

# OUTREACH NEWS: FAREWELL EDITION

## RIDGEWAY METHODIST CHURCH



Dear Friends

This is the last *Outreach News* I shall produce as your Lay Worker. I leave here with very mixed emotions - looking forward to the new job I shall be taking up at Nottingham in September, while at the same time sad to be leaving behind so many friends and happy memories. As Sydney Carter says in the well known hymn; *And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me travelling along with you.* Life presents us with many different paths to take, but as Christians we are inspired by the love and guidance of God in all things.

I'm sure you will agree that we have achieved a great deal together in the last nineteen months. The programme of evening events, day trips, community outreach, Bible studies and courses has brought many new people into contact with the church and hopefully enriched the spiritual life and fellowship of those already here. As the church and circuit now look for somebody to take over the work on a part-time basis, I am sure that you will give them as much support, prayer and encouragement as you have given me.

May God bless you as individuals and a fellowship as you move forward together in your service for Him.

## **SPRING AND SUMMER EVENTS**

We have had a busy four months since I last updated you with *Outreach News* at Easter.

The *Church Community Weekend Away* at *Treloyhan Manor* near St Ives was certainly one of the highlights. 48 people came with us, 23 of these were young people, young families or new people. John and Valerie Carne led a time of teaching and there were plenty of opportunities for fellowship and leisure. It was a good time and one which I am sure we will all remember.

During April and May the church hosted two travelling theatre companies. *Hope's Kitchen* performed by the *Riding Lights Company* was a play about the lives of four friends who find hope amidst the difficulties of life. It was great to see the church packed for this performance! *Glory! Glory! That man Billy!* performed by the *Jasperian Theatre Company*, told the story of Cornish evangelist Billy Bray. It was an inspiring production and enjoyed by the many people who came from all different churches.

Our next event on 17 June was the *Chinese Evening* with Kim Goh. 73 people came, the highest number yet to an evening event, 30 of these were guests of church members or the church. Kim, now a Methodist Minister in Leeds, shared the amazing testimony of his life as a Triad gangster and his coming to faith in Christ whilst in prison. It was good to meet with so people who do not regularly attend church at a social event with a Christian message.

At the beginning of July we were pleased to invite Bob Hartman to the church for an evening of storytelling. Bob brings stories to life through vivid description and active audience participation. A number of young families and

children with little or no previous contact with the church came to this event.

Our *Spiritual Day Away* was on 16 July. Ruth Richey, a Deacon at the Methodist Central Hall, led a time of quiet reflection and meditation amidst the beautiful surroundings of *Hampton Manor* in Cornwall. It was a time away that benefited all who came.

Finally, the trip to *Sidmouth Donkey Sanctuary* on 30 July—a must for all those with an interest in this four-legged friend. 48 people came with us including 17 children, our day also included a puppet show and afternoon tea at Sidholme Hotel.

### **WHAT WILL I BE DOING IN NOTTINGHAM?**

On 1 September I will begin my new job as Lay Minister at three churches in and around Nottingham. I will work alongside an ordained Minister and my role will be varied providing pastoral care, leadership, preaching and leading worship, and outreach. The churches are quite different and have their own needs. Sherwood is the largest church, located in an inner suburban area with a substantial student population it has a ministry to people of all ages – one of the priorities here is outreach. Burton Joyce and Thurgarton are village chapels east of Nottingham. Both are small fellowships and a priority at Thurgarton will be building stronger links with the local Anglican church.

As many of you know I have missed seeing family and friends from the midlands and north of England while I have been with you. This appointment will help me to be closer to them. My address from 1 September will be:

**5 Greenbank Court  
Sherwood  
Nottingham  
NG5 4BU**

It has been good to see so many of you over the last days and weeks to say good bye. I would like to thank all those who have supported and encouraged me, especially the church stewards and John and Janet Haley for their hospitality.

With God's blessing,

*James Darby*

*The church has a busy programme of regular and seasonal events. These are advertised on our weekly and monthly sheets and on our website.*

**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:  
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