



# IVYBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

*Sharing Life*  
*Sharing Faith*



**December 2015**

**January 2016**

# Newsletter

## ***From the Minister***



There are some things that you simply can't ignore. As I write this December letter to you it is still November, the week after the awful terrorist attacks in Paris. And you can't ignore a thing like that, especially when it's so close to home. So our hearts go out to those who are mourning the loss of loved ones, and the many who are so badly injured. I am aware that the attacks in Paris are simply the tip of the iceberg, and that week on week there are reports of unspeakable acts of terrorism, violence and war feeding in through our media from around the world. The Russian plane that crashed over Sinai with the loss of over 200 innocent lives is now thought to be the work of terrorists. Europe is full of desperate refugees fleeing from war in their home country. The world, as Winter approaches, appears to be a very dark place indeed.

How is it, we ask ourselves, that some people can become so poisoned with evil? How is it that we can be so overcome with hate towards our fellow humans that we seek to blow them to pieces or gun them down in the streets, unarmed and defenceless? What sort of God is it that sanctions such activities? No sort of God. If the nature of God is to destroy innocent people, to snuff out the light of life, love and hope; then that's a God that I won't believe in.

And sometimes people come to me and say, "but what about the Old Testament? There we see God commanding terrible acts of genocide against rebellious nations. What's the difference?"

Many Christians struggle with the violence and death that we see in the history of the people of Israel as portrayed in books like Joshua. But from these accounts it is important that we observe something about God – that He is sovereign. His power is absolute, and He can act with judgement or with mercy. A Muslim once explained to me that the Islamic understanding of Allah is that He is like a set of scales - on one side you have the power of God, and on the other side you have the mercy of God. Often these scales are in perfect balance, but there are times when the power of God is displayed (and people get hurt), and other times when the mercy of God prevails (and people get delivered). The word is, God is all-powerful, and you don't mess with Him. And this has to be true of God, or He simply isn't "God".



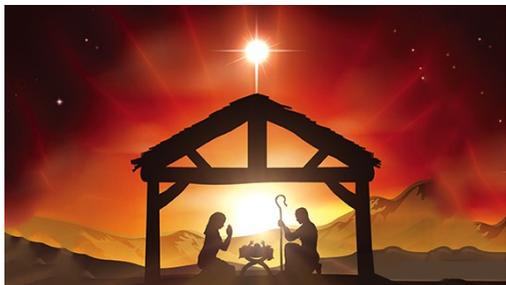
Some people ask me how I can be sure that Christianity is the one true faith, when there are so many other religions in the world that you can choose from. The answer to this is simple: because Christianity is unique. All other faiths have this same idea of a sovereign god (or gods) that has no emotional attachment to us. Furthermore, if we wish to enter heaven (or a good re-birth!) then our salvation is predicated on the good deeds that we do during our life. It is salvation through works.

Any Christian will tell you that God is not like this at all. Certainly, those Old Testament accounts of an angry God demonstrate to us His power and sovereignty, but from the very beginning of time God has determined that He would enter our world, to live amongst us and befriend us, to heal us and deliver us. To teach us about love, the love that defines His divine nature, so that we might live in relationship with Him and with each other. We know this because Jesus was once asked what is the greatest commandment, and He responded by telling us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. In order to do this we first have to realise just how much God loves us, despite our evil thoughts and deeds. We see this clearly through Jesus' death on the cross, taking away all our sins and wickedness. Then we can enter into the most amazing relationship of love for our Lord, and with the power of the Spirit we can set about living lives grounded in love, both for God and for one another. In this way the darkness is dispelled, because we belong to the light.

We see terrible deeds of darkness all around us, but Jesus warned us that it would be this way, and we are not to be anxious. When we are shocked and dismayed at the atrocity of terrorism and war, our response must be to hold fast to the light, and to love all the more. Because where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Where there is despair, He brings hope: where there is hate, He brings love: where there is darkness, He brings light. Without Him, truly all hope is gone.

There has never been a better time to focus this year on the true meaning of Christmas. The light coming into a world full of darkness. Tiny, vulnerable, often overlooked: but ultimately the only way that this complicated and often difficult life is ever going to make any sense.

God bless  
*Ralph*





# December Worship

## IVYBRIDGE

Dec 6	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Communion IGNITE
Dec 13	10:30 am <b>4:00 pm</b>	Rev Ralph Ward Nativity and Christingle
Dec 20	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Mr Mike Cade Rev Ralph Ward - Carol Service
Dec 27	10:30 am 6:30 am	Mr Terry Milam No Service

## BITTAFORD

Dec 6	10:30 am	Rev David Youngs - Communion
Dec 13	10:30 am	Mrs Gillian Higgins
Dec 20	2:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Communion
Dec 27	10:30 am	Mr Mike Cade



*The Services for January were not known at the time of going to print*

*The speakers have been taken from Circuit Plan  
and are correct to the best of the Editor's knowledge.*



## ***From the Editor ...***

As this is a double issue of our Newsletter, our next one will not be until February. If you would like to include anything in the February Newsletter, please let me have the details by Sunday 10 January in any of the following ways:-

***(Please note my change of email address)***

- ♥ send it by email to ***contact@jennyhansford.co.uk***
- ♥ ring me on ***01752 894634***
- ♥ hand it to me at church on a Sunday
- ♥ place it in the "H" pigeonhole in the Church Concourse
- ♥ post it through my letterbox at ***10 MacAndrew Walk, Ivybridge***

I would just like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a Very Happy Christmas, and many blessings in 2016.

*"Don't be afraid, for the Lord will go before you and will be with you; He will not fail nor forsake you."* (Deut 31:8 TLB)



***Jenny Hansford***



## **Accommodation Needed**

Would anyone be able to offer accommodation to our 22 year old daughter?

Miriam has mild Asperger's Syndrome, and is ready to move in to independent living. She is in receipt of Housing Benefit and is currently on ESA.

Miriam has been living in London for several years, and would very much like to relocate to Devon, which would enable us to be more supportive. She is a very independent young lady who is well used to looking after herself and using public transport.

Please ring Pauline and Adrian Cresswell for further information on 01752 895689.



# December News

If you have anything you would like included in the Church News please let Judy Jago know at church, or ring her on 894829.

This comes with warmest wishes for a very Happy Christmas as we celebrate Emmanuel, God with us in the baby born in that stable so long ago. We look forward to seeing you at our Christmas services which are detailed on page 11 of this Newsletter



**Congratulations!**

Many congratulations to Matt Maddaford as he has scooped Apprentice of the Year at Princess Yachts for the second year running. Well done Matt and we wish you well as you look forward to the end of your Apprenticeship and your future after that.

Many congratulations and a very happy birthday to Sara Bromage as she celebrates a significant birthday this month. Sara, we hope you celebrate well and enjoy all the fun of a big birthday.



At last Phil and Becky have moved to their new home in Roberts Road, Barne Barton, Plymouth. Many congratulations on the move and we hope you are winning the battle of the boxes. We wish you much happiness in your new home.

Jutta Berger has also moved home from Moorhaven to the old Royal Naval Hospital site in Plymouth. Jutta we send our love as you settle in and we hope all went smoothly on the day (in spite of the awful weather!!)



Tim Grayling is now working in Kenya for two years with an Aid organisation specialising in providing wells and sanitation around that country, and given security issues around the world we would ask that you remember Tim, Colette and their family in your prayers during this time.

The Squires family are suffering a bit at the moment - Phil has been in hospital for a heart by pass operation (we hope that doesn't change after we have gone to press!!) and we



send our very best wishes and prayers for a return to full health and strength as soon as possible. Also Esme, his Mother, is very poorly with cancer. Visitors to her care home in Minehead tell us she is serene and content and we do send Esme our love, and prayers for the whole family as they seek to meet all these needs.

Pat Robinson has been very poorly of late and spent a considerable time in hospital. It's good to know she is now home, though continuing treatment. Pat, we are praying for a speedy recovery and a return to your normal "full of energy" self. It's been tough time for Mick and the rest of the family and we pray they all feel more at peace now you are safely home.



Lyn Allen's Stepfather, Geoff, sadly died in the middle of November and we send our love and sympathy to you all as you come to terms with life without him.

There are several folk undergoing treatment for cancer and others struggling with ill health of family members and we would ask that you remember our friends in your prayers.



Thank you very much to everyone who has been praying for me. It is really appreciated. Thank you.

*Bert Paddock*



Mum and I are so grateful for all the love, support and prayers we received not only while I was in hospital but in the weeks following.

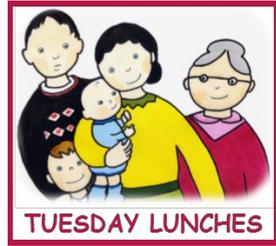
My recovery is going really well and hopefully you will already have noticed me at church and seen the amazing result of my operation (although you might not have recognised me at first!!).

Mum and I feel very blessed to be part of this fellowship and to be covered by so much love and prayer. Thank you.

*Matt Bowker*

## TUESDAY LUNCHES

Every Tuesday from 12:30 until 2:00 pm, delicious lunches are served in the Café area of the church. Whether you fancy a light lunch of sandwiches, jacket potato, something on toast, or a full hot meal and dessert, it will be prepared especially for YOU. A drink comes free with our new MEAL DEAL.



The friendly staff will wait on you and if you have special dietary needs we will do our best to accommodate you. Everyone is welcome - no need to book. We'd be delighted to see you.

The idea behind the lunches is that anyone can come along to meet a friend or make a new friend and have chance to chat together over an enjoyable meal, prepared by someone else, whether it is a two course hot meal, or something simpler.



## Remembrance Sunday

I'm sure many of you noticed the beautiful ceramic poppy displayed at the front of the church on Remembrance Sunday.

This is one of the commemorative ceramic poppies from the spectacular display at the Tower of London last year that marked 100 years since Britain's involvement in the First World War. Our grateful thanks go to Nancy Morgans who very kindly donated this poppy to IMC.

Our thanks also go to Andrew and Nigel Phillips who made the special case it was so beautifully displayed in.

This special display enhanced the other wonderful displays in our church created by Lindsey Reid. We are very blessed at IMC with such generous and creative people.

We would like to find a permanent position for this poppy in the church, so if you have any suggestions, please let me know.

*Yvonne Bithell*



## Nativity and Christingle Service

We have the pleasure of inviting you to our annual Nativity and Christingle Service, which will be on Sunday 13 December at 4:00 pm.

As always, we would love the children to come dressed as kings, shepherds and angels, and to join the tableau as we tell the story.

Bring your friends! Come and wait by the stable with us, and we'll celebrate the Christmas Story together.



### Daily Bread

Words for Life

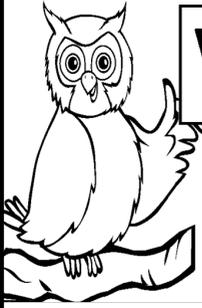
The Bible guide  
for every day

### Why Read The Bible?

Do you want to develop your relationship with God? Then Scripture Union's Bible Guide called '**Daily Bread**', would be helpful to you. This is a daily reading guide that aims to help you hear from God. As the title implies, reading the Bible daily gives us regular food for our spirits. Most of us need a little help in this and as we engage with it we are helped to face God's challenges in the here and now.

The next issue, which covers **January to March 2016**, costs £4.00. If you would like me to order a copy for you please sign the list in the concourse. Alternatively come and speak to me in person at church, or send me an email at [www.dianaengland@talktalk.net](mailto:www.dianaengland@talktalk.net). Please order before 7 December.

*Diana England*



# Wise and Wonderful

(because that is what we are)

Fellowship for "third-agers", all are welcome. We meet fortnightly in the IMC Café: see dates below.  
Meetings are on Fridays, 2.30 - 4:00 pm



## Spring programme 2016

### January 8

New Year Party

### January 22

Dyslexia: a personal perspective with Sue Lawrie

### February 5

"Songs and Stories"

Memories, stories and favourite music

### February 19

Scenes of Israel with Joan Bulman

### March 4

St Luke's Hospice

with a member of their team of speakers

### March 18

to be announced

The summer programme will run  
from April 8 until July 15.

We look forward to seeing you.

Please contact one of us for more information:

Valerie Marriott 893614

Sara Bromage 894198

Judy Jago 894829

Sue Pengilley 896444

David and Christine Moulder 892858

# *Christmas Services*

*at*

## *Ivybridge Methodist Church*

Come and join us

### *Christingle with Nativity*

Sunday 13 December @ 4:00 pm

*Especially for families, and all children are welcome to dress up as Nativity characters*

### *Carols by Candlelight*

Sunday 20 December @ 6:30 pm

### *Carols at Bittaford Chapel*

Thursday 24 December @ 6:30 pm

### *Midnight Communion Service*

Thursday 24 December @ 11:15 pm

### *Christmas Day*

Friday 25 December @ 10:00 am

*A short Family Service  
to celebrate Jesus' birthday*





# Christmas at Bittaford Methodist Church

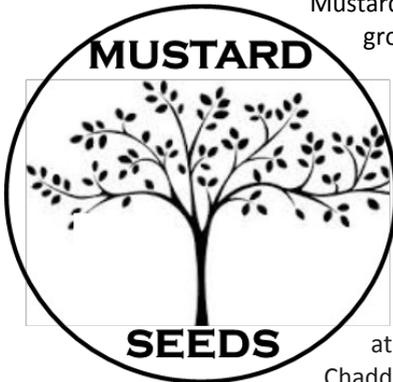
Come and join us for a  
Christmas Themed Concert

Saturday 5 December  
7:30 pm

Tickets £5.00 on the door  
or in advance from  
Jutta or Lindsay

Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

All money raised to Church Funds



Mustard Seeds is the only inter-church singles group in Plymouth at the moment and is proving to be a huge support network for many Christian Singles.

We still have room to grow and welcome more singles in need of fellowship.

Our next meeting together will be our Christmas Meal on Saturday 5 December at 7:30 pm. This will be held at the Chaddlewood Inn, and will cost £11.50 for a three course meal.

If you would like to join us please contact me on 07890 280634. If you want to join us for our meal you will need to pre-book with a £5 deposit.

*Julia Johnston*

## Healing



It was good to read Peter Stanford's testimonial in the November newsletter, how he found himself unexpectedly virtually pain free following surgery, repeatedly able to turn down the offered analgesics. He felt sustained by all the prayer support church friends were giving.

I have recently been reading some excellent books on biblical healing, "To Hell With Sickness" by Bill Prankard being one, and "How to Heal The Sick" by Charles and Francis Hunter another very comprehensive guide to Christian Healing. From this I quote:

*"I believe God is in heaven crying over churches where they do not lay hands on people on Sunday morning and believe for their healing, because God wants you well!"*

We are blessed that at IMC, personal prayer is always offered at the morning services, but how many of the congregation avail themselves of this for physical ailments with any belief this will help as much or more than their prescriptions? Yet I have heard of some truly miraculous healings experienced by folks I have met. I would love to see more such testimonials shared in our church newsletter, so that as a congregation our faith in God's healing powers being still at work today can be built up.

In Mark 16: 17-18 Jesus says, *"And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name ... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."*

The world continually contradicts this assertion. If we allow it to our faith for healing will be continually undermined.

I recently attended the 'Understanding Healing' workshop at Methodist Central Hall, where some wonderful testimonies were shared, with lively discussion and some excellent worship (with help from Christian and two of our talented Stevenson boys). Healing ministry was given and received.

By sharing healing testimonials at every opportunity we can, and should, help to bolster our mutual faith in the potential and availability of the Lord's healing power in the 21st century. Surely this is Good News indeed!

*Lindsay Ellis*

## WESLEY WANDERERS



Once again, we have been blessed with good weather and great company for nearly all our monthly walks this year; (often on the last Saturday in the month, but this can vary). We usually meet at Ivybridge Railway Station and use public transport or car share, so not having your own transport is no barrier to joining us. Our walks are generally around 3-5 miles, enjoying circular walks through the countryside around us, Dartmoor and the coast path, with occasional ones further afield. Strong walking shoes or boots and waterproofs are the only essentials. We are a very friendly and sociable group, and usually have coffee and/or lunch stops too!

Our next walk is planned to be Calstock to Cotehele on 5 December; a train journey and short walk to enjoy lunch and a short carol concert in the hall under their famous garland before returning. Keep an eye on the weekly newsheet for further details of this and future walks.

The following walk will probably be a New Year walk, on 1st or 2nd of January.

Everybody is very welcome to join us. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive details of future walks, please drop me an email at [sue.pengilley@gmail.com](mailto:sue.pengilley@gmail.com)



A party for all **families with young children** (and tired mummies) who need to go to bed early, even on New Years Eve!

**Thursday 31 December**  
**4:00 - 7:00 pm**



**Bouncy Castle**



**Music and dancing**



**Party Games**



**Bring and share  
Party Food**



Let us know if you can come -  
text Sophie on 07730 475958, or  
email: [s\\_r\\_phillips@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:s_r_phillips@hotmail.co.uk)

# Church Contacts



## Minister:

Rev Ralph Ward Tel: 01752 651424  
email: ralphward@talktalk.net

## Senior Steward:

Mrs Helen Martin Tel: 01752 698054

## Room Bookings:

Chris and Kate Crouch Tel: 01752 894273

## House Group Information:

Mrs Helen Maddaford Tel: 01752 892810

## Youth Work:

Phil Blunt Tel: 07816 910152

If you have any items for the  
**February Newsletter**  
please get them to the Editor by  
**Sunday 10 January**  
**at the latest please.**

Tel: 01752 894634  
email: [contact@jennyhansford.co.uk](mailto:contact@jennyhansford.co.uk)



**Please note the change  
of email address!**



Visit our website at  
**[www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk](http://www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk)**

If you wish to contact Tony regarding the website  
you can do so at [mrmerrit@icloud.com](mailto:mrmerrit@icloud.com)