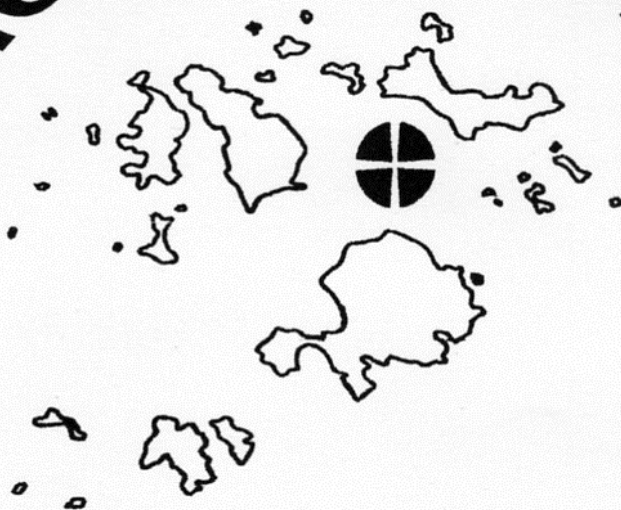


Isles of Scilly



Methodist Church Circuit

IN TOUCH

May 2014

Chairman of the District

Revd. Stephen Wild M.A.

Minister

Revd. Charles R. Gibbs 422406

Local Preachers

Barbara Hasler Len Michell

Gordon Bird

Christopher Savill

Circuit Stewards

Mrs Christine Savill 423563

Mr Mervyn Bird 423117

Mrs Beryl Read 422977

Mr Len Michell 422409

Circuit Treasurer Mr Christopher Savill 423563

Circuit Meeting Secretary

Church Stewards St. Mary's

Mrs Claire Jenkins Mrs June Lethbridge

Mr Philip Lethbridge Mrs Beryl Read

Mrs Sue Williams Mrs Leigh Kendrick

St. Martin's Mr Derek Perkins

St. Mary's

Treasurer Mrs Sue Williams 422605

Church Council Secretary Mrs Beryl Read 422977

Property Secretary Mrs Anne Gurr 422224

Gift Aid Secretary Mrs Stephanie Bird 423117

Organist Mr Len Michell 422409

St. Martin's

Church Council Secretary Mrs Jackie Perkins

Church Treasurer Mr Alan Terry

Organist Mr Rodney Ashford 423109

Connexional Link Person Beryl Read 422977

Some thoughts from the St. Mary's Manse

Sometimes I am asked the question: 'What is the best time of year to visit Scilly?' Like most places in the British Isles as regards weather there is never a time when we can be sure of sunshine, but looking through so many photographs I have taken over our years here on the islands I have noticed that those taken in the month of May seem to record wonderful views across sandy beaches looking out to remote islands with clear blue skies and bright sunshine. Please do not book your holidays based on this! But after the winter we have had here on Scilly, I think we are all looking forward to a glorious month of May.

Some regular visitors to our islands are Steve and Heather Radford who often visit in May. We are delighted that this year they will be leading morning worship on St. Mary's on 11th May and the following Sunday on Aldersgate Sunday, 18th May.

We also welcome Graham Garden who is the National Advocate for the Local Preachers and Leaders of Worship Trust. He will be with us during the last weekend of May, leading morning worship on St Martin's and evening worship on St Mary's on 25th May. During his visit there will also be a meeting of worship leaders and preachers on St Mary's. We thank Len Michell for arranging this important visit because the occasions remind us that although we may be the smallest of all the UK Methodist Circuits and the most remote, we are still part of the wider church. It is good that we can welcome visiting friends to enrich the life of our island churches.

Regular readers and members on St Mary's will know that for a number of years we have had a regular prayer meeting on a Monday afternoon at the manse. These meetings remain in place, but in addition to these meetings

we have now a second prayer meeting at Seagull Cottage, Mary Ratcliffe's home, on a Thursday evening. These meetings are specifically for us to pray for a revival in our island churches, and for this to make the promises of God real and relevant to all who live on these islands. We are committed as a church to prayer and we believe that our prayers will be answered.

Somehow it seems the right thing to be praying for revival, and I expect the hope of revival has been on the hearts of many who live here and visit our churches while on holiday. Looking back over the years wherever I have lived there have always been those who believe that one day this will happen.

I remember as a child in the 1950s seeing the verses of scripture on roadside hoardings and on railway stations. I don't know who paid to have these often challenging texts placed in such prominent positions, but I expect all of this reminds us of a past era when maybe people were more tolerant of the church in what in some ways seemed to be a more God-Fearing Nation than we live in today.

Things have certainly moved on from those years of post war austerity. Lifestyles and aspirations have changed; things that were once thought to be outrageous now seem to be the norm, and even the laws of our land now reflect the vast changes that many of us have witnessed in our lives as regards just what is right and what is wrong.

Some of course will remind us that there have been great advances in the way we now live. They will point to the greater equality for those who were once marginalized, and I expect we would all agree with this and give thanks that for many life is now much better than it once was.

People today are certainly much more aware of their rights, but despite all of this progress I wonder how many have not heard the precious right of all, the right spoken of in the opening chapter of John's Gospel where John speaks of the right given to us by God to become a 'Child of God' by believing in Jesus.

I sometimes look back to my teenage years in the 1960s and remember how there were those great missions with the likes of Billy Graham filling the vast stadiums with those who came to hear his message to a needy world. Over the years thousands must have come forward and received their right to become the Children of God by trusting in the Good News of the Gospel, and we give thanks for those evangelists who over the years showed such dedication to telling others about our precious Christian faith. Yes we do believe in revival, we long for it and we work for it, and now we rejoice that on our islands we now meet week by week to pray for it.

Yet looking back over the years, is our nation more Godly than it once was? Are we more God fearing as a nation than we were fifty years ago, and are our churches and chapels as full as they once were with people coming together to worship on a Sunday? I have often wondered if 'Christian commitment' is what it once was here on the beautiful Isles of Scilly.

Over the years, I have lost count of the times faithful souls in our churches have said to me "Charlie, what has gone wrong?" and "Why is it that over the years we have witnessed nothing other than a steady decline with so few times of growth?" I could write a lot more about this, but let me just leave you with two verses from the New Testament which I believe have much to say about revival and maybe why at times it seems so far away from our experience of church life.

Firstly, from John's Gospel, where we read of Jesus saying, **"Truly I say unto you, No-One can see the Kingdom of Heaven unless they are Born Again"**, and secondly from Mark's Gospel, where we read of Jesus saying, **"If anyone would come after me they must deny themselves, and take up their Cross and follow!"**

It seems to me that so many of our questions, dilemmas and disappointments about revival in our churches are summed up in these two key verses of scripture. Firstly, what good is it for you or me to take that vital step of being Born Again if we are not then prepared to truly take up our Cross and follow. Secondly, what possible hope can we have in taking up our cross and seeking to follow Jesus unless we have been born again by faith in Him.

The two must always go together if we are to witness growth and renewal in our churches. We shall never be able to truly take up our Cross and follow unless we are Born Again, and there seems little point in claiming to be born again unless we are prepared totally trust in God and follow the sacrificial life of Jesus. Maybe grasping this would take us a step nearer to seeing revival in our churches. Yes, we may pray for revival, and this is surely what the Lord would want us to do, but maybe prayers without obeying God's will to live Christ-like lives is by far the main stumbling block to the renewal that we all long to see in our churches and in our nation today.

Maybe things would have been very different if we had truly as a church taken up our cross and followed. Maybe if we had truly lived that 'Sacrificial Life' in the power of the Holy Spirit we would have seen the revival that we long for, and maybe the Church would have more credibility in our nation than it seems to command today.

The Apostle Paul said **"I am not ashamed of The Gospel, for it is the power of God to bring Salvation to all who will believe."** Because of this, we shall continue to pray for revival in our churches; we shall continue to preach that by the grace of God all can be born anew, and we shall seek to be faithful disciples of The Lord Jesus as we seek every opportunity to show love and kindness to others as we take up our cross and follow.

I end with some news from our Circuit Meeting. As we all know, Neil, Rose and Lilly Didlick moved to the mainland earlier in the year. We are delighted to hear that they are happy and well and very much involved with the church there. Rose, of course, was secretary of our Circuit Meeting, and had done a wonderful job in this role over many years. I think we all knew that we might find it difficult to find the right person for this important job.

However, we are delighted and very thankful to report that Heather Terry was been elected at the meeting to serve as our secretary. We thank Heather for her commitment to the Church on these islands, and we rejoice in the many gifts and graces which she will bring to this important job in furthering the work of our Church.

Yes we do indeed rejoice in our precious Christian faith; we give thanks that by being born again we can each become the children of God, and we pray that together we shall take up our cross and follow as together we pray for revival in our island churches.

I remain by the Grace of God the Methodist minister on these remote yet beautiful islands for a while.

Charlie Gibbs



News from St. Martins

The last few weeks have certainly reminded us of the beauty of God's Kingdom.

Our early visitors have been blessed with glorious weather. It's so good to see new faces, and also many familiar ones including family and friends returning for the Easter break.

A family service conducted by Rev Charlie celebrated Life by the sea was a refreshing reminder of the importance of involving young people in our community. We thank young Issy and Jake Williams who took an active part!

We held a joint service with friends from the Anglican Church to mark Mothering Sunday, and it was good to have Rev Penny Prince with us.

Members of the congregation had been to school to help the children make up bunches of flowers which were given out to Mums during the service. Such lovely flowers remind us of our farming roots on the islands. Tea and cakes followed the service.

Finally congratulations go to Heather and Alan who have celebrated their Ruby wedding anniversary, and were with family including daughters Jenny and Roz in London for the occasion.

Val Thomas

The report to be given by our minister at the annual Church Meeting on 25th May.

The past year in the life of our Methodist Church here on St Mary's has been one of joys and challenges, but we rejoice in the many opportunities that have been ours in showing love and care in this island community.

Throughout the year we have been able to maintain three acts of worship each Sunday, and have been able to lead the residents of Park House in worship on the first Sunday of each month.

Our Pastoral Committee met in January to distribute membership tickets to our 52 members and a further 40 fellowship tickets were distributed to friends of our church. Our drop in membership was due to the transfer of Neil and Rose Didlick to the Helston Circuit, and the transfer of membership of David Pender to Westminster Central Hall where he is continuing his training as a local preacher.

Since the meeting of our Pastoral Committee we have had the sad loss of Steve Ottery who passed from this life in March, and we rejoice that Dean and Kim Watson have now been made members of our church. At present our membership stands at 51 members.

Our work with children and young people is still an important part of our mission as a church. We give thanks for the excellent work of Vicki and Merryn Smith with our Children's Church and the encouragement that they give each Sunday with their work with the children. Our annual holiday club was wonderful, and we rejoice that the attendance at our Saturday Seekers has been good. We thank Gordon Bird and his dedicated team for their commitment to the children of St Mary's. In addition to this

we give thanks that our minister is able to go into our school and lead assemblies and get to know the children. All of these things are a sign of our commitment to further our work with children and families on St Mary's.

Jen Scott (nee Nightingale) with the support from our district has been able to continue her work with young people one day a month and we give thanks to Lynn Miller from the Parish Church who has helped Jen with this very important work.

We give thanks to our local preachers and leaders of worship who lead us week by week. Mrs. Mary Ratcliffe is now well on course to complete her training to become a fully accredited local preacher and we rejoice that we have three members being trained as worship leaders. We look forward to Vicki Smith, Sonia Crompton and Kim Watson leading worship, especially at our 9:15 services.

Our weekly Friday Fellowship evenings have continued to meet most weeks at the manse. During Lent we joined our friends at the Parish Church for study and fellowship, and our weekly Monday Prayer meets every week. The Wednesday evening House Group which has met for many years continues to meet, and in addition to this we now have a Thursday evening group where we have been looking at examples of Revival in many places throughout the world and praying for a revival of faith on our islands. We give thanks for those who plan and lead these meetings.

Again this year several of our members are going to the mainland to attend Spring Harvest, and our minister has been elected to represent the Cornwall Methodist District at the Methodist Conference which meets in Birmingham this year.

Last summer it was clear that the number of visitors coming to worship with us on a Sunday was less than in previous years, and some are saying that expected visitor numbers could be down again this year. This is also reflected in the number attending slide shows during the week. Because income and donations from visitors are such an important element in our annual church income this has resulted in our income being less than our outgoings. We are at present awaiting the result of an application for an increased grant from the mainland to support the mission of our church but it is clear there may well be a continued shortfall which cannot be met by our very limited reserves.

However, despite the present financial issues we still all know that our Methodist church is an important part of our island community. In addition to our ongoing work with children and young people, we also seek to offer care to the elderly. Our Wednesday afternoon 'At Home' is there as a meeting place for the elderly, we continue to visit those who are house bound, and through our link with the hospital where our minister is the appointed chaplain we are able to offer help and work closely with our islands Social Services.

Finally, we give thanks for those who serve our church in so many ways, for our team of stewards, and for those who manage our money and finances and property.

At this present time there are certainly many challenges ahead of us, but we continue to rejoice in our precious Christian Faith and continue to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom and revival in His church on our islands.

Over the past year, our minister has conducted 5 funerals, 2 baptisms, 1 wedding and one wedding blessing.

We give thanks to God for all that is past, and we trust in Him for all that is to come.

Annual Church Meeting Sunday 25th May 12 noon

We look forward to our Annual Church Meeting after our 11 am service on 25th May. At this important meeting we will review the mission of our church over the last year, elect those to represent us on our church council and appoint our church stewards to serve from September. We will also review our giving to others and decide to whom we will give donations from our church funds.

The meeting will be followed by a Bring and Share luncheon at 1 pm. Please put the date in your diary and be there to celebrate the ongoing work of our Methodist Church on St Mary's.



Important Notice

Could you help to further the work of our Church by either serving as a church steward or being part of our church council?

We are now looking for new people to serve in this way. For more details please speak to our minister so that we may make a list of those who wish help in these posts to be elected at our Annual Church Meeting on the 25th May

Cats

A Cheshire vicar has two cats. Their names are Ancient and Modern – because they are both him.



'Scilly People at Gwennap Pit' on 8th June 2014

After looking through old photographs on the Church Facebook Page, a couple of us thought it would be a really good idea for all those who have now left the islands to get together at some point. It has been agreed that we meet at **Gwennap Pit for their Annual Rally on Sunday 8th June.** We will meet at 1pm for a picnic and singing will start at 2.30pm with the service beginning at 3pm. Please be prepared for rain as the service will go ahead outside whatever the weather!

It would be great if as many of you as possible, who at some time, were part of the Methodist Church on the islands, could all come together to have fun & fellowship. Please join the 'Event' Facebook Page if you are able, and keep up to date with any details. Please share this info with anyone else you think might be interested in coming along. If you are on holiday from the islands at this time, please do join us.



Together, the Vicar and organist
chose the hymns for the month

I am sure that this is not how Charlie and Len decide on our hymns!

Birthday Greetings for May

Harriet Pender, Michael Jenkins,
Dorothy Beedell, Mervyn Bird, Chris
Hensleigh, Nick Jenkins, Andy Brooks
and Emma Roberts
God's blessings to you all.



News from our local preachers and leaders of worship meeting

We are delighted that Mary Ratcliffe is getting on so well with her training as a local preacher, and our District Tutor John Hogarth is hoping that Mary will be accredited as a local preacher in the coming year.

We are also delighted that three members from St Mary's are close to completing their training as worship leaders. We hope that Vicki Smith, Sonia Crompton and Kim Watson will be ready to help in leading our worship from July.

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Any contributions will be gratefully received. *The magazine uses material from the Parish Pump, a resource for editors to which we subscribe.*

Good Friday and Easter Sunday Sunrise Service on the Buzza

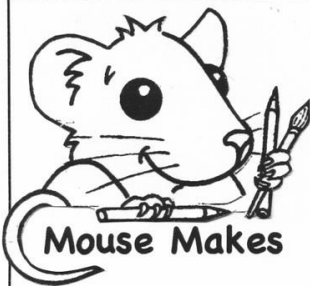
On Good Friday, after a short act of worship in the Methodist Chapel on St Mary's, a large wooden cross was taken through the town, along Porthcressa and up the Buzza Hill. It was secured in place overlooking the town ready for Easter Sunday morning. We were delighted that Bishop Christopher Budd from the Roman Catholic Church joined us in worship at the Chapel and at Porthcressa offered a prayer for all our local island churches.

On Easter Sunday morning at 6 am visitors and islanders gathered for a sunrise service led by Charlie Gibbs, the superintendent minister of the Methodist Church. Again Bishop Christopher Budd joined us together with friends of all denominations for this very special sunrise service. After the hymns had been sung and prayers offered those gathered went to Seagull Cottage for an Easter breakfast.

Later that day the Easter Cross was dressed with Scillonian flowers at the Chapel for the morning family service which was well attended by visitors and locals. Many present at our Easter services were amazed at the beautiful flowers. We give thanks to those who have made Easter so very special this year on St Mary's.

When children pray (they did their best!)

- ~ Give us this steak and daily bread, and forgive us our mattresses.
- ~ Hail, Mary, full of grapes.
- ~ He suffered under a bunch of violets." (Pontius Pilate)



THE ASCENSION

Forty days after his resurrection JESUS led his disciples out to Bethany and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. As he blessed them he was taken up into heaven.

"Christ Jesus is the one who died for us and was raised to life again for us and is sitting in the place of highest honour next to God, pleading for us there in heaven" Romans 8:34

"For there is only one God and there is only one way that people can reach God. That way is through Christ Jesus"
1 Timothy 2:5



THE LORD HEARS YOUR PRAYERS



Write your prayers to GOD in the prayer hands above knowing that JESUS is in heaven at God's right hand speaking to God for us



May14 @deborahnoble @parishpump.co.uk

JESUS

If I could package faith into one parcel
And collect all hope into a single can –
If I could roll all love into one heart-ball
And commoditise it in a living man
I'd already have a fully detailed label
Prepared before the world itself began -
And it would have one name -
And that name – JESUS -
At the centre of God's universal plan
To take the world along the course
God's surge of love provoked
Till wholeness flows through everything
With God's Spirit of life unyoked.

By Sam Doubtfire

Churches criticise Budget alcohol announcement

Three major British Churches have criticised government plans to scrap the alcohol duty escalator as announced in the recent Chancellor's Budget speech.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church say that George Osborne's announcement is 'irresponsible', signalling good news for the drinks industry, while the taxpayer is left to bear the social and financial costs of problem drinking.

"As alcoholic drinks have become more affordable – an estimated 61% more affordable since 1980 - the harm caused by alcohol misuse has increased, and already costs the UK £21bn per year. Research shows that introducing a minimum unit price on alcohol would have a significant impact on problem drinking. Doctors, healthcare professionals and charities have long expressed their support for such a measure."

PRAYER CHAIN

In the first instance please contact me, Mary Ratcliffe 423030 or Revd. Charles Gibbs 422406. I will then pass on the prayer request to the first name in each of the groups.

Mervyn & Stephanie Bird	423117
Sue Williams	422605
Merryn & Vicki Smith	423360

Claire Jenkins	423546
Margaret Snowball	422896
Gordon Bird	422550
Sonia Crompton	422854

Barbara Hasler	422208
Margaret Crane	422596
Len & Sylvia Michell	422409
Pamela Thomas	423115
June Lethbridge	422404

Beryl Read	422977
Gwen Clarkson	423106

For the Prayer Chain to be effective it is essential that requests are forwarded to the person in the column beneath your name, if that person is not available please ring the next person on the list.

May Notices

St. Mary's

4th 10:00 Children's Church
 11:00 Len Michell
 20:00 Gordon Bird

Park House 16:00 Beryl Read

11th 10.30 Steve and Heather Radford Beryl Read
 20:00 Barbara Hasler

18th 9:15 Gordon Bird Mervyn Bird
 11:00 Steve and Heather Radford Communion
 20:00 Revd Charles Gibbs Songs of Praise

25nd 09:15 Mary Ratcliffe/ Beryl Read
 11:00 Revd Charles Gibbs followed by ACM
 20:00 Mr G Garden

St. Martin's

4th 11:00 Barbara Hasler

11th 11:00 Len Michell

18th 11:00 Revd Charles Gibbs Communion

25^{nth} 11:00 Mr G Garden