



Crediton Methodist Church



Newsletter
Dec 2010/Jan 2011

Crediton Methodist Church

Minister: Rev Ann Varker

Email: minister@creditonmethodist.org.uk

Phone: 01363 777308

Services this month:

Dec 5th	10.30	Rev Ann Varker	Sacrament
	6.30	Mr. D Bradford	
Dec 12th	8.45	Rev A Varker	Sacrament
	10.30	Prof Stephen Lea	
	6.30	Rev Ann Varker	Sacrament
Dec 19th	10.30	Mr. Stephen Lawson	All Age Worship
	6.30	Rev Ann Varker	Carol Service
Dec 24th	4 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service	
Dec 25th	10.00	Christmas Day Service	
Dec 26th	10.30	Rev Ann Varker	

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: 1st 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 776674)

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)

**Material for the February newsletter to Ken Saunders
by January 23rd**

editors: Ken Saunders, June Redfern, Sarah Turner

kendsaunders@btinternet.com

Church website: www.creditonmethodist.org.uk

Dear friends,

Whilst shopping in Exeter last week for materials for the Ark, I was horrified to see that the shop in question is intending to open on Christmas Day. I suppressed my urge to go and speak to the manager, resolving instead to get in touch with the Head Office of the company.

For several years I have been aware of the impact of Boxing Day opening on our family life; both our daughters have worked in retail and have been required to be in work on the 26th. I can only see more heartache for families like ours if members of staff are expected to turn up on December 25th too. I want to resist this move in any way I can but am all too aware that there are those who will say that people are free not to shop if they wish.

This situation has also got me thinking about those who have no option but to work on Christmas Day: those in caring professions, the emergency services and farmers, to name just a few. I wonder what we can do as a church and as a society to ensure that all have time to worship, if they choose to do so, and to spend time with those they love at some point over the festive season.

Although as a church we have services at different times of the day over the Christmas weekend I would like to find out whether we really are meeting the needs of those who are working to join in worship.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a Happy Christmas and every blessing for the New Year,

Ann Varker

Exploring the Vision – 21st November 2010

Forty six people of all ages met with one purpose: to discuss the vision we have for church and to begin to put that into words.

We shared what we value about church: the friendliness, the inclusion of all ages and the music, to name just three. And we talked about what we long to see in the life of the church – so many hopes and dreams! As we did so we began to discover more about each other and appreciated a real sense of togetherness. After an excellent ‘bring and share’ lunch we moved on to consider the contribution each one of us has to make, and the extent to which that fits into church life at present. It was good to be there; it was time well spent, and, I believe, offers real promise for the future.

Each person present was asked to write down their views on what they value and what they long to see. These responses will be displayed in church as a couple of jigsaws for everyone to consider. Equipped with these we can begin to take further steps in discerning our priorities as a congregation.

Thank you to all who participated with such energy and enthusiasm. Please come along when we meet again, (see below) to look at the results of our conversation on the 21st and see what God is saying to us through this about a vision for the future.

Ann Varker

**Exploring the Vision
Part 2
Sunday 5th December
Crediton Methodist
Church
11.30 to 12.30**

OKEHAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY - CAROLS FOR ALL.

Friday 10th December -
Fairplace Methodist Church
Okehampton @ 7.30pm

Monday 13th December -
The Mint, Exeter @ 7.30pm
Tickets from the stewards

Friday 17th December -
Fairplace Methodist Church
Okehampton @ 7.30pm

TO THE HIDDEN CONGREGATION

So, you actually went to Church; on holiday; and the Church you went to - as far as the door - was a well-known Cathedral. But, on the door, were charges for admission! 'Bit steep,' you thought, 'quite a chunk of cash for two adults and the kids'.

Then, you had a second thought; during the week you'd noticed another Church, which might be more inviting. When you got there, though, the place was all shut up, despite the large Notice board, giving times of Services. Almost by accident, you noticed a smaller note: 'United Service at St Gregory; no Service here'.

Well, that did it! Your one effort at church-going came to nothing. However, before you write Church off altogether; remember Cathedrals have become almost self-supporting museums, visited by thousands, only as museums. They have to pay their way.

As for that Church without a Service. Aren't you one of those who complain Churches are private cliques? Sorry you found no Service but, at least, this group weren't private, inward-looking, keeping themselves to themselves.

So, Christmas is coming. Why not try a Church again, in your home town; to see if they're really as shut in as you think?

Only, before you go, make sure there's a Service there, not a United Service elsewhere; and it's free!

Happy Christmas
Will (01363 777544)
19.11.2010

Bright Hour January

Jan 14th Annual General
Meeting.

Jan 21st: Rev Ann Varker
Holy Communion
(other dates to be confirmed)

Pause for Thought

I must try to resist the temptation simply to moan about the commercialisation of Christmas although I do feel that so much of the celebration seems very far removed from the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, and I often feel that we, within the church, are in grave danger - perhaps more than at any other time of year - of running around in shallow water. We need the message of Advent to restore the balance by pointing us in quite a different direction from the "are you ready for Christmas?" approach.

Some years ago Dr Gordon Rupp made the point in one of his books that while we tend to pride ourselves on putting first things first, the early Christians were always putting last things first. The traditional Christian calendar invites us to think of 'the last things', eternity, judgement, heaven and hell. A pretty gloomy catalogue, most people will feel, and a far cry from ticking off the items on a Christmas shopping list! But, let's remember that our views about the purpose and end of life will determine our attitudes here and now. Advent challenges us to think about one of the most important but often neglected elements in the Christian faith; hope is a distinctive feature of the Christian message, a fact recognised by the writer, Albert Camus when he wrote, "I do not pass myself off as a Christian; I share your hatred of evil, but I do not share your hope".

Christian hope is set within the tangled events that we call history; it is not mere optimism nor a whistling in the dark to keep up our spirits. Rather it is a confident assurance that shining through the murky sky of the contemporary world there is the good news of a God Who came in Jesus, Who is constantly at work among us and is the Lord of the End as well as the beginning of all things.

With these certainties in mind I wish you a hope-full Advent and a blessed Christmas.

Rev. Graeme Butler.

VENTURE FX

A NEW INITIATIVE IN METHODISM



This short article continues the occasional series from the Exeter Methodist Circuit aimed at informing local church members about current Circuit business and initiatives. Here Jon Curtis tells us about Venture FX.

Venture FX is a recent innovation by the Methodist Church, which aims to reach those who are un-churched, particularly within the 18-35 age range. Venture FX is based upon the principles of 'Fresh Expressions' of church, by which we are not held to traditional versions of congregations and worship, but are willing to make Church in ways that are different. Some examples of Fresh Expressions might include Café Church (where a meeting is based around discussion in a café setting) or Messy Church (where activities, worship and a meal together are all part of a service). Fresh Expressions has had success at bringing those who were uninterested in traditional styles of Church into our community in other ways. Venture FX however is not so concerned with bringing those outside of the church into it, but taking the gospel to where those people are. This does not mean that the inherent values of the gospel, the message or the community are changed, but that they are made available to those who have not engaged with what has come before. The aim is to start 'new Christian community', which is both ecclesiastically and societally valid. It is worth stating that these are not new ideas, and much good work has been done before in these ways, but the Methodist Church has launched this initiative to empower 20 new workers to work in 20 new locations around the UK over the next five years. I have been chosen by this initiative to work as a 'Venture FX Pioneer', and we hope that this will occur in Exeter, starting in the next few months. It is a really exciting prospect and I for one am particularly grateful to the Circuit for its support in this!

If you are interested in finding out more, you can e-mail me at jon_shoe@hotmail.com or search "Venture FX" on the Methodist Church website.

Christmas in Bethlehem – 2010 style

I cast my mind back to March 2008 when a group from this Church undertook a visit to Palestine. As we approach Christmas again this year, we should remember the way that the Christians in Palestine have to exist. 'Ole Little Town of Bethlehem' is a far cry from the gentle hymn we sing. The photos shows the barbed



wire restrictions and walls of restraint that all Palestinians have had to endure every day since we left them after our brief visit a few years ago. I remember the huge water valves situated at strategic points to enable the Israeli Government to turn on the tap (or not) when and if they wish to, depending on whether their own illegal settlements had sufficient water for their use. I saw the Jordan , the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan drained to their limits to satisfy the influx of settlers who were being shipped in to occupy Palestinian land.

I would also urge you to follow the resolution passed in the Methodist Conference this year:

The Methodist Conference notes the call of the World Council of Churches in 2009 for an international boycott of settlement produce and services and the support given for such a boycott by Christian leaders in Palestine in



the “Kairos” document, Palestinian civil society and a growing number of Jewish organisations both inside Israel and worldwide and calls on the Methodist people to support and engage with this boycott of Israeli goods emanating from illegal settlements.

For further detailed information go to this link on their website.

<http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/assets/downloads/confrep-14-justice-for-palestine-israel-170510.pdf>

Zouhgi Zouhgi, (a wonderful man we met), was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize this year. He said that they measured distance in checkpoints, not miles. It is easier for him to come to the UK than go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem and 76% of the people are living on £1 a day. The Palestinians are being denied freedom of movement by the Wall and 80% of their children have experienced trauma.

When we sing our carols this year, I would like to reflect on the plight of all Christians in Palestine this Christmas, especially those in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Let us pray that the peace talks lead to relationship-building, an end to injustice and conflict, and the promotion of human rights between Palestine and Israel.

Christine Marshall



Night of a Thousand Voices

**7.30 p.m. Friday 17th.
December
at
Exeter Cathedral**

**Free admission with a
retiring collection for
the work of Christian
Aid.**

Decorating the Church for Christmas

Thursday 16th Dec from 9.30a.m. We will be decorating the Church ready for Christmas. Some of the jobs will be putting the candles around for the carol service; decorating with flowers etc; and fixing the outside lights. If you can spare some time to help it would be much appreciated. Please leave any greenery at the Church by 9.30a.m.. If you could let me know in what way you are able to help that would be good.

Thank you.
Christine. G.

Bright Hour

Meetings in December:

Dec 3rd. Members afternoon

Dec 10th. Carol Service/Pippins
and Mince Pies

Reg Retires



Reg has cared for our church gardens faithfully for the last 15 years – cutting the grass, weeding, pruning the shrubs, keeping things tidy. He now feels he has done it for long enough. As a church we wish to say a big ‘thankyou’ to Reg for all his hard work.

We now need to find someone to take his place – please see Sid if you are able to help.

100th Birthday Celebrated Near and Far

Irene Sankey celebrated her 100th birthday on 19th November 2010, with many cards and good wishes from her family, friends and colleagues at home and overseas. Rene's sister Dorothy was able to visit, together with her nieces Margaret, Jean and Janet. Judy Spiers dedicated a song to her on her BBC Radio Devon show, and visited her personally in the afternoon. Accolades were sent to Rene from the Queen's Nursing Institute and The International Aid Trust and Rene received a lovely, warm letter from the Martinova family in the Ukraine that she has sponsored for many years, with this phrase: 'Let God bless you for being our missionary without words but in deeds'. (see below)

Rene was delighted with the donations received for The International Aid Trust to mark her special day, and she will be helping to decide how the money will be used a little later.

From the Martinovi family:

Dear Grandma Irene,

Together with you we are celebrating your 100 anniversary! We'll do the celebrate table and will gather together (by possibilities) to celebrate our grandma birthday.

We don't know actually what to wish to the person on 100 years anniversary because you are the first we know!, but from the bottom of our heart we'd like to send you our love and warm for all you do for us and because you are family!. Despite any distance, our love to you is very close love. We wish you God's blessing and strength and health in this day. We thank God that we could know Him closer through you and that His blessing start to act in our life. Let God bless you for being our missionary without words but in deeds.

Please accept our warmth greetings and love for your birthday.

Your family Martinovi; Gaiya and 22 children

Blessings Svetiana.

Shoebox Testimony

I know many of you are doing shoeboxes every year, and I would like to share with you my story.

It's hard to find words to describe the joy I felt when I received my first shoebox as a little girl in Romania. I received gifts that I had never had before, but most amazing was the little teddy bear that I called Martin.

I remember opening the shoebox, seeing the teddy bear and thinking that my little heart at seven years old would burst. I remember holding him up and showing him my school that had ugly, old chairs and tables, with paint peeling off the walls. I remember running home from school, down a bumpy road,



holding my box in one hand and clutching my teddy in the other. I remember arriving at my home with no carpet, running water, central heating or electricity; there were just a lot of muddy children playing outside and a little baby crying inside while my mum was cooking.

The following years taking my special box of presents and showing them off to my parents. I remember my dad saying, "Somebody really loves you and thought about you". And last I remember putting my new teddy bear on top of my pillow, pride of place in my little home.

The following years my whole family and I got involved in delivering shoeboxes. My father is a pastor and a church planter and together with friends we distributed boxes to hospitals, orphanages and rural schools, sharing God's love through these wonderful gifts.

Because of your big hearts we were able to brighten up many children's Christmas. For many a shoebox is the only present they will ever get and this they will never forget. For me, I knew that I couldn't expect anything from my parents, apart from food on the table but amazingly I got a shoebox and that was more than I ever could have wished for.

Now, here I am, relocated in England, working as an au pair and writing to say thank you. Thank you from the little girl that received a shoebox, but who is now able to help others in the UK put together shoeboxes for children in need.

And just in case you're curious, I still have my teddy bear, Martin. He's got a nicer pillow now and is pretty old, 15 years, but he is still as special to me as the first day I saw him. Thank you all for the love that you put into your shoeboxes and the difference you have made in so many children's lives.

With love and a thankful heart – *Diana Arustei*
(Article from *The Baptist Times* – Friday 22 October 2010, printed with permission)

Carol Singing



**We have been invited
to sing Carols
at Redvers
on Thursday 16th
December
7 p.m.
Please join us
if you are able.**

JANUARY JOLLIES 2011

‘Tis the season to be jolly - and jolly we certainly will be on Saturday 22 January for it is time, once again, for “January Jollies”, our annual evening of fellowship and fun which will be held from 4.00 to 7.00pm in the Robert Raikes Hall.

As usual there will be a variety of items including a team game for the children (of all ages!) which will require a lot of audience participation, music from the Crediton Methodist Band and, of course, the pantomime which this year may well have a fishy theme. We will end the evening with a bedtime story.

If any of you who would like to participate and present a musical or poetry item or join the cast of the pantomime, Please let me know as soon as possible so I can find a slot for your in the evening’s programme or a part in the pantomime.

During the evening we will have supper on a “bring and share” basis. Although not essential, it would help if those with surnames starting with A to F would bring a sweet and those with surnames from G to Z would bring savoury items. To cover other costs – heating, drinks, etc., donations will be invited during the evening. Any surplus will go towards the refurbishment fund.

Put the date in your diary now and look forward to this special event when the evenings are dark and cold and we all need our spirits lifted.

John Ashley

Action for Children

Some of our offerings over the Christmas period will be donated to Action for Children

Who we are

Action for Children is committed to helping the most vulnerable and neglected children and young people in the UK break through injustice, deprivation and inequality, so they can achieve their full potential.

A proud heritage

We have been working with the UK's most vulnerable and neglected children since 1869. We were originally called the National Children's Home, or NCH, until September 2008 when we changed our name to one that better describes what we do.

Promise of Advent

Four Bible Studies to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. Ann will lead these sessions at the Mid-Week services and also at 5 Fairfield Rd for the next four Wednesdays – 7.30 pm.



Crediton Food bank

Since it was launched 6 week's ago, Crediton Foodbank has already fed 24 adults and 8 children living in Crediton. Thank you so much to everybody who has contributed to make this possible.

We are hoping to provide small Christmas hampers for all those families and individuals who have needed help from the Foodbank. We recognize that Christmas can be a difficult time for many people who are already struggling financially. We would like them to know that as 'Churches together in Crediton' we care and would like to bless them in this small way.

If you would like to contribute towards the Christmas hampers this year, here are a few ideas of the type of things it would be wonderful to bless people with, in addition to the basic food supplies we provide:-

Mince pies, Yule logs, small Christmas cakes, Christmas puddings, Chocolates, Special biscuits, Selection packs, small toys or gifts (e.g. toiletries etc).....

Please place any donations for the hampers in the Foodbank box in your church. Thank you so much for your generosity. We trust and pray that this will be another practical demonstration of the amazing love that God has for the people we have been able to help through the Foodbank in Crediton. Thank you & God bless,

Wendy





**OKEHAMPTON
CHORAL SOCIETY**



(Directed by John Holland)

presents

CAROLS

FOR



ALL



2010

The Mint Methodist Church Exeter

Monday 13th December at 7.30 pm

*Tickets from the Stewards
also at*

Fairplace Church, Okehampton

Friday 10th December at 7.30

Friday 17th December at 7.30



Pastoral News

*Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee. (H&P81)*



Our Mission:

Please pray for our church and our minister Revd Ann Varker as together we seek God's will and purpose for our mission and ministry, and for prayer the life of all our church family.

Our Community:

Please pray for those in our community who need to find work, and for people in financial difficulties and those agencies in Crediton which are able to help.

Our Church Family:

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.

And so your prayers are asked for all who are unwell, anxious or vulnerable. Of those, we name here: Rita Ash; Jane Avery; Margaret Bagwell, Ray Burnett; Alan & Kim Clemens; Jude Coram and all his family; Ivor Coram; Horace & Doris Crispin; Beatrice Curle; Mary Greasley; Linda Heard; Harold Hollingsworth; Frank Howarth; Marjorie Ings; Rob Ings; Len Jenkinson; Phyllis & Gillian Maunder; Lynda & Norman Medcraft; Bronwyn & Colin Nott, and daughter Rachel; Rene Sankey; Margaret Scott; Ann Spry; Arthur Tancock; Eileen & George Tarr; Mary Tyson.

Contacts: Karen Theedom: Pastoral Secretary:	775704
Pam Murphy: Pastoral News page:	773414
June Redfern: Prayer requests:	84058

Residential Homes services:

Summerhayes:	Thursday	3 December	3:15 pm
Kenwyn:	Wednesday	15 December	3:15 pm
St Lawrence:	Thursday	16 December	11:15 am

Please let Pam know of anyone who would like to be included for prayer: for their calling and work in God's name; for reason for thanksgiving; for their need. Thank you.

Dates for December & January

Dec 4th Whiddon Down Christmas Fair in the Village Hall at 2.30pm

Dec 12th Ladies Supper Club, Bickleigh Mill, 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Dec 12th Carol Service in Whiddon Down Village Hall, 6.30pm, led by Rev David Easton

Dec 13th 'Carols for All' by Okehampton Choral Society at The Mint MC, 7.30pm

Dec 16th Carol Singing at Redvers House, 7.00pm

Dec 18th 'The Ark' Christmas Party at 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Dec 18th Carol Singing at Tesco (Exeter), 9.00am in aid of 'Action for Children

Dec 19th Worship for All Ages with Mr Stephen Lawson at 10.30pm

Carols by Candlelight with Rev Ann Varker at 6.30pm

Dec 24th Carols & Drama for Christmas at 4.00pm

Dec 25th Christmas Morning Celebration at 10.00am

Jan 9th Covenant Service at 10.30am with Rev Ann Varker

Jan 10th 'The Ark' Review Meeting at Oake House, 7.30pm

Jan 18th Open House, Table Top Games at Oake House, 7.30pm

Jan 22nd January Jollies at 4.00pm

Jan 24th Children & Young People Meeting at Oake House, 7.30pm

Christmas at Crediton Methodist

Sunday Dec 19th:

**Worship for all ages
Nativity Play 'We can't see Jesus'
10.30 a.m.**

'Carols by Candlelight' 6.30 p.m.

Dec 24th

**Carols & Drama for Christmas
4 p.m.**

Dec 25th

**Christmas Morning Celebration
10 a.m.**

