The Methodist Church

Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit



SUPERINTENDENT'S NOVEMBER PASTORAL LETTER

8 November 2026 - Year A

To the people of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit

Today, on **Remembrance Sunday**, we take time to remember and give thanks for all those who have served, suffered, and lost their lives in wars and conflicts. As we wear our poppies and gather for worship, we remember the cost of war and pray for peace in our world.



Armistice Day is always marked on **11 November**, the day when the First World War ended in 1918.

Remembrance Sunday is held on the Sunday closest to 11 November so that communities, churches, service organisations, and civic groups can come together to remember. This year, Remembrance Sunday falls on **8 November**.

This morning, I will be leading a **Remembrance Parade Service** at Westbury-on-Trym Methodist Church, focusing on the theme of peace. After the service, we will join the local community at the cenotaph to lay wreaths and observe a minute's silence in memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Circuit Staff Retreat: 11-13 November

From 11-13 November, the Circuit Staff and Stewards will be gathering at Trinity College, Bristol for a retreat. We are grateful to both the Bristol Methodist District and the Circuit for providing the resources that have made this important time possible. Our focus will be on staffing and the future shape of ministry across the Circuit.

We are pleased that the retreat will be facilitated by David Knight from the Learning Network. As we pray, reflect, and plan together, we ask for your prayers. We seek God's wisdom and guidance as we discern how best to use the gifts, people, and resources entrusted to us. Our desire is to develop a sustainable and mission-focused approach to ministry that will enable our churches to flourish in the years ahead.

Bristol Christmas Market

The Christmas season is fast approaching, and with it the return of the Bristol Christmas Market in Broadmead from 6 November to 23 December. The market will feature more than 40 stalls, festive food and drink, live entertainment, and a variety of seasonal attractions. Entry is free, and thousands of people are expected to visit over the coming weeks.



Once again, our chaplaincy team will be present among traders, workers, and visitors, offering friendship, a listening ear, and pastoral support throughout the festive season. We give thanks for this valuable ministry at the heart of our city. Please pray for our Circuit Wellbeing Chaplain, Matt Albury, and all who serve alongside him, that they may share God's love, hope, and peace with everyone they meet.

Reverend Leigh Maydew

As we continue to give thanks for the ministry shared across our Circuit, I would like to let you know that Reverend Leigh Maydew has been appointed as a full-time Chaplain in the British Army and will leave the Bristol & South Gloucestershire Circuit in August 2027. Leigh's call to military chaplaincy has grown out of his ministry as an Army Reserve Chaplain, and many across the Circuit have encouraged and supported him in this calling. While we will be sad to see him move on, we also celebrate this new opportunity for service and witness.



Please keep Leigh, his family, and the congregations of Badminton Road, Watley's End, Winterbourne Down, and Yate in your prayers during this period of transition. Work has already begun on plans for the future, and we trust that God will continue to guide and provide for both Leigh and the Circuit. We are grateful to the circuit stewards for putting together a profile for a prospecting new minister at short notice.

Reverend Richard Sharples

We continue to hold Reverend Richard Sharples, formerly a member of our staff team, in our prayers as he undergoes treatment and recovery following recent chemotherapy. We pray for Richard's healing and renewed strength, and we also remember his wife Biddy Sharples and the wider family. May they know God's loving presence, encouragement, and peace in the days ahead.

In Memoriam

- We were also saddened to hear of the death of Rachel Newton. We give thanks for her life and witness, and we hold Rachel's family and friends in our love and prayers as they grieve her loss. Details of Rachel's funeral can be found in the Mailchimp.
- We were saddened this week to receive news of the death of the Revd Jong Sin Lee, a former minister in the Circuit. Jong Sin had lived with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) for more than eight years and faced his illness with great courage and faith. We hold his family and loved ones in our prayers, asking that they may know God's comfort, strength, and peace at this difficult time.
- *May all who mourn know the presence of Christ, who is the resurrection and the life.*

A Diwali Greeting



As many of our Hindu neighbours, friends and communities celebrate **Diwali**, the Festival of Lights, we extend our warmest greetings and good wishes. May this special festival be a time of joy, peace, hope and blessing for all who celebrate. We give thanks for the rich diversity of our communities and pray for continued understanding, friendship and goodwill among people of all faiths. Shubh Diwali!

Closing Thoughts

As we mark Remembrance Sunday and look ahead to Armistice Day, let us remember with gratitude those who served, sacrificed and gave their lives for others. Their courage reminds us not to take peace for granted. In a world that still faces conflict and division, may we each do our part to bring peace through kindness, understanding, forgiveness and love. Let us continue to pray for all who serve in the armed forces, for those affected by war, and for God's peace to be known in our communities and throughout the world.

"*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.*" (Matthew 5:9)

Blessings and love,

Teddy Kalongo