



The **Methodist** Church

CONNECTED

Newsletter of the Torbay Methodist Circuit—Issue 1: December 2016

“Many parts form one body” (1 Cor. 12:12)

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of *Connected*, the newsletter of the Torbay Methodist Circuit. We’re hoping this newsletter will become a resource which develops and strengthens the connections between the nine churches across the circuit. We are one of the smaller circuits in today’s Methodist Church—but we still cover quite a large area, stretching from Kingskerswell down through Torquay and Paignton, on to Brixham, and over the river to Dartmouth.

Most of us are aware that many local churches are no longer able to offer such a broad range of activities for all ages as they once could. However, within the circuit we still have a wide variety of groups and events—so, for example, a local church that doesn’t have a parent and toddler group can encourage families who join the congregation to attend a group at another circuit church. The same applies to women’s groups, Bible study, choir and music groups, Messy Church, and anything else that we offer within the circuit. And it applies to different styles and approaches to Sunday worship too! Viewing these as complementary rather than competing can help us to grow together, affirming and supporting one another, and recognising that though we are many parts we form one body.

We want to include good news stories of worship, fellowship, mission and evangelism across the circuit. If you have good news to share, let us know!

Advent and Christmas services

The seasons of Advent and Christmas can be a good time to talk to others about our faith in Jesus, and to invite people to carol services and other seasonal events in our churches.



Special carol services will be held at most of our churches on 18th December: the Paignton section will hold a joint carol service at Goodrington at 6.00pm; Central (Torquay) and Brixham have services at 6.30pm, and Victoria Park at 4.00pm. The other churches have special morning services. Central (Torquay) and Brixham also have Nativity services at 10.30am that morning.

On Christmas Day, there will be a united service for the Paignton section at Palace Avenue, services in Torquay at Central, St Andrews, and Victoria Park, and a service at Brixham—all at 10.30am. There will also be a Christmas Day carol service at Goodrington (6.00pm).

Hospital Closure?

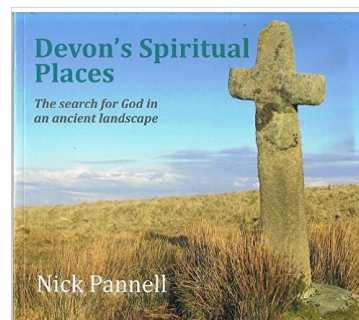
Central Paignton Churches—Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army and our own Methodist congregations at Palace Avenue and Southfield—organised a meeting on 5th November at Paignton Parish Church that gave members of the public the opportunity to ask some members of the Clinical Commissioning Group about plans for health and social care in Torbay, including the possible closure of Paignton Hospital (below) and the future role of Brixham Hospital.



Devon’s Spiritual Places

This beautifully-illustrated book by Nick Pannell, a member of Palace Avenue Methodist Church, was published in October.

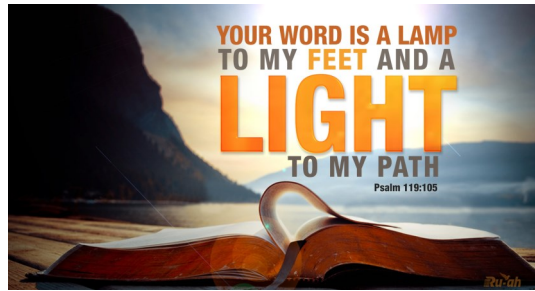
Nick travels to 18 inspirational sites across Devon, from tiny chapels to towering Cathedrals and Abbeys. An ideal gift, the book is available from the circuit office, priced £10.



Bible Reading Notes

Do you find it hard to find time to fit regular Bible reading into your day, or to keep it going in a consistent pattern? We all struggle at times to make space in our day for prayer and Bible reading. It can also sometimes be hard to see new things in familiar Scripture passages.

There is a great variety of daily Bible reading notes available, which can help to support regular Bible reading and prayer. There are actually too many notes and books to include here, but at the moment the four series listed opposite are popular in our local churches across the circuit. If you need advice, don't be afraid to ask your minister!



Some of you already have subscriptions to these or other similar series through your local church, but if you don't and would like to order notes then you can do so through the circuit. Please contact Catherine in the circuit office by post, phone or email (details are on the back of this newsletter) with your name, contact details including which circuit church you attend, and which series you'd like to receive.

You do not need to pay in advance, and you do not need to subscribe for the whole year. However, if you want to cancel or change your subscription you need to do so one month before the next edition of your current notes begins. It helps to have new orders two weeks in advance of the start date.

Goodrington Messy Church

We believe there is a deep need to introduce families to the Christian faith. As part of our vision to reach out into our community, Messy Church has been meeting on the second Friday of each month for the last six years. We find that people are now bringing their friends.



We meet after school to share in various Bible-based activities. Parents and children are happy to make things together while talking to team members and, in this way, strong links are forged and relationships built. After an hour, we move into the church for worship. A cooked tea is served at 5.30pm.

There is no charge, but donations often more than cover the cost of the tea. We prepare nutritious meals using home-grown fruit and vegetables.



Volunteers generously give their time and money to provide equipment and craft materials, and we have a good

response to appeals for 'junk' and scraps for crafts from our congregation. We are supported by helpers, parents and children



from other Paignton churches. All are welcome, although all adult helpers do have to be recruited safely under Methodist Church Safeguarding procedures.

Our programmes link Bible stories to everyday life, and this year the programme included Simeon and Anna, Ezekiel's valley of dry bones, the ungrateful lepers, and salt and light. Back issues of all the handouts are available at www.goodringtonmethodist.co.uk/messychurch.

Messy Church is an important outreach in today's world and offers a place where parents and children can enjoy time together learning Christian values and laying a foundation for the future. It's a great time to meet people, make new friends, and explore the message of Jesus.

Wendy Forman

Wendy Forman is Messy Church leader, Pastoral Secretary and Church Steward at Goodrington Methodist Church.

German Teenagers' Choir

As part of a visit to England, a teenagers' choir from the Lutheran parish of Mühlberg, a small town on the River Elbe about 45 miles north-west of Dresden, shared in a morning service at Goodrington Methodist Church. The service included readings in German, Korean and Welsh, as well as English. Pastor Kerstin Miech assisted at Holy Communion and everyone was invited to lunch after the service.

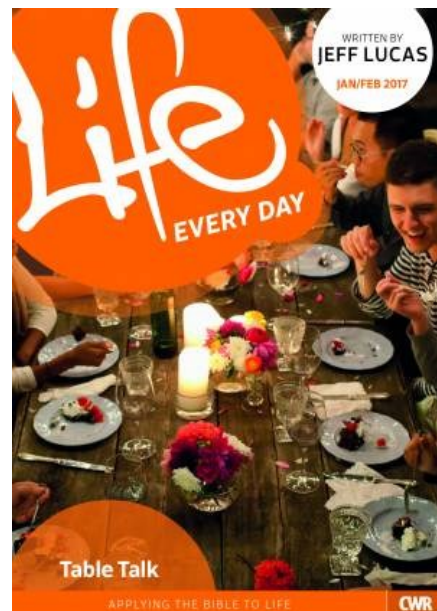


Life Every Day: Apply the Bible to life each day with these popular life application notes written by well-known international speaker and bestselling author Jeff Lucas (£2.99/issue; £17.94/year).

Every Day With Jesus: Practical help with life's challenges, insight into the deeper truths of the Bible in a style that challenges, comforts and encourages (£2.99/issue; £17.94/year).

New Daylight: Each day offers a short Bible passage (text included), thought-provoking comment and a prayer or point for reflection (£4.35/issue, increasing to £4.40 from the June issue; £17.50/year).

The Upper Room: Each daily meditation includes a recommended Bible reading and a key verse, reflection and prayer (£4.30/issue, £4.35 from June; £17.30/year).



Brixham Bicentenary

We are now nearing the end of our bicentenary celebration year, and are looking expectantly and enthusiastically to the future. Our last event will be a Christmas Tree Festival concluding with a visit from Revd Dr Mark Wakelin, Past President of the Methodist Conference (2012-13). This will be held from Thursday 8th to Sunday 11th December and everyone is cordially invited. The proceeds of the festival will add to the money already collected during the year in support of our nominated charity, *Toilet Twinning*. So far we have raised sufficient funds to twin with eight individual toilets—including two in Bangladesh, one in Burundi, one in the Congo and one in Guatemala—plus a school toilet block in Kenya.

There has been a wide range of celebratory events during the year, including the Valentine Reunion which brought together many couples that had been married in the church at Fore Street (see picture, below). A performance of the new Roger Jones musical *Barnabas*, the Youth Club and Junior Church weekend, a magnificent Flower Festival which raised over £2000 for charity, the Civic Service, and the Georgian Dinner and Anniversary were all a great success.



We were delighted to have the President of the Methodist Conference, Revd Steve Wild, speak at the Georgian Dinner and the picture below shows Steve together with Revd Doug Rix, Revd Dr John Haley, Revd John Carne and Revd Martin Turner, formerly the Minister at Central Hall Westminster.

In addition, we have welcomed 12 visiting ministers—all of whom have not only celebrated the past with us, but have also challenged us to go forward into the future. The message has been both consistent and clear: the role of our church is to be out in the community. The great commission from our Lord instructs us to *go* into all the world and make disciples, not wait for the world to come to us. As Paul Jarrett of the *Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen* succinctly put it, 'Jesus said to the Galilean fishers, "I will make you fishers of men," but if you are going to follow him you've got to go out there and fish.' As a church, we intend to be out there fishing for the next 200 years!



Dr David Taylor

Dr David Taylor is Treasurer of Brixham Methodist Church, which has a prominent place in Fore Street, Brixham.

World Church Challenge Comes to Torbay

Zimbabwe Victims' Support Fund



For 14 years I served as a Mission Partner in Zimbabwe and during this time the country suffered its gravest crisis. The rule of law collapsed, a once-thriving economy crashed, unemployment and grinding poverty followed for millions—compounded this year by drought and famine. Severe malnutrition is already claiming lives.

But if the people of Zimbabwe are victims of the crazed policies of a desperate ruling élite, they are not abandoned by God. The God of justice and mercy has a special regard for the weak and vulnerable. And he has demonstrated his compassion for the victims in many examples of courageous self-giving in solidarity with the poor.

We rejoice that God has given us a window of opportunity to bless and make a real difference to the lives of many thousands of the poorest through *Zimbabwe Victims' Support Fund* (ZVSF). Now a registered charity, ZVSF started in 2002 as a simple means of linking the caring church in Britain with our suffering brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe: a global circle of grace, if you like, giving us the privilege of supporting the amazing work which God is doing there through his faithful servants on the ground.

When I visited Zimbabwe in May, I helped to produce a DVD, *Grace in a Dry Land*, which is just 11 minutes long and shows the relief feeding and proclamation of the gospel. I will be happy to show this to any church or group interested—and tell you more, so that you may consider becoming a partner with God, and us, in this inspirational ministry of grace.



For further details, please take a look at our website www.zimbabwewictimssupportfund.org.

Graham Shaw

Revd Graham Shaw is a supernumerary minister living in Brixham. To get in touch with Graham, please enquire through the circuit office and we will forward your message to him.

Paignton Churches Welcome Korean Students

Eight South Korean students from a Paignton language school joined in worship at Palace Avenue and Goodrington Methodist Churches between



February and September. Two of the young women, themselves practising Christians, took the opportunity to witness to their friends. Sophia (Min-yung) is now at home in Seoul and hopes to work in another country next year.

Joanna (Jaewon) is now living in Clapham and continuing her studies. She currently attends a Korean church near Oxford Circus. Joanna (pictured *right*, below) writes:

감사합니다, 축복합니다, 사랑합니다

페잉턴 교회 식구들

which means, 'Thank you, I bless you, I love you, Paignton Church family members.'

Each student was presented with a *Good News Bible* by Palace Avenue Methodist Church, and gospel literature in Korean (supplied by *Lifewords*) was available at Goodrington. A highlight of the students' visit was sharing a



mid-summer Christmas dinner with turkey, all the trimmings, Christmas pudding and crackers, courtesy of Janet Haley.

Autumn Fair for Rowcroft Hospice

This year, proceeds of the autumn fair at Goodrington Methodist Church were given to Rowcroft Hospice. The fair, opened by Kevin Foster MP, included a visit by a fire engine from the Devon and Somerset Fire Service, and animals and birds from Totnes Rare Breeds Farm.



There were stalls with crafts, gifts, jewellery, toys, cakes, and face-painting, as well as refreshments.



Please send good news stories of worship, fellowship, mission and evangelism to Torbay Methodist Circuit Office by no later than 10th February to be considered for inclusion in the next issue of *Connected*.

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