

From the Manse

Dear Friends,



Last month I wrote about finding ourselves, like some storm-blown migrant bird, in a strange and unexpected landscape. I wrote those words before the decision of the Circuit meeting not to extend my time on the Islands.

To mix my metaphors, a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then and we've found ourselves in unexpected territory. As everyone on the Islands will know, that decision has caused a huge amount of heartache and, yes, sometimes, ill feeling.

I have been grateful for the many cards, letters and phone calls from people across Scilly and further afield. Your love and, especially your prayers, have meant a lot to me. I am especially grateful – as should we all – for the time and pastoral care which Steven Wild, our District Chair, has given to us.

But now we must move on.

If I am resentful of those who did not vote for me to remain on the Islands, or have a sense of anger or bitterness, these feelings will, ultimately, destroy me.

The same is true for others who feel dismay, anger – or even a sense of betrayal – at what has happened. I urge you all – indeed I would plead with you – not to let all of this fester away. It will only destroy the fellowship that we have. Jesus spoke a lot about loving those with whom we have our differences. Now is one of those times when we need to put Christ's teaching into practice.

We really need to stretch out the hand of fellowship one with another. If Jesus could pray, on the Cross, words of forgiveness for those who had betrayed him, is it really so great a thing for us to be reconciled to those with whom we have our differences? But this must be a two-way street.

Whatever your views on this matter, you have a part to play. We need to put ourselves in the other person's shoes. When we stand there, what do we see?

I am going to remain in this Circuit for another nine months. During that time it is my prayer and my priority that we embrace the words of Jesus: 'Love one another, just as I have loved you ... so that the world will know that you are my disciples'. And that is the important point. The Church does not exist primarily for the benefit of its members. Christ calls us to live together as an example and witness to the wider world, of which we are a part – not from which we are apart!

If you are a mainland reader of *In Touch*, please continue to pray for us here in this part of God's Kingdom. Thank you.

Every blessing,

David



Christmas Concert

The proposed date of this year's concert is Friday 19th December.

This popular event has been part of the Christmas scene for many years, thanks to those who have organized it. This year we are looking for someone to make it happen. Is that person YOU? If so please let David know.

An organizational health warning is attached in that it is vital to pin down the participants and not let them just decide to perform on the night!

Mary Ratcliffe

Letter from Steve Wild

Dear Friends,

I am glad to have this opportunity to write to you in your excellent magazine 'In Touch'. As a Christian community you are having a testing time at the moment. I have been praying for you all daily, that God's love will surround you all as a Methodist family at this time when the decision has been made for David to leave you in August. After my visit in the middle of October, I read the following passage from the Bible in my quiet time: *'May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* (Romans 15 v. 5 - 6). As I read this I realised that it is a prayer, Paul wants God to give to the Christians in Rome *endurance* (this can be translated as patience), comfort and a spirit of unity so that together they can glorify God. As I see it that's what the Holy Spirit wants from us. For David your minister and for you as a group of believers the Lord God will comfort you. In different ways at this time you all feel hurt, but to be obedient to God and as a witness to non-Christians on the Islands, we can, with God's help have 'one heart and mouth' as this passage says. Jesus prayed when he was on earth that his followers may be one (John 17 v. 21); he was distressed when his disciples didn't see eye to eye but prays for them in this intimate way. St Paul not only in this passage but in many of his other letters speaks of believers being 'one'.

To get to this place we need the endurance or patience Paul speaks of, it means something very positive that is steady, being given the strength by the Holy Spirit to stick through however great the discouragement.

Let us pray therefore for each other and for David's future ministry.

Clive Mumford's fascinating book 'Portrait of the Isles of Scilly' written in the 1960's describes the islanders facing the challenges of the future being like a helmsman steering safely through dangerous waters. As a Methodist community, I believe we can creatively move forward through this difficult time to give glory to God and loving others as Jesus would.

With every blessing

Steve Wild

Cornwall District Chair

News from St. Martin's

It's that time of year when many of our congregation are either away from the Islands or are anticipating their autumn holiday. Therefore we have been especially glad to welcome visitors to our worship throughout late September and early October. With half term holiday-makers in mind, the photographic exhibition will continue into November.

Unfortunately, Gladys Perkins had a fall and hurt her back a few weeks ago, so her holiday with Derek has had to be postponed. We trust the pain and discomfort will ease so they too can get away for a break.

Finally we would like to congratulate David (as we did Derek Perkins and Gordon Bird earlier in the year) on being voted a Radio Scilly unsung hero, with a vote that reflected an unequivocal measure of public appreciation.

The failure of the democratic process, with regard to an extension of David's ministry within the Islands, is a considerable disappointment to many on St. Martin's. However, as I have heard said, by next August we will have been fortunate enough to have had him as our Minister for seven years, and for that we give thanks. Perhaps we can move forward believing others will now benefit from and appreciate David's particular strengths and skills.

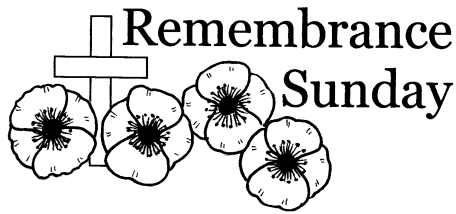
Heather

Birthday Greetings

This month we send greetings to Jonathan and Daniel Bird, David Easton, Veronica Deane, Julia Ottery and Monica Taylor. If we have not yet caught up with you and you have a birthday in November, we wish you a very happy day.



Also, congratulations to Izzy & Alfie Trenear on the birth of their grandson (Alfie), 8 pounds 13.5 ounces, born to Robyn and Daniel on 15th October.



Remembrance Day

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

Prayer for Remembrance Day

For those who were killed in battle
For those who gave up their lives to save others
For those who fought because they were forced to
For those who died standing up for a just cause.

For those who said war was wrong,
For those who tried to make the peace
For those who prayed when others had no time to pray.

For those creatures who needlessly died
For those trees that needlessly are slaughtered



For all of mankind
let us quietly pray

May your God hold them in peace
May love flow over the Earth and cleanse us all
This day and for always.



Marianne Griffin

Reflections upon Retirement

The retirement is from Stewardship in the St Mary's Methodist Church after eleven years of service. The impetus for it has been my fast-approaching eighth decade and increasing incompetence. The reflections have been upon the past two decades spent here in St Mary's.

From the early 1960s my dear husband, Peter wished to farm here. At each possibility I did not have to express my reluctance to live here. Decisions were made for us by others. Then, in 1990 Peter's wish to live here was granted and I had difficult adjustments to make!

For sixty years I had been an active member of the Congregational Church and its successor, The United Reformed Church. I served as the Junior Church Superintendent and am ordained as an Elder for life, now non-serving of course! As the Methodist Church is the only Non-Conformist church here, my attendance was certain, but it took me three years before I felt able to transfer my membership. I missed the monthly Church Meeting at which all members vote on the business. Most of all there was the loss of the privilege of serving at the Lord's Supper. In the URC, Elders bring the bread to each member of the congregation to be eaten together, followed by the wine served and partaken in the same way. Occasionally our Minister here has asked me to serve at the Communion Service and that has been a great joy to me.

In my reflections I realise the Lord God's plan for us over the years. Peter was persuaded in due course to join the Church, not having been a worshipper since Confirmation as a teenager. He was a practical member of the Property Committee and in due course became a Steward. All an answer from God to me.

Eleven years ago I became a Steward myself and have served under the Revs Brian Mavers and David Easton. I relinquish the honour as technology advances – I can clobber anything! From now on I shall confine myself to giving cushions to folks like me who need a back-rest. I hand the task of stewarding over to a younger member of the fellowship who will be much better qualified to deal with the changes in church life in the next few years.

My thanks to you all for your forbearance during my years as Steward and especially to Philip for his technical assistance in recent months!

Gwen

A prayer taken from the book 'Jerusalem Prayers for the World Today'

Footmarks Ahead

*Guide our feet into the way of peace,
for in our confusion we do not know which way to turn,
In the babel of voices we hear no clear word,
In the mass of propaganda we cannot find the truth.
Give us direction in which to move, and when we
cannot find it guide our feet by Thy wisdom, if
unperceived
by our understanding.
Keep our hearts peaceful in trust, give us quiet courage.
Keep us steady under criticism or opposition, with unfailing
love towards all, and eager expectation to see the footmarks
of Thy dear Son ahead, perhaps only a step or two, but
pointing to the peace of Thy will,
O Creator and Redeemer of all.*



Tricia Thomas

The Best thing to Give

We all give gifts at some time or other and sometimes wonder what that gift should be. What about these 'priceless' gifts?

The best gift to give your enemy is forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a child, a good example.
To a father, deference.
To a mother, conduct that will make her proud of you.
To yourself, respect.
To all men, charity.

With thanks to the editor of the magazine of Trinity Methodist Church, Royton where this first appeared.

Another favourite hymn of old. The story of its origins told by the great evangelist Billy Graham.

Trusting Jesus

“Trusting Jesus” is a hymn that is completely American in background. Edgar Stites, author of the words, was a direct descendant of John Howland, one of the Mayflower’s passengers. Active in the civil war, he was later a riverboat pilot and then a missionary to the frontier churches in South Dakota.

The hymn poem first appeared in a newspaper, and was handed to the American evangelist D.L. Moody. In turn, Moody gave it to his soloist and songleader, Ira D. Sankey, asking him to set it to music. In his book, Sankey’s story of the Gospel Hymns, the singer says, “I assented, on condition that he should vouch for the doctrine taught in the verses, and he said he would.”

This hymn was the favourite of my longtime friend, Dr. W.B. Riley, and it expresses well the motivating purpose of his life. During the more than forty years that Dr. Riley was the beloved pastor of the First Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he was a pillar of strength in the evangelical movement. He appeared many times at the Florida Bible Institute while I was a student there. He – and other men like Dr. H.H. Savage, Dr. William Evans and Dr. Vance Havner – instilled in me a love for the Word of God, and gave me my first doctrinal anchorage.

The frequent theme of Dr. Riley’s preaching was the grace of God. He both taught and lived a practical Christianity that is proclaimed in this motto and title: “Trusting Jesus, That Is All.”

I have often emphasized that becoming a Christian is more than “making a decision” to live a better life or to attend church more regularly. When by faith we accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour, something supernatural takes place. HE comes to dwell in our hearts, and gives us HIS own supernatural life – eternal life.

But it would be a mistake to imagine that from then on, we are automatically and almost magically victorious over sin and doubt.

NOT SO! Each day we must have the same trust we experienced when we first came to know Christ. We all remember the words in Ephesians 2: 8, “For by grace are ye saved through faith.” But too many people forget Hebrews 10: 38, “Now the just shall LIVE by faith.” This is the secret of LIVING the Christian life – everyday faith – “simply trusting every day.”

Each day we renew our faith in God’s forgiveness. Sometimes after years of walking with God, the devil will tempt us to doubt our salvation. But on the strength of God’s word we can exercise faith and trust and drive the sin of doubt away.

We “simply trust” that God will keep us, guide us and protect us each day. It is probably a good thing that we know “not what a day may bring forth” Proverbs 27: 1. For if we were to see the road ahead for the next month, or year, or ten years, we would probably not have the courage to face it.

If we use the resources of prayer, of God’s Word, and of Christian fellowship – and if we exercise faith and trust for each day – we can live daily in glorious victory!

Simply trusting every day – trusting through a stormy way;
Even when my faith is small, trusting Jesus, that is all.

Refrain Trusting as the moments fly, trusting as the days go by
 Trusting Him whate’er befall, trusting Jesus that is all.

Brightly doth His Spirit shine into this poor heart of mine
While He leads I cannot fall, trusting Jesus, that is all.

Singing if my way be clear; praying if the path be drear
If in danger, for Him call; trusting Jesus that is all.

Trusting Him while life shall last, trusting Him till earth be past;
Till within the Jasper wall; trusting Jesus that is all.

Tricia Thomas

Family Matters

As most of you know I have recently celebrated my 70th Birthday. A milestone in anyone's life and we were able to mark it by being together with our family. How wonderful that was and to see the love and concern our children have for each other and for us. I cannot help reflecting that many families do not enjoy such togetherness and allow differences of opinion to distance them from each other. How sad we would be if that happened in our family. Certainly differences of opinion do occur; I can well remember the times when my brothers and sisters wanted their own way about something and not receiving it raged off in a huff. But my mother, after her initial disappointment and distress, drew us all together again by her love, helping us to sort out our differences and not being content until we apologised to each other and to her for the distress caused.

In Mark's gospel (Mark 3:33) Jesus asks 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' This passage reminds us that we are part of a larger family, that of all believers. As we read this passage we are reminded that Jesus says that all who belong to him in obedience are his family.

Those who belong to God and walk in his ways are in a privileged and close relationship with him. We do not belong to 'God's people, plc'. We belong to a community - a family. We belong to one another because we all share in our status as children of God. As children, even of a Heavenly Father we sometimes disagree and he is surely distressed by this just as my mother was but He will bring us together again in love. A family divided is weak but a family united is strong and will continue to grow in love one for another with a love which is strong even when life is tough.

This brings me again to my birthday when I received many cards and presents. Thank you for those and also for all the presents which included ducks for families in Bangladesh (through Christian Aid), sandals for people with leprosy (Leprosy Mission) and some mosquito nets for use in Sierra Leone. May we always remember that we are part of a larger family and give thanks for the Gospel which reminds us of that and also that Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins and all mankind.

Prayer

Father God, I am humbled that you would bring me into your family. Help me to grow more and more into the family likeness. Amen.

PS, Ducks

Since 1998 the partner organisation of Christian Aid, 'Friends in Village Development Bangladesh' has helped villagers generate an income for themselves by providing duck farms and hatcheries. Ducks can be bred and sold or bartered at market, and their eggs can be eaten. Owning a duck hatchery means greater self-sufficiency and self-respect, helping people free themselves from debt and allowing them to work towards a more secure future. Thanks to gifts such as this, livelihoods are being transformed.

Mary Ratcliffe

Action for Children

This charity, which is supported by the Methodist Church nationwide and here in the Isles of Scilly, has pruned its name. It has dropped the prefix NCH, the initials of its long-term name, the National Children's Home. The outreach is the same and we have once more been able to support them by having a stall at the Charities Fayre, held in the Town Hall on Saturday 18th October at the instigation of the joint Anglican and Methodist Social Awareness Committee.



It was a most rewarding day for us, starting with a wonderful bonus. Claire and Brian Jenkins had a grand clear-out of the loft in Nundeepts and we arrived to find our stall had been given a great variety of lovely items, mostly dating from way back! We did manage to sell some books on the stall as well, but the greater part of the £53 in proceeds came from Claire's beneficence.

Our special thanks to her. As local representative of the charity my thanks go to all who supported us in any way and especially to my valiant helpers, Steve and Pam Manning and Elizabeth Tanner.

Gwen Clarkson

Something to make you think

I thought it would be good to introduce some stimulating debate into the pages of our '*In Touch*' so here goes - Should Christians be worried about global warming or climate change?

If you are worried, what is it that concerns you? Is it that you will lose some material possessions or benefits? Or that changes in rainfall and temperature will make you feel uncomfortable? Are you afraid, like some, that it could lead to the ultimate destruction of our planet?

I have some good news: **Creationists** believe that God has made us in His image to serve a purpose in His great plan. As He created the universe and knows the end from the beginning there is no need to fear! **Evolutionists** believe that mankind has evolved and adapted to the prevailing conditions on earth. Therefore we will all be able to breathe underwater or grow wings and fly when the ice cap melts. Good news on both counts eh?

Which belief are you trusting in?

William Thomas

If there is anyone who would like to continue this debate, please send your contribution to the Editorial team.

Some more Bible howlers from children

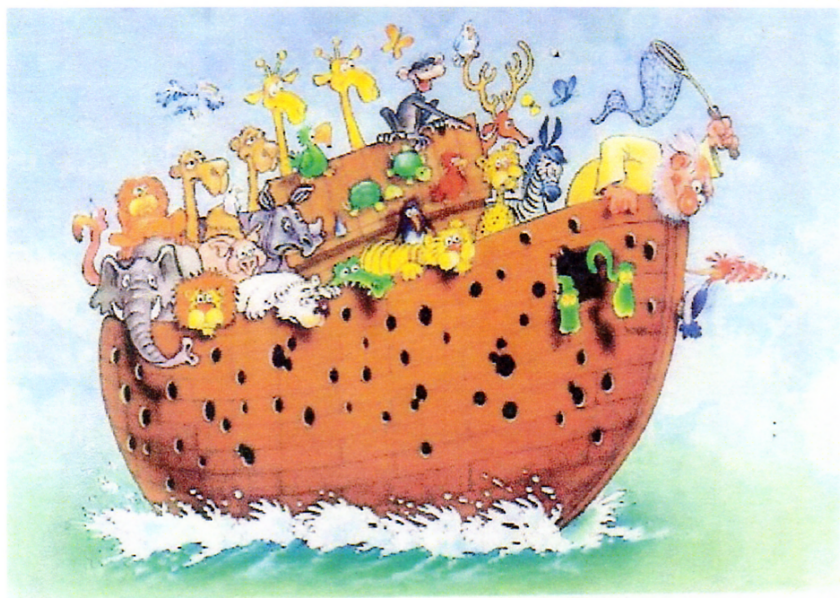
The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.

The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.

Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

St John the blacksmith dumped water on his head.

The woodpecker might have to go!



Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark... **One:** Don't miss the boat. **Two:** Remember that we are all in the same boat. **Three:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark. **Four:** Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big. **Five:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done. **Six:** Build your future on high ground. **Seven:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs. **Eight:** Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs. **Nine:** When you're stressed, float a while. **Ten:** Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals. **Eleven:** No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

With thanks to Judi Williams for sharing this with us

Corentyn's latest newsletter

This letter was accompanied by photos showing the layout of the buildings that Corentyn is working in. This has been printed out together with the original newsletter and it is in the church for people to see.

Basically, we're working primarily in three similar looking buildings, but each with different natures.

The first is called 'Revelation', which is the 'inclusion' centre, it houses several computers, our line manager's office and it's the place where the inclusion work happens. It's laid out similar to a classroom.

Then there's 'Sanctuary', the youth room. This is where the lunch time youth club happens (where toast is served and is a grand opportunity to meet the children of Wetherby). It's also open on Friday night for a youth club, and there are three youth clubs on Wednesday night which make use of this room and the surrounding area. It's laid out very much like a youth club, and has sofas, a bar, sound system, disco lights and an air hockey table.

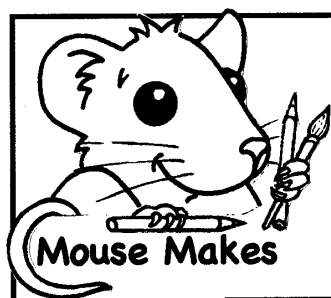
Last is the prayer bunker. This is laid out like a house, or at least has a very homely feel to it. There is a shower/bathroom, kitchen, and the prayer room.

We are practically on top of Wetherby High School, and in that building is where the Sunday service happens. Being so close, gives us oodles of chances to meet the youth and gives us a great contact point with the young people involved with our inclusion work.

A couple of one-liners

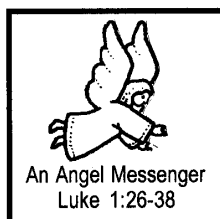
An atheist has no invisible means of support.

People are like tea-bags – you have to put them in hot water before you know how strong they are.



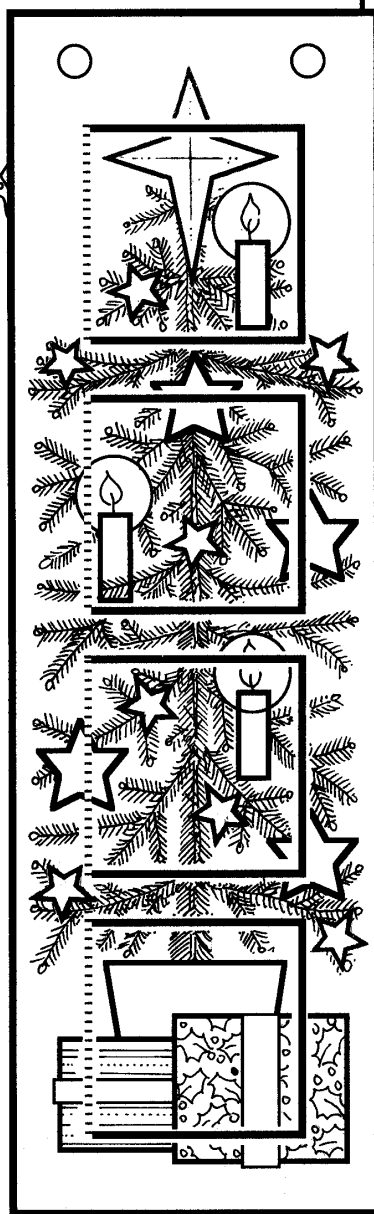
ADVENT
comes from
the Latin
'AD VENTO'
which means
'ARRIVAL'

In advent we
celebrate
Jesus' birth
and look
forward to
the time
when Jesus
will come
again.



Make this Advent
calendar to count down
the four Sundays
before Christmas

1. Cut out the front of the calendar. 2. **Ask an adult** to cut around the thick lines of each window with a craft knife, then fold them open along the dotted lines. 3. Put glue on the back of the calendar around the edge and stick onto card. 4. Cut out the pictures and glue onto the backing card behind each window. 5. Punch holes in the top and hang.



Nov 08

Diary Dates

October

21st- November 5th David on Holiday

November

- 9th Remembrance Sunday. Both services in the Methodist Churches
- 13th St. Mary's Church Council, 7.00 p.m.
- 15th Saturday Seekers, St. Mary's, 1.30pm
- 26th St. Mary's Stewards' Meeting, 10.30am

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