

# THIS MONTH: MARCH 2008



## RIDGWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

### **A good start to the year**

Most Methodist Churches in Britain use individual communion glasses. One of the handy things about these is that they enable us to count how many people receive communion. I am pleased to say that this number has been increasing steadily in recent years. The number of people taking communion on Sunday mornings now regularly exceeds 100 – it certainly did in January and February and whereas we were once excited to exceed 100 people, now we are disappointed to fall below that. Every church has things to develop but we are working on challenges associated with growth and new people joining us rather than, as so many churches, problems relating to decline. I wonder if I could encourage members who have been with us for more than two years to make sure that you are getting to know some of the people who have joined us in the last two years. That's already happening in *Christianity Explored* but I hope it will happen in the main Sunday congregation as well. Evening congregations continue steadily with about 30 attending. However, these could be significantly greater occasions for the gospel if they were swelled by people who caught the vision of two complementary services. Could you catch that vision?

### **Mothering Sunday: 2 March**

The early date of Easter means that Mothering Sunday falls on 2 March. Once again we are hosting our popular Mothering Sunday breakfast at 9.30 am and following this with an all-age service at 10.30 am. All-age services are often a good way to introduce someone to the church community for the first time.

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

In order to start promptly we are advertising the time as 7.00 for 7.30 pm. This will enable people to gain entry and to choose their hot supper. Bryn will play two song sets and during the interval there will be the opportunity to have desserts and drinks. If you would like to help with the arrangements in any way please speak to one of the stewards.

### **Easter arrangements**

Don't shoot me but we are not having our traditional Maundy Thursday evening communion service this year. Instead we are showing the *Narnia* film at 7.00 pm. This excellent film is a way in which all ages can think about the Easter message through the symbolism of the story by C. S. Lewis. Those who would otherwise miss the Maundy Thursday communion will undoubtedly be welcome to join me at the Women's Fellowship Maundy Thursday communion on 20 March at 2.45 pm.

Don't forget our Good Friday morning service starts at 10.00 am. I am grateful for those who take an interest in Millbrook. I shall be conducting a service at 6.00 pm at Millbrook Methodist Church and we are going to follow that with tea/coffee and light refreshments. The Rame Peninsula is a lovely place to spend a few hours if the weather is mild, so I hope that some of you will support me and the congregation there and take the opportunity to enjoy a special day. At Ridgeway our Easter Day services are at 10.30 am and 7.00 pm. To get the day off to a good start we are serving breakfast from 9.30 am. Every Sunday is Easter Day in miniature but Easter Day is the great celebration of the Christian year – Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!

### **What is the assessment?**

Every Methodist Church is part of a group of Methodist Churches ('the circuit'). Our circuit is Plymouth and Devonport. Methodism is structured in such a way that our ministers and other staff resources are financed by the circuit. The circuit also contributes to the Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District which in turn contributes to our central offices (sometimes called 'the connexion' which reminds us of the inter-relatedness of all Methodist congregations). In return, from the circuit we receive ordained ministers, local preachers (who are trained and resourced by the circuit) and help and advice with finance and property. From the District we receive not only the ministry of our district chairman, Revd John Carne, who oversees our ministers, and helps us with district evangelism and administration, but also the district evangelism enabler and the district training and development officer. Each local Methodist Church pays a contribution to the circuit (the assessment). In order to sustain eight full-time Methodist ministers in the Plymouth and Devonport Circuit, our church council at Ridgeway has agreed an increased annual contribution that will rise to £44,000 in 2009-10. Training of ministers, local preachers, workers with children and young people, home and overseas mission projects and a whole realm of legal and property advice are handled by our central offices in London and Manchester.

In addition to the assessment, our own overheads at Ridgeway, such as building maintenance, utilities (gas, electricity, water), office and secretary, we need everyone in our community to rise to the challenge of realistic giving. The only alternative is for our work to contract and not to grow and that is not the way that our local church and circuit leadership team feel is the way to go ahead. You can help the church at no extra cost to yourself by signing a Gift Aid declaration (which enables the church to recover any income tax you have paid on the sums that you give). A member who gives £10 each week gives £520 each year but with Gift Aid that can become £665.60 – so it is well worth doing. Even if you do not pay income tax, you can arrange to give regularly through the envelope scheme or by standing order - please ask our treasurer for further information. I don't really like writing about money but these are the challenges that we have to face and to which I hope we can all rise. God bless you all through the remainder of Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

Yours sincerely

*John Haley*

## March Diary

Saturday 1:	8.30 am	Prayer Meeting
	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril Baker)
<b>Sunday 2:</b>	<b>9.30 am</b>	<b>Mothering Sunday breakfast</b>
	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Revd John Haley: All Age Service &amp; Baptism</b>
	<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Mr Brian Hart: Youth Led Service</b>
Monday 3:		
	7.30 pm	Circuit Meeting (Ivybridge)
Tuesday 4:		
	10.00-12.30	Patchwork Group
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Eileen Line: "My life in the theatre"
Wednesday 5:		
	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
	7.00 pm	Christianity Explored (week 7)
	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible Study (Romans week 8)
Thursday 6:		
	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Revd Ambrose Wright
	7.30 pm	Finance and Property Meeting
Friday 7:		
	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Bryn Haworth evening at Millbrook
Saturday 8:		
		Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys Fun Day (Salisbury Rd)
	9.15 am	Dartmoor Walk
	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine & Lydia)
	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Bryn Haworth Blues Cafe
<b>Sunday 9:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Revd John Haley: Communion</b>
	<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd John Haley</b>
Monday 10:		
	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible Study (Romans week 9)
Tuesday 11:		
	7.30 pm	Men's Fellowship: Ken Snelling
	7.30 pm	Stewards' Meeting
	7.45 pm	Ladies' Group: Neil Reeves "Burrator"
Wednesday 12:		
	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
	7.00 pm	Christianity Explored (week 8)
Thursday 13:		
	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Peter Gregory
Saturday 15:		
	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Outreach (Pat Stead)

**Sunday 16:**

**10.30 am**      **Mr George Weddle with Mr Gary Streeter, MP**  
**7.00 pm**      **Revd John Haley: Communion**

Monday 17:

7.30 pm      Church Council Meeting

Tuesday 18:

10.00-12.30      Patchwork Group  
2.15 pm      Service at Pocklington Rise (All welcome)  
7.45 pm      Ladies' Group: Easter Message, Revd Dr Denis Applebee

Wednesday 19:

10.00-12.30      Coffee followed by lunches  
7.00 pm      Christianity Explored (Week 9)  
7.30 pm      Minister's Bible Study (Romans 10)

**Thursday 20: MAUNDY THURSDAY**

2.45 pm      Women's Fellowship: Revd John Haley  
"Maundy Thursday Communion"  
7.00 pm      Film: "The Chronicles of Narnia" (see separate sheet)

**Friday 21:**

**GOOD FRIDAY**  
**10.00 am**      **Good Friday Service with John Haley**  
11.30-2.00 pm      "Through the Wardrobe" activity for children age 5+

Saturday 22:

10.00 am      Flower arranging for Easter Day  
10.00-12.00      Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril Baker)

**Sunday 23: EASTER DAY**

**9.30 am**      **Breakfast**  
**10.30 am**      **Revd John Haley: Communion**  
**7.00 pm**      **Revd John Haley**

Tuesday 25:

10.00-12.30      Patchwork Group  
7.45 pm      Men's Fellowship at Elburton: David Youngs "Easter Talk"

Thursday 27:

2.45 pm      Women's Fellowship: Miss Barbara Baker

Saturday 29:

10.00-12.00      Oasis Coffee Bar: Women's Fellowship

Sunday 30:

**10.30 am**      **Revd Dr Denis Applebee**  
**7.00 pm**      **Mrs Val Marriott**

**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](mailto:admin@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk)

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