



**IVYBRIDGE**  
**METHODIST CHURCH**

*Sharing Life*  
*Sharing Faith*



**February 2015**  
**Newsletter**



## ***From the Minister***

I remember when I was at theological college we had to go on placement and do an orientation exercise. The idea of this was that when we moved to a new appointment as ministers it was important that we made the effort to understand the nature of the community in which we were living - what sort of people lived there, the economic and social factors, etc. After all, it's no good having a Chipping Norton mind-set if you are working in Doncaster. One of the pitfalls for clergy is that they sometimes get caught up in the family of the church, without realising that in some cases the people of the church fellowship are far from indicative of the types of people who live out there in the community. And if we are to minister - not just clergy, but all of us - to the people of our communities, then we have to understand where they are coming from.

Only if we reflect on where we've been, can we gain a grasp of where we are going. As the famous Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard once said, "Life must be lived forwards, but can only be understood backwards".

As any aficionado of the X Factor will tell you, a contestant has a much better chance of progressing through the competition if they have an interesting (and preferably tragic) "back story". It helps us all to relate to them, and we get a sense in which, having overcome so much hardship in their life, in some way they *deserve* success in a TV talent show.

Sorry if I'm about to get a bit obscure here, but I have to admit a fascination about something from history called the Delphic Oracle. Between 1600 BC and the 4th Century AD, there was a pagan temple located on the slopes of Mount Parnassus in Greece, to which many thousands of people pilgrimaged over the years to try and gain some insight into their future. These included heads of state, kings and emperors, who sought guidance especially during times of tribulation or war. They would place their trust, ironically, in the enigmatic and sometimes frenzied gabbling of a woman, the oracle herself, who would sit on a stool in the temple directly above a fissure in the rock, through which a vapour would rise (now thought to be ethylene). This gas would produce in her a euphoric state - and hard as it is for us to understand in 2015, people would put their trust in this crazy trippy stuff over hundreds of years, often changing the policies and major decisions of their nation to fit the often vague ramblings that the oracle had provided them in answer to their questions.



Why am I telling you all this? Well, as you undertook the pilgrimage up the mountain, carrying your gifts to present to the oracle, you would encounter a succession of grand buildings and monuments, all designed to impress you. On the exterior walls of the temple itself were written two famous sayings:

*"Nothing in excess"*

(which sounds like good advice for all us who are on New Year diets), and

*"Know thyself".*

I'm particularly fascinated by the latter. Yes, I know it isn't Christian, but it seems to me so fundamentally important, particularly because we seem to be so spectacularly poor at doing what it says. As year turns to year many of us fail to learn the lessons of our past experiences. We stagger from one calamity to the next - we wonder why things repeatedly seem to go wrong for us. And rather than understand who we are and where we might be going, we find ourselves giving up on ourselves and just trudging on through the course of our life. The Germans even have a word for this - they call it *Weltschmerz*. Or if you prefer a quote from classic American rock singer John Mellencamp: *"Oh Yeah; life goes on, long after the thrill of living it is gone"*

In 2001 I moved into a new appointment in East Dorset to a town with lots of new housing, and as you might expect of me if you know me at all, one of my first visits was to the local school, which happened to be at the end of my street. The headmaster (who was an evangelical Christian, praise the Lord!), sat me down in his office and told me that this town "...is a place of new beginnings, Ralph". He went on to explain that many parents that he knew had moved there in recent times, often after a marriage breakdown, to start again. They had a dark and painful past experience, and they were attempting to put it all behind them with a shiny new life. Over the years that I was in this town both he and I reflected over our observations that some of these people lurched into further ill advised relationships, or encountered problems with materialism, alcohol, debt, etc. Behind the immaculate veneer of what was a beautiful place, lay many broken hearts.

So how can we "know ourselves", and avoid the many disappointments, snares and disillusionments of this often difficult life? Well of course there's only one way - to know yourself you first have to get to know Jesus. And when we get to know Jesus there is a wonderful opportunity that opens up to us. Whereas in the world we are scarred, defined and sometimes excluded by our mistakes, in Jesus we have the invitation to repent and to be forgiven. We should never take this lightly. Revelation 3:20 famously says:

*"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."*



It shows Jesus as always faithful, always patient, always waiting for us, always loving and understanding. Sometimes we forget to include verse 19 in this quote, which is very important:

*“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.”*

Only in Jesus can we truly start over. Only in Jesus can we know ourselves, because He alone knows us. Jesus knows your whole story - he saw you before you were born, he watches over you every day, he knows every aspect of your future. He knows better than you your gifts and talents, your insecurities and temptations. He will take you as you are, time and time again. Let's walk with him through 2015 - there's no better way.

God bless

*Ralph*

## Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday 6 March at 7:30 pm  
Here at IMC



1 February at 6:30 pm at The Priory  
29 March (Palm Sunday) at St John's Church

### *From the Editor ...*

Our next Newsletter will be in March and if you would like to include anything in that Newsletter, please let me have the details by Friday 10 February in any of the following ways -

- ♥ send it by email to [jenny.bucknall@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.bucknall@gmail.com)
- ♥ ring me on **01752 894634**
- ♥ hand it to me at church on a Sunday
- ♥ place it in the "B" pigeonhole in the Church Concourse
- ♥ post it through my letterbox at **10 MacAndrew Walk, Ivybridge**



*Jenny Bucknall*



# February Worship

## **IVYBRIDGE**

Feb 1	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Communion IGNITE
Feb 8	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward Rev Ralph Ward - Communion
Feb 15	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Family Service Rev Ralph Ward
Feb 22	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Michael Parsons Mr Mike Cade
Mar 1	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Communion IGNITE
Mar 8	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward Rev Ralph Ward - Communion

## **BITTAFORD**

Feb 1	10:30 am	Rev David Youngs
Feb 8	10:30 am	Mrs Lilian Sharp
Feb 14	2:30 pm	Rev Ralph Ward - Communion
Feb 22	10:30 am	Mrs Sheila Merrin
Mar 1	10:30 am	Rev David Youngs
Mar 8	10:30 am	Mr John Pointon

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



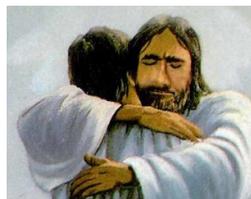
# February News

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

Welcome to our News bit after the previous double edition. If we have missed anything significant do please get in touch. We hope Christmas and the New Year were good times, and we are all now looking for the new things God will be doing amongst us in 2015.

We do know that the past few months have not been good times for quite a few folk, which sadly includes some bereavements.

Sue Lawrie's Mum, Ian and Dan Godfrey's Dad and Chris Gentle's Mum all died in December. Losing someone is very hard at any time but it happening near Christmas seems more poignant and we send our warmest love and deepest sympathies to all of you and your families as you come to terms with life without your special parent.



We also have some lovely news – a new baby and two engagements!



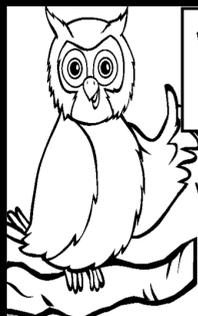
Aileen Jury's son John, and his wife Helen, are celebrating the birth of their first baby – a little girl, Emily, who weighed 5lbs 3 oz. She arrived three weeks early but seems to be doing well and we send love and many congratulations to all the family.

The Phillips family provide us with two very exciting pieces of news this month—their son Peter asked Lora to marry him, and daughter Katy said yes when Tom asked her to marry him. Two engagements in a month is lovely and we send our love and congratulations to both couples along with our prayers for stress free wedding preparations!



There are still members of our fellowship undergoing treatment for cancer, those who are recovering well but will take a while to be fully fit, those looking for employment and those caring for others.

It would be good to hold these people in our prayers along with those who don't feel able to share their problems and those who have been recently bereaved.

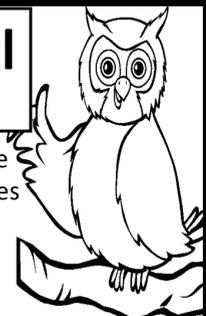


# Wise and Wonderful

(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, from 2.30 until 4,  
with a charge of £1 each time



## Spring programme 2015

**13 February**

Pancake Party with drama for Lent

**27 February**

House Detective - Maureen Selley

**13 March**

Memories are made of this.....

**27 March**

Easter Reflection - Ralph Ward

We look forward to seeing you.

Please contact one of us for more information:  
Valerie Marriott 893614 Sara Bromage 894198  
Judy Jago 894829 Sue Pengilly  
David and Christine Moulder 892858

## Green Check Tablecloths



Ladies, and maybe Gentlemen,

We appear to be missing some tablecloths from church. Would you please check your laundry baskets in case there is a *green check tablecloth* lurking there waiting for attention. Thank you.

*Mercy*



## Ladies In Faith and Fellowship Together

Event	Time/date	What to expect
House Group	Wed 21 Jan 7:30 pm	<i>'Lady of Reckless abandonment'</i> Ruth 1 & Isaiah 29:13.
House group	Wed 28 Jan 7:30 pm	<i>'Lady of Reckless abandonment'</i> John 3:16
House group	Wed 4 Feb 7:30 pm	<i>Lady of Reckless abandonment'</i> Luke 7: 36-50
<b>Bring &amp; Share Breakfast</b>	<b>Sat 7 Feb. 9:30 am</b>	<b>Inspiring fellowship and comforting prayer for ALL women</b>
House group	Wed 11 Feb 7:30 pm	Summary of <i>'Lady of Reckless abandonment'</i> Ruth's diligence
<b>HALF TERM</b>	Wed 18 Feb	<b>NO HOUSE GROUP</b>
	Wed 25 Feb	<b>NO HOUSE GROUP</b>
House group	Wed 4 Mar 7:30 pm	<i>'Lady of Diligence'</i> Ruth 2
<b>Bring &amp; Share Breakfast</b>	<b>Sat 7 Mar 9:30 am</b>	<b>Inspiring fellowship and comforting prayer for ALL women</b>
House group	Wed 11 Mar 7.30 pm	<i>'Lady of Diligence'</i> Matthew 6:21-33
House group	Wed 18 Mar 7:30 pm	<i>'Lady of Faith'</i> Psalm 34:8-11
House group	Wed 25 Mar 7:30 pm	<i>'Lady of Faith'</i> Psalm 138:8, 139; Rom 8:32; & Heb 11:6
<b>Ladies Social</b>	<b>Sat 28 Mar</b>	<b>Details to be confirmed</b>



A women's only group for women of all ages, marital status' and journeys with Jesus.

LIFT Housegroup meets every Wednesday from 7:30 pm at 21 Bedford Grove, Ivybridge for prayer and study, and whilst aimed at single women is suitable for all. We will be studying from "Lady in Waiting: Becoming God's best while waiting for Mr Right" by Jackie Kendal, which is a study guide from inspiring women from the Bible. For more details contact Julia Johnston on 07890 280634.

The Prayer Breakfast is an inspiring morning, and due to popular demand will be a monthly event for ALL women.

## Toilet Twinning

Thank you for listening to the appeal for donors to the strange concept of Toilet Twinning! You may be interested to learn that we've had 25 contributors and that the call raised £1,988. This has helped 25 families directly and provided two toilet blocks in schools. They provide cleanliness (lowering the likelihood of disease) and freedom from fear. The School Toilet Blocks enhance the opportunity for education as a barrier to schooling is lowered.



You can read about the joint venture between Tear Fund and CORD at <http://www.toilettwinning.org/> There is still much that can be done.

*Vic Abbott*



A very big thank you to the Girls' Brigade for the lovely festive Christmas cards they made. I was able to send these cards all over England and locally to the visitors that attended our church services during 2014. Some cards were given with gifts to our older Pastoral Members who loved receiving a homemade card.

Thanks also to Chrissie and Sara, the leaders, who work hard encouraging the girls with lots of good ideas.

*Pat Watson*



Hi All

I am off on my trek up Kilimanjaro in the middle of June, but I still need more sponsorship money.

I am planning to arrange two worship evening, one in February and one in April. The first one is on Saturday 21 February at 7:30 pm at Ivybridge Methodist Church. The group "Counted In" have agreed to play the music. This band is made up of Ben, Tim and Jonnie Stephenson and Nathaniel Bell.

This is an informal worship time where we get together and listen to the Christian music, pray, dance and sing along. There is no charge for this evening, but I would appreciate donations for my trek.

I'm hoping that the April event will be Israeli dancing as I have two friends who teach this, but I've still got to confirm a definite date for this.

Another way you can support me is by going to the link of my Compassion page. If you want to donate this way please let me have your email address so that I can send you the link. My email is - [louise.grindrod@sky.com](mailto:louise.grindrod@sky.com)

Many thanks for all your support.

*Louise Grindrod*



## Jenny Bucknall

### Typing and Secretarial Services



As some of you know last September I was made redundant from a job I had been doing for ten years and really enjoyed! That has been very hard, but I guess God thought I was ready for a change! Although I'm not sure what that change is meant to be, as so far I have been unsuccessful in obtaining another job, I am still looking and trusting that God has a plan (*Jeremiah 29:11*).

However, an idea that keeps popping up in my head is to start my own business offering typing and secretarial services, and because that thought won't go away I'm beginning to wonder if that is part of God's plan!

I will admit that I find the idea rather daunting, but I know that God has gifted me with the ability to create lovely things on the computer. For example, this newsletter that you are reading is something that I have been producing since September 2005.

So, this notice is me stepping out in faith and asking if you can help me! I would really appreciate your prayers that God will lead me to the job that He wants me to do; but also if this business is part of the way forward for me I would really appreciate any advise or tips on running my own business as this is something very new to me! And of course if you have any typing work that you think I could help you out with, that would be amazing!

I have extensive experience of working with Word, Publisher and Excel and so can produce anything such as letters, reports, dissertations, questionnaires, spreadsheets etc. However, my real passion is on the more creative side of things, producing things like posters, invitations, forms, leaflets and of course newsletters.

When Ruth and Andy got married in 2013 I created their invitation inserts, orders of service, reception table name cards, leaflets explaining their table names and even their table plan!

So, thank you my church family for reading this, and thank you in anticipation for your prayers, advice, help and work.

*Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.*

*Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.*

Ephesians 3:20-21

# 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:

Mrs Anna Bushby Tel: 01364 72097

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

Tel: 01752 894634  
email: [jenny.bucknall@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.bucknall@gmail.com)



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

If you wish to contact Matt regarding the website  
you can do so at [imc.matt.r.bowker@gmail.com](mailto:imc.matt.r.bowker@gmail.com)