

# THIS MONTH: MAY 2006

## RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



Dear Friends

### **May – a month of prayer**

Following last year's successful *Plympton Churches' Festival of Prayer*, we are hosting the event again on Wednesday 24 May from 7.30 pm. The date should strike a chord with Methodists and the event will include a recollection of 'the heart strangely warmed'. The Methodist year of non-stop prayer comes to the Plymouth and Exeter District in May and we also have our own week of 24:7 prayer beginning 19 May. Please use this time creatively, support the various events and remember our Whole Church Prayer Initiative.

### **Marilyn Baker: Saturday 6 May, 7.30 pm**

One of the things we asked our outreach workers to do was to bring some nationally known Christian musicians to Plympton. The visit earlier in the year of Bryn Haworth and the forthcoming visit of Marilyn Baker have achieved that, and it is good that things that we have been planning for so long are now taking place. Separate publicity is available about the Marilyn Baker concert. I am pleased that Marilyn will also be with us on the Sunday morning.

### **Being equipped to serve God better**

Because Biblical education in a congregation works at many different levels (Sunday services and midweek groups) we have initiated a review of the midweek devotional life of our church. In this review, I expressly asked to be involved with newcomers to the church and those who want to have a deeper level of teaching and Biblical training. I have heard such positive things from my friends at the *Peninsula Gospel Partnership* about the *Moore College External Studies UK* that I am hoping to start a group in September that will do the *Moore Course*.

If you have some leadership role (e.g. local preacher, steward, youth leader, church council member) in the church it would be very helpful for you to enrol on the course. Courses sound hard going because you feel on your own. My aim would be to run a leader facilitated course, with fortnightly groups, probably on Wednesdays, to support those students who would like to do the course. I know that the word 'course' and all the associated terms seem very daunting. I cannot really help that, but I can assure you of my personal help. Please consider taking what might be the unique opportunity of having someone supportive alongside you while doing something worthwhile to equip and enable you for your Christian service. If you think you might be interested, sample units are available through the church office.

Each *Moore Course* unit is made up of ten 'weeks' (for us, these will be fortnights) and each requires about five hours' homework. If enough people are interested, from March 2007 I might do two groups side by side so that people who wanted to progress more rapidly and complete the nine units (for the Preliminary Certificate in Theology) could do so in just over two years. The course is becoming more widely recognised and it would be useful for anyone thinking of different avenues of Christian service, in the local church and beyond. Each unit costs £28.

### **Peninsula Gospel Partnership**

Last September, the first course of the *Peninsula Gospel Partnership (PGP)* started in Plymouth and I was

pleased to be associated with it and am now on the steering group. *PGP* brings together Christians, from different denominations, who long to see a Christ-centred, Bible-teaching, people-loving church for every community in Cornwall and Devon. By working together through a network of local churches, *PGP* enables and encourages churches to share good practice and provides opportunities to facilitate ministry training by identifying areas for development and invigorating or creating much needed ministries. *PGP* is in close contact with other regional *Gospel Partnerships* across the country. *PGP* affirms that the message of the cross is God's way of saving people from his coming wrath and, therefore, proclaiming this message is vitally important. It is as the Bible is taught in the power of the Holy Spirit that God's voice is heard. It is primarily through the local church that unbelievers are brought to faith in Christ and believers are built up in him. *PGP* believes that people can be drawn from local congregations and trained as Bible teachers for ministry and service in the local churches. Those with suitable gifts can be encouraged to consider going on into full-time ministry. It is likely that in September another *PGP* course will be organised on Mondays (from 10.00 am – 4.00 pm) and more information is available through the church office.

### **New stewards**

At our General Church Meeting on Sunday 2 April we reappointed Pat Stead, Sue Tozer, Marilyn Crabb and Barry Mead as church stewards. Dave Hockings and Karen Hussey were also appointed. We were grateful to Sue Couch and Peter Gregory for the time that they served as stewards and wish both those who are serving in the coming year (from 1 May) and those who are standing down God's blessing. More information about the General Church Meeting is available in a separate leaflet.

### **Minister's Sabbatical: 8 May to 7 August**

The idea of a minister's sabbatical is not new to our congregation as Revd George Palmer had a sabbatical some years ago. Sabbaticals for circuit ministers are compulsory and mine begins on 8 May. Ordained ministry is partly about doing certain things (taking services, pastoral visiting and helping with church administration) but, in effect, it is a way of life rather than a job. If it were a job then a sabbatical would either be a different kind of work or a holiday. Although most ministers find that their sabbaticals include things that could be described as a different kind of work or a holiday, the aim of the scheme is to provide the ministers with resources to make them more effective on their return to circuit work. Further details of my sabbatical can be found in the information from the General Church Meeting. For much of this time, Janet and the children will be at home and sharing friendship and fellowship with the congregation as usual. The minister deputising for me is the Revd Stephen Caddick but the first point of reference for any enquiries would normally be the church office, the pastoral secretary (Sue Couch) or one of the stewards. I am grateful to all the visiting preachers who are covering my absence and trust their visits will be a blessing both to them and to the congregation.

God bless you all.

*John Haley*

### **A call to minister**

At Ridgeway we are very lucky to have groups of people who, as part of a rota, address the needs of others through the ministry of door steward, crèche helper and coffee helper. Each role is different, and the opportunity is there for each person to bring their own personality to the role. If you would like to know more, please contact Muriel Duerden (door steward), Jan Smith (crèche) or Pat Stead (coffee).

### **Pray Without Ceasing**

As part of *Pray Without Ceasing*, the Methodist Church's national year of non-stop prayer, the Plymouth and Exeter district will be praying from 12-26 May. The Plymouth and Devonport circuit has been allocated a 32-hour slot from midnight on 17 May to 8.00am on 18 May, and within that period Ridgeway Methodist Church has been allocated the slot from 4.00am to 8.00am on Wednesday 17 May.

# May Diary

Monday 1:

2.00 - 4.00 'The Noise' Community event at Chaddlewood Farm

Tuesday 2:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group

7.30 pm Crosstalk Circuit Prayer Meeting at Stoke

7.30 Church Council Meeting

7.45 pm Ladies Group: Pat Hogben - Life in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service

Wednesday 3:

10.00 - 1.00 pm Coffee followed by lunches

7.30 pm Prayer meeting in the church

Thursday 4:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Sue Couch

7.30 pm House Fellowship Group at the home of Margaret and Martin Holst

Saturday 6:

10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar :Christine and Peter Gregory (Outreach Mission)

7.30 Marilyn Baker in concert

**Sunday 7:**

**10.30 am      Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)**

**7.00 pm        Revd John Haley**

Monday 8:

7.30 *Living Faith* Bible Study

Tuesday 9:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group

7.30 pm Men's Fellowship (Ridgeway): Mr John Goodridge - Devon Great Consul

7.45 pm Ladies Group: Paul Hopkin - Music of Ivor Novello

Wednesday 10:

10.00 - 1.00 pm Coffee followed by lunches

7.30 pm House Fellowship

Thursday 11:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Pam Tibbs

7.30 pm House Fellowship Group at the home of Margaret and Martin Holst

Saturday 13:

10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar

**Sunday 14:**

**10.30 am      Mrs Julie Birkett**

**7.00 pm        Mrs Janet Dobinson**

Monday 15:

7.30 pm *Living Faith* Bible Study

Tuesday 16:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group

2.15 pm Service at Pocklington Rise ( Revd Colin Roberts). All welcome

7.45 pm Ladies Group - Heather Wood - Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS)

Wednesday 17:

4.00 - 8.00am *Pray Without Ceasing* prayer slot

10.00 - 1.00 pm Coffee followed by lunches

7.30 pm House Fellowship

Thursday 18:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Judith Goodridge

7.30 pm House Fellowship Group at the home of Margaret and Martin Holst

Friday 19 - Wednesday 26: 24/7 Prayer Week

Saturday 20:

10.00 - 12 noon Oasis Coffee Bar

7.30 Recharge

**Sunday 21:**

**10.30 am Revd Dr. Denis Applebee**

**7.00 pm Mr Brian Hart**

Monday 22:

7.30 *Living Faith* Bible Study

Tuesday 23:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group

7.45 pm Ladies Group: Peggy Cook - "Penny pinching and pound stretching"

Wednesday 24:

10.00 - 1.00 pm Coffee followed by lunches

7.30 pm Plympton Churches' Festival of Prayer

**Thursday 25 Ascension Day:**

10.30 am Ascension Day Service

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mr Carl Edwards and 'Bring and Buy'

7.30 pm House Fellowship Group at the home of Margaret and Martin Holst

Friday 26 - Monday 29: Boys' Brigade Camp

Saturday 27:

10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar - Kim, Steve and Miriam (Youth Mission)

Saturday 27 - Saturday 3 June: Girls' Brigade Camp

**Sunday 28:**

**10.30 am Miss Catherine Stead**

**7.00 pm Miss Judith Walker**

Tuesday 30:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group

7.45 pm Ladies Group - Half term break

7.30 pm Men's Fellowship (Elburton): Ted Dixon - 50 years walking on Dartmoor

Wednesday 31:

10.00 - 1.00 pm Lunches - Half term break

7.30 pm House Fellowships

**Church office hours:**

**Tuesday-Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm**

**Church telephones: 348178 (office only) 331186 (pre-school and hall)**

**Church Office:** office@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

**Minister: The Revd John M Haley:** minister@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

**Outreach Worker: Miss Catherine Stead:** outreach@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

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Information for June's *This Month* to the office by 24 May please.