

# THIS MONTH: OCTOBER 2009



## RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

### **The invitation process**

Over the summer period, I have been one of the ministers in the Plymouth and Devonport Methodist Circuit to go through the invitation process. When the Methodist movement started, ministers travelled on circuits (preaching rounds). These were often very extensive and, as travel by horseback was slow, the travelling preachers would only visit each local society before moving on to the next village or town. Each year, Mr Wesley would change the circuits that the itinerant preachers served, with the idea of keeping the whole movement fresh and dynamic. In time, these itinerant or travelling preachers became Methodist ministers.

Over the years, our concept of circuits has changed. Ministers are now stationed in much smaller circuits and the superintendent minister will more often than not appoint a minister to a church or group of churches (section). However, we retain the idea that most of our ministers are itinerant and this is the origin of the distinction between ministers (who, in years gone by, were all expected to be itinerant – on fairly short fixed-term appointments to circuits) and local preachers (who were not itinerant). Because my appointment is to the circuit, in which I have been given responsibility for two local churches, the circuit (through lay officers called circuit stewards) asks our church stewards to go through a period of consultation with a view to bringing a recommendation to the circuit meeting.

As my invitation to the Plymouth and Devonport Circuit was due to expire in August 2010, earlier in the summer, the local church stewards were asked to consult with our church members as to whether my appointment should be extended. I was given papers regarding what those consulted had said and was very encouraged and rather humbled that the overwhelming desire of the people in my local churches was that I should continue as your minister for a further period of years. On 14 September, the circuit meeting agreed that I should be invited to serve for a further four years (to August 2014) and I was pleased to accept. I am grateful to the church stewards and all those who have overseen the process.

Members who were at the services near my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday will remember my sharing with you how, for me, one of the big sacrifices of ministry had been the distances that I was required to move away from my home area. In my endeavours to 'help God out' I had found myself at Inverness, which though a beautiful city in a lovely part of Britain, was about as far from my roots as it was possible to be on the mainland. From then on I decided that God can manage things without my helping him out and he has graciously arranged for me to spend what promises to be more than one-third of my ministry within just a few miles of where I was born. Janet and the children and our extended family are all pleased with this news.

## **Wembley**

A few members have expressed an interest in joining the congregation at Park Lane Methodist Church, Wembley, for their anniversary at the end of October. If you would like any more information about that, please be in touch with me as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

*John Haley*

### **Invitation Statement**

During June the stewards consulted with over 100 people at Ridgeway and discussed John's interest in being invited to stay for a further four years in the Plymouth and Devonport Circuit. After discussion and prayerful consideration we submitted the following statement to the circuit stewards, who have the responsibility of making recommendations to the circuit meetings about extensions to ministerial appointments.

The stewards and others consulted at Ridgeway Methodist Church feel that a change at this point would be unsettling and that we need continuity in order to strengthen the work that has been started. The church is in the process of stepping out in faith on evangelistic missions and we need the guidance, stability and leadership of a minister who is Bible believing and Jesus loving. We need someone whom we know and who knows us, as the coming years will be challenging and demanding.

The stewards recognise that John cannot do everything himself and that he must be supported so that all aspects of his ministry can continue to grow. The members at Ridgeway also need to recognise our need for continual growth so that we can all move forward in the work that the Lord is calling us to do. John regularly challenges us about this and recent training and teaching has enabled us to consider stepping out in new ways.

We feel the church has grown in depth of faith, Bible knowledge and Christian spirituality but that there is unfinished work to be completed. We want to be a church where both people searching and new Christians are going to feel at home, loved, accepted and are going to put down strong roots in the Christian faith. This will mean that the church will have to move out of its current comfort zone and take on the challenge of reaching out to those who don't know Jesus. Change will be essential as we make our message and format relevant to those outside the church.

In achieving this vision it is essential that we stand firm on the gospel message and support John and each other in its proclamation. We rely totally on God to lead us forward and trust that John feels he is able to accept the challenge of leading the church at Ridgeway to realise this vision.

The circuit meeting took place on Monday 14 September. John was invited to stay in the circuit in his present appointment for a further four years to August 2014. We are pleased that John accepted our invitation and we pray God's blessing and guidance on all that is to take place in these coming years.

***The Stewards***

## Accommodation in Plympton

I am looking for some kind souls to help out by offering accommodation in Plympton - (Bed Breakfast and Dinner) for 6 members of Team Challenge, a Christian group who work in schools and are in our area on 17, 18 & 19 November [www.challengeteamuk.org](http://www.challengeteamuk.org). For more information, please call me (339508). Many thanks.

Jean Foy.

## Training.

A training day is being held on Monday 9 November 2009 from 10.30 am - 3.15 pm. at Exeter Cathedral Chapter House, entitled *Fishnets! On the edge of Eternity* the speaker is Ann Morisy and the topic is mission amongst the aged. The places are limited and we need to reserve them as soon as possible. If you would like to reserve a place and arrange to travel together, please contact the church office.

## October Diary

Thursday 1:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Mr Smith
Saturday 3:	8:30 am 10.00-12.00	Monthly Prayer meeting Oasis Coffee Bar: Street Pastors (Marilyn and friends)
<b>Sunday 4</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)</b> <b>Mrs Kate Konrad</b>
Monday 5:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 3)
Tuesday 6:	10.00 - 12.00 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Ladies' Group: Revd Colin Roberts (The Myth of Morse)
Wednesday 7:	10.00-12.30 7.30 pm	Coffee followed by Lunches Church Council
Thursday 8:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Mrs Mary McNaughton
Saturday 10:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Miriam and Val Foot)
<b>Sunday 11:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd John Haley</b> <b>Revd Simon Leigh and Revd John Haley</b>
Monday 12:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 4)
Tuesday 13:	10.00-12.00 7:30 pm 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Men's Fellowship: John Duerden (Carpet bowls) Ladies' Group: Geoff Blake-Lobb
Wednesday 14:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches

Thursday 15:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Tony and Judy Eden (Zambia)
Friday 16:	2.00 pm	Network Committee meeting
Saturday 17:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Local Mission (Pat and others) Fresh Expressions Day at Okehampton - please ask for details
<b>Sunday 18:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Revd Paul Smith</b> <b>Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)</b>
Monday 19:	7.30 pm	Minister's Bible study (Ephesians, 5)
Tuesday 20:	10.00 - 12.00 3.00 pm 7.45 pm	Patchwork Group Cake cafe Ladies' Group: Judith Goodridge (Views of the Cape Peninsula)
Wednesday 21:	10.00-12.30	Coffee followed by Lunches
Thursday 22:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Mrs Doreen Sinstadt
Friday 23:	tba	Skittles evening
Saturday 24:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Pre-school (John Scott and the girls)
<b>Sunday 25:</b>	<b>10.30 am</b> <b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Deacon Ruth Richey</b> <b>Women's Fellowship (Network) Anniversary</b> <b>Mr Earle Rendle</b>
Wednesday 28:	Tba	Men's Fellowship: Elburton Extravaganza Concert (28 - 31 Oct) Ticket to be booked (£7)
Thursday 29:	2.45 pm	Women's Fellowship: Peter Gregory
Saturday 31:	10.00-12.00	Oasis Coffee Bar: Church Funds (Avril and friends)

**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 27 October please.