
H SIF WB	6.00		Rowell		Williams
Llanidloes	10.30	@ Trefeglwys SS	Smith	B Thomas HC	J Thomas
H ON WB					
Caersws	10.30	UB	J Thomas	T Jobling	B Thomas HC
H WB					
Trefeglwys	10.00	B Thomas HC	@ Llawr y Glyn	Smith	@ Llawr y Glyn
H M					
Llawr Y Glyn	2.30	@ Trefeglwys	B Thomas	@ Trefeglwys	Chiplin HC
H WB					

Visit www.wbhmethodists.org.uk for any changes to the Plan

REFERENCES USED IN THE PLAN

BOOKS

H Hymns and Psalms
M Methodist Hymn Book
ON Methodist Hymns Old & New
S The Source
StF Singing the Faith
WB Methodist Worship Book

SERVICES

AA All Age Worship
AACG All Age Cell Group
ATS Afternoon Tea Service
BAP Baptism
BC Breakfast Church
BTCS Back to Church Sunday
CA Chapel Anniversary
CAP Christians Against Poverty
C&C Carols and Christingle
CHS Community Hymn Singing
CMM Christian Music Ministries
Cov Covenant
CS Carol Service
FF Flower Festival
HC Holy Communion
HF Harvest Festival
Jub Jubilate
LA Local Arrangement
LS Lambing Service
OWW One World Week
P&P Prayer and Praise
SKS Sankey Service
SoP Songs of Praise
SS Sectional Service
WCT Welshpool Churches Together
UnS Circuit United Service

UNITED SERVICES

UA at Anglican
UB at Baptist
UM at Methodist
UP at Presbyterian
URC at URC
UW at Welsh Chapel

OTHER

T Transport Required
TS Trial Service

Rolling Reports from the September 2017 Circuit Meeting

Welshpool

Since our last report in June 2016, we have celebrated the completion of our development work. Our re-vamped premises are occupied most days of the week and have been much praised by our user groups. We were particularly pleased that we were able to get planning permission to install "new look" glazed front doors, which provide passers by with a glimpse of the cross in our worship area, and of any activities which might be taking place, emphasising how very much alive our church still is.

We continue to welcome members of our community to our weekly Coffee Mornings and Playgroup, to our fortnightly Saturday Lunches, our monthly Friday Fellowship and Gallery Group, and to our varied programme of social events. In our two newest groups, the Saturday 'Walking with Friends' group and the Thursday 'Reading the Bible Together' group, as in our Jubilate Singing Group, we have been pleased to welcome those from other churches in the town who have

joined us. The 5th Sunday morning ecumenical services have now become well-established, when we join with St Mary's either at our High Street church, or at their church. (This is in addition to the monthly ecumenical evening services).

We have been pleased to welcome the Rev Marian Jones as our minister for the next 12 months, and are looking forward to a fruitful year under her guidance, as we seek together to find new ways of mission and service. Next month three of our members are attending a training course run by the Churches Against Poverty Debt Counselling Charity with a view to setting up a group in Welshpool to help with money management - just one of the ideas we have of how we may reach out to those with particular needs in our town, as we continue to "Celebrate and Share God's Love".

Janice Rhodes

Cefn

We have continued with our regular worship on Sundays, at 10 am on the first Sunday of every month when we have the popular Breakfast Church. The first quarter hour is for sharing

tea/coffee/toast and chat. The other Sunday services are at 6 pm. But in the summer, June to August, we hold these on a Wednesday at 7 pm.

We now have a regular coffee morning on the fourth Saturday of each month. All are welcome and we provide tea or coffee with cake, buttered loaf or biscuits. There is no charge, though donations may be left if wished.

Our fellowship meeting in a member's home continues happily on the third Thursday of each month. The relaxed atmosphere helps to encourage all to join in the discussion. At present we are thinking about some of Jesus' parables and what they say to us today.

Last August we had our first ever wedding at Cefn and this year the local couple came back

specially to remember the occasion.

We are very grateful to local people, we all know who (!), who provide plants for containers at the front of the chapel which gives such a bright appearance in summer. Also we would like to thank our organist from Welshpool, who comes out to play for us on special occasions. We have a keyboard which was offered to us by Rev Sue, our former minister, who had too little room for it in her new home.

Just a reminder that if any group wishes to hire our premises for meetings or other needs this may be arranged.

Altogether we have much to be grateful for and are glad to be part of the community.

Eileen Jobling



The Ten Commandments in Verse

Thou shalt have no God but me,
Before no idol bow thy knee.
Take not the name of God in vain,
Nor dare the Sabbath Day profane.
Give both thy parents honour due,
Take heed that thou no murder do.
Abstain from words and deeds unclean,
Nor steal, though thou art poor and mean.
Nor make a wilful lie nor love it,
What is thy neighbour's do not covert.

Submitted by **Phil-Eve Senior**, Newtown

Young People's Page

Holly

I usually forget to wear gloves and the barbed leaves prickle and hurt.

Many of us tend to be prickly too.

All too often we hurt one another.

Misunderstandings and thoughtlessness can really get under our skin.

Christmas is a good time to remember God's message of Peace and Goodwill to all humankind.

With his help our lives can bear the fruit of love, patience and self control as berries on the holly bough.

Anon

*Submitted by **Doreen Robinson***

Newtown

Can you solve these anagrams?

They are all well known Christmas Carols

If you are really stuck the answers are on the back page.

1. ENGLISH TINT
2. NEW TROLL FETISH
3. RED NOSE GREET MY UGLY MENTOR
4. SWEET GHERKIN
5. A HOT MINCE PIE AND MUCH GLITTER
6. HEROIC MATTRESS
7. THY LOVELY THIN HEAD
8. I'M LENDING H.R.H. DOGGY IRON
9. OJ SHOT MAGIC REINDEER ICON
10. THE SWISS ARE HIP



*Submitted by **Shan Calvert**, Newtown*

From the Heart



I have a list of folks I know, all written in a book.
And every year at Christmas time, I go and take a look.

And that is when I realise, that these names are a part,
Not of the book they're written in, but of my very heart.

For each name stands for someone whose path touched mine.
Then left such a print of friendship, that I want to touch again.
And while it may seem trite of me, to make this solemn claim,
I really feel I am composed, of each remembered name.

So never think of Christmas cards, as just a mere routine,
Of names upon a Christmas list, forgotten in between.
For when I send a Christmas card, that is addressed to you,
It's because you're on the list of folks that I'm indebted to.

And every year when Christmas comes, I realise anew
The biggest gift that life can give, is knowing folks like you.

Submitted by Mrs Edith Thomas, Welshpool

Whilst doing meals on wheels, delivering food to the elderly, I took my 4 year old daughter along. The various appliances of old age i.e. canes, Zimmer frames etc intrigued her. At one house I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable questions she turned and whispered " The tooth fairy won't believe this"!!



Be Still and Know That I Am God.

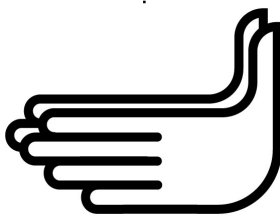
We live in an age of noise. From traffic to television, kitchen appliances to lawn mowers and from piped music in shops to sheep bleating on the hills. We rarely experience silence and when we do it's palpable and we often feel the need to say something or put the radio on!

When Bob and Jenny came to our Circuit, Jenny started up a Julian Meeting once a month at the Manse. The meetings are based on the contemplative prayer practised by Julian of Norwich, a nun of the 14th century.

So what happens at these meetings? Well, put simply, we sit in silence for 30 minutes! One of the group leads into the silence with a short reading and at the end brings the silence gently to a close. In the silence we aim to clear the mind of any distractions and wait on God. We are giving God a chance to break through all the busyness and obstructions that are part of our lives.

Of course, even in the quietness of the lounge at Glandwr there are still some background noises which we learn to ignore. And, yes, we could all do this in the quiet of our own homes but, just as with church worship, there are benefits of the fellowship of others sharing in the activity.

The experience of a Julian Meeting is peaceful and unthreatening. Any discomforts some feel about expectations of having to speak out, as in a conventional prayer meeting, are removed from these sessions.



If you think that this might be for you, or that you would like to give it a try, you would be made very welcome. The meetings are at the Manse, Glandwr, Milford Rd., Newtown, on the second Tuesday of each month at 2.30pm.

And if you think 30 minutes silence is difficult to achieve, for those of you who know me, if I can do it - anyone can!

Libby Gilman
Llanidloes

Dates for your Diary

- ♦ **Friday, 1st December, 6.30pm at Welshpool (Town's Winter Festival)**

Carol Singing on the Steps, Hot Chocolate and Cookies

- ♦ **Saturday, 2nd December, 10am to 2pm at Welshpool (Winter Festival)**

Christmas Fair, Coffee and Lunches

- ♦ **Sunday 10th December, at Newtown**

Christmas Lunch

- ♦ **Tuesday, 12th December, 7pm at Welshpool**

Service of Light to remember loved ones absent this Christmas

- ♦ **Wednesday 13th, 6.30pm at Llawryglyn**

Village Carol Singing with the Wesley Singers

- ♦ **Saturday, 16th December, 10.00am in Broad Street, Welshpool**

Carol Singing in the street raising funds for Action for Children

- ♦ **Sunday, 17th December, 10.30am at Llanidloes**

Carol Service

- ♦ **Sunday, 17th December, 4pm at Welshpool**

"Make Way for Christmas" (Graham Kendrick) with Jubilate & Tea Party

- ♦ **Sunday, 17th December, 6pm at Newtown, and 6pm at Caersws**

Carol Services

- ♦ **Monday, 18th December, 10.00am at Welshpool**

Coffee and Carols for Action for Children

- ♦ **Tuesday, 19th December, 6.30pm at Pentre Llifior**

Candlelit Carol Service followed by mince pies and drinks in the Stable

- ♦ **Tuesday, 19th December, 7pm at Llanidloes**

Wesley Singers Christmas Concert

- ♦ **Thursday, 21st December, 10.30am at the Hermitage, Welshpool**

Carol Service for the residents with Rev Marian, Jubilate and friends

- ♦ **Thursday, 21st December, 7pm at Cefn**

Carols by Candlelight

- ♦ **Sunday, 24th December, 10.45am at Welshpool**

Traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve Midnight Communions:

11.15pm at Llanidloes

11.30pm at Newtown and Welshpool

Christmas Day Services:

9.30am at Caersws

10.00am at Newtown and at the Baptist Church, Welshpool

10.30am at Pentre Llifior

ANAGRAM answers:

1. Silent Night
2. The First Nowell
3. God Rest You Merry Gentlemen
4. We Three Kings
5. It Came Upon A Midnight Clear
6. O Christmas Tree
7. The Holly And The Ivy
8. Ding Dong Merrily On High
9. Good Christian Men Rejoice
10. I Saw Three Ships



Editorial

Wishing you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

A big thank you to those who have contributed to this issue; we really appreciate receiving material on any suitable theme. If in doubt, please send it anyway! Our next issue covers Easter and our copy date is **mid January 2018**, however, contributions are very welcome at any time.

We are happy to receive articles by post:

Foxglove, Beech Close, Newtown SY16 2QP

by email: editors.marlow@btinternet.com

or you can pass to the ministers or stewards.

This magazine is available in glorious technicolour on the Circuit website:



www.wbhmethodists.org.uk

Those of you with smart phones or tablets can scan this QR code to go straight to the website.

Bill and Andrea Marlow