

# THIS MONTH: NOVEMBER 2009



## RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

### Jesus, are you changing me?

One of my favourite worship songs is by our friend, pianist and singer/songwriter, Marilyn Baker, 'Jesus, you are changing me' (*Songs of Fellowship* 311). I think I first came to know the song from a cassette recording, *Spring Harvest 1987*, so I have known it for a long time now. It is a lovely prayer, rich in Biblical imagery (Romans 12:2, Jeremiah 18:6, Romans 9:21, Colossians 1:18) and, as we might expect from Marilyn Baker, set to very appropriate music.

Jesus, you are changing me  
By your Spirit you're making me like you.  
Jesus, you're transforming me,  
That your loveliness may be seen in all I do.  
You are the potter and I am the clay,  
Help me to be willing to let you have your way.  
Jesus, you are changing me,  
As I let you reign supreme within my heart.

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The title of these paragraphs, *Jesus, are you changing me?*, is not a typing error. I intentionally rearranged the words of the first line of the song – because I think the question is an important one. While it is good to affirm the work of the Lord Jesus in our hearts and lives, we must be careful, in our prayers and in our praise, not to lack self-awareness.

The celebrated Scottish poet, Robert Burns, penned the lines:

O wad some Power the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as ithers see us!  
(From the poem, 'To a louse')

In English, Burn's Scotch lines read: 'Oh would some power the gift give us, to see ourselves as others see us.' The poem concerns an incident in which the poet saw a woman in church sporting a new hat. Unknown to her, there was a louse visible on the plumes, subjecting her to ridicule. It is a lesson in self-awareness – though only with regard to external matters and not with regard to the heart.

In 1742, Charles Wesley published the magnificent hymn, 'Open Lord, my inward ear' (*Hymns and Psalms*, 540), considered by the great Methodist hymn scholar Dr J. E. Rattenbury to be among the six greatest of all Wesley's hymns.

Show me, as my soul can bear,  
The depth of inbred sin;  
All the unbelief declare,  
The pride that lurks within;  
Take me, whom thyself hast bought,  
Bring into captivity  
Every high aspiring thought  
That would not stoop to thee.

In the hymn, it is clear that the writer is looking for a new depth of self-awareness in the presence of Christ – but he is not sure he will be able to bear it.

In the fellowship of the church, as in life, we have to learn to get along with other people. It doesn't take us long to realise that the other people in church aren't perfect and it doesn't take them long to realise that we are not perfect either. When we have difficult relationships, if we lack self-awareness, we might not see what part our own behaviour has played in those difficulties but when, by the grace of God, we become more self-aware, we can be enabled not to project our problems onto other people but to share in fellowship with them in a way in which we can all affirm that pithy maxim, 'Be patient – God hasn't finished with me yet'.

### **Memorial service: Sunday 15 November, 6.00 pm**

Since the circuit plan was made earlier in the year, we have had to change the date of our Memorial Service. This is the time when we invite bereaved families that the church has served through my ministry to come to a special service. Your support of the bereaved families is important, so please come if you can. There will be a retiring collection for Children's Hospice South West. Please note that the service on Sunday 22 November will be at the usual time of 7.00 pm.

### **Faith, Hope and Charity: Saturday 14 November, 7.00 pm**

The owners of Polhawn Fort, Polhawn, near Rame Head have kindly agreed to lend our Millbrook Church this impressive venue for an evening of Christian testimony in word and song with Simon Parnall – this is an ideal event to take a guest who might not be so at home in church. Further details of the evening and how to book are on a separate leaflet. Bookings can be returned to me or through our church office. Parking at the fort is limited, so if you can arrange to go in a full car that is very helpful. We have been offered several items for a blind auction (where you submit a sealed bid and the highest bid secures the prize), including tea for two at the House of Commons. All proceeds will go to Children's Hospice South West.

### **Gift Day Coffee Morning: Saturday 7 November, 10.00 am – noon**

Members and those who attend regularly on Sundays should receive a letter about our annual Gift Day appeal. If you do not receive a letter by Sunday 1 November, please speak to a steward or contact the church office. While our annual income has increased our annual expenditure has increased dramatically (not least our bills for gas, electricity, water and insurance) leaving us with a £12,000 deficit on last year's accounts. At the same time, we are welcoming new people, have vigorous youth work and are planning new initiatives for the New Year. We hope that everyone will share the vision for our work to continue and expand – for that to happen we need your prayerful, practical and financial support.

## Appointments

At our recent church council, Barbara Parr (treasurer) and John Duerden (Finance and Property secretary) gave notice that they would be standing down from their appointments next year at the end of August and April respectively. If you think you might be able to fulfil either of these appointments, or would like to find out what is involved, please speak to me or to one of the stewards as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

*John Haley*

## November Diary

Sunday 1:

10.30 am  
7.00 pm

Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)  
Mr Brian Hart

Monday 2:

7.30 pm

Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 6)

Tuesday 3:

10.00 - 12.00  
3.00 pm  
7.45 pm

Patchwork Group  
Cake café  
Ladies' Group: Laura Bloom (Flower Demonstration)

Wednesday 4:

10.00-12.30  
10.00-4.00  
7.30 pm

Coffee followed by Lunches  
PGP Day Conference  
Stewart's meeting

Thursday 5:

2.45 pm

Women's Fellowship: TBA

Saturday 7:

8.30 am  
10.00-12.00

Monthly prayer meeting  
Oasis Coffee Bar: Gift Day Coffee morning

Sunday 8:

10.30 am  
7.00 pm

Revd John Haley (Parade Service - All age family worship)  
Revd John Haley

Monday 9:

7.30 pm

Circuit meeting (Ivybridge)/no Minister's Bible study

Tuesday 10:

10.00-12.00  
3.00 pm  
7:30 pm  
7.45 pm

Patchwork Group  
Cake café  
Men's Fellowship at Ridgeway Methodist Church  
Ladies' Group: Revd John Haley

Wednesday 11:

10.00-12.30  
7.30 pm

Coffee followed by Lunches  
Pastoral Committee

Thursday 12:

2.45 pm

Women's Fellowship: Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)

Saturday 14:

10.00-12.00  
7.00 pm

Oasis Coffee Bar: Youth Outreach (Ann, Kim & Steve)  
Faith, Hope and Charity (see separate leaflet)

<b>Sunday 15:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>Major Pamela Smith</b> <b>Revd John Haley (Memorial Service)</b>
Monday 16:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 7)
Tuesday 17:	10.00 - 12.00 2.15 pm 3.00 pm 7.30 pm 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome) Cake café Christmas services planning meeting Ladies' Group: Bring and Buy Evening
Wednesday 18:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 19:	1.15 pm 2.45 pm	Pre-school management Women's Fellowship: Mrs Kath Roberts
Saturday 21:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Action for Children (Miriam and others)
<b>Sunday 22:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd John Haley</b> <b>Revd John Haley</b>
Monday 23:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 8)
Tuesday 24:	10.00 - 12.00 3.00 pm 7.30 pm 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Cake café Men's Fellowship: Barbara & Michael Chown (Elburton Church) Ladies' Group: Mr David James (Term in office as Lord Mayor)
Wednesday 25:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 26:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: TBA
Saturday 28:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Local Mission (Pat and others)
<b>Sunday 29:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd David Hull</b> <b>Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)</b>
Monday 30:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 9)

**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)  
**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 November *This Month* to the office by 24 November please.