

plest doodle, splash of paint, patch of cloth or mould of clay might be reminiscent of childhood, but it is immediately elevated if it is a focus for asking God 'what are you saying to me through this?' Perhaps child like creativity needs to be reclaimed, 'unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' Matt 18:3. I believe this is also a valid way of hearing the Spirit's groans, see Romans 8:26, if we are willing to wait in stillness and see with reverence.

There are those who are creating masterpieces that inspire others, but your creative listening work may be God's gift for only you to see. The joy and the wholeness are in the doing, not in the technical perfection of the result. However if you are able to share with others and discern together what God is saying to the church we will know He is building His body. Remember God is in the process, the subject matter and the artist. Enjoy your creative listening!

Paul R Howes

The Northampton District has a new website. You can see it at:
www.northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk

CIRCUIT DIARY

more at www.bbbcircuit.org.uk

Aug	14 Tue	7.00pm	Creating a Safer Space training, Bicester
	23 Wed	7.30pm	Circuit Invitation Committee, Thornborough
	29 Wed	8.00pm	Creating a Safer Space training, Buckingham
Sep	5 Wed	7.30pm	Circuit Local Preachers, Bicester
	15 Sat	10.15am	Northampton District Synod, Northampton
	18 Tue	7.30pm	Circuit Meeting, Buckingham
Nov	28 Wed	7.30pm	Circuit Property at Brackley
Dec	6 Thu	7.30pm	Circuit Local Preachers, Buckingham

Information for the next "Bulletin" to Malcolm Wainwright by Mon. Nov. 5 2012
 (35 Cartwright Crescent, Brackley, NN13 6HA, malcolm-w@talktalk.net)

Aug - Nov
 2012
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The Methodist Church 
 Buckingham, Bicester & Brackley Circuit
www.bbbcircuit.org.uk

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Creative Listening

Having had a lifelong interest in graphic art matched with an increasing concern that we do not adequately demonstrate that we are a listening church, I have wanted to explore and promote 'creative listening'.

Immediately the words suggest two dimensions: creating the spiritual well being of the church both as individuals and as a body; being creative with any artistic material. My sabbatical taken February – April this year gave me the opportunity

to listen and to meet some creative listeners. With Celtic pilgrims on Lindisfarne, artists in Perth, gardeners near Exeter, community workers at Spring Harvest, counsellors at Sheffield, I learnt that so many disciplines have something to teach us.

I have always wanted to counter those who claim to have no artistic talent with the wonderful phrase 'let God be the artist'. The starting point must be a desire to engage with Him. The sim-



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The next in our series
about the churches of
the Circuit.

File on THORNBOROUGH

- ◆ **LOCATION** *The Chapel is situated opposite the green in the centre of this beautiful village.*
- ◆ **MEMBERSHIP** *There are 7 active members and a small number of adherents who are regular attenders.*
- ◆ **THE BUILDING** *In addition to the main chapel, there is a modern extension, which comprises a meeting room with a comfortable seating area, a fully equipped kitchen, an ordinary toilet and a disabled toilet. Patio doors lead out from the seating area onto a patio and a lawned garden leading down to a stream.*
- ◆ **SERVICES** *Services are held every Sunday at 11 am. On the first Sunday of the month a cafe church service is held at 10-10.45 am before the 11 am service. This is open to people of all ages but is probably most appropriate for children and their parents. On the second Sunday, we join together with the Anglicans for a family service. This service alternates between the Chapel and the church.*
- ◆ **PASTORAL WORKER** *Katy Morris is employed on a part-time basis to assist with all activities. She has proved to be an integral part of the life of the church.*
- ◆ **SCRAMBLERS AND INVESTIGATORS** *This children's group meet at cafe church and on the third Sunday of the month, where they are present for a short time in the service. They then go into the meeting room for separate activities. They meet in the holidays for activities and will be having an overnight camp in late August.*
- ◆ **CHURCH LINK** *Every year, a coach load of members from Charlemont Methodist Church, West Bromwich come to join in our Harvest Festival and stay for lunch. We have also visited their church on several occasions.*
- ◆ **HOUSE GROUP** *A small group meet weekly for Bible study,*

prayer and support in a member's home. One member who moved away to Cornwall has recently started participating remotely via Skype.

- ◆ **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES** *On the first Monday of the month about 25 villagers meet for lunch at the Chapel. "Meet and Eat" caters for older members of the community. The meal is followed by a quiz, or occasionally singing. It's an opportunity to form friendships and for us to offer prayer and support.*

Every Friday morning a group of six villagers meet to draw, paint and chat between 10 am-12 pm.

Funeral receptions is another service offered to the community. In the past few years, we have provided a venue and catering for several villagers who have been connected to us through the various activities in the church.

The Chapel has also provided refreshments and toilet facilities for the Annual Village Fun Run.

We took an active part in the Jubilee celebrations and village fete. An art exhibition was held in the Chapel and cream teas were served. A plate smashing stall was very popular!

- ◆ **FUTURE ACTIVITIES** *In September, we hope to launch a group meeting monthly, to knit for a charity - "Knit One to Save One" - knitting and crocheting items for premature babies in Africa. It is hoped that this will provide another opportunity for people who would normally be isolated in their own homes to meet together, with a definite purpose. People who don't want to knit will be invited to play board games or just chat.*
- ◆ *It is hoped that the meeting room and garden will be used more in the future as a venue for Alpha away days, quiet retreats, etc. A brochure is being prepared in order to advertise this more widely. The venue has already been used by the Bicester stewards, Buckingham Anglican Leadership Team and the local WI for various meetings.*