

# THIS MONTH: MAY 2009



## RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

### **Be bold – Be Jesus' witnesses**

In an age where most of us have known little other than church decline we must remind ourselves that it is God's will for the Christian community to grow. In the New Testament (particularly in Acts) we see a remarkable period of church growth. I don't believe that there is a special formula ('all you have got to do is ...') but I do believe that there are certain basics that we must ensure are happening. Individual Christians gathered together in local churches must have a maturing relationship with God, the heavenly Father. My Father was always my Father but my relationship with him was different when I was 30 years old from when I was a three year old – neither of us would have wanted it any other way. We must also have maturing relationships with one another. I like meeting new friends but my relationship with them is inevitably different from friendships that I have made and sustained over the years. Key to the growth of the New Testament church, however, was the readiness with which the believers witnessed to Jesus. They did not do that in their own strength (as if they had a technique that any double-glazing salesman has tried to learn) – the Spirit enabled them to witness. They were ready to take any and every opportunity to witness to Jesus. We need to be ready as well. This need not mean 'forcing things down people's throats (that's likely to make them sick!)'. Instead we need to look for opportunities to share our faith with others. Witnessing will mean saying that Jesus is my Saviour, that his dying on the cross is the way that he shows the love of God and saves me. We will need to say that he is alive and we feel that by faith we can know him. We believe that he is Lord of all and calls each of us to have lives which are changing because we believe and trust in him.

### **Me, a church member?**

The Methodist Church began as a society and, to this day, the way to join is to become a church member. If you are attending regularly on Sundays and feel that you would like to explore what it means to be a church member you are welcome to attend the four membership groups that I shall be holding on Monday evenings (11 May, 18 May, 1 June and 8 June) at 6.15 pm in the crèche (the group lasts up to one hour). It helps me to know that you are coming but it is possible just to come on the evening. If you are interested but cannot come on Mondays at 6.15 pm then please let me know. The basis of church membership is as follows:

*All those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and accept the obligation to serve Him in the life of the Church and the world are welcome as full members of the Methodist Church. In the Church: Members are committed to worship, holy communion, fellowship and service, prayer and Bible study, and responsible giving. In the world: Members are committed to the working out of their faith in daily life, the offering for personal service in the community, the Christian use of their resources, and the support of the Church in its total world mission.*

From time to time we have a review of our membership roll. Those who have moved out to the area or who no longer attend are encouraged either to join a new church or renew their commitment to Christ and his church.

### **Taming the Tiger!**

The long-awaited weekend with Tony Anthony is almost with us. A former world Kung Fu champion, Tony has a gripping, life-changing story which he will share at Plymouth Guildhall on Sunday 10 May at 7.00 pm. Admission is free. Tony also wants to equip others to share faith and make disciples for

Jesus. Not many of us find that easy and so we have arranged a day of 'Release Training' on Saturday 9 May from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm. Booking is essential and costs £12 but that does include a training pack and lunch. Please contact the office without delay to confirm your place.

### **Remembering Wesley – why it is important**

Our special service for Aldersgate Sunday (24 May at 7.30 pm) recalls the conversion of John Wesley when he wrote in his journal (24 May 1738), 'I felt my heart strangely warmed'. Most Christian groups have some kind of heritage and, because ours is firmly rooted in personal faith it is particularly important that we affirm the continued importance of knowing God personally. It is also important that we do not lose three of our historic emphases – 'Christ dying for us'; Christ reigning in us' and the universal gospel call, that is the good news of Jesus Christ is for all.

### **Welcome to Willy Niklaus**

Willy Niklaus will be with us from 23 to 31 May. Sadly his wife, Katharina, is not able to join us this time. I met Willy at the Methodist Theological Seminary, Reutlingen, Germany in May 1981 and visited his congregation at Lenzburg in February 1992. This is Willy's return visit! I'll let Willy introduce himself:

*I was born in Bern and brought up in Thun. When I was 17 years old a friend took me along to a youth club of the Methodist Church. After national service, I decided I should become a fighter for peace but concluded there must be more to life. As a student, I arranged a work placement in an institution for drug addicts. Together with those freedom-seeking people, I really met Jesus in a very personal and liberating way. Shortly after, back in Reutlingen (Germany), I met your minister, John. After a Methodist circuit appointment in Lenzburg (near Zürich), I moved to work at Adelboden, in the Bernese Oberland, to work with drug addicts in a therapeutic house. Later I took a new job as youth worker and Bible teacher in the Swiss Reformed Church and decided to finish studies at the University of Bern in order to be a minister in that church. I now have an appointment with congregations in Thurnen and Seftigen, a nice valley between Thun and Bern, called Gürbetal. The parish has three nice churches, the one in Kirchenthurnen being more than 1,000 years old – with a long and sometimes difficult history! A lot of my time is spent teaching the basics of Christian belief to children aged seven to 16 years. I am married to Katharina and we have four sons, Florian (23), Pierino (21), Vinzenz (17) and Manuel (nearly 14). Outside of work I enjoy skiing and jogging, traveling and meeting and getting to know new people. I know John enjoyed his visit to Lenzburg and now I am looking forward to being with John and his congregations.*

### **Property news**

We are experiencing some disruption downstairs as work continues to make 'the void' a more usable area for storage. Our grateful thanks to those who have been working on this project.

### **Minister's Bible study**

Finally, this term in my Monday Bible study we are looking at Acts – an important book for the season of Ascension and Pentecost. We are always pleased to welcome new members to our group. We start at 7.30 pm and finish with tea/coffee and superior biscuits at about 9.00 pm.

Yours sincerely

*John Haley*

### **Pastoral Committee**

The meeting will be held on May 13 in the Lounge at 7.30 pm. Your agenda for the meeting will be passed to you soon. May the Lord bless this work which is done in His name. Sue Couch.

## **Tony Anthony: 8-10 May (See separate sheets for further information)**

Please pray:

- ✚ That the prisons and schools will be open and welcoming to the testimony that is shared
- ✚ That the ground will be prepared for young and old on the fringes of our church to come along to these events and meet the living Jesus
- ✚ That the Lord will speak through Tony and give him the right words for each of the events
- ✚ That the Release training will provide an opportunity for many people to think about how the Lord is calling us to proclaim the gospel
- ✚ That the Lord will touch many lives through the things that are to take place.

### **THE NOISE weekend (1-4 May)**

Friday 1 May, 6.45-9.30 pm film *Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* - all welcome.

Saturday 2 May 7.00-9.00 pm MADD Hatters Quiz Party - with quiz rounds and puddings

Sunday 3 May 2.00 - 4.00 pm prayer walk around Plympton

Monday 4 May 2.00-4.00 pm Family Fun afternoon at Castle Green

Please book your place for the quiz (you don't need to be part of a team). Any unwanted treasures would be greatly appreciated for the free gift stall at Castle Green. Thank you for your continuing support and prayer.

## **May Diary**

Saturday 2:

8.30 am Monthly Prayer Meeting  
10.00-12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: The Noise (Miriam, Kim and Steve)

**Sunday 3:**

**10.30 am Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)**  
**7.00 pm Miss Catherine Stead**

Tuesday 5:

10.00-12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.45 pm Ladies Group: Pauline Rooks (Alzheimer's Association)

Wednesday 6:

10.00-12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches  
7.30 pm Steward's meeting

Thursday 7:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Revd Mike Getley

Saturday 9:

10.00- 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lydia)  
10.00 am Tony Anthony "Release training" (see separate leaflet)

**Sunday 10:**

**10.30 am Revd David Hull**  
**7.00 pm Tony Anthony at Plymouth Guildhall (no Ridgeway service)**

Monday 11:

6.15 pm Exploring Church membership (1) crèche  
7.30 pm Minister's Bible study (Acts, unit 3)

Tuesday 12:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Jim McMullin (Music round the world)

Wednesday 13:	10.00-12.30 7.30 pm	Coffee followed by Lunches Pastoral committee
Thursday 14:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Louise Carter
Saturday 16:	10.00-12.00 10.00-12.30	Oasis Coffee Bar: Christian Aid (Pat) <i>Homosexuality: Truth and Compassion</i> , with Jonathan Berry (Asst. Director, True Freedom Trust) at Grace Community Church, Morval, Looe
<b>Sunday 17:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd David Martin</b> <b>Revd David Youngs</b>
Monday 18:	6.15 pm 7.30 pm	Exploring Church membership (2) crèche Minister's Bible study (Acts, unit 4)
Tuesday 19:	10.00 - 12.00 2.15 pm Time tbc 7.30 pm	Patchwork Group Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome) Ladies' Group: Visit to Polperro Men's Fellowship: Mike Steel (Alaska Cruise)
Wednesday 20:	10.00 - 12.30	Coffee followed by lunches
Thursday 21:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Graham Skedgell
Saturday 23:	10.00-12.00 4.00 pm	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril) Marriage of John Scott and Annette Heard
<b>Sunday 24:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.30 pm</b>	<b>Revd John Haley</b> <b>United Service for Aldersgate Sunday</b>
Tuesday 26:	7.30 pm	Men's Fellowship: Revd David Youngs
Thursday 28:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: speaker tbc
Saturday 30:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Youth Outreach (Miriam, Kim and Steve)
<b>Sunday 31:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd Willy Niklaus</b> <b>Revd John Haley and Revd Willy Niklaus (Holy Communion)</b>

**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](mailto:admin@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk)  
**Minister: The Revd John M Haley:** [min@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk](mailto:min@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk)

**[www.ridgewaymethodist.org.uk](http://www.ridgewaymethodist.org.uk)**

Information for June's *This Month* to the office by 26 May please.