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IVYBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

**I delight in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of his
righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the soil makes the young plant come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make
righteousness and praise
spring up before all nations.
Isaiah 61 10:11**

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Sharing Life
Sharing Faith

SAYING GOODBYE

Dear Magazine Reader



So this is the last time I'll write in the church magazine before my sabbatical starts on the 3rd May and we move on in August.

I would like to use this blessing from **Ephesians 1:15-18 NIV** which says,

"For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people..."

That pretty much says it all! Carolyn and I were so excited to be asked by the Chair of the District, Rev Graham Thompson, back in the summer of 2016 if I would be prepared to have pastoral oversight for Ivybridge Methodist Church. So for a year I commuted from Kingsbridge clocking up over 5,000 miles to-ing and fro-ing as we started to get to know you all. And then from August 2017 we moved to the Ivybridge manse and I also looked after Yealmpton and Bittaford. Then, as from last year, had Pennycross under my wing too. What a privilege to serve the Lord here in Devon. We have seen many come and go. There have been many challenges along the way, but we have seen the Lord at work in so many different and encouraging ways. Even Covid-19 couldn't stop the work of Christ amongst us. For many of you coming online and now back in the church it has made us appreciate one another all the more.

And so we believe it is time to move on. We are doing so, not because we don't love you all, as we've been very happy here, but the Lord has wired us up to move on once the time is right. We also want to be nearer our grand-children at this critical time. Having been 4,000 miles away from the UK as mission partners and then 250+ mile away here in Devon it's time to get a bit closer to them now that they've arrived.

So as we prepare to move on we give thanks to God for you. We give thanks to God for any good we may have been able to do and give God all the glory. Any mistakes I take full responsibility for and thank you for your grace and forgiveness! It is our prayer that you will indeed receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you can both individually and corporately know Him better. There are denominationally challenging days ahead. It is important that we hold fast to the true and full Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and not compromise the truth of God's unalterable word. There are many false prophets who will try and cleverly convince you to conform to the pattern of this world. That is why we pray that the eyes of your heart will be enlightened and that you don't let go of the hope that God has called you to.

So thank you to all of you who have supported us in any way, prayed for us, spoken well of us and have unwaveringly served the Lord Jesus through the local church. None of our efforts are wasted in Him.

Yours in Christ, Rev Mark



I asked Mark if I could also write a little personal message as we prepare to move to Shropshire.

When Mark was first asked to become the minister in Ivybridge, I was so excited to become a part of the fellowship, particularly once we moved over here and we didn't have to do that drive several times a week, sometimes more than once a day! From the beginning of our time amongst you, I have felt very welcomed and very much a part of the church, which is not always the case everywhere we have been so it was much appreciated. You have allowed me to exercise my ministry alongside Mark and use my gifts in various ways and it has been such a privilege to walk alongside many of you through some difficult times, not least the past year with all the challenges of Covid.

Ivybridge has been a place where I have felt cared for and appreciated by many people with one or two particular encouragers who have prayed for me and lifted me when I have been struggling myself with various issues. It has been lovely to have one or two people who have

recognized my own needs and have walked alongside me in different ways.

Many of you have taken so much interest in our growing family (all our grandchildren have been born since we have been with you!), in my role within Methodist Women in Britain and latterly in my recent role as Vice President of Conference and I have so valued all the prayer support in this strange year!

We have loved our time here in Ivybridge and living in wonderful Devon but as you all know, we feel the time has come to move closer to our families as we have lived far away from them all for nearly 9 years now and the heartache of that grows year on year especially now our parents are elderly and we have three lovely grandchildren to consider.

We take with us treasured memories of our time in Ivybridge and look forward to hearing about all that God does in and through you all in the coming days. My prayer for you all is that you will keep on fixing your eyes on Jesus and not get distracted by the pull of the world and its pleasures so that you can move forward in your discipleship, grow in your faith as individuals and families and as a church, seek God's plan for reaching this town and area with the love of Jesus.

God bless you all and thank you for allowing me to be a part of all this!

Carolyn Lawrence



THANKS

Nigel & Joy Phillips would like to sincerely thank the many members of our Church family for your prayers, messages and cards received before , during and since Nigel's recent heart bypass surgery.

We have found these particularly helpful in light of the restrictions we have all been subject to because of the pandemic.

Nigel's recovery is progressing well and we are looking forward to being able to return to Church worship.

Christian Aid Week 10th – 16th May 2021

Unfortunately, we are not able to run the usual door to door envelope collections this year but people like Rose still need our help. Christian Aid has therefore set up an 'e envelope' scheme, allowing donations to be made online.

This is a great way to donate as it will show what we as a church have collected. The link will be available on the Ivybridge Methodist Church website and also printed below. It's easy to use, just click and go. It can also be shared with friends and family too.

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/ivybridge-methodist?channel=copy>

Paper collection envelopes will be available in church for those who would prefer to donate by cheque.

Christian Aid publicity posters that can be put up in your window or road will also be available for those who would like one.

It would be wonderful if we could keep Christian Aid Week going despite COVID!

Please ask us if you have any questions.

Alison and Steve Gill
Tel: 01752 896596



Visit our website at

www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk

where you can see a **colour version** of this Newsletter.

If you wish to contact Tony regarding the website you can do so at **mrmerrit@icloud.com**



MAY NEWS

If you have anything you would like to include in the **Church News** please let Judy Jago know by ringing her on **01752 894829**

How lovely to begin the news with congratulations on a new Grandson for **Sharon and Colin Walling** as son and daughter-in-law **Alex and Lauren** are the new proud parents of **Freddie** born safely on April 6th. He arrived a little early but Mum and baby are doing well and, given the easing of restrictions, **Sharon, Colin and Auntie Jemma** have been able to go and meet him and see his big sister **Isla**. We send very best wishes to **Alex and Lauren** and pray all continues to go well with life for them.



More congratulations as **Nigel Phillips** celebrates his 70th birthday at the end of May (29th). It's great to see you back in circulation and looking well after your operation Nigel and we send love and best wishes for a continuing, speedy recovery and a very happy birthday. Hope you can celebrate your special day in style.

Sadly, after "celebrating" **Sue Ridge's** 99th birthday in last months newsletter we have to share she died over Easter, a few days before her birthday. **Sue** was a stalwart member of the Church for more years than I care to remember, always cheerful, always supportive, ready to welcome all who came along. She worked tirelessly in the 60's with a small group of people to secure the future of the church and ensure the fellowship would carry on. She was a very independent lady and lived at home for many years after Ken died. As she became frailer **Sue** elected to move into Ivydene Care Home where she died peacefully. Several of our members have visited Sue faithfully all the time she has been in Ivydene and they will miss her a great deal. We send our deepest sympathy to **Brian Linda and David and their families** at the loss of a lovely Mum and Grandma.



We also learnt early in April of the death of **Beryl Paddock**.

Beryl and Bert had stepped back from regular worship as **Beryl** became poorly but we did catch up with them at our regular Songs of Praise which they both loved. We send our sincerest condolences to Bert and all the family at this sad time.

As local elections are happening it would be good to pray for those of our members in local politics, **Victor Abbot, Sara Hladkij and Mike Cade**, for wisdom as they fulfil their roles and seek for the good of our communities and energy to keep all the balls in the air!!

Mercy thought this might be of interest to some of you,
it's not written by her.

Vitamin F This is so true!!!!

Why do I have a variety of friends who are all so different in character? How is it possible that I can get along with them all? I think that each one helps to bring out a "different" part of me.

With one of them I am polite. With another I joke.

I can sit down and talk about serious matters with one. With another I laugh a lot. I listen to one friend's problems. Then I listen to another one's advice for me.

My friends are like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. When completed, they form a treasure box. A treasure of friends!

They are my friends who understand me better than I understand myself.

They're friends who support me through good days and bad.

Real Age doctors tell us that friends are good for our health.

Dr. Oz calls them Vitamin F (for Friends) and counts the benefits of friends as essential to our well being.

Research shows that people in strong social circles have less risk of depression and terminal strokes.

If you enjoy Vitamin F constantly you can be up to 30 years younger than your real age.

The warmth of friendship stops stress and even in your most intense moments, it decreases the chance of a cardiac arrest or stroke by 50%.

I'm so happy that I have a stock of Vitamin F!

In summary, we should value our friends and keep in touch with them.

We should try to see the funny side of things and laugh together and pray for each other in the tough moments.

IMC BANK ACCOUNT CHANGE

IMC now has a new Coop Community bank account and the existing IMC NatWest account will be closed on the 19th May 2021.

The background to the new Coop bank account.

This change started when I became treasurer in March 2020, just as the UK entered its first lockdown. Paying church bills by cheque requires two signatures and during a lockdown this did not seem to be the right way to proceed or practical.

The leadership team and the church council therefore agreed to move to online banking with the IMC NatWest account. The downside of this move is that we lost the two-signature authorisation for payments, as online transactions only required the treasurer to approve. This is not good practice. NatWest did offer a dual authorisation account, but at a cost.

Then in August 2020 the NatWest bank wrote to IMC about the possibility of switching its bank account under a scheme called the "Banking Business Switch Offer". This arose from the merger of NatWest and RBS, who would end up with an unacceptable large proportion of the UK business accounts. For the merger to be approved, they agreed with the UK government that they would divest some of their business accounts. In addition, if our application was successful, this could also possibly attract a £4000 incentive payment for switching.

In exploring this option, IMC decided to apply for a Coop Community Directplus Account, as it offers two-signature authorisation online with no fees. The other advantage is the Coop bank is considered to be ethical and also uses the post office network, which is easily accessible. IMC applied on the 3rd December 2020 and received approval from RBS on the 22nd March 2021. IMC then received a formal notice from the Coop Bank for its new account on the 24th March 2021.

IMC's new bank details are:

Ivybridge Methodist Church, registered charity 1192612



Account number: 67 20 34 00

Sort number: 08-92-99

What happens next?

The main change is for all IMC's faithful donors who either give by a regular standing order and or make one off gifts.

If you do nothing your regular weekly and monthly donations will continue to be received by IMC. The NatWest bank will transfer them to the IMC Coop bank account. This is for an indefinite period.

If you want to make a change to the amount of your standing order you will have to cancel your old standing order and set up a new standing order using the new IMC Coop Bank details.


If you want to make a one off donation to IMC you should start using the new Coop account immediately.

The bank will write to each donor advising of this change. I have not seen the letter. It is likely though, that they will ask you to change your standing order from IMC NatWest to IMC Coop.

For those who have online access this change is relatively straightforward to do.

For those who do not have online banking access and want to make the change, it will involve writing to your bank to cancel the old standing order and starting a new one with the new IMC Coop bank details. IMC can provide a standing order mandate form for you to use. Please request from either David or myself, Robin.

In addition to this article I will email or post this article to every donor about this change, just to ensure no one is missed. In addition the standing order mandate form will be attached/enclosed that can be used as an instruction to your bank/building society to close the old standing order and set up a new one.

If you require any assistance with the above or have any other questions about this bank account change, please do not hesitate to get in touch by telephone, email or post either with David Bithell or myself Robin Duckering. Contact Details 



David Bithell, Managing Trustee

Tel: 01752 690727

Email: djb@dbithell.co.uk

or by post either via **the church** or direct to my
home address 28 Oaktree Close, Ivybridge, PL21 9RJ

Robin Duckering, IMC Treasurer

Tel: 01548 830070

Email: robin.duckering@gmail.com

or by post either via **the church** or direct to my
home address 6 Scoldens Close, Modbury, Ivybridge, PL21 0SN

PENTECOST SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE

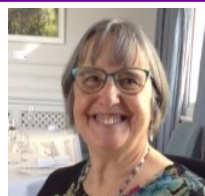
We will be holding an evening service on **Pentecost Sunday - 23 May at 6:30pm**, and this replaces the evening service on the circuit plan for 16 May. As a church we are called to work with the Holy Spirit in building the Kingdom of God within our community. Part of this is belief in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring wholeness and healing in people's lives. The focus of this time together will be a conversation on how to build healing and wholeness into the life of our church. If your heart is to see folk set free to be the people whom God created them to be, please come along and share in the conversation.

The evening will be set within the context of worship and prayer.

From the Editor

If you would like to include anything in the **June Newsletter**, please let me have details by Friday 14th May in any of the following ways:

- ◆ send it by email to: **imc33chris@gmail.com**
- ◆ ring me on: **01752 892341**
- ◆ post it through my letterbox at: **33 Julian Road, Ivybridge PL21 9BU**
please put your name on it



ALBANIA REPORT for Methodist Financial Year 2019/2020

from Nick & Sar Wakeley

During the period between 01/09/2019 and 31/08/2020 a total of £4,863.75 was given by the Ivybridge Methodist Church fellowship to support our ministry in Albania. Of this sum £1,263.75 was to support the purchase of food.

Our relationship with IMC began over twenty years ago with the idea to "twin" the church we pastored in Elbasan with IMC.

Since that time IMC supported the church with a regular monthly gift towards the running expenses of the church to cover things such as rent and electricity etc.

Seven years ago we handed over the church and began a church planting ministry in villages. At that time IMC very kindly agreed to transfer the support to cover our living and ministry expenses.

We also have longstanding friends who fellowship at IMC who have supported us as a family for over thirty years.

Then latterly we receive a regular gift into our Aid & Church account to go towards our ministry of feeding needy families.

Ministry Report

(i) Discipleship Groups:

The main aim of our ministry is to make disciples, (**Mat 28:19**).

So our principal focus is on discipleship groups in four locations. Two groups are mixed male and female. Two groups are ladies and children only. There are also separate children's meetings in the two locations of mixed meetings. Hence a total of six meetings each week.

During the time of lock-down we held weekly meetings online.

(ii) Practical Helps Ministries

We aim to show the love of God in practical ways, such as:

*** Food**

During the lock-down we were able to transfer money to super-markets so needy people could buy food on providing proof of identity.

The gift from IMC was very timely and spent in this way. We were able to support nearly thirty families some more than once.

* Education & Training

Help to sponsor university and elementary education. Also training such as getting an HGV license and a welding course.

* Medical & Dental Expenses

During this time we were also able to raise money to buy a simple house for a very poor lady who was living in a shack and whose husband had been in prison for many years.

(iii) Teaching & Teaching Materials

Itinerant preaching was limited because of travel restrictions, some teachings were posted on social media. Also preparation of new material continued.

(iv) Encouraging Leaders & their Wives

Before lock-down we met with church leaders, often with their wives, usually over a meal or a coffee. This is simply to encourage them. We see it as friendship without an agenda! During this time much of this has continued by phone.

(v) Hosting Teams

We were unable to host teams during this time due to restrictions.

(vi) Children's Camp

However we were able to host our annual children's camp at our house. We collected some children from villages and children from our village came on foot.

(vii) Ladies' Nights of Prayer

These continued some of the time, sometimes with Bible teaching included.

We hope this gives a flavour of the ministry we believe God has entrusted to us and we really want to thank all at IMC for their faithful support to us over the years.

With grateful hearts, *Nick and Sar Wakeley*



MAY 2021

Services



IVYBRIDGE

May 2	10:30 am	Revd Mark Lawrence - Communion
	6:30 pm	Revd Andy Chislett-McDonald United Service with Bittaford
May 9	10:30 am	Miss Teresa White
	6:30 pm	Revd Andy Chislett-McDonald Communion
May 16	10:30 am	All Family Worship
	6:30 pm	NO SERVICE
May 23	10.30 am	Mrs Val Marriott
	6:30 pm	Pentecost Evening Service - see page 10
May 30	10:30 am	Mr Mike Cade
	6:30 pm	NO SERVICE

BITTAFORD

May 2	11:00 am	Revd David Youngs - Communion
	6:30 pm	Revd Andy Chislett-McDonald United Service with Ivybridge
May 9	11:00 am	Mrs Gillian Higgins
May 16	11:00 am	Mr Len Woodland
May 23	11:00 am	Revd Andy Chislett-McDonald
May 30	11:00 am	Mr T Merrifield

Spiritual Gifts

Last month, we looked at the importance of Spiritual Gifts in the Church and how the Church functions more effectively when everyone is released into their God-given purpose. This month, we continue by looking at what spiritual gifts are and how they differ (e.g.) from other spiritual aspects, like the Fruit of the Spirit.

There are many scriptures that speak about our purpose in life, e.g.

Ps 139: 13-16 tells us we are unique: each a one-off!

Eph 2: 10 says we are here for a purpose

Acts 17: 26 reminds us we were born at the right time and in the right place

Esther 4: 14 points to our Godly potential for influencing the circumstances we are in

The Holy Spirit has given us gifts to enable us to carry out our God-given purpose. This is not random: God knows us perfectly and made us with these abilities built in. Becoming a Christian and allowing the Spirit free rein in our lives, releases the gifts for us to use.

So, what is a spiritual gift: A spiritual gift is a special ability, given by the Holy Spirit according to God's grace, to every member of the Body of Christ for use in and outside that Body. You might like to reflect on the various parts of this definition.

We also use the word Calling. In general, our calling is to use our gifts – i.e. God does not give you a gift to bury in the ground, but to use to build his Kingdom. But, he may well call you to use your gift in a specific way – sometimes called a Ministry – minister, by the way, is a simple word, meaning servant. God has not only given us gifts, but also passions for certain things. Like gifts, that differs from one person to another. A person with a pastoral gift, might well have a burning passion to tell young people about Jesus. Their gift is pastoral or nurturing, but the application of the gift is to a certain group of people.

The bible identifies about 30 spiritual gifts, but we need not argue about the exact number. One thing is for sure, though. The gifts are spread around the Body of Christ and so, everyone will be in a minority, but at the same time, everyone is vital to the success of the whole. And, because we are all in a minority, not everyone will be excited about the same things as other people! The point is, we make an unstoppable force together.



Most of us have a few gifts each; for example, a leader will often have the gift of faith as well, because leadership can be scary and faith strengthens us when the road gets hard. Gifts often go together in this way. A Teacher would not be effective without Knowledge, so those gifts often go together

Natural gifts are not the same as spiritual gifts, though very often God takes a natural gift, e.g. the gift of serving, and uses it spiritually (to serve his purposes). Spiritual gifts will always build the Kingdom of God (or the Body of Christ)

Gifts of the Spirit and the Fruit of the Spirit are not the same, but complementary. The fruit of the Spirit (as in Galatians 5: 22/23) is about our character and how we grow this fruit when we listen and learn from the Holy Spirit. Without character, gifts are ineffective if not dangerous. If we don't have a Christian character, why would anyone listen to our teaching or our prophetic voice or anything else?

Finally, the tasks we do in church should ideally match the gifts we have. This is not a rigid rule! All Christians are asked to intercede, but some people are strongly gifted that way and have a deep passion to intercede for others and world issues. Some Christians make their home and goods readily available to others as a matter of habit, but all of us are asked to be hospitable. Again, the key is passion for something.

I'd like to invite you to review your life and look at the various things you do, where you do them and, if you can, see what you bring to the situation. For example, during a typical week, you might spend time at work, with your friends, with your family and in church. Reflect on what you do at those times and what you bring to the situation.

If you'd like to look at this further, we have an excellent questionnaire to help discover your gifts. It takes about 30 minutes to complete and is a good starting point for discovery and reflection. It is, of course, only a first step, not the destination! The results will give you something to ponder and pray about, to see where God might lead you. If you send me an email, I'll send you a copy.

Phil Walsh

philipstephenwalsh@gmail.com

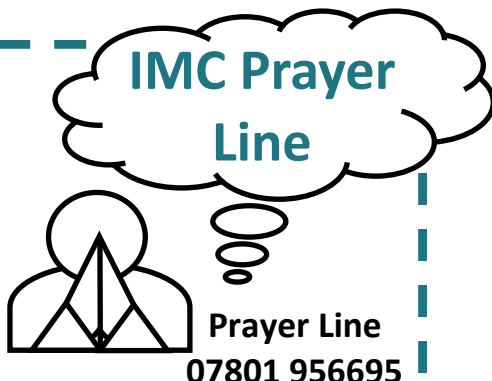
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Ivybridge Methodist Church registered charity 1192612