

THIS MONTH: AUGUST 2005

RIDGEWAY
METHODIST
CHURCH



Dear Friends

Outreach worker

On a Tuesday morning in June, two years ago, I learned at a meeting of the circuit leadership team that there was a possibility that we could use some capital money for outreach projects in the circuit. On the Wednesday I had the idea of a 'community evangelist for Plympton' with the brief of reaching out to the 'missing generation' of 20-40 year olds. On the Thursday I took the idea to our church council and on the Friday submitted our scheme to the circuit. This became the circuit outreach worker based at Ridgeway. We were delighted when our scheme was approved and after getting all our paperwork together the superintendent, circuit stewards and local church stewards interviewed and appointed James Darby who started his work with us in January 2004.

The 19 months that James has been with us have just flown by. He has brought his own gentle style and inscrutable sense of humour to us and used these in the service of the gospel, working closely with me and coordinating the church's outreach programme. Before James arrived I said that this work would not be easy and that we should not expect results overnight.

The time that James has been with us has been a steep learning curve for us all. We have been pioneering a work that had scarcely been done before in a Methodist Church. When we came up with the name 'outreach worker' it was an unfamiliar name. The situations vacant pages of the *Methodist Recorder* now include advertisements from churches asking for outreach workers (often for particular age groups).

The regular programme of outreach events has given us all the opportunity to invite people to Christian events whom we might not have been able to invite to a church service. For some people the outreach events have been a stepping stone into the Sunday services. For many others they have provided an opportunity to meet Christian people to hear Christian testimony and witness in a context where they have been able to listen without feeling threatened.

The time has come for James to leave us. James comes from Market Harborough in Leicestershire and studied at Leicester and Birmingham. He now moves to Nottingham, much nearer to his roots, to work on the east side of the city. We shall miss him and I am sure that the whole church community will want to add its thanks to the appreciation that I express here. James' Christian service continues and so does ours.

I believe that what James has done has encouraged us to see what we as a church can do, laid good foundations and given us confidence that this work can go ahead. We have not experienced 'instant success' but I believe that we have done a lot of groundbreaking, sowing seeds and watering. It is a work that must continue.

When James told me that he was moving into a new avenue of service I suggested to the circuit that we apply to use the remaining capital available from the circuit for outreach to fund a new half-time outreach worker for 12 months. This was approved at the circuit meeting and we have been working hard behind the scenes to get the necessary approval from the Methodist district (particularly with regard to employment legislation) for that to happen. We hope to advertise the position very shortly and it might be the case that I shall have some good news for you when I write my newsletter article for next month. For the meantime, please pray for James as he moves into his new work and for those of us engaged in trying to appoint a new outreach worker here, that the right person be appointed.

Holiday greetings

Janet, the children and I were pleased to have the opportunity to go on holiday to Switzerland and to stay in an apartment loaned to us by Christian friends. Most of our holiday was spent at Männedorf on Lake Zürich but we also spent a weekend in Davos with our friend Ursula Hertig. The morning service at Davos Methodist Church, *Pauluskirche*, was a united service with the Salvation Army. We stayed after the service for the barbecue and bring greetings from our Methodist friends at Davos and from David and Marian Künzi-Feuz, the Salvation Army officers. As well as the Sunday service at Männedorf Methodist Church we attended a house group. Following the Bible study in German would not have been possible for us but, anticipating that the pattern of housegroups around Europe might be much the same, we arrived about an hour and a half after the start time expecting to run into the tea and biscuits. We were made very welcome at the home of Thomas and Marian Jetzer and treated to cake and fresh fruit tarts. We also had a day in the Bernese Oberland with our friends Willy and Käthi Niklaus. I first met Willy at the Methodist Theological Seminary at Reutlingen, Germany, in 1981. Willy served in a Methodist circuit at Lenzburg near Zürich but later moved to work in a drug rehabilitation project at Adelboden. He is now a minister in the Swiss Reformed Church in the parish of Toffen teaching the Christian faith in schools as part of the Swiss Reformed pattern of preparation for confirmation. Our last Christian contact in Switzerland was with our friend Schwester Olga Frischknecht who is a Methodist deaconess in Zürich. Schw. Olga is now retired from her work as a nurse in what was, until relatively recently, a Methodist hospital. It was good to make new Christian friends and to renew our fellowship with those we knew before. We hope that many of them will be able to make a return visit to England.

If you are going away in the summer holiday period I hope that you have as enjoyable a holiday as we did. If you are not able to go away then I hope that you will still be able to enjoy some summer weather and the many lovely things that we have here on our own doorstep.

God bless

John Haley

Greetings from Katharine Haley in Brazil:

I flew to Brazil on Thursday 21 July with a group from the Plymouth & Exeter District of the Methodist Church to work with Villa Cont do Pinhal Methodist Church, São Paulo. The church has 120 members and an average Sunday congregation of 70. The congregation includes a large number of young people, the majority being from poor families. There is a real hunger and enthusiasm from the church as a whole for contact with Christians in Britain. Much of the church was built by the congregation. It has taken 20 years and it is still not finished because they keep running out of money. The church is in a very poor area and is about five minutes away from a favela (Heliópolis). Home to more than 50,000 people, it is the biggest favela in São Paulo and the second biggest in Brazil. We are doing three projects, painting in URNAS, a pre-school/primary school and digging a garden plot out the back; cooking in a homeless centre; and working

with the people in a drug rehabilitation centre, an hour outside of São Paulo. I am expecting to be working in the last of these. I am staying with a family, Daniel, Denir, Debora and Amanda Galindos who send their greetings to everyone at Ridgeway Methodist Church. The projects will enable young Christians from São Paulo who, due to their background and environment in which they live, would not normally have the opportunity to join such a programme, to experience a different culture and to enter into a dialogue with Christians in Britain. British and Brazilians can learn from each other and share what they have experienced with their home churches, giving greater understanding of the world church and the responsibilities and benefits that come with this. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Katharine

GRAND PRIX Holiday Club

Tuesday 30th August - Friday 2nd September 9.30 - 12.00 for 4 year olds upwards, cost £1.50 per session. Plus a family fun day out on Saturday 3rd September. Please take leaflets to give to family and friends. Donations of cardboard boxes (shoe box size and smaller), clean yogurt pots and ribbons would be very welcome - please leave in Prayer Room. Your prayers, as always, would be appreciated for this week. As part of the Holiday Club there will also be activities in the afternoons/evenings for teenagers - please talk to Miriam for more details.

Oasis

Dates are available for the September—December period. If your group would like to book a date please contact Ann Beavington or the church office.

News from Monica and Mark

Hello everyone.

Hope you are all keeping well. We've arrived safely in New York. The weather is nice but 'hot'. Been to the beach and shopping malls. We have met family and we are sharing a very nice time. New York is a very exciting place. It was lovely to see my brother after 6 long years. Mark and the children are enjoying the weather and sight seeing.

Finding it very hot in Florida. Have been to Orlando, Hannah and Aaron enjoyed it. Spent time with family and friends. Travelling to Miami tomorrow and then flying to Equador. By the time read this we will have arrived!

God bless you all. Take care.

Lots of love Monica, Mark Hannah and Aaran.

August Diary

Tuesday 2 :

7.30 pm Crosstalk. Circuit Prayer Meeting at Stoke

Saturday : 6

10.00—12 noon Oasis Coffee Bar. In support of Mission Outreach.

Sunday 7:

10.30 am Revd John Haley. Holy Communion

7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Wednesday 10:

7.30 pm House Fellowships

Saturday 13:

10.00 am—12 noon Oasis Coffee Bar. In support of additional instruments. Music Group

9.15 am Dartmoor walk. Please see notice board for details

Sunday 14:

10.30 am Revd John Haley

7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Wednesday 17:

7.30 pm House Fellowships

Saturday 20:

10.00 am—12 noon Oasis Coffee Bar. In support of additional instruments. Music Group

Sunday 21:

10.30 am Miss Catherine Stead

7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Wednesday 24:

7.30 pm House Fellowships

Saturday 27:

10.00—12 noon Oasis Coffee Bar. In support of Youth Mission. Miriam, Kim and Steve

Sunday 28:

10.30 am Revd John Haley

7.00 pm Revd John Haley

Tuesday 30 August—Friday 2 September 'Grand Prix' Holiday Club

Church office hours:

Tuesday-Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

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

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

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Information for September's *This Month* to the office by 23 August please.

WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE TRUE
TRUE
WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE HONEST
HONEST
WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE PURE
PURE
WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE LOVELY
LOVELY
THINK ON THESE THINGS
Philippians 4 : 8