

THIS MONTH: SEPTEMBER 2006



RIDGWAY METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

All change!

September marks the beginning of the new Methodist Church year. As usual, it is a time of change both at Ridgeway Methodist Church and in the Plymouth and Devonport Circuit.

At Ridgeway, we say farewell to Catherine Stead. Catherine grew up in the church but then had four years away from us at college. It was good that shortly after my arrival at Ridgeway my ministry challenged and encouraged Catherine, and she was later received as a member and offered as a local preacher. I was pleased that Catherine was successful in her application to be part-time outreach worker from last September, and she also agreed to help fill the vacancy in the office after Easter. Catherine is about to begin a new chapter of her Christian service as layworker at Pateley Bridge, and I am sure that everyone in the church community will join me in wishing Catherine God's blessing and guidance as she moves to North Yorkshire. In *Outreach News* you will be able to read how the responsibility for the continued work of the church in mission and evangelism must continue, even though for the first time since James Darby joined us in January 2004 we have no outreach worker to help us.

At Ridgeway, we say welcome to Joanne Dixon. Joanne successfully applied for the new post of church and minister's secretary and starts with us on 1 September. She brings her previous work experience with her but will take a while to learn about the Methodist Church and our community at Ridgeway. Please do everything that you can to make Joanne welcome and help guide her through Methodist language and ways of doing things. We have a large community and it will take a while for Joanne to become familiar with the organisations, let alone our large community roll!

The circuit has said farewell to three ministers. Revd John and Mrs Sharman Waldegrave have retired to Kinver, Staffordshire, where John will be an active supernumerary. Revd Margaret and Mr Vic Anderson have moved to a new circuit in County Durham. Revd John and Mrs Ruth Brady have also moved on from the circuit. John is taking a little while as a minister without appointment and will be delighted to think that he has the prayerful support of members in the circuit as he seeks a new dimension of service. We must also remember Revd Albert Gard as he has recently moved to Bolton to be near his daughter. Albert is not at all well. Please uphold him in your prayers. It has been my privilege to have him as a colleague and friend.

In the circuit, we will also welcome two new ministers. Revd Martyn Neads, a minister of the United Reformed Church, is coming to us from training in Birmingham. He will be working in the United Churches at Torpoint and Laira, and will also have pastoral charge of Stoke Methodist Church. Martyn recently married Miss Danie Pearson, who will continue to work at Elburton Methodist Church. Revd Doug Rix will need little introduction to the Ridgeway congregation. Doug and Eunice have recently moved to Crownhill, and Doug, a minister of the Congregational Church, has been approved to serve as a Methodist minister and will have pastoral charge at Crownhill, Compton and Tamerton Methodist Churches. The reduction in our circuit staff means that ministers are taking on more responsibilities and I am taking pastoral charge of our Millbrook Church.

The midweek devotional life of the church

I am very grateful to all those who worked on the review of the midweek devotional life of the church. Their findings were challenging and I hope achievable in the mid-term future. However, in the short-term I hope to put into place a new Ridgeway Cell Network of midweek groups (see the separate leaflet), maintain the termly midweek celebrations and start a new monthly Saturday morning prayer meeting. I describe my ministry as one of strong leadership, but until now I have not exercised my leadership role with regard to midweek groups or prayer. I must admit that I am counting on your support as I believe that we really need to take decisive steps forward. I organised monthly Saturday morning prayer meetings from 1990-2001 but did not do so here because of my commitment to take Michael to his football coaching. However, now that Michael is a little older and is playing later I have decided to make my own sacrifice of giving up an hour of my weekly day off each month to lead the church in prayer. I am hoping that if I can show that level of commitment so can you. Therefore, on the first Saturday of each month we will meet for prayer from 8.30 am to 9.30 am. Everyone is welcome. Please come prepared to say a prayer, to read a prayer that you have written in advance or to read a prayer or even an appropriate song or hymn from a book.

An excellent effort

Thank you to everyone who worked hard on the church property over the summer, particularly those who helped with the renovation of the hall floor. I don't think our friends on *Strictly Come Dancing* are available - otherwise I would have had another idea for an outreach event. I am also pleased that our work with children and young people has continued over the summer with trips to Soul Survivor, Momentum and the holiday club.

Back to work

My recent sabbatical took me to the USA (New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas), Norway and Germany. It was good to see 'old' friends and to make many more new friends and contacts (see the guestbook on the website). I hope that many of these will make a return visit to Plympton and first in the queue are the young people from Heubach, Germany. I was excited that my book (co-written with the Revd Professor Leslie J. Francis) *British Methodism: What Circuit Ministers Really Think* was published by Epworth Press on 30 June. The front page article in the *Methodist Recorder* has stimulated debate that is still running in the letters column. Now it is time to get back in the regular routine. I appreciated all those who held the fort during my absence and am looking forward to my twenty-fourth year of service and ministry.

God bless

John Haley

COFFEE AND CRECHE - CAN YOU HELP?

At present, we are able to provide parents with crèche facilities to look after their young children on a Sunday morning. We are also able to provide the whole congregation with the opportunity to join together for tea and coffee (and superior biscuits!) after morning worship. We are very grateful to those who help with the crèche; however, it would be helpful to have more people on the rota. The crèche is not required every week, but we do need to have people available each week to help if it is required. At present, those on the rota help out once a month - but, of course, when more people are able to help each person is called upon less frequently. If you are able to help, please speak to Jan Smith. We are also grateful to those who help with providing tea and coffee. Again, all those helping enable the service to continue, and with more volunteers each person is required less frequently. If you are able to help with this ministry, please contact Pat Stead.

TRANSPORT

A number of our congregation require transport on Sunday mornings. As well as those collected from Pocklington Rise, there are also individuals who need to be collected. Do you have empty seats in your car on a Sunday morning? Can you join the group of volunteers who enable those requiring transport to worship at Ridgeway? If you are able to help, please speak to Peter Crabb or one of the stewards.

September Diary

Saturday 2:

- 8.30 am Monthly Prayer Meeting
- 10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Christine and Peter Gregory (Outreach Mission)
- 10.00 - 5.00 Trip to Bicton Gardens

Sunday 3 :

- 10.30 am Revd John Haley (Holy Communion)**
- 7.00 pm Mrs Debbie Richards**

Monday 4:

- 6.15pm Membership Preparation Group (1)
- 7.30 pm Boys' Brigade AGM

Tuesday 5:

- 10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork
- 7.30pm *Crosstalk* Circuit Prayer Meeting (Stoke)
- 7.45pm Ladies' Group: Lyn Green

Wednesday 6:

- 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by lunches
- 7.30 pm Circuit welcome to new ministers at Compton Methodist Church

Thursday 7:

- 2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Revd John Haley (Communion)

Saturday 9:

- 9.00 - 3.00 Plymouth and Exeter District Synod at College of St Mark and St John
- 10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar:

Sunday 10:

- 10.30 am Revd Dr John Haley (Lighthouse New Year)**
- 7.00 pm Revd Dr John Haley**

Monday 11:

- 6.15pm Membership Preparation Group (2)

Tuesday 12:

- 10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork
- 7.45pm Ladies' Group: David Morris

Wednesday 13:

- 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by lunches
- 7.30pm Circuit Meeting (Ivybridge) with prayer from 6.45pm

Thursday 14:

- 2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mrs Judith Goodridge

Saturday 16:

- 10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Pat Stead
- 7.30pm Recharge

Sunday 17:

- 10.30 am Revd Vijay Panandikar**
- 7.00 pm Revd Dr John Haley**

Monday 18:
6.15pm Membership Preparation Group (3)
7.30 pm Finance and Property Committee Meeting

Tuesday 19:
10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork
2.15pm Service at Pocklington Rise (all welcome)
7.45pm Ladies' Group: Revd Dr Denis Applebee

Wednesday 20:
10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by lunches

Thursday 21:
2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Mr R Smith

Saturday 23:
10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar:

Sunday 24:
10.30 am Revd Dr John Haley (Harvest Festival)
4.30pm Euroangelism presentation
5.30pm Tea
7.00 pm Revd Dr John Haley

Monday 25:
6.15pm Membership Preparation Group (4)

Tuesday 26:
10.00 - 12.00 Patchwork
7.30 pm Youth Council Meeting
7.45pm Ladies' Group: Mervyn Moorehead - The Gideons

Wednesday 27:
10.00 - 12.30 Coffee followed by lunches

Thursday 28:
2.45 pm Women's Fellowship: Members' afternoon

Saturday 30:
10.00 - 12.00 Oasis Coffee Bar: Miriam Sitch

Sunday 1 October:
10.30 am Revd Dr John Haley (Holy Communion, Membership service)
7.00 pm Mr Brian Hart

Church office hours:
Tuesday-Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Church telephones:
348178 (office only)
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Church Office: office@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk
Minister: The Revd John M Haley: minister@ridgewaymethodist.org.uk

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Information for October's *This Month* to the office by 21 September please.