

# RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



## THIS MONTH: NOVEMBER 2011

Dear Friends

This is most unusual! Jewish genealogies generally only refer to males and the five women - included all had dodgy things about them. Two of them played the prostitute, one committed adultery with the king, a fourth appealed to a relative to look after her by sleeping at his feet and pulling his blanket over her, and the fifth claimed God wanted her to become an unmarried teenage mother! They would be given column space in today's newspapers, never mind shocking the moral susceptibilities of their own generations.

Yet the amazing thing is that what they did in their lives contributed, unwittingly, to the coming of Jesus, the saviour of the world. Despite whatever was dodgy about their deeds, God used them in his plans, and guess what? He can use us too. Now, I'm not trying to compare those dodgy dames with you; well, not too much! But our God is a God who involves himself in his world. He has never been just a spectator, peering down from heaven at the antics of people. When the Israelite slaves were having a tough time in Egypt, we read in Exodus that "God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them" (Ex 2:24-25). The next thing we read is God calling Moses to act for him and bring his people out of Egypt. And God continues to be involved in his world through Jesus in the power of his Holy Spirit. He is a schemer, He has plans. The whole Bible has God's plan written all the way through it. Now God has plans for us as individuals and as a group of Christians in Ridgeway. Just as those dodgy dames could not see God's whole picture of his will, so we may find it hard to trace his plan through our lives. This is especially so during difficult times and experiences. The prophet Jeremiah lived during difficult times in his country. The Babylonians were invading, destroying and deporting people. Jeremiah believed God was telling him to inform the king and the people that God was behind the invasion. He was actually getting the Babylonian army to do his will because of how bad and rebellious the nation was, that was a tough message for the king and nation to accept. In fact, they did not accept it and gave Jeremiah a tough time too. He was imprisoned for a while, later, when many of the people were forced to live in exile in Babylon, he wrote a letter to them: "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:11-13). Can you imagine the impact that letter must have had on those deportees who had only recently seen their country devastated and their homes ruined? For people who had no hope and who felt they had no future, Jeremiah brought God's message of "hope and a future".

We may be feeling as if our future is uncertain. It is in such times that God does speak and come alongside to comfort and guide. This Jeremiah passage about God's plans has come to me a couple of times in different ways recently. I don't think it is just coincidence. The miracle of God's word in scripture is that, although it was written for a specific occasion at a specific time, God's Holy Spirit can then apply that ancient word to our circumstances and time in a way that is relevant and powerful. So I believe that the Lord is saying to us today, "I know the plans I have for you....plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". We need to heed God's advice through Jeremiah to those exiles when he says "call upon me and come and pray to me" for he promises to "listen to you". If we do so, the Lord then says that he "will be found by you", meaning that we can sense his presence, his peace and his power working in and through us, so let us find "hope and a future" in the work and witness in Ridgeway, in the sure knowledge that God has plans for us here. Those dodgy dames often did not feel as if they had any future or any value in God's or anyone else's sight, but they did, they helped to prepare for Jesus coming. God has plans for us to share Jesus with those in our community and there's nothing dodgy about that!

God bless

*Nigel Graham*

### **Care for the Family**

During celebrating marriage week 2012 - Care for the family are holding a presentation "Marriage Unlocked" in Plymouth on Friday 10 February 2012 from 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm. Cost £12 per couple, £10 for a second couple, this event is taken place at the Holiday Inn, please contact the church office to order tickets.

### **Church Gift Day (Saturday 19 November, 10.00 am to noon)**

Church members and those who attend regularly on Sundays will be receiving information about our Gift Day. The church needs to rise to the financial challenges we are facing and a special gift at Gift Day will help, as well as thoughtful and prayerful giving throughout the year. If for some reason you do not receive a letter about Gift Day please enquire through the office

*Rachael Granville - Treasurer*

### **Prayer Chain**

Newer members of the congregation may not know that we have a team of people, who are part of "the prayer chain", we will pray for you, your family or friends in times of crisis or special need. You must ask people's permission before putting them on the list, and you can give as little or as much information as you/they wish, which remains confidential and is only shared with those on the prayer chain. You are welcome to contact either of us (please refer to our notice board), the prayer chain team are: Chris Bowden, Jane Toms, Dorothy Sercombe, Christine Gregory, Doreen Sinstadt, Margaret Samuels, Alfie and Beryl Harper, Barbara Wagner, Sue Couch, Stella Smith, Jan Streeter, Carol Sharman. (Prayer team, please use that order). If you feel this may be your ministry, please contact me (338099).

*Carol Sharman*

# November Diary

Tuesday 1:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.30 pm Men's Fellowship: Mrs Rebecca Dillingham (MAF)  
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Mrs Sue Hooper (Queen Victoria)


Wednesday 2:

10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches  
7.30 pm Pastoral meeting

Thursday 3:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Pat Stead  
7.30 pm Church Council meeting

Saturday 5:

	<b>PRAYER CAFÉ</b> <b>Saturday 5 November</b> <b>8.30 - 9.30 am</b> <b>Prayer and breakfast</b>	
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10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Outreach (Christine and Lydia)

**Sunday 6:**

## **Sunday Services**

**10.30 am Preacher: Revd Roger Beck**  
**7.00 pm Preacher: Mr Mike Cade**

Monday 7:

7.30 pm Minister Bible Study (6)

Tuesday 8:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Mrs Hannah Pursglove (Driftwood Art - FABED)

Wednesday 9:

10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches  
**7.30 pm Fellowship Café**

	<b>FELLOWSHIP CAFÉ</b> <b>Wednesday 9 November</b> <b>7.30 - 9.00 pm</b> <b>Fellowship preceded by puddings</b>
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Thursday 10:

2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Gillian Higgins

Saturday 12:

10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Ladies' Group)

**Sunday 13:**

## **Remembrance Sunday**

**10.30 am Preacher: Revd David Youngs - Parade**  
**7.00 pm Preacher: Mrs Delarre Irving**

Monday 14:

7.30 pm Minister Bible Study (7)

Tuesday 15:

10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
2.15 pm Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome)  
7.30 pm Men's Fellowship: Mrs Eunice Halliday (Plymouth Food Bank)  
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Mrs Tina Powell (Trading Standards)

Wednesday 16: 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches

Thursday 17: 2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Revd Mike Parsons  
7.00 pm Flower Arrangement practice (in the crèche)

Saturday 19: 10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Gift Day (Val, Les and Joan)

**Sunday 20: Sunday Services**  
**10.30 am Preacher: Revd David Hull - Holy Communion**  
**7.00 pm Preacher: Mrs Kate Konrad**

Monday 21: 7.30 pm Minister Bible Study (8)


Tuesday 22: 10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.45 pm Ladies' Group: Bring and Buy

Wednesday 23: 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches

Thursday 24: 2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Revd David Hull

Saturday 26: 10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Shekinah Mission (Sue and Len)

**Sunday 27: Sunday Services:**  
**10.30 am Preacher: Revd Alen McCulloch**  
**7.00 pm Preacher: Mr Nigel Graham - Teaching Café**

	<p><b>TEACHING CAFÉ</b>  <b>Sunday 27 November</b>  <b>7.00 - 8.30 pm</b>  <b>Teaching and a light supper</b></p>
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Monday 28: 7.30 pm Minister Bible Study (9)

Tuesday 29: 10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork Group  
7.30 pm Men's Fellowship: Revd Paul Rees (Own Choice)  
7.30 pm Ladies' Group: Perfect Harmony (Christmas Concert)

Wednesday 30: 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by Lunches

**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)**

**Local Mission Enabler: Mrs Rae Nelson: [mission@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk](mailto:mission@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk)**

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

Please submit Information for December *This Month* to the office by 22 November.