

THIS MONTH: FEBRUARY 2008



RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

Things change – even in church!

Most of my friends know that I reach my 50th birthday this year. Things have changed in my lifetime – even in church! In the first half of my life, the Bible still contained 'Thees and Thous', the minister or preacher prayed in the language of the Bible and in the Sunday services we sang five traditional hymns. The general assumption in society was that everyone was a 'Christian' even though only a minority went to church. For many people, 'Christian' simply meant ordinary, decent, nice person. To suggest someone might not be a Christian would have been considered preposterous. In the second half of my life, the Bible, prayer and Christian worship have all become more contemporary. The general assumption among people younger than me is that ordinary, decent, nice people are simply that, without the need for any particular label. To assume that other people are Christians is preposterous. Of course, not all changes in society or in the church are necessarily for the better but perhaps one good thing is that we have a new awareness that you actually have to *become* a Christian. Jesus said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is near." We often think of repentance as changing what we do but it is deeper than that. Repentance is not so much a new way of behaving as a new way of thinking that spills over into a new way of speaking and a new way of acting. In the New Testament, men and women repented and trusted in Jesus Christ, committing themselves to learn from him and follow him, because they saw their lives were going nowhere other than the grave without him. They expressed repentance and faith through being baptised and looked for spiritual renewal in their lives. In actual fact, that is what becoming a Christian has meant throughout the generations ... what about you?

***Christianity Explored* (Wednesday evenings at 7.00 pm)**

Christianity Explored, a 10 week programme that includes a DVD presentation, a two course meal and a short time of discussion is underway but it still possible to join the group. Simon Rogers would be pleased to know that you are coming so just speak to Simon or one of the church stewards.

News from the Plymouth and Devonport Methodist Circuit

Since last June, our superintendent minister has been off work having his two shoulder joints replaced. Our thoughts and prayers have been with Robert and his wife, Marion. I am pleased to say that Robert hopes to return to work at Sherwell United Church in February but does not feel ready to return to his superintendent's responsibilities. I am

anticipating that the circuit will ask me to continue as acting superintendent until at least 31 August 2008. I am very grateful to all who have been helping me in my very demanding responsibilities and thank everyone for their understanding that one or two things have not been done as promptly or as efficiently I would normally aim to do them.

Bryn Haworth at Ridgeway (Saturday 8 March at 7.30 pm)

The purpose of all outreach events is to give people in our church community the opportunity to invite people to come to a special event that is not a typical Sunday service. It also gives the whole church community the opportunity to spend some time together, to get to know one another and to go to something special that we can all enjoy. In March, we welcome Bryn Haworth. Lancashire born, acclaimed slide guitarist, Bryn Haworth, is also a singer-songwriter and a top performer who has been delighting audiences with his own unique brand of rock, country and gospel blues for over 30 years. He has recorded as a session guitar player with top musicians including Chris de Burgh, Joan Armatrading, Cliff Richard and Gerry Rafferty. In 1974 Bryn and his wife Sally became Christians and this powerful experience has brought a strong gospel influence into his music. Bryn is coming to us as part of his national 'Winter Blues' tour – this is an acoustic set, so friends who do not like loud music need not be frightened! There is a separate booking leaflet for the evening which includes a hot supper. Tickets cost £7.50 for adults and £5 for students and children, including a hot supper.

Yours sincerely

John Haley

SCHOOLS IN PLYMOUTH

During the past few months, churches in Plymouth have had the opportunity to purchase sets of books from the Christian Resource Project, and give them to primary and infant schools in the area. The Church Council agreed to buy sets of books for all the appropriate schools in Plympton. Following our enquiry to CRP we found that the schools in Plympton had already been given sets of books and the Church Council agreed to use the books to give to other schools in Plymouth, who had as yet not had any. We have now been able to visit several schools in the Devonport and Estover area and found this to be a real blessing to those visiting and to the schools involved.

FLOWER ARRANGING GROUP

The Flower Arranging Group would like to welcome new people to help to arrange the church flowers for Mothering Sunday. Please meet in the crèche on Thursday 28 February at 7.00 pm. Bring suitable cutters for flowers and foliage stems. Hope to see you.

Sue Couch

February Diary

Saturday 2:

8.30 am Prayer Meeting
9.15 am Dartmoor Walk
10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lydia)
7.30 pm "Recharge"

Sunday 3:

10.30 am Revd John Haley (Communion Service)
7.00 pm Mrs Julie Birkett

Monday 4:

7.30 pm Minister's Bible Study (Romans week 5)

Tuesday 5:

10.00-12.30 Patchwork Group
6.30 for 7.00 pm Ladies' Group dinner at the George

Wednesday 6:

10.00-12.30 Coffee followed by lunches
7.00 pm Christianity Explored (week 3)

Thursday 7:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Peter Fisher "Paraguayan Harp"

Friday 8:

7.30 pm Quiz Night

Saturday 9:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Youth Outreach (Miriam)

Sunday 10:

10.30 am Mrs Alfreda Rogers
7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Tuesday 12:

7.30 pm Men's Fellowship: David Hockings "Transport"

Wednesday 13:

7.00 pm Christianity Explored (week 4)

Thursday 14:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Marion Yelland

Saturday 16:

10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril & Pamela)

Sunday 17:

10.30 am Mrs Janet Dobinson
7.00 pm Miss Judith Walker

Monday 18:

7.30 pm Minister's Bible Study (Romans week 6)

Tuesday 19:	10.00-12.30	Patchwork Group
	2.15 pm	Service at Pocklington Rise (All welcome)
	7.30 pm	Youth Council Meeting
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Eileen Slade "Japanese Silk Flowers"
Wednesday 20:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
	7.00 pm	Christianity Explored (week 5)
Thursday 21:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Mike Law
Saturday 23:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Outreach (Pat Stead)
Sunday 24:	10.30 am	To be arranged
	7.00 pm	Revd John Haley: Communion
Monday 25:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible Study (Romans week 7)
Tuesday 26:	10.00-12.30	Patchwork Group
	7.30 pm	Ladies Group: Pam Kempson "History of Beads"
	7.45 pm	Men's Fellowship with Women's Fellowship at Elburton
Wednesday 27:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
	7.00 pm	Christianity Explored (week 6)
Thursday 28:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Prim Skedgell
	7.00 pm	Flowering arranging for Mothering Sunday

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
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Information for March's *This Month* to the office by 19 February please.