

RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



THIS MONTH: APRIL 2010

Dear Friends

Easter – a double celebration

For many people, Easter is now a couple of Bank Holidays and little else – but for the Christian it is a story in two parts. The first part, Good Friday, is about the sufferings and awful death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. Christians believe that it is by the death of Jesus Christ that they have hope of forgiveness and peace with God. The second part, Easter Day, is the story of the resurrection of Jesus. By our standards the disciples, Jesus' closest friends, were not educated – but neither were they stupid. They believed that the Jesus that they had laid in the tomb on Friday afternoon was alive again and the same Jesus who appeared to them.

Which part of that two part story is harder to believe? The quick answer suggests that the resurrection part of the story is harder to believe because it is outside of our normal experience. But a thoughtful answer is that the story about the most awful, painful, tragic death containing hope and meaning is the harder to believe – yet at the front of most churches is not an empty tomb but a cross.

As I look out of my back bedroom window I can see a great oak tree – soon it will be coming into leaf. But later in the year I expect to see leaves and acorns. But how do I know? Because I have watched trees for many years and seen it happen before. Christians, perhaps not awfully well, seek to share a message of hope and meaning in all circumstances, partly, because, in Jesus, they have seen it happen before, partly because the alternative of hopelessness and meaninglessness is about as close to hell in this life as it is possible for the Christian to get.

Sharing faith and hope and meaning is not easy when things are going well and it's certainly no easier when things are going badly. Faith and hope and meaning stand not against doubt (it's quite natural to have doubts from time to time) but against unbelief and hopelessness and meaninglessness. One thing that Christians know is that being a Christian does not insulate the believer from life's difficulties – for many people across the world life is much more difficult because they are Christians. Yet, Christians gain strength from knowing two things. Firstly, there is no situation or circumstances that we might face where God is not ultimately in control and, secondly, whatever situation or circumstances we face, God has promised he will not leave or forsake one of his children. God who raised Jesus to life, appointed the disciples as witnesses, who told others, and who share the hope of life in Jesus Christ.

I hope you will share with us in our services for Holy Week and Easter. On Maundy Thursday, Women's Fellowship are hosting the traditional communion service at 2.45 pm and all are welcome. Kindly note that our Good Friday service is at 10.00 am. Information about the Good Friday Treasure Hunt, which will conclude with a short service, is available on a separate leaflet. Easter Day begins with breakfast at 9.30 am and our services are at the usual times of 10.30 am and 7.00 pm.

General Church Meeting (Sunday 25 April, 2.30 pm)

Following on from our church council in March, in April we have our General Church Meeting. The main purpose of the meeting is to review the life and work of the church and to appoint stewards and representatives to the church council for the coming year. Nominations for church stewards should be made using the printed forms which are available from the church council secretary. These should be

submitted no later than Sunday 18 April. Younger members are especially encouraged to accept nominations to the church council as representatives.

Church giving

At the last two General Church Meetings, our treasurer has made us aware of the financial challenges that we are facing as a church. I am pleased that we continue to support a great number of mission initiatives in our own community, in Great Britain and across the world. However, to continue to sustain this work and go forward in our own local mission your support, prayerful, practical and financial, is vital. Many of our members give by standing order, others give through the envelope scheme and if you pay income tax it is important to know that, by your signing one simple form, the church can reclaim income tax against the amount that you give (this increases your giving by 25%). Traditionally, Christians have looked towards the tithe as a guide to their basic giving (i.e. 10% of their income) and we appreciate the many members who follow this biblical principle. If tithing is something that you have not considered before then perhaps you might review your giving by comparing it to other things that are significant expenses in your annual budget cost. Our household recently enjoyed a modest holiday to Downton near Looe (when we totted everything up it probably cost about £650 – or £13/week over the year). As a church, we don't want to keep on appealing for money – but we do need our whole church community to consider giving prayerfully and realistically, so that the work of God can go forward.

Fellowship Café (14 April, 7.30 pm)

Following the successful start made with our Teaching Café and Prayer Café, we are looking forward to our first Fellowship Café, which will take place on Wednesday 14 April at 7.30 pm (and all being well on the Wednesday nearest to the 15th of the month thereafter). Various members have taken responsibility for this and I am looking forward to it – though I have no more idea about the format of the evening than most of our members. I hope you will support this latest step of faith as we respond to the vision that we believe that God has given us from Acts 2:42, “they devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, the breaking of bread and to prayer,” using some of the insights from the Café Church format.

God bless

John Haley

FLOWER FESTIVAL (Saturday 8 May)

The church will be open throughout the day with an art exhibition and strawberry teas downstairs in the Oasis area. As this is the day of the Plympton May Fair we are taking the opportunity to be an active part of the community and to invite people into the church. We need everyone's help and support, especially volunteers to help with stewarding for one hour on the day. Please could you review the board in the front entrance and add your name at a suitable time. Please pray that through this event many people will come into the church and that those visiting will be drawn closer to knowing Jesus, the Saviour and Lord.

The Local Mission team

PRAYER CAFÉ

The next Prayer Café is on Saturday 3 April at 8.30 am, meeting for refreshments first and then moving into the hall for a time of prayer. This month the focus is on new life. The café will finish informally allowing those who wish to continue praying to do so or to have someone pray with them.

THE NOISE

We are looking forward to our 10th NOISE taking place from 1 - 3 May. Please can you support our young people by praying for them, by coming along and helping with the car washing, litter picking and fun afternoon at Castle Green. We also need donations for the Free Gift Stall, books, home made cakes and small chocolate bars (to be given out on Ridgeway on Saturday 24 April). Thank you.

Miriam Sitch

ENCIRCLED IN CARE

This is a twelve week course starting on Thursday 22 April 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm (no charge) at Stoke Methodist Church - for those people who are involved in pastoral care or visiting in the church. If you would like to register, please contact Sue Couch (337278) by Sunday 4 April.

PLANTING A TREE

It is tradition for the Stannator to plant a tree or shrub during their year of office. I have been given permission by the Church Council to plant a shrub in the church garden. This will take place on Friday 23 April at 3.00 pm. It would be very much appreciated if some of the church members could come. Tea, coffee and cake will be served in the vestibule. Thank you.

Marilyn Crabb

April Diary

Maundy Thursday 1:

2.45 pm

Women's Fellowship: Revd John Haley - communion
(all welcome)

Friday 2:



10.00 am

Good Friday service

1.30 pm

Treasure Hunt (please take a leaflet)

Saturday 3:

	PRAYER CAFÉ 8.30 - 9.30 am Prayer and Breakfast	
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10.00 - 12.00

Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lidia)

Easter Sunday 4:

9.30 am

Easter breakfast

10.30 am

Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)

7.00 pm

Mrs Alfreda Rogers

Thursday 8:

2.45 pm

Women's Fellowship: Revd Maureen Robins

Saturday 10:

10.00 - 12.00

Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril and Val)

Sunday 11:

10.30 am

Miss Catherine Stead

7.00 pm

Mrs Brenda Youngs

Tuesday 13:

7.30 pm

Men's Fellowship: Mr John Gooddridge (Morwellham)

Wednesday 14:

7.30 pm

Fellowship Café (Please see separate leaflet)

Thursday 15:

2.45 pm

Women's Fellowship: Mrs Judith Goodridge

Friday 16:

10.00 - 12.00

Easter activity morning (all school age children) - cost £1.

Saturday 17:

10.00 - 12.00

Oasis Coffee Bar: Local Mission (Pat and Jane)

Sunday 18:

10.30 am Dr Philip Walsh
7.00 pm Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)

Tuesday 20:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group
2.15 pm Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome)
3.00 pm Cake café
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: "Summer Beetles"

Wednesday 21:

10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches

Thursday 22:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Pat Stead

Saturday 24:

10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Youth Outreach (Miriam, Kim and Steve)

Sunday 25:

10.30 am Revd John Haley
2.30 pm General Church Meeting
7.00 pm Revd John Haley (Teaching Café)

Monday 26:



TEACHING CAFÉ
7.00 - 8.30 pm
Teaching and a light supper

7.30 pm

Minister's study (Reformation History 1)

Tuesday 27:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group
3.00 pm Cake café
7.30 pm Ministry and Mission Committee
7.30 pm Men's Fellowship: Mr Paul May (Afghanistan)
at Elburton Methodist Church
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Mr Paul Lowden JP (Magistrates in the Community)

Wednesday 28:

10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches

Thursday 29:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mr Graham Skedgell

Church office hours: Tuesday-Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
Church telephones: 348178 (office only); 331186 (pre-school and hall)

Church Office: admin@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk
Minister: The Revd John M Haley: min@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

www.ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

Information for May *This Month* to the office by 20 April please.