



# IVYBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

*Sharing Life*  
*Sharing Faith*



He IS Risen!

March 2016  
Newsletter

## ***From the Minister***



Don't worry, it's not you getting older. It really is the case that Easter seems to be coming round sooner this year than previously: that's because Easter is a "moveable feast", and this year it falls on 27 March, nearly as early as it possibly could. The earliest that it's possible for Easter Sunday to occur is 22 March, and the latest is the 25 April! So in case you're not sure why it is that Easter moves around every year, whilst Christmas remains on the same date, allow me to shed some light on it.

As far as Christmas is concerned, we simply don't know the date or indeed the time of year when Jesus was born. 25 December was chosen because of its proximity to the Winter Solstice on 22 December, which is the shortest day of the year here in the UK. Christian missionaries to our shores determined that this was an ideal opportunity to celebrate the coming of Jesus the Light of the World (and besides, we could simply pinch the old pagan Solstice celebrations and "Christianize" them).

But Easter is different: we know exactly what time of year it took place, because on the night before Jesus died, He was in Jerusalem with His disciples celebrating the Jewish Passover festival. As Luke tells us:

*When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the Kingdom of God." (Luke 22:14-16)*

We know when the Passover is celebrated each year, but it cannot be pinned down to a single calendar date. Anyway, the calendar was changed in 1582 by Pope Gregory, from the "Julian" calendar (reputedly established by Julius Caesar) to the more accurate "Gregorian" calendar. Fortunately the date of the Passover is determined by something that God Himself has set in place - the moon. The Jewish Passover takes place at the time of the first full moon after the Vernal (or Spring) Equinox. And if I remember my astronomical studies correctly (I was once an officer in the Merchant Navy, don't you know), the moon orbits the earth every 27.3 days. So it doesn't tie in with the changing calendar months. The Vernal Equinox, however, is the same every year, on 21 March, and is the day upon which we have equal periods of daylight and darkness, as the earth moves around the sun following its 365 day cycle.



It's easy to observe in the sky the changing phases of the moon, but if you're wondering about how ancient people were able to work out when the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes occur, along with the Summer and Winter Solstices, remember that 4,000 years ago it is popularly thought that Bronze Age people were using Stonehenge as an astronomical clock which was aligned to observe and celebrate the solstices. Their observances were of course pagan in their significance, and it is thought that Stonehenge had other ritual uses and purposes as well, but the fact remains that ancient people spent a lot more time than we do looking at the night sky and observing the patterns of movement that exist within it.

So with the equinox astronomically set at 21 March, the earliest possible date for Easter Sunday is the day following, 22 March. You may recall that Easter was really early in 2008, when it fell on 23 March, and you might be surprised to hear that it will not fall on the same date again until the year 2160, so none of us who were here in 2008 will ever witness it again! It's just possible that you were around the last time it fell on 23 March, but you'd need to have lived to over 95 years of age, since the last time this happened was 1913!

No one was around to celebrate the earliest possible Easter date of 22 March, which last occurred in 1818. And none of us are ever going to see it happen again, because the next time it happens will be in the year 2285!

You never realised that there was so much to this, did you? Neither, I suspect, did you realise just how much of a nerd your minister can be!

The only important thing about all of this is not the numbers, or the dates, but the fact that it really happened. The whole of human history swivels on this single most amazing event: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through this act of love and sacrifice God has made atonement for our sins, and reunited us with Himself. Every sinful thought, word or deed that any person has ever or will ever do, has been forgiven through the cross. At the point of Jesus' death, the light of hope left our world. In fact it *literally* left our world. As all three Synoptic Gospels tell us, the sky went dark for 3 hours at noon on Good Friday:

*It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining. (Luke 23: 44-45)*

For years I wrongly thought that this was the result of a total eclipse of the sun, but as I've now discovered, it's impossible for such an eclipse to occur at the time of a full moon. Which means that God *literally* turned out the lights. The sun cannot shine while the world has no Light.



Praise God, on the third day the agony and despair of humanity was overturned. The Light was returned, and that same Light calls us all to step out of the darkness and into the presence of our friend and Lord, Jesus.

Happy Easter everyone,  
God bless,

*Ralph*

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

If you would like to include anything in the April Newsletter, please let me have the details by Thursday 10 March 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***

*Jenny Hansford*



## **FOR SALE**

### **2 mobility scooters**

One has hardly been used and comes with a battery - £250

Second in good condition, but no battery - £100

If you are interested please contact  
Madeline or Miles Allen on 01752 691143  
(evenings are best, but you can leave a message)



# March Worship

## **IVYBRIDGE**

|        |          |                                    |
|--------|----------|------------------------------------|
| Mar 6  |          | <b>MOTHERING SUNDAY</b>            |
|        | 10:30 am | Rev Ralph Ward - Communion         |
|        | 6:30 pm  | Rev Ralph Ward                     |
| Mar 13 | 10:30 am | Rev Ralph Ward                     |
|        | 6:30 pm  | IGNITE- Communion                  |
| Mar 20 | 10:30 am | Rev Ralph Ward - Family Service    |
|        | 6:30 pm  | Prayer Service led by Gill Cowsill |
|        |          | <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>               |
| Mar 27 | 10:30 am | Rev Ralph Ward                     |
|        | 6:30 pm  | Mrs Gillian Higgins                |
| Apr 3  | 10:30 am | Dr Philip Walsh                    |
|        | 6:30 pm  | Mrs Amanda Rees                    |
| Apr 10 | 10:30 am | Rev Ralph Ward - Communion         |
|        | 6:30 pm  | IGNITE - Communion                 |

## **BITTAFORD**

|        |          |                              |
|--------|----------|------------------------------|
|        |          | <b>MOTHERING SUNDAY</b>      |
| Mar 6  | 10:30 am | Rev David Youngs - Communion |
| Mar 13 | 10:30 am | Mr Keith Angilley            |
| Mar 20 | 10:30 am | Mr John Pointon              |
|        |          | <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>         |
| Mar 27 | 2:30 pm  | Rev Ralph Ward - Communion   |
| Apr 3  | 10:30 am | Mrs Brenda Youngs            |
| Apr 10 | 10:30 am | Rev David Youngs - Communion |

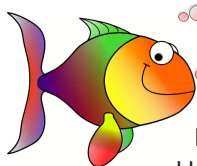
*The speakers have been taken from Circuit Plan  
and are correct to the best of the Editor's knowledge.*



# March 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.

Once again it is with great delight we can welcome our next new baby to the Church family. Solomon Wilson Patrick was born on 7 February weighing 6lbs 5oz, and after initial problems is now fine and growing well. Mum and Dad, Carla and Chris, and brother Zach are settling into their new shaped family and we send our warmest love and congratulations to you all and as ever, would wish the gift of sleep for you if we could!



One piece of good news we missed last month was that Ralph and Adele's daughter Phoebe was offered (and took) a full-time permanent post at the Aquarium in Plymouth. This is something she has worked incredibly hard for and we send our warmest congratulations Phoebe and hope it all goes smoothly!

Becky and Nick Anderson have recently moved into their new home in Yeoland Park. We do hope that you feel settled soon and enjoy having your own home.



It appears that this year is going to be a year of many celebrations of significant birthdays, as we understand that 1936, 1946, 1956 and 1966 were very good years! During March we have two friends who are celebrating, their significant birthdays, and we send our love and congratulations to Linnie Davis and Christine Moulder, wishing you both a lovely day and many, many happy returns

Many congratulations go to Ben Crudge as he marries Beth on 12 March in Cardiff. We send our very best wishes to you both and your families, and pray you have the most special day.



There are a few poorly people to pray for - Joan Jones is now home from hospital and we do hope things are going smoothly Joan and that you feel up to being out and about soon.



Joan Long (our most senior member) is in hospital as I write this and Joan we send our very warm wishes for a good recovery and hope you will be home soon.

Cecil Downing has recently been in Kingsbridge hospital and we understand his health is improving even if it's a little slower than he would like. Cecil we hope you feel much better very soon.



Sadly we also have to send our deepest sympathies to Margaret and Dennis Ewers and their family as they mourn the sudden death of their Son-in-Law in Cornwall; and to Marilyn Davis on the death of her husband Peter who had bravely fought a long battle with illness. You are all much in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

### Thanksgiving service for the late Iris Toy

I want to thank my good friends at IMC for all the love and help you so kindly and willingly showed to me and my family following the peaceful passing of my dear mum.

The help with accommodation and the wonderful contributions for tea following the service at Efford were a real witness to God's love shown to us all and it made this difficult time so much easier for us all.

Thanks so very much and God bless you all.

*Wendy Ascroft*



### Dates of the next Work Days

19 March

*(Please note this is the third Saturday)*

9 April

14 May

Please come along from 9:30 am onwards and help to keep our Church building clean, tidy and welcoming for all its users.

**Delicious coffee and cakes from "Wesleys" and free lunch for all helpers!**



**News from Cambodia -  
IMC supports Cambodian  
Communities out of Crisis  
with a regular donation**

I have just returned from a three-week visit to Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The main purpose of the trip was to spend time

with my adopted family, but I did take the opportunity to visit the 'Children of Cambodia' project supported by Cambodian Communities out of Crisis. We are so grateful for your monthly gift that helps provide funds for this project.

We started the 'Dump Kids' project nine years ago with the aim of rescuing 15 children from scavenging for recyclable materials in appalling conditions on Phnom Penh's rubbish dump. We sent them to school, gave them some basic healthcare and provided a daily cooked meal for them in order to improve their standard of nutrition and remove some of the pressure on their parents to force them to work in order to get enough money to pay for their food.

Some of the children have completed school and found employment or are in vocational training centres. Some were placed in orphanages following the death of both parents from AIDS. Some families' level of income has risen sufficiently to enable them to provide for their children without our help. None of the parents now has to work on the dump (so we renamed the project 'Children of Cambodia') but all are still desperately poor. Every time a child has left, another needy one has taken his or her place.

The dump was filled up and has been replaced by another in a different location. What used to be wasteland just outside Phnom Penh's city limits is now part of the suburbs. The standard of living of people in the area is rising, but the families whose children we support are an exception to this. Some of the parents work in Thailand and their children are living with grandparents in little more than shacks. Support for their education and the daily meal are still vital.

Thank you, not only for your financial support, but also for your prayers for these needy children and their families.

*Myers Cooper*

If anyone would like more details please contact Val Marriott or Myers direct.





## MUSTARD SEEDS

is a thriving group for Single Christians of all ages and walks of faith who love fellowship.

Please come along to any event where you will receive a warm welcome.

For further details contact Julia on 07890 280634.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS (12:30 START)

26 March - Saltram House

30 April - The Bakery, Royal William Yard

28 May - Mount Edgecombe Picnic and Walk

25 June - Cadover Bridge BBQ

30 July - Bigbury Beach BBQ

## HELP NEEDED!

The Salvation Army is in desperate need of more volunteers to help in their shop in Ivybridge, particularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but any day would be helpful.

If you think you could support the amazing work of the Salvation Army in this way, please contact either Jeanette or Chrissy on 892951, they will be delighted to hear from you.

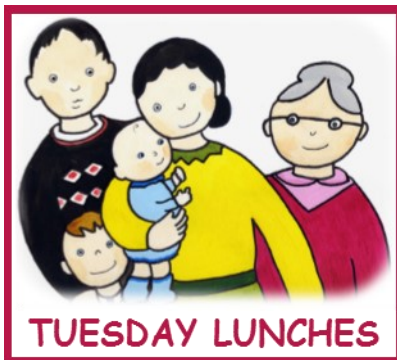
Thank you.



## TUESDAY LUNCHES

Do you have a couple of hours to spare on a Tuesday?

Then why not come along to the church café and give us a hand with preparing and serving lunches? You don't have to be a Master chef - just good fresh meals and snacks. It wouldn't be every week - maybe once a month. It's fun, you make friends and you will have a delicious free lunch with the rest of the staff.



Interested? Then give Mercy a ring on 893812 or drop her an email at [bmercy.matthews@homecall.co.uk](mailto:bmercy.matthews@homecall.co.uk)



## Men's Fellowship Friday 5 February

A big thank you to John Hladkij for a most enjoyable and interesting talk entitled 'A Portion of Trouble' about a young 19 year old west countryman policing the streets of Londonderry. We did say before he started talking

that it may be necessary for people to either sign the 'Official Secrets Act' or be shot at the end of the talk! John was very open and honest about his somewhat terrifying experiences and we can only praise his bravery and commitment in what he had to do.

The talk was followed by a most enjoyable supper provide by Vino's Pizzeria, Pizza and chips at a very reasonable £5 per head.

Men's Fellowship is always an excellent opportunity for the men in the Church and any guests they wish to invite to enjoy fellowship together, and if you haven't come to one yet, please do join us next time. There were 25 people at John's talk which was an excellent turnout.

Thank you again to all who came and helped to make the evening a very successful one.

# A Story For The Heart

With Carl Madearis and Jay Pathak

*"To **every** person there comes a special moment when we are figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing, unique to who we are.*

*What a tragedy if that moment finds us unprepared for the work that could be our finest hour."*

Winston Churchill

**Following Ralph's Lent talks on evangelism we are going to look at some of the simple ways we can all feel comfortable and confident about our own story.**

- ♥ This course will be an encouragement to everyone at IMC.
- ♥ Four Monday evenings at IMC - 7:45 to 9:30 pm.  
(Dates are 11 April, 25 April, 9 May, and 16 May)
- ♥ Join us in the Main Church to watch these talks on DVD.



This is a time for extra support and encouragement and this short course should help provide just that.

**Do come along – thankyou!**

## Property News



The church buildings continue to be used for a variety of activities on top of its role as a place of worship. The church is the base for Street Pastors and is the shop front for Foodbank. YFC offices are here. Mondays finds a Service Veterans Group. You can learn maths or how to dance. Little Fishes and Songs & Stories cater for the younger children. Tuesdays you can get a coffee or a meal and Saturdays a coffee and cake. Girls Brigade and Brownies also meet here. The youth team holds a bible study; for year 6+, there is also Wired and for

year 10+ there is Re-Wired. W.I. meet here as do University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age Choir. At Christmas all the local primary schools use the building. Our own Carol service this year saw upwards of 350 people. In school holidays we have children's clubs and ad-hoc concerts occur throughout the year.

This is a valuable community asset but it comes at a cost. If you donate to the church the building is where a lot of your money goes. Safety: Fire alarms and emergency lighting are inspected every six months, extinguishers annually; lifts – three inspections a year plus always something to be replaced; Gas appliances – annual inspection of three boilers and six large heaters. Utilities: a big space to heat and light. We have contractors coming in to do remedial work revealed by the five year electrical inspection. Then we come to maintenance, we do as much of this in-house as we can but we are a small group.

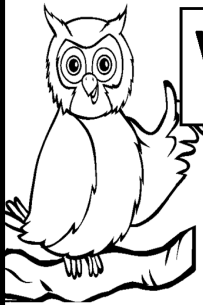
Some time ago the property team were tasked to improve the appearance of the sanctuary and transepts; all the walls have blemishes and showed signs of water egress. Starting with sanctuary we did damp tests and took professional advice on the damp problems; we then did a holding job and painted it with a cheap emulsion. We then moved into the transepts and removed the render from the two walls in worst condition and re-rendered with lime and mortar. The North Transept has scaffolding up and has been repainted the scaffolding will be coming down and we will then improve the floor area of Crèche Corner. The side walls of The Nave have now been painted and hopefully by the time you read this we will have completed the South Transept and moved into the Sanctuary. Here we face our biggest challenge when we paint the top of the arches. Hopefully this is a once in 30 years job!

On the horizon: The lights in the main church will be replaced with LEDs, much brighter and much more economical. This lighting will really expose the state of the carpeting which needs replacing, hopefully in the next 18 months.



Every five years Methodist HQ send a surveyor to do the quinquennial inspection, in his report he states that our premises are very fit for purpose. This is only because of a lot of your money is spent and the efforts of the hard pressed maintenance team.. Please get involved.

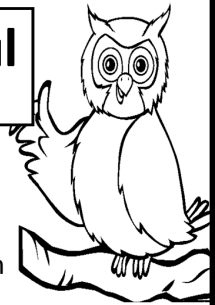
*Chris Phillips*



## **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**

#### **March 4**

St Luke's Hospice  
with a member of their team of speakers

#### **March 18**

"The Good Life" DVD, ice-cream and popcorn

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

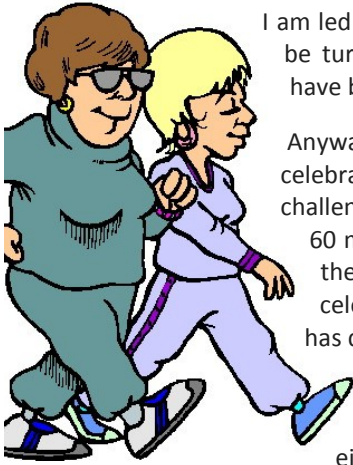
Sara Bromage 894198

Judy Jago 894829

Sue Pengilley 896444

David and Christine Moulder 892858

## 60/60 Walk



I am led to believe that there are quite a few who will be turning 60 this year in our church. 1956 must have been a good year!

Anyway, as I am one of those who will be celebrating my 60th this year, I wanted to challenge myself this and have decided to walk 60 miles along the North Devon Coastal Path over the Easter weekend. Sara Hladkij will also be celebrating her significant birthday this year and has decided to join me on this journey.

We would also like to open it to anyone else who would be interested in joining us for either a part of the walk or all of it. The more the merrier and the more enjoyable the walk.

For the first part of our walk we will join with others for the annual walk up the Western Beacon on Good Friday. Then on Saturday we will continue our walk at Croyde Bay, ending up in Minehead on Easter Monday for the start of Spring Harvest.

I am hoping to raise funds for two charities –

**Open Doors** - who care for the persecuted church all over the world in many practical and prayerful ways; and

**Next Generation Nepal** - who look after children who have been trafficked in Nepal. They give them a home, education and love. While doing this they try and find their families and return them home. I came across them after reading a book by Conor Grennan, 'Little Princess'. They also have a Facebook page for more information.

I have set up a just giving account called Madeline's 60/60 Walk.

Sara will be raising up much needed funds for **Devon Youth**.

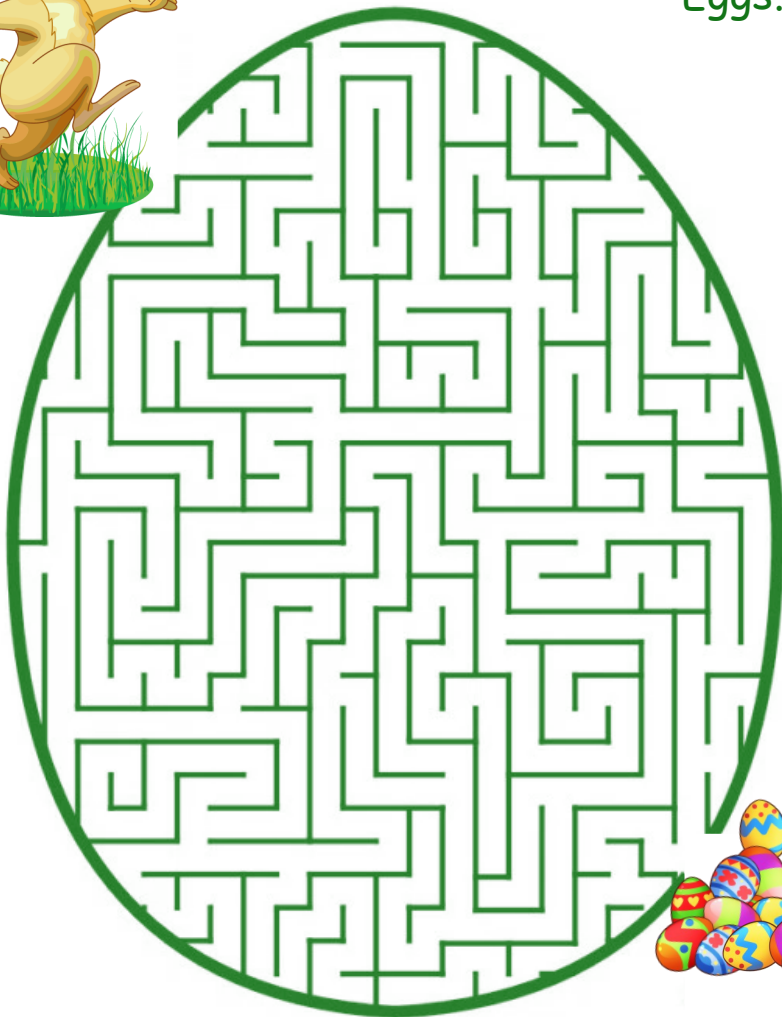
All contributions will be very gratefully appreciated, and your prayers will be equally appreciated. Thank you.

God bless

*Madeline and Sara*



Help the Easter Bunny find  
his way through the maze  
to the rest of his Easter  
Eggs.



*(The solution will be in next month's newsletter)*

# Happy Easter Everyone

# Church Contacts



## Minister:

Rev Ralph Ward Tel: 01752 651424  
email: [ralphward@talktalk.net](mailto: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

## April Newsletter

please get them to the Editor by

**Thursday 10 March**

**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)