

Some thoughts from St Mary's Manse.....



As I sit to write this letter it is early May, it is warm and sunny, there seems to be many visitors enjoying the delights of these fine islands, and on Sunday..... the first day of the week, we are able to welcome visitors to our worship. both here on St Mary's and in our fine chapel on St Martin's.

Over the past few weeks we have sung some fine Easter hymns, and this was especially the case on Easter Sunday evening on St Mary's, at our special Easter Songs of Praise Easter hymns and anthems are special, they speak of the victory won for us on the cross of Jesus. I especially like the verses that remind us of the 'Spiritual Battle' that has been won by Jesus.

Fine examples of this are in the Wesley hymn 'Christ the Lord is risen today' (v2. line2) where we sing 'Fought the fight, the battle won' or the Thomas Kelly hymn 'Look ye saints the sight is glorious'(v1 line2) where we sing 'from the fight returned victorious', or the fine hymn of Francis Potts 'The strife is o'er the battle done'..... the title speaks for itself.

All of these hymn writers, of course, are trying to lay before us in song the victory won for us that we find in the pages of the New Testament! The whole of history was changed upon the Cross of Calvary, there a line was drawn under the past, the great mistakes, and the sins of the world were forgiven, and this victory is laid before us in the Easter story of Jesus being alive. This is the very foundation of our precious faith, it gives us the power to live our lives as victors, and heirs to all that God will provide.... Yes having faith really does make a difference to our lives! The story of Easter, the story of the battle won, and the promise that this lays before us, has the potential to make this world a very different place to what it is. Yet somehow, as we all

know, there is evidence all around us of a world, made up of people just like you and I, who just have not received this life changing message, and are living lives that are in so many ways denying this God given victory!

John in his Gospel picks up this theme and lays it before us as a 'Battle between Light and Darkness'. John like us knew the victory won by Jesus upon the Cross, indeed it is John who describes this as 'His Hour of Glorification'. John is convinced that the story of the Cross is the story of God's great love for this world, but time and time again he reminds us that the world has not fully grasped this. At the start of the Gospel he writes, "He came to His own, yet His own received Him not, and John reminds us that those who have not received the Good News of the Gospel are in effect 'Living in Darkness'.

Today we are told it is not fashionable for the church to be speaking of battles and conflict, much loved hymns such as 'Onward Christian Soldiers are seldom sung because of their military overtones, but in following this line we run the risk of denying much of what the New Testament says about the task before us as a church.

Those who have listened to the Gospel, those who have understood that message of God sharing in all that makes us human, and those who have grasped the message of the Cross know that our faith is precious, indeed it would seem to me that faith in Jesus is the most precious thing that any one of us can possess.

Today we seem to be surrounded by those who seem to see little need of God's victory won for us upon the Cross. people seem to be able to live their lives without seeing any need of worship on a Sunday, or meeting together to give thanks and celebrate God's great love and provision for the world.... Maybe John is right when he speaks of people living in darkness.

Yes, the church, and all who know the precious truth about Jesus have a battle to fight. It is not a battle that is to be fought with worldly weapons, but with the weapons given to us by God. The battle we face is a spiritual battle, a battle against darkness, against lack of love, and against the spirit of gloom and despair..... A battle that has been won by God, and this victory is freely given to all who will receive.

I expect that most who read our magazine are more than familiar with what advice Paul gives to the church about this very real 'spiritual battle' upon which we as a church are in the front line. He says" Be strong in the Lord, and in His mighty power, and put on the full armour of God and take your stand! " This is certainly a reminder of the spiritual battle that we face.

God has equipped us well for battle, indeed Paul reminds each of us of the weapons we have. They are 'The Truth' of God's Word, 'The Righteousness' won for us by Jesus. 'Salvation' from the darkness of the world found in Jesus, and the gift of The Holy Spirit which by the grace of God fills us with confidence, and enables us to stand firm in this world of doubt and despair.

Peter just like us was an ordinary man, who like us made great changes to his life after meeting with Jesus. But despite this, and despite his great profession of faith, he, we are told, denied Jesus not once but three times, later, in his great Epistles to the church he, like other New Testament writers speaks both about the victory won for us on the Cross, and also of a raging spiritual battle that surrounds the church. He knew that being a follower of the Risen Christ was not easy, he knew the reality of living in the light of Jesus in a world of darkness, and he knew the stark reality of what it may mean to 'Take up our Cross and to follow'. In the battle that is before us we too are called to make sacrifices in our lives. We need to understand that in a

battle we need to stand firm, to be totally committed to just what it may mean to be the church of Jesus in this age of fast change and much doubt, and to be prepared to give testimony to our precious faith and the victory we know in our own personal lives. Frances Ridley Havergal understood this concept and in her hymn 'Who is on the Lord's side' writes 'Fierce may be the conflict, strong may be the foe, But the King's own army none can overthrow. Round His standard, raging, victory is secure, for His truth unchanging makes the victory sure!' Some may say this expresses Victorian views, but maybe it reminds us the reality of being church today.

This month we are reminded of how our precious faith reminds us of God's victory on the Cross of Jesus. Pentecost Sunday this year is on the 12<sup>th</sup>, at our 10.30 worship, led on this day by Neil Didlick and Len Michell, we will again be reminded of how in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit tells us the truth about God, and enables us to be witnesses to the empty cross today. And on Pentecost Sunday evening, at our 8pm service, we will again be reminded of the faithfulness of God to us today as we share together in the bread and wine from the Lord's Table.

Trinity Sunday this year falls on the 19<sup>th</sup> June. In the morning our Trinity Sunday worship will be led by Barbara Hasler, and in the evening, at 8pm, we will be celebrating the conquering love of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in a special Songs of Praise celebration worship.

We thank God for all that is past, and trust Him for all that is to come!

I remain, by the grace of God, the Methodist minister on these fine islands for a while. May our precious faith continue to be seen in our love for one another.

*Charles R. Gibbs*

## News from St Martin's

Firstly, thanks to Val for so ably writing the St.Martin's notes for May's In Touch, whilst Alan and I were on holiday. We very much enjoyed visiting family and friends. When spending time in Wales we were able to visit Geoff and Elaine Watt ( past owners of Polreath ) who retired to a village near Lampeter and David in Aberystwyth. It was good to see some of the beautiful Welsh mountain and coastal scenery and "catch up" with those we hadn't seen for a while. They send their good wishes to their friends in Scilly.

It felt most unusual not to worship on St.Martins at Easter, but I understand that Tony and Wendy Pudner joined their friends to



celebrate and give thanks for the redeeming sacrifice of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Our thanks to Wendy for playing the organ on each Sunday of their break.

Also out thanks and congratulations to Mary Ratcliffe for multi tasking so well on May 8<sup>th</sup>! Not only did Mary lead worship but she also played the organ in Uncle Rodney's absence. Speaking about the Road to Emmaus, Mary reminded us of the kindness and blessings we can share with strangers on the regular journeys we make in our daily lives. She encouraged us to use these opportunities to touch the lives of others with words of faith and encouragement, and in so doing be personally blessed.

As a church community our thoughts and prayers remain with Auntie Celia and Uncle Rodney, also those within the St.Marys congregation who are experiencing ill health or the responsibilities of caring.

*Heather*

We welcome all our visitors and friends to all our services. We are proud to be part of the world-wide Methodist Church. We welcome people from all walks of life and all Christian traditions. If you have no church background you will find a welcome in our church.

Refreshments are served after all our services.

+++++

**Some of our Special Services in June**

+++++

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June. 11 .00am** Come and meet **DUDLEY COATES**  
Our guest preacher on **Ascension Sunday**.  
Dudley is a past vice-president of the Methodist Church.

**8pm Ascentiontide Celebration Service.**

be sure not to miss this special act of worship with the hymns we love to sing and a message of hope from the pages of Luke's Gospel

+++++

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

**8pm The Faithfulness of God.** with the hymns you love to sing and a special Pentecost Sunday Holy Communion.

+++++

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

**8pm Songs of Praise The Faithfulness of God.**

With the hymns you love to sing at our special Trinity Sunday Celebration Worship

+++++

**COMING EVENT JULY 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Service 11.00am Tresco**

All will be made most welcome to join with us on our outing!

**Family News.**Last month the hospital was nearly taken over by Methodists! Fiona was enjoying respite care whilst Gordon had hand surgery, she was soon joined by Barbara recovering from receiving a new knee joint at St Michael's and then they were both joined by Celia from St Martin's to enable Rodney to go to the mainland for an appointment. We send our love and remember them all in our prayers. The disturbance at the New School Build has made difficulties for children and teachers and ancillary staff and we also remembered them in our Monday Prayers. These are always at the Manse between 2.15 and 3.00pm. During this time we remember many people here and abroad. followed by a cuppa and conversation

Also in hospital was Mabel Bennet and we remember her and all her family at this sad time.

### **SPRING SYNOD – 14TH MAY 2011 – TRURO METHODIST CHURCH (TMC)**

Our minister, Charlie, and myself attended the Synod on behalf of the Isles of Scilly Circuit. Unlike some previous synods we arrived with time to spare before the opening, and were able to stay until the end because, having preaching appointments in the Liskeard Circuit (see another report), we didn't have to dash off to catch a helicopter.

The emphasis was on building stronger ties with the Cornwall Diocese, affirming those things which bind us together in the family of Christ and building mutual respect and understanding in those things which we do differently. To this end, before Synod started Chairman Steve Wild met with Bishop Tim Thornton and Cannon Perran Gay in the Cathedral and processed with the cross to TMC. The cross was placed in the pulpit, and after Steve's welcome, Cannon Perran led the devotions. The theme was 'What are we doing on our own that we could be doing together?'

Later we learnt about Epiphany House, a CofE building in Truro with a varied history of usage, including the bishop's residence and the residence of the Sisters of the Epiphany, but which is now available for 'quiet days', training courses, and retreats.

The afternoon session started with 2 short presentations bringing to our notice things which are being 'done together' with other denominations such as the work of Street Pastors in 7 towns in

Cornwall (a scheme is in preparation at Penzance) and a  
(continued on Page 10)

## **Good Friday Walk of Witness**

On Good Friday we had the opportunity to join with local friends and visitors to take a long, reverential walk up to the entrance grave on Buzza Hill. After a short service at the Chapel we began our walk at the Town Hall. There we participated in the first of seven Stations of the Cross. Canon Peter Walker led our meditation based on the Franciscan tradition. Here and at each subsequent Station, he gave a Bible reading and led us in prayer and reflection. We then sang some verses from the hymn 'It is a thing most wonderful'

We then set out on our journey, with David Pender carrying the large wooden cross ahead of us. Our next stop was at the Park, followed by a gathering outside the Scillonian Club. Our fourth Station was on Holgates Green, again with a fitting Bible reading and its relevance to our lives here on Scilly. We thought of Simon of Cyrene, carrying for Jesus the heavy burden of His Cross. Our attention was drawn to several boats in the Harbour, such as the Lifeboat, and the medical Launch as examples of concern shown for others in our island's community. Philip Lethbridge now carried the cross.

Our fifth stop was at Porth Mellon where we heard of the legendary Veronica who offered her veil to Christ to mop his brow. Quite a personal risk considering the situation. This time Canon Peter highlighted the role of volunteers, always so very valuable here in many different ways.

We then took an unexpected walk to the Dump, well out of sight for most visitors, fortunately! here the connection was made with the rubbish we keep hidden in our lives and how a kind word can help when friends are troubled. We then sang some verses from 'There is a green hill far away'

Our final station was at the Garden Pavilion, thinking about the women doing things for Jesus and for people here in the



community. The words were said 'We adore you, O Christ and we bless You'. He did it all that we might be forgiven. Lynn Walker and Fiona Maybrey took over the burden of the cross for the last trek up the hill to Buzza. It was erected for all to see from the town, until early on Sunday morning. Christ was crucified high up, just outside the city walls of Jerusalem. We thought of those left high and dry and stripped of self-worth. Always there is the potential for new life in Christ. We kept a minute's silence, valuable at times of distress. We thought about the seeming silence of God at moments of history and natural disaster. Giving thanks for all who respond from their faith at such times.

We sang 'When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died'

The whole walk having been a truly uplifting experience.

*Gwen Clarkson*

*Thanks to Mary and Charlie for providing us all with a meal at midday.*



### **Easter Morning.**

At daybreak on Easter Day a service was held at Buzza by the ancient Burial Chamber the cross having been draped with a white cloth signifying that Christ was indeed Risen from the dead.

Later this was carried down to the Chapel where it was decorated with flowers. This was a truly magnificent finishing touch to

the already flower bedecked chapel. The chapel was full and many voices raised in praise and echoing time after time.

**Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluiah!  
Thanks be to God.**

breakfast project in Penzance catering 5 days a week for the homeless in the area staffed interdenominationally.

This was followed by an address by Bishop Tim encouraging serious consideration as to whether unity or mission should be our priority. He reminded us that although statistically the Church was now a minority organization, it often 'punched above its weight' in the influence it had in society as long as 'mission' was the focus rather than arguments over church structure. The practical working out of this had been seen in the projects in Cornwall where Chairman and Bishop put aside their denominational positions and missioned together for the sake of the Gospel. After Bishop Tim had finished his address there was a short 'buzz' time when we could talk about the issues with those around us before the closing worship followed by communion. Bread was given by the Chairman and the Bishop, and the wine by young people of the church. Synod had commenced with the processional cross being carried in by a Cathedral steward; at the end it was carried out by a Methodist steward, and we all paraded out of the church and along the busy street to the front of the cathedral where there was a prayer followed by 'Thine be the Glory' struck up by Steve Wild and heartily sung by Synod members.

During the day there were the usual agenda items of matters needing to be agreed by Synod, and one or two reports relating to District activities. Also, a bouquet was presented to Lady Mary Holborrow, Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall who is to retire in September after being the Queen's representative in the County for 17yrs. The Chairman thanked her for the many occasions she had accepted invitations to be present at various Methodist events during that time.

But Steve had a surprise for her and Bishop Tim (and, indeed, for all of us) - he had written a sketch for his puppet frog 'Clarence' - a Methodist to the core, - and two other frogs, who were giving Clarence problems because one was going to a CofE church and another to a R.C. church. Its serious point was that we were all part of the family of Christ, but Synod rocked with laughter at the sight of the Bishop of Truro and the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Cornwall out at the front each with a hand up a puppet and being led along by our Chairman. I did wonder if God was laughing too - I'm sure He was.

Len Michell.

**Thought.** You can do more than pray but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed. John Bunyan

### **Quietness – God’s opportunity to speak.**

I doubt if Moses, tending Jethro’s flock failed to remember his life in Egypt first as an innocent child and then as far from innocent as it possible to be. A murderer no less.

For he had ample opportunity to think in the solitude of the desert, even with one eye on the sheep and on any predator that may be lying hidden near by.

During the many hours of solitude he would have ample opportunity to thank God for the many blessings that had been given to him, supplying him with a safe home, wife and child, all this in spite of the wrong he had done.

Why had he been saved from harm whilst his fellow Israelites were still in captivity? He must have prayed in Midian for their deliverance as the slaves prayed to God in Egypt.

We know that Moses was called by God to go and rescue his people. Action after prayer, I think it’s helpful to remember that God spoke to Moses when he was in the desert. In a quiet place, where nothing else could distract him from time alone with God. In the silence God called and equipped him to rescue his people.

We need to find a place of silence, physically and spiritually if God is to get a word in edgeways into our noisy lives,if his will for our lives is to be found.

Are we brave enough to choose to carve out for ourselves a quiet place in this noisy world?

When we do I am sure we will find direction for our lives, after prayer and we too will be able to rescue others in need.

Mary

## **Representative to Synod**

Twice a year, in May & September, our Church sends representatives to Truro to attend Synod on behalf of our Circuit. A vacancy has arisen for one of our members to attend, and this is an opportunity for someone to experience the wider Church. Synod is more than a business meeting, and would be a great source of encouragement to anyone wishing to meet and worship with other Christians from around the county.

All expenses will be paid. For further details please contact our Minister, Rev Charlie Gibbs.

Rose Didlick  
Circuit Secretary

## **Thanks**

William Hall who left the Islands twelve years ago wishes to thank the members of the chapel who sent him birthday cards on his 70th birthday.

"I had a great time, my daughter Jacqui and son William organised a party in a hotel and 27 members of the Hall family came. It was fantastic!

I also had three other parties organised by my three Ball-room dance classes. All in all I had a lovely week of celebrations. I see Brian and Mary Mavers most weeks.

Thank you in the chapel once again"

## **Quiet musings**

Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things. - *A J Gordon*.

It is what you do when you have nothing to do that reveals what you are.  
*anon*

## **Action for Children**

We have recently sent a £75 donation to the Methodist charity for children. Very many thanks go to the contributors to this sum. The largest amount was a generous gift of £50 from the Scillonian Entertainers. Other friends, mostly in our congregation, have given ,in exchange for various items including herbs, cards and books, often donating far in excess of what was expected!.

Please continue to support the small bookstall in the library corner of the Methodist Hall. Mostly they are Recipe and Cookery books given by Doreen and Brian Leach..... on having a grand clear out, bless them! Our friends are so supportive, praise be!

Gwen Clarkson. Representative Action for Children.

## **A Serious Thought for Today and Every Day**

Have you ever thought that a tongue can be more lethal than a sword?

Being judgemental is a sin we all fall into at times, but, how often is this judgement made without knowing the whole situation? So often we listen to one side of the story when we know that every situation has many sides.

We speak knowledgeably on subjects of which we really don't know the truth- and by so doing, we cause untold hurt.

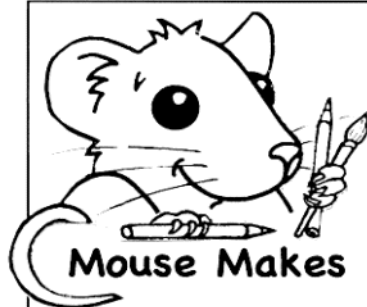
Jesus said "He who is without sin cast the first stone"  
and those present left the scene one by one knowing that they too had sinned.

We pray to God to forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do we always carry this through?

Surely we do not think our views are more important than God's?

Beryl Stanhope



Jesus said: —  
 “The **Helper**,  
 the **Holy Spirit**,  
 whom the Father will  
 send in my name, will  
**teach** you everything  
 and make you  
**remember** all that  
 I have told you:.”  
*John 14:26*



Jesus said:  
 “I will ask the Father,  
 and he will give you  
 another **Helper**, who  
 will stay with you  
 forever. He is the  
**Spirit** who reveals  
 the **truth** about God.”  
*John 14:16,17*

Read the story of  
 Pentecost in Acts 2



Jesus said:  
 “..how much  
 more shall your  
 Heavenly  
 Father give the  
 Holy Spirit to  
 them that ask  
 him?  
*Luke 11:13*”

## The Fruit of the Spirit

“The Spirit produces



LOVE

JOY



PEACE



PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

HUMILITY

and **SELF CONTROL**”



*Galatians 5:22*



“Let the Spirit direct your lives”  
*Galatians 5:16*



“...the spirit also  
 comes to help us,  
 weak as we are.  
 For we do not  
 know how we  
 ought to pray; the  
 Spirit himself  
 pleads with God  
 for us”  
*Romans 8:26*”

Cut out , keep and learn these  
 Holy Spirit Bible verse cards.

## A Thought from God at Midnight

Hello and welcome my child, says your God  
Today is the day you must live  
You can do what is lovely and do all things well  
Or you could choose to do wrong instead

The choice is yours – I can only help guide you  
The way may be happy or sad  
I want you to grow as you serve me below  
So that one day you will be glad

I ask you to live as a child I have taught  
That others will want to live well  
I love them all and I want them with me  
In a wonderful place I have bought

Jesus came down to earth as my son  
And his wisdom and love saved the lost  
The redemption He won has only begun  
And He only He knows the cost.

Hello Mary - thank you so much for sending the In Touch mag for so long - I now have my own laptop so from now on I will download it over the internet (I hope) In the middle of the night - while we were on holiday in Malta I wrote these few verses - which just came to me and you can use them if you like!!!

Blessings from our congregation to yours Mary Dolding  
Mary lives and worships in Gibraltar.

**This email accompanied Mary's poem and it reminds me that the ever mounting costs of posting the magazine haven't lessened indeed they have increased once more. It has now been suggested that if we know of a friend who receives the magazine we may take on the responsibility, and joy, of sending it to them with a personal note. We are thankful that visitors do want to know what is going on in our part of God's Kingdom and it has also been suggested that a gift of stamps from local readers to Gwen would be a significant way of helping to maintain this ministry. Some people have told us, with Mary, that they read the magazine online and for some that is acceptable. For others reading from a screen presents a challenge too far.**

**Editor's notes.**



## Birthdays in June

Happy Birthday to you,  
Happy Birthday to you.  
God Bless you and keep you  
and watch over you.

Kenneth Jackson Cocking; Rose Didlick;  
June Lethbridge; Philip Lethbridge; Tony Nightingale;  
Steve Manning; Jackie Perkins; Tianna Rose; Christopher  
Savill and Gill Trenear

### Sermon prep

A young curate who had just been ordained stepped in to take the sermon as the vicar was ill. At the end of the sermon he apologised: 'At such short notice I'm afraid I just had to rely on the Holy Spirit. Next week I hope to do better!'

**Laughline** He who laughs last, thinks slowest.

That's probably me! Editor Mary

[www.scillymethodists.co.uk](http://www.scillymethodists.co.uk)

Editorial team Anne Gurr [manda.gurr@btinternet.com](mailto:manda.gurr@btinternet.com)  
Mary Ratcliffe [maryratcliffe@live.com](mailto:maryratcliffe@live.com)  
Val Parker [martinandval.parker@virgin.net](mailto:martinandval.parker@virgin.net)

Some material in this magazine was obtained from [www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk). We thank them for providing material for magazine editors to use