



# Crediton Methodist Church



Newsletter  
November 2009

My dear friends,

I am aware that there are several people within our church fellowship who are very apprehensive concerning possible changes to the interior of our church. I do understand that any proposed changes will create doubts, uncertainty and valid objections about costs and/or necessity.

Our church was built over one hundred years ago in a style relevant to that time. Could I suggest that if we were to build a new church today it would be very different? (a) a level site with easy access, fulfilling the criteria of any with disabilities (b) If finance was a factor it probably would not have a separate worship area (only used for a few hours a week), but a large multi-purpose room used for worship and many other activities. (c) It would have moveable seating and furnishings. (d) The question of an organ or alternative musical instrument would have to be addressed, recognising that those responsible for the building should consider not just their preferences but the generations to follow (e) eco friendly. How would you design a new church? (Answers on a postcard please!)

But, my friends, we have no intention to build new, but to adapt our present premises to meet new challenges and opportunities. Exactly how we do this will never meet with complete approval from everybody. New challenges and change often mean making sacrifices, some of them painful. We must earnestly seek God's guidance as we move forward.

I am willing to talk and listen to anyone concerning this project. I have been directly involved with four refurbishment projects during my ministry; in each situation love and graciousness has found a way through the inevitable minefields.

It can be helpful to visit other churches where refurbishment has taken place. I am willing to organise a 'Church crawl', transport provided, if required, visiting some churches within a thirty mile radius of Crediton. Please let me know if you are interested.

Finally, my great concern is that the material things of our church must be kept in perspective. Far more important is our present and future mission, spiritual growth and fellowship. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read of these concerns discussed at the recent Church Life meeting which Rev Mark Gilberson encouraged us to explore.

As you have often heard said ‘the building is not the church but rather the people who worship within it’.

May we be willing for the Lord to change and redirect us in accordance with His will as we continue to serve Him and worship Him.

*Every blessing.*

*David*

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## Thanks

Thank you all for the gifts from the harvest festival service. I am sorry to have missed it as it is one of my favorite services. I was thinking of you all and thanking God for all the wonderful things he has given us and for the people who toll to produce the harvest.

Regards *Iris Mackie*

\* \* \* \* \*

Marjorie and Clifford would like to thank friends for their cards, best wishes, visits and offers of help since Marjorie’s accident in September.

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## Coffee morning at Topsham

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November

10.00 to 12 noon

At St Nicholas Methodist Church Topsham

In aid of Action for Children.

Topsham is a lovely place for a Saturday morning stroll and the coffee, cakes and biscuits are really good.

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## A date to book

Okehampton Choral Christmas Concert

St Thomas Methodist

14<sup>th</sup> December 7.30 p.m.

For Methodist Homes

# Crediton Methodist Church

**Minister: Rev D Gregory Tel: 01363 774312**

**Email: [minister@creditonmethodist.org.uk](mailto:minister@creditonmethodist.org.uk)**

## **Services this month:**

- Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. 10.30 Rev J M Bailey  
6.30 Rev D Easton
- Nov 8<sup>th</sup>. 8.45 Rev D Gregory (S)  
10.30 Rev Pillinger (Chairman of the District) (Remembrance Sunday)  
6.30 Rev D Gregory (S)
- Nov 15<sup>th</sup>.10.30 Rev M Gilbertson (All Age Worship)  
6.30 Rev P Collings
- Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>.10.30 Rev D Gregory  
6.0 Talkback at Methodist Church
- Nov 29<sup>th</sup>.10.30 Rev C Keep  
6.30 Rev A Sails (S)

## **Church Groups:**

Toddlers – meets on Mondays 1.30 to 3.15 during term time  
(contact Sarah on 01363 774370)

Women's Open House – (contact Christine Marshall 772012)

Ladies Supper group: 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month (contact Margaret Kenshole 775144)

Mid-week service: Wednesdays 12.30 Bring a sandwich lunch/drinks provided.

Knit & Natter: Wednesdays 2.00 to 3.30 ( Wendy Homeshaw 01363 772786))

Bright Hour: Fridays at 2.30 p.m. (Contact Kath Wollacott 01363775445)

Fellowship Groups meet regularly. (Contact Ken Saunders on 01363 773078)

Every Saturday: Coffee Morning from 10.30.

Church is open for prayer 9a.m. – 10 a.m.

The Ark: Saturdays monthly 4 – 6 p.m. (contact the minister)

Sunday Services at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m (most Sundays)

Every Sunday: 10.30 a.m. Sunday Club; Jesus Squad (10+ age group) 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.

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**Material for the December newsletter to Ken Saunders  
by November 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

**editors: Ken Saunders, June Redfern, Sarah Turner  
[kendsaunders@btinternet.com](mailto:kendsaunders@btinternet.com)**

**Church website: [www.creditonmethodist.org.uk](http://www.creditonmethodist.org.uk)**

*Riverside Ladies  
Barbershop Chorus  
Plus  
Woodfarm Brass Ensemble*



**at  
Crediton Methodist Church**

**Saturday November 28<sup>th</sup> 7.30 p.m.  
Tickets £5 (including light refreshments) from  
Stewards, Evans Newsagents or 'On the door'**

**Proceeds for Church Funds.**

## **METHODIST HOMES FOR THE AGED**

**exists to improve the quality of life for older people, inspired by Christian concern.**

Quotes from : 1998 One Foot in Eden: A Celtic View of the Stages of Life)

*“Old age is repeatedly devalued into an inferior state of being, regarded as a decline or fall from the fullness of life. We have forgotten the fruit that an old tree can bear, yielding an abundance that will far outweigh the crops of the young”.*

*“The experience of our later years should be shifted from ‘everybody expecting me just to wind down and disintegrate’ to a place of joyful, conscious ripening, with a revitalising sense of focus and self-worth: a place from which to harvest the fruits of a lifetime”.*

For those of you who are not fully aware of the vision at MHA –

- MHA is a charity providing care homes, housing and support services
- Established 65 years ago and providing a range of services to over 12,500 people.
- 3000 older people are in residential, nursing and specialist dementia care homes.
- 1500 older people are in sheltered housing and housing with care
- 8000 older people in community projects.

**Homes of Quality** - MHA has emerged as one of the top performing care providers in the country, according to the latest report from the Care Quality Commission. The Commission oversees all care services and councils across England. In their report 2007/8 the Commission rated 89% of MHA’s Homes as ‘Good’ or ‘Excellent’ and noted MHA’s overall ability to give older people autonomy and choice in their lives.

If you would like to find out more about MHA and how the services could help you or a loved on please contact –

MHA Care Group  
Epworth House

Stuart Street, Derby DE1 2EQ

‘phone – 01332 296200 or visit the website [www.mha.org.uk](http://www.mha.org.uk)



This picture was taken by one of our members who attended a Seminar in Cornwall and was very impressed with what she heard about the role of Methodist Homes for the Aged.

*June Redfern*

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## **Ladies Bright Hour**

Nov 6<sup>th</sup>: Rev David Gregory (Holy Communion)

Nov 13<sup>th</sup>: Mrs Cynthia Dixon

Nov 20<sup>th</sup>: Rev Ruth Green.

Nov 27<sup>th</sup>: Rev Kenneth Hext

Bright Hour meets on Fridays at 2.30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

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## **Church Newsletters**

**The following have appeared in church newsletters (not ours!)**

**‘Ladies, don’t forget the rummage sale. It’s a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.’**

**‘Don’t let worry kill you off. Let the Church help.’**

**‘The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.’**

**‘Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use the double door at the side entrance.’**

**Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.’**

## **“Oh we don’t have that sort of thing round here”**

The week commencing 23 November this year is Domestic Abuse Awareness Week. The comment above was made by a resident of one Mid Devon village where volunteers were offering advice and support to the community last year. The sad fact is that this is so ill informed and so wrong.

We know that domestic abuse and violence is very under reported and women are likely to suffer on average 35 incidents of abuse before speaking to someone who can help. But its not just women, men experience abuse within their relationships too, as do those in same sex relationships. Current statistics suggest that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience domestic abuse of some kind, at some stage during their life.

Domestic violence and abuse is essentially about the misuse of power and the exercise of control by one person over another within an intimate relationship. It can begin at anytime during a relationship, is rarely a one-off event and often increases in frequency and severity over a period of time. It is not just physical violence but also can take many forms such as sexual attacks, bullying, threats, mental and verbal abuse, humiliation, financial control and deprivation of movement. Incidents can often occur at times of stress or during times of the year when many families are traditionally spending more time together, such as Christmas, New Year and sporting events.

Confidential help and advice is available in a manner that won't put individuals at risk, and it doesn't mean that uniformed officers will call at anyone's home, unless there is an emergency.

Exeter Women's Aid offers refuge and Outreach services for men, women and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

- ◆ In an Emergency Dial 999
- ◆ Exeter Women's Aid offers a 24 hour confidential support and information line 0800 328 3070
- ◆ Outreach Project in Mid Devon call 01392 426521
- ◆ Safe Project (for 14-25 yr olds) 01392 490583

Make a change today.

*Julia Ryder*

Tel 01884 234997



East & Mid Devon

# World AIDS Day – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009

Advent is a time to remember HIV/AIDS, say organisers of World AIDS Day. The Advent season helps Christians prepare to celebrate Christ's coming to heal a broken world.

For twenty years, that need for healing has been echoed in the call to mark World AIDS Day on December 1 – and for Christians to reflect on the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS during worship on the first Sunday in Advent.

Over 40 million people worldwide and 70,000 in the UK are living with HIV. Every year, over 7,000 people are newly diagnosed in the UK alone despite the fact that HIV is a preventable virus.

This Advent, the National AIDS Trust is calling on faith communities to help stop new HIV infections and overcome prejudice and discrimination. Its theme, 'Understanding through Communication', is designed to highlight the importance of talking freely about HIV/AIDS.

Getting people talking, says the Trust, breaks down the silence surrounding the disease. It also helps people increase their own understanding and the knowledge of those around them.

"We believe that faith communities have a crucial role in reaching out to a wide range of people and keeping HIV and AIDS firmly at the centre of the UK agenda," says National AIDS Trust Chief Executive, Deborah Jack. Open communication, she adds, can help prevent stigma and discrimination.

As God reaches out in love to the world, the messages of Christmas and World AIDS Day may be more closely connected than we first thought. You can support the work of the Methodist Church with people with HIV/AIDS by giving to the **Methodist Church Fund for World Mission**.

*Methodist Church Website*

## *Prayer Network*

*'At about that same time Jesus climbed a mountain to pray. He was there all night in prayer before God. The next day he summoned his disciples; from them he selected twelve he designated as apostles.'*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Leaving there, Jesus went, as he so often did, to the Mount of Olives. The disciples followed him. When they arrived at the place he pulled away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down and prayed. 'Father remove this cup from me. But please, not what I want. What do you want?'*

There are 17 references to Jesus prayer life in the gospels. Jesus modeled a life of prayer for us.

- He prayed often, He prayed early in the morning, late at night, all through the night.
- He prayed before making important decisions.
- He prayed before critical events in His life.
- He prayed when he was overwhelmed with sorrow.
- He prayed as He ministered to others.
- He prayed before His miracles.
- And He prayed for others.

Communicating with His Father was so important to Jesus.

James tells us to 'pray for one another...'

And so a prayer network (or prayer chain) has been formed in the church so that when people are faced with important decisions, or critical situations, or difficulties with relationships, or are weighed down with sorrow or grief; or are searching for spiritual help, then we can 'pray for one another'.

June Redfern has kindly offered to act as co-ordinator of the prayer network. Requests for prayer may be given to Rev David Gregory or direct to June.

Each month Pam writes a pastoral page for the newsletter and requests prayer for a number of people. The prayer network must not detract in any way from this request for people with on-going problems. The prayer network is designed for specific, urgent requests.

Soon there should be a system of prayer cards in the church (replacing the Prayer Book). Request for prayer may be written on a card and placed in the box in the foyer. The cards will be brought forward in a service, at the same time as the offering, and the person conducting the service will pray over them without reading any individual cards. The cards will then be passed to June so that she can request people in the network to pray.

Any information passed to the prayer network will be regarded as confidential.

Following the article in the June newsletter, the following have offered to be part of the network: Rev David Gregory, June Redfern, Pam Murphy, Margery Ings, Margaret Scott, Margaret & Ken Saunders. If you would like to be part of the network please let June know.

If you are part of the network you will receive requests, by phone, for prayer from a certain person and be asked to pass on the request to another person.

The prayer network will start on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

# THE CLIMATE OF OPINION

## Pause for thought

Some ideas 'catch on' and become the accepted views of their age; often called the 'climate of opinion'.

Some years ago a Conference gathered in Bristol. The Speaker had already written words on the blackboard:

*A claim to truth only has meaning if it can be proved by natural science.*

We were used to such remarks. They were the climate of opinion in our age; the background against which we had to work. (If they were true, most of us - theologians, philosophers of religion - would be out of a job!)

**They're still the present climate of opinion.** TV adverts tell the story: a product is said to be 'scientifically proven'. The accepted idea is that science is the only way to true and certain knowledge. Art, morality, religion - they're only matters of emotion or faith.

**If any evangelism - 'Outreach', 'Fresh Expression' - ignores that climate of opinion, then it's banging its head against the wall!**

Yet, it's not all bleak news. Back there, in that lecture hall, the Speaker did a small but remarkable thing. He simply put quotation marks round his words on the board, like this:

"A claim to truth only has meaning if it can be proved by natural science"

A 'eureka!' moment!! It was immediately clear that the words on the board were themselves only a claim to truth; that they themselves had meaning only if they could be proved by science. And, of course, we knew they were not science, could not be proved by science. They were no more certain than any other claim of faith.

*There's a key difference here between, on one hand, truths discoverable by the sciences and, on the other hand, a claim that science is the only*

# Faith.

*way to truth.* The latter claim is not itself science; more a statement of faith.

Now it takes time for new thinking to trickle down and become widely accepted. Slowly, over the last few years, more thinkers are recognising that key difference, between science and an over-blown faith in science as the only path to truth.

So, when chances come - preparing an address, talking at work, checking what the children are picking up at school - let's do two things. First, recognise that present 'climate of opinion'. Second, challenge it's mistaken faith that science is the only way to truth. It isn't!

Happy challenging!

Will

Dr W D Robinson. Dowrich House, Sandford, Crediton EX17 4EQ. 01363 777544



# Notes from the Church Life Meeting on 22 September 2009

The meeting was chaired jointly by Revd David Gregory and Revd Mark Gilborson, and attended by about 40 people from the church.

Mark looked with us at developing the spiritual side of church life. He is happy to be contacted about these issues. Tel: 01392 256716, Email:

oblig@blueyonder.co.uk His report is below. David looked at refurbishment ideas for the church and notes from this are published separately.

## FROM REV MARK GILBORSON

Below is a summary of some of the ideas generated by the church life meeting and some additional suggestions that I received in letters from people unable to attend that meeting. Some of the ideas are contradictory, I am sure that not all will be agreed by all! They are a start, an opportunity to learn from one another and engage in the best way forward, and to seek God's guidance. One of the questions I would like to ask is what would you like me to do in the coming year to start to help you address some of these suggestions.

I have collated the ideas under six headings and have indicated, which questions each idea came from:

<u>Question title.</u>	<u>Question no.</u>
<b>Issues we must tackle</b>	<b>1.</b>
<b>What we could do in 12 months</b>	<b>2.</b>
What the church might look like in 5 years time	3.
The additional suggestions received by letter	4.

The question we must explore is what to do next. Some things may be immediate with specific aims, some may be longer term and strategic. Some may involve financial costs and personal costs; some may be 'quick fixes' that might come relatively easily.

Perhaps it might also be fair for me to suggest some things that I am able/willing to undertake that have come to mind as I have reflected – this list is not exhaustive!

- Worship/Young People – All Age Worship, linked to the Ark. Might we try and get our young people to prepare something to share during the Sunday morning service – poem, prayer, painting, sketch, song etc. This would serve several purposes, it values the young people, it demonstrates their learning to the congregation and might encourage them and their families to come on the Sunday morning. If there were

some younger musicians then I could come earlier on a Saturday and spend time learning a song with them before the Ark started.

- **Worship/Discipleship** – Might we engage on a series of planned preaching, maybe over a 6-8 week period, this would allow us to look at a biblical book or character, or some theological ideas. This will allow some teaching and will form a cohesive block encouraging continuity. It would also be best served by employing our own preacher with maybe one or two ‘hand picked’ from the Circuit or elsewhere.
- **Fellowship/Discipleship** – A Bible study or Emmaus course with an opportunity to engage particularly with those who perhaps are not regularly involved in weekday meetings. Sometimes reading books together or watching films and engaging in theological reflection can be a great way of involving ‘fringe’ people and learning about and from one another.
- **Fellowship/Outreach** – Regular ‘intergenerational’ social events, opportunities to have fun, eat and just experience being ‘church’ without the worry of having to do ‘church’ stuff. Beetle Drive, Quiz Night, Karaoke (!) etc.

These are a summary of the changes under categories:

### **Physical aspect of building**

- 1. Use of building: greater accessibility and flexibility**
- 2. Make more use of the church – upstairs – Upstairs activities for the community**
- 2 Remove pews / replace with chairs**
- 3 No pews / With pews
- 3 Is the ‘Crucified Christ’ window theologically representative of our tradition ?

### **Young People**

- 1. Children – increase numbers, especially 11+**
- 1 The Ark – the need to inform the congregation**
- 3 Full of young people (boys& girls)

- 3 Lack of young people
- 4 What can we do for our 12+ youngsters?
- 4 Link with Pippins – formal invitations to Ark/AAW

### **Worship**

- 1 Prayer**
- 1 Worship**
- 2 Get the worship balance right**
- 2 Get a music machine**
- 2 More modern worship / worship band**
- 3 Worship any day of the week
- 3 Flexibility of worship any day
- 4 Reverent and distinct start to worship
- 4 Learn new songs /modern worship
- 4 New song books – Songs of Fellowship 1-4 combined

### **Fellowship**

- 1 Address gap between generations**
- 1 House groups! Regular!**
- 2 Study / Fellowship programme**
- 2 Spiritually improved

### **Mission/Outreach**

- 1 Mission and Outreach**
- 1 Membership**
- 2 Grow and reach out into the community, in particular to young families**
- 2 Advertising / outreach**
- 2 Outdoor meetings in Newcombes Meadow**
- 3 Wide open to the community
- 3 Growing/Full/Empty

### **Church Life**

- 1 Pastoral Work**
- 1 Effective communication**
- 2 Bring people from edges to centre of church / use gifts & talents/ leadership (especially 40 – 50 age group)**

- 3 Even more friendly
- 3 Younger congregation
- 3 Greater membership involvement
- 3 More vibrant and welcoming
- 3 Organised pastoral work
- 3 How do we include everyone's gifts?

## **Appendix 1**

### **What do we do best?**

- Welcoming / friendly
- Singing
- Enjoy children in the church
- Companionship
- Ladies groups
- Generous
- Food
- Well used by community
- Toddlers
- Young people / children are well loved
- Caring
- Good balance between being welcoming and overpowering
- Committees
- Outreach
- Eco-friendly
- Traidcraft / Fairtrade
- Worship
- Good Timings
- Coffee mornings / lunches
- Responding to needs
- Working together

## Pastoral News



*God of love, you watch with all who weep,  
worry or who are weary.  
You offer hope to those in despair,  
and your calming presence to the troubled.  
Give us peace.*

### Church Family news

Please pray for the continued strength, commitment and unity of our whole church family as together we seek to spread the word about the love of God and to reach out to younger families.

Pray for those who minister to us: Revd David Gregory and Revd Mark Gilborson working together, with us over the coming year; for vision, strength, guidance and assurance in the work before them. May they be upheld in our love and support for them.

Please remember in prayer those in our church family named personally here: Rita & Roland Ash; Ray Burnett; Alan & Kim Clemens; Beatrice Curle; Ray Heard; Harold Hollingsworth; Allan Hooper; Frank Howarth; Len Jenkinson; Phyllis & Gillian Maunder; Lynda & Norman Medcraft; Bronwyn & Colin Nott, and daughter Rachel; Clara Paige; Rene Sankey; Ann Spry; Arthur Tancock; Eileen Tarr; Mary Tyson.

Pray, too, for the families who are coming to learn of the Gospel News through the Ark and for those in the Residential homes we visit.

### Residential Homes

Services for November are:

Summerhayes :	Thursday	5 November	3:15 pm
Kenwyn:	Wednesday	18 November	2:30 pm
St Lawrence	Thursday	19 November	3:15pm

Contacts: Karen Theedom:	Pastoral Secretary:	775704
Pam Murphy:	Pastoral News page:	773414

## **Diary of Events for November**

Tues 3<sup>rd</sup>: Church Life Sub Committee at 'Epworth' Newcombes 7.30 p.m.  
Ladies Supper Group at Devonshire dumpling, 7.30 p.m.

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup>: Just 10 meeting at 'Epworth' Newcombes. 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.

Tues 10<sup>th</sup>: Stewards meeting at 9 Blagdon Rise 7.15 p.m.

Wed 11<sup>th</sup>: Pastoral Leaders Meeting at 'Epworth' Newcombes 7.30 p.m.

Thurs 12<sup>th</sup>: Just 10 meeting at 'Epworth, Newcombes . 7.15 for 7.30p.m.

Sat 14<sup>th</sup>: World Mission Market at Sidwell Street MC 10.00a.m.

Tues 17<sup>th</sup>: Open House 7.30p.m. at Cynthia's. 'Christmas Ideas'.

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup>: Just 10 meeting at 'Epworth' Newcombes 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.

Fri 20<sup>th</sup>: Launch 24/7 CrUX Week of Prayer at Exeter cathedral 8.00 p.m.

Sat 21<sup>st</sup>: The Ark 4 p.m. Theme 'Jonah and the Whale'.

Sat 28<sup>th</sup>: Rivercity Ladies Barbershop Chorus Concert 7.30 p.m.