

THIS MONTH: JUNE 2009

RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



Dear Friends

A sense of expectancy

If we learned one thing from the recent visit of Tony Anthony – and I am sure that many of us learned more than one thing – it was to have a sense of expectancy. When we come through the church door we must have a sense of expectation – that God is going to move among us.

Pentecost

As June arrives the church has moved into the season of Pentecost. While we rightly celebrate the day of Pentecost (this year Sunday 31 May) and the coming of the Holy Spirit in power on the apostles, there is no time when the Holy Spirit has been withdrawn from the Christian Church.

There are many miracles associated with Pentecost – the mighty rushing wind, the cloven tongues of fire, the apostles praising God in previously unknown and unlearned languages (commonly called the gift of speaking in tongues), but to me the greatest miracle was that 3,000 were added to their number that day.

Pentecost was the time that the Christian community exploded into life. The power and presence of the Holy Spirit gave new power to the Apostles' preaching. The sermons in *Acts* enable us to discover the content of that preaching – Jesus was the promised Saviour, the death of Jesus was part of God's plan, God raised Jesus from death as he promised, the resurrection of Jesus was witnessed and proved (by the disciples and the women who followed Jesus), Jesus is glorified now and forever, all must repent and believe in him. We must be faithful to this message in our preaching and witnessing and prayerful that God will anoint his word with the Holy Spirit.

What do these countries have in common?

When we think of the countries of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Eire, Spain, Germany, Ecuador, Malawi, the Philippines and Fiji – what do they all have common? The answer is that we had people born and brought up in all these countries at our last communion service. Older members will remember that one of the set prayers in the communion service from the *Methodist Service Book* said that we shared in 'the heavenly banquet prepared for all mankind'. The picture of worship in heaven is that it includes people of every tribe, nation, people and language. When we welcome people from different ethnic groups, countries, nationalities and languages, in such a way that together we own the Lordship of Christ and that his church is our church, we are a community that anticipates the heavenly banquet

Extreme politics: why Christians should be concerned

Very sadly, to the alarm of many people, including almost all Christian denominations, the British National Party has made gains in local elections in recent years. While, some years ago evangelical Christians were concerned about the atheistic philosophy of extreme left-wing politics (and were quite well aware of the persecution of Christians in communist states), today Christians must also be concerned about the politics of the far-right.

Along with many other citizens of the United Kingdom, I am proud to be British. Despite the well-publicised anti-social behaviour of some Britons abroad, our traditions, our heritage, our customs, our values, our sense of fair-play and our special sense of humour are things that I cherish. We need not

do that with any sense of superiority, though I must admit that I have said to German friends, 'stick to what you're good at, making cars, and leave pop music to us!' However, while seeking to give the impression that they simply support everything that is British, the real agenda of the British National Party (BNP) is racist in its motivation.

Grenada-born Lance Corporal Johnson Beharry was honoured in 2005 after twice saving lives under enemy fire. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for 'repeated extreme gallantry and unquestioned valour' for two rescues in May and June 2004, despite a harrowing weight of incoming fire. In the June operation, L/Cpl Beharry's vehicle was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade round but, despite receiving horrific head injuries, he drove out of the ambush and saved his crew. The BNP describe L/Cpl Beharry as an 'immigrant' claiming that he only received Britain's top military honour because of 'positive discrimination by the PC-mad government'. This disgusting slur on such acts of bravery shows the BNP up for what it really is - thinly disguised, abhorrent racism. Christians may have reservations about the candidates or the policies of the mainstream political parties but, although it has never been my intention to tell people which way to vote or 'to preach politics from the pulpit', I think that, regarding the BNP, I can with integrity say, 'don't vote for them'. The Methodist Church 'expects members of the Methodist Church to practice and promote racial justice and inclusion, and reject any political parties that attempt to stir up racial hatred and fear of asylum seekers'.

German students

Since last September, four German students have been a welcome part of our congregation. For one term, in the autumn, we welcomed Julian Elbers who is now back at home in Dortmund. In the spring term, we welcomed Sophie Bucka who has returned to Halle. Since the New Year, we have been joined by Katrina Brand, who will go home to Bavaria in July. This month we must say 'goodbye' to Nicola Hoch. Nicola, who has been studying at Coombe Dean and Hele's Schools, has attended the church every Sunday since last October. Nicola's last Sunday with us will be 14 June. Always so polite and friendly, members of the congregation will know that Nicola's spoken English is excellent. Nicola first read in church on Remembrance Sunday and has been one of our readers on several other occasions. Her ready smile and even temperament have made her a pleasure to have in our congregation and as a frequent guest in our home. I was going to say that Nicola is beginning to master the English sense of humour but perhaps I ought to say the 'Haley sense of humour'! These four young people have been excellent ambassadors for their families, for their country and for their generation. We wish them well for the future.

News from our General Church Meeting

Our general church meeting reappointed Avril Baker, David Hockings, Karen Hussey, Simon Rogers and Sue Tozer as church stewards. Carmen de Pablo, Keith Pope, Pat Stead and Stella Smith were appointed to the new role of assistant steward. Some of our former stewards are also prepared to act as 'reserve stewards'. John Buttle, Rachael Granville, Linda Prynne, Miriam Sitch, Neil Stewart, Carmen de Pablo, Holly Ennis and Matthew Rogers were elected to the church council. Our treasurer, Barbara Parr, reminded us that it is very beneficial to the church for all tax payers to sign a Gift Aid declaration (please request this through the church office). The church faces significant increases in utility costs. The *monthly* figures, with the figures for the last financial year in brackets, are as follows: electricity £180/month (£88); gas £203/month (£120), water £169/month (£78). In short it is costing us more than £6,600/year for these three bills – nearly £130/week. Cleaning and property maintenance are also significant expenses. Our annual assessment (the amount we pay to the circuit for the maintenance of ministry in Plymouth and Devonport and the wider work of the Methodist Church) is now £41,500 – nearly £800/week. We continue to run an efficient and busy office. Your continued thoughtful giving helps the church to maintain and develop its ministry and mission.

Visit of Revd Steven Wild to Millbrook Methodist Church

Separate leaflets are available advertising the visit of Steve Wild to Millbrook Methodist Church on Saturday 13 June. At 4.00 pm Steve is meeting with people from Millbrook and Ridgeway to talk about evangelism (this meeting is not being widely advertised and is for our two church communities). We will be serving high tea from 6.00 to 7.00 pm. The evening celebration begins at 7.30 pm with young people from St Dennis helping to lead the singing. Please support this event if you can.

Congratulations to the new Plympton Stannator

I am sure that everyone in the church community joins me in sending our congratulations to Mrs Marilyn Crabb on her appointment as the Plympton Stannator for the coming year. We wish Marilyn and Peter a very successful year.

Yours sincerely

John Haley

Action for children (6 June)

The annual walk to raise funds will take place this year on 6 June at 12.00 noon. Please see the notice board in the foyer for further information about this and three other events to which we are invited. Sponsor forms for the walk can be obtained from Ann and Norman.

June Diary

Monday 1:	6.15 pm 7.30 pm	Exploring Church membership (3) crèche Minister's Bible Study (Acts, unit 5)
Tuesday 2:	10.00-12.00 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Ladies Group: Peter Gregory (Memories)
Wednesday 3:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 4:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Revd John M Haley
Saturday 6:	8.30 am 10.00- 12.00	Monthly Prayer Meeting Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lydia)
Sunday 7:	10.30 am 7.00 pm	Revd John Haley and Revd John Carne (Holy Communion) Mrs Kate Konrad
Monday 8:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Acts, unit 6)
Tuesday 9:	10.00 - 12.00 6.30 pm 7.30 pm	Patchwork Group Ladies' Group: Evening Meal at the Moorland Hotel Men's Fellowship: Ridgeway Walk
Wednesday 10:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 11:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Outing to Paignton
Saturday 13:	10.00-12.00 4.00 pm	Oasis Coffee Bar: Local Mission (Pat & others) Training in Evangelism and Personal Witness (Millbrook)

	6.00 pm	High Tea (Millbrook)
	7.30 pm	Celebration with Steve Wild (Millbrook)
Sunday 14:		
	10.30 am	Revd John Haley
	7.00 pm	Revd John Haley
Monday 15:		
	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Acts, unit 7)
Tuesday 16:		
	10.00 - 12.00	Patchwork Group
	2.15 pm	Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome)
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Mrs Kate Konrad (Tearfund)
Wednesday 17:		
	10.00 - 12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
Thursday 18:		
	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Revd David Youngs
Saturday 20:		
	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril)
Sunday 21:		
	10.30 am	Revd Denis Applebee
	7.00 pm	Mrs Alfreda Rogers
Monday 22:		
	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible Study (Acts, unit 8)
Tuesday 23:		
	10.00 - 12.00	Patchwork Group
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Helen and Peter Haydn-Davies
Wednesday 24:		
	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 25:		
	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Revd Maureen Robbins
Saturday 27:		
	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Girls Brigade (Officers)
Sunday 28:		
	10.30 am	Revd John Haley (Includes the Baptism of the son of Keith and Helen Pope)
	7.00 pm	Revd John Haley
Monday 29:		
	7.30 pm	Minster's Bible Study (Acts, unit 9)
Tuesday 30:		
	10.00 - 12.00	Patchwork Group
	7.30 pm	Men's Fellowship: Wilf Harrison (America-Grand Canyon)
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Revd John Haley

Church office hours: Tuesday-Friday 11.00 am - 2.00 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 July's *This Month* to the office by 23 June please.