

THIS MONTH: AUGUST 2008

RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



Dear Friends

Looking out of the window

I think I did quite a lot of looking out of the window at school but I don't mean 'looking out of the window' in the sense of daydreaming, or even admiring the view, but in the sense of getting a perspective on the world. For many of us, our view of the world is not only shaped by looking out of the window but also by looking through those 'windows on the world', the newspaper, the radio and television and more recently the internet.

Internet search engines work a little like the index of a large encyclopaedia. Recently I entered the question, 'what makes you angry?' into a search engine. Surprisingly, nearly all the answers came from teenagers. These included the predictable replies, 'school, college, exams, people who don't listen/understand – parents!' I had thought that across the developed world people might have been angry about hunger in the two-thirds world, terrorism, child-labour, drug addiction, teenage pregnancy, knife-crime'. Maybe they are, but if they are they don't seem to be saying so.

This prompted me to ask the question, 'does God get angry?' We know that God's nature is implacably opposed to sin. His holiness stands against the wilful, deliberate sin of humanity. The third century theologian Lactantius wrote, 'he who does not get angry does not care'. The Bible teaches us that looks at the sin and injustice in the world and gets angry. I hadn't thought I would be thankful for that until I realised it shows how much he cares.

Looking in the mirror

Every morning I multitask! I manage to look out of the window (by listening to the radio news) and in the mirror at the same time. When we reflect on the evil in present day society we are forced to conclude, like it or not, that we are caught up in that evil and face injustice, disease and dying. When we look in the mirror we may or may not be pleased with what we see outwardly but I am using the expression to mean coming to a realistic self-assessment.

It is either a very proud person or a very foolish person that cries out to God, 'Lord, just give me what I deserve'. That would be justice. Crying out for mercy is not exactly fashionable today and yet we should cry out, 'Lord, do not give me what I deserve'. That is mercy. Yet the miracle of the Christian gospel is that God is willing to go beyond mercy (not giving us what we deserve) to grace (blessing us even though we do not deserve it).

His grace is seen most clearly in the decisive event in the history of the world for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son:

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.

(Stuart Townend)

Office changes

Friday 11 July was Joanne's last day in the office. Joanne wrote, 'It has been a pleasure working with John and everyone in the church community. Thank you for your wonderful support over the last two years.' We Joanne well as she seeks a full-time employment. We hope a new secretary will start early in September but for the meantime Catherine Stead will be working in the office.

Changes in Boys' Brigade

A special barbeque was held on 14 July to celebrate Andy Sherrington's 12 years of service as Captain of the company. We are grateful to Andy for all that he has done and wish him well as he seeks new avenues of service. Simon Rogers has been appointed as the new BB Captain and we wish him God's blessing.

A wedding invitation

Lara Austin and Gary Thomas are getting married on Saturday 16 August at 3.00 pm (yes, you are right, Argyle are away that day!). Lara, Gary, Callum and Lily-Rose are important members of our church community and want everyone to know that you are welcome to attend the ceremony.

Special events in August

We welcome anyone who is visiting on holiday to our Sunday services. The holiday season means that a lot of regular events are on their summer break. However, there are still some special events. The friends at Millbrook invite everyone to their cream tea on Saturday 9 August at 2.00 pm. The holiday club for children runs each morning from Tuesday 26 to Friday 29 August and on Saturday 30 August we are having a day out in Tavistock. If you are going away, do have a relaxing and refreshing time. If you are staying at home, let's hope for some real summer weather.

God bless

John Haley

August Diary

Saturday 2:

8.30 am Monthly prayer meeting
9.15 am Dartmoor walk
10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lydia)
7.00-9.15 pm Recharge

Sunday 3:

10.30 am Mr Andrew Chapple
7.00 pm Mrs Alfreda Rogers

Saturday 9:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Youth Outreach (Miriram, Steve and Kim)
2.00 pm Cream Tea at Millbrook

Sunday 10:

10.30 am Revd John Haley: Communion
7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Saturday 16:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Outreach (Pat Stead)
3.00pm Wedding of Gary Thomas and Lara Astin

Sunday 17:

10.30 am Mr Earle Rendle
7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Saturday 23:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Church funds (Avril)

Sunday 24:

10.30 am Revd John Haley
7.00 pm Revd Stephen Caddick and Revd John Haley

Tuesday 26 – Friday 29

Holiday club

Saturday 30:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar:
Tavistock

Sunday 31:

10.30 am Revd John Haley
7.00 pm Revd John Haley

**Church office hours:
Tuesday-Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm**

**Church telephones:
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Information for September's *This Month* to the office by 26 August please.