

TORRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2024 - Issue 145

Welcome to Edition Number 145

Contact e-mail address is newsletter@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk or bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com

Any comments or items you wish to share, please contact the editor, Dave Watson by e-mail; phone 01237 451437 or to 6 Greenings Road, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, EX39 5LU.

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Circuit Manager – Sarah Richards – 01237 472649 – sarahrichards185@gmail.com

Circuit Safeguarding Officer – Jacqui Watson – safeguarding@torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk

As well as the Circuit Facebook page – **Torridge Methodist Circuit**, we have a private Facebook Group where we care share thoughts, prayers & other material on **Torridge Methodist Circuit Group**. If you wish to join please push the Join button & I can add you.

Please pray for our Ministers, Rob Blackhall & Andrew Vidamour, for Frank Watson & Sarah Richards and all involved in the varied life of the Circuit; for those connected to the various Chapels & the communities in which they live & work.

CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICES

The Circuit Services continue to take place ON VARIOUS Sunday's on Zoom using the Services that are printed in the Circuit Newsletter. The Services are on Sunday Evenings starting at 6.30pm – but the 'doors will be open' at about 6.15pm. The contact/entry details will be send out during the preceding week & the Service can be accessed via a computer/laptop with camera/microphone, I Pad/Phone or using a 'normal' phone. Even if you have a device with camera/microphone & do not wish to be seen – you can join in without the camera on.

If you do not receive an email or want further information – please contact Sarah Richards, Circuit Administrator on 01237 472649 or sarahrichards185@gmail.com

FROM REV ROB BLACKHALL – SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER

Dear Friends

As I write it is raining, again! No, it is pouring. O no, not more rain. Where is all the rain coming from and where is it going?

The news from my radio this morning was not good. Ukraine, Israel-Gaza, divisions in society, issues with health care, or lack of it. My brother spent a night in hospital – they found him a bed – in a cupboard.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb (Mark 16:1-2)

Easter. The self-giving love, as displayed by Jesus cannot be defeated. Hatred and death will not stand against such love. There is always hope and as the first disciples were to discover as they realized that the risen Christ was among them, that there is peace.

There is great contrast between my opening paragraph and the one I have just completed.

Ukraine. The war shows no sign of ending. The death toll is horrendous. Where is it all going to end? Putin re-elected in Russia. I am writing this before the elections, but I am fairly confident in my predication!

Israel- Gaza. The 7th October Hamas attacks were the worst atrocities on the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Hamas and other want to destroy Israel and wipe Jews from the face of the earth. Hostages were taken. Israel sought to defend itself; and the carnage and destruction in Gaza have been unimaginable. Why doesn't the world do something? Well, why have we ignored the issues for decades.

Hatred in the UK is clear to see. Antisemitism is the rise. The words of politicians stoke the fires for division, deflecting away from the pains of society. A government minister applauded food banks in her constituency. Yes, they do a great job; but we should not have the need for food banks. People should not be struggling as they surely are. I hear more and more people give thanks for the work of those who work in the health service, while bemoaning a long wait to actually see anyone.

All these is about the big questions in international and political situations. God is also concerned about our lives; our hopes and fears; and loves and our loses; our dreams and visions.

Easter. Love, hope, peace.

Please don't tell me that the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified yet risen is out of date or irrelevant. (I agree that the Church that bears his name might be).

A love for all people; that each and everyone on our planet is valued; and is given the means by which to flourish as human beings.

Peace, not just an absence of war; but a well-being for life in all its fullness.

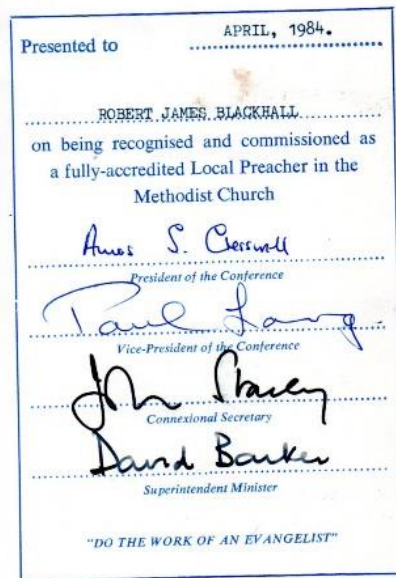
Hope, that through the ways of God that what is current is a pale reflection of what is intended for humanity.

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, Alleluia! - Rob

APRIL FOOL?

On 1st April 1984, 40 years ago, a service for the Admission of Local Preachers took place at Walsall Central Hall. It was I who was being admitted. It still staggers me all these years and services later that I was, and am, called to be one of Mr. Wesley's preachers.



With the connotations of April 1st, an auspicious day for such a service!
Quoting from the Bible given to me on that occasion, the New English Bible, remember that,
"Divine folly is wiser than the wisdom of man, and divine weakness stronger than man's strength."
(1 Cor. 1:25)

Any one up for being a fool for God?
Rob

DISTRICT SERVICE WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE, Revd Gill Newton on Sunday 21st April 2024 at Bude Methodist Church. Time 6pm for the Service & 4.30pm for Afternoon Tea.

GOSPEL READINGS

On Tuesday of Holy Week at 7.30am we started reading Matthew's Gospel and concluded with John, ending at 6.30pm. Eleven hours of listening the Gospels.

A BIG thank you to all who read.

It was an interesting day. It was fascinating to hear the whole Gospels from start to finish. It sort of seeped into your soul.

It reminded us of how much of the Gospels we never hear in our cycle of the lectionary and the Christian year; and that we only every hear little bits. I was struck by the mixture of styles in the Gospel and between them. There are different types of writing, from lists, to says, to stories, the parables. Then there are the healing miracles. And of course, the detail moving toward Jesus death and resurrection. Someone noted that they heard things that were very similar - that is the way the Gospels are, particularly Matthew, Mark and Luke. It was then very noticable that the style and content of John are very different. God, has richly blessed us with these four Gospels.

I am grateful to Buckland Brewer for hosting us - and that others were able to join in via You Tube, well after the initial problem of it not working!

Once again, thanks to all - Rob



FROM REVD ANDREW VIDAMOUR

Dear Friends,

I recently read the novel *The Dean's Watch* by Elizabeth Goudge, set in a cathedral city in Victorian times. Towards the very end of his life, the Dean of the Cathedral there, Adam Ayscough, enters new worlds as he meets several people, adults and children, who touch his heart in what seems to be (for him) a new way, as he tries to help and serve them in different ways (for example, he helps one young man find a more suitable apprenticeship), and generally.

This is a very moving account, and it may remind us of how God may bring about 'resurrections' in our own experience, for example in the way we look at people and the world, and as we perhaps discover new talents and avenues of service.

In his book True Resurrection, too, H.A. Williams draws our attention to the renewal we may know in our lives. For an artist, for instance, this may involve the rediscovery of creative ability after a time lacking in creative inspiration. For an athlete, it may be a recovery of form, perhaps after an injury. For any one of us, this may be the renewal of a friendship, maybe after a difference of opinion or a time of separation.

All these may not seem very spectacular, but each may follow a time of struggle (paralleling the Passion of Jesus, in a sense). Also, each renewal may offer feelings of peace, joy and satisfaction, and each may happen at any time, possibly unexpectedly, inspired by the constantly surprising Spirit of God in Christ.

I believe all these signs of hope are part of the continuing Resurrection of Jesus we celebrate at Easter and beyond for, as Martin Luther, the Protestant Reformer, put it: 'We are an Easter people'. As the angel says at the empty tomb to the friends of Jesus, 'he (Jesus) is going ahead of you to Galilee' (Mark 16: 7) (i.e. wherever you are going), and 'I am with you always, even to the end of the age' (Matthew 28: 20).

May we find, know and live God's hope afresh as we travel through the Easter season and always.
Andrew Vidamour

CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICE: Sunday 14th April 2024 (6.30pm)

Call to Worship
Hymn: 'O, for a thousand tongues to sing' (364)
Prayers of Adoration and Confession
The Lord's Prayer
Psalm: 4
Hymn: 'I know that my Redeemer lives' (303)
Bible Reading: Acts 3: 12-19
Bible Reading: Luke 24: 36b-48
Hymn: 'God forgave my sin' (424)
Sermon
Silence
Hymn: 'All you that seek the Lord who died' (294)
Prayers of Intercession
Hymn: 'Christ is alive!' (297)
The Blessing

Hymns from 'Singing the Faith' unless stated

EDI TRAINING

• If you wish to do the EDI course online, can you let Sarah Richards know.

To do the training online please take the following steps:-

1. Go to <https://mcb.theologyx.com/> If you have already used Theology X (probably for the Advanced safeguarding module) use the same username and password to sign into MCBX (the new Methodist online training platform).

2. If you do not have a Theology X account, just go straight to the MCBX and register there to create an account.
3. There you will find the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Module
4. You do not need to do it all at once but can do as little or as much as your time allows.
5. At the end you will be given a certificate (via email). Please could you let Sarah Richards have a copy of that so we can keep a record.

FRANK WATSON – CIRCUIT LAY MINISTER

The Mission to Seafarers Knitting Project

Well Done Everyone!

Thank you to all those who have been busy knitting over the autumn and winter months. I have sent off our first box of knitted donations to The Mission to Seafarers.



**Caring for seafarers
around the world**

The numbers were...

Wollen Hat: 39

Mufflers: 12

Balaclava Pattern: 1

Fingerless Mittens on two needles: 7

Totals number of items: **59**

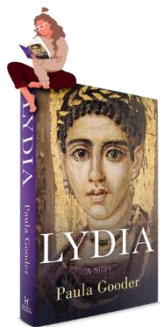
If people would like to still continue knitting then please feel free. It would be good to have this as an ongoing circuit project throughout the year.

The Bible in One Year

April	Old Testament Reading	New Testament Reading	Reading from Psalms/Proverbs
Mon 01	Numbers 31:25 – 32:42	Luke 8:40 – 9:9	Psalm 40:1-8
Tue 02	Numbers 33:1 – 34:29	Luke 9:10-27	Proverbs 8:22-31
Wed 03	Numbers 35:1 – 36:13	Luke 9:28-56	Psalm 40:9-17
Thu 04	Deuteronomy 1:1 – 2:23	Luke 9:57 – 10:24	Psalm 41:1-6
Fri 05	Deuteronomy 2:24 – 4:14	Luke 10:25 – 11:4	Psalm 41:7-13
Sat 06	Deuteronomy 4:15 – 5:33	Luke 11:5-32	Proverbs 8:32-36
Sun 07	Deuteronomy 6:1 – 8:20	Luke 11:33-54	Psalm 42:1-6a
Mon 08	Deuteronomy 9:1 – 10:22	Luke 12:1-34	Psalm 42:6b-11
Tue 09	Deuteronomy 11:1 – 12:32	Luke 12:35-59	Psalm 43:1-5
Wed 10	Deuteronomy 13:1 – 14:29	Luke 13:1-30	Proverbs 9:1-12
Thu 11	Deuteronomy 15:1 – 16:20	Luke 13:31 – 14:14	Psalm 44:1-12
Fri 12	Deuteronomy 16:21 – 18:22	Luke 14:15-35	Psalm 44:13-26
Sat 13	Deuteronomy 19:1 – 20:20	Luke 15:1-32	Psalm 45:1-9
Sun 14	Deuteronomy 21:1 – 22:30	Luke 16:1-18	Proverbs 9:13-18
Mon 15	Deuteronomy 23:1 – 25:19	Luke 16:19 – 17:10	Psalm 45:10-17
Tue 16	Deuteronomy 26:1 – 28:14	Luke 17:11-37	Psalm 46:1-11
Wed 17	Deuteronomy 28:15-68	Luke 18:1-30	Psalm 47:1-9
Thu 18	Deuteronomy 29:1 – 30:10	Luke 18:31 – 19:10	Proverbs 10:1-10
Fri 19	Deuteronomy 30:11 – 31:29	Luke 19:11-44	Psalm 48:1-8
Sat 20	Deuteronomy 31:30 – 32:52	Luke 19:45 – 20:26	Psalm 48:9-14
Sun 21	Deuteronomy 33:1 – 34:12	Luke 20:27 – 21:4	Psalm 49:1-20

Mon 22	Joshua 1:1 – 2:24	Luke 21:5-38	Proverbs 10:11-20
Tue 23	Joshua 3:1 – 5:12	Luke 22:1-38	Psalm 50:1-15
Wed 24	Joshua 5:13 – 7:26	Luke 22:39-62	Psalm 50:16-23
Thu 25	Joshua 8:1 – 9:15	Luke 22:63 – 23:25	Psalm 51:1-9
Fri 26	Joshua 9:16 – 10:43	Luke 23:26-56	Proverbs 10:21-30
Sat 27	Joshua 11:1 – 12:24	Luke 24:1-35	Psalm 51:10-19
Sun 28	Joshua 13:1 – 14:15	Luke 24:36-53	Psalm 52:1-9
Mon 29	Joshua 15:1 – 16:10	John 1:1-28	Psalm 53:1-6
Tue 30	Joshua 17:1 – 18:28	John 1:29-51	Proverbs 10:31 – 11:8

Circuit Book Club



'Lydia' A Story Discussion Dates are as follows: All on Tuesdays

2nd April – Session 5: Chapters 15-20

16th April – Session 6: Chapters 21-27

30th April – Session 7: Chapters 28 – Epilogue

Encircled in Care Course

PLEASE NOTE: The Encircled in Care Course will finish its last two sessions (listed below) after Easter, dates to be arranged. This is due to the Circuit Lent Course being run at both Northam and Torrington this year to just as many people as possible the chance to engage with this important season in the life of our church year.

Session 9: Loss and Bereavement			
In this session we... increase the confidence of all in working through issues of loss with people, consider how churches might help people 'return' following the loss of a loved one, and explore the stages of grief.	TBC	Northam	14:00
	TBC	Torrington	14:00
Session 10: Domestic Abuse			
In this session we.. recognise that Domestic abuse affects people within the life of the Church as well as in the wider community, reflect on the issues of domestic abuse, and consider what appropriate responses we might make.	TBC	Northam	14:00
	TBC	Torrington	14:00

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Online Training Programme 2023 - Foundation

This training will now only be delivered in person in the Circuit.

CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING FOUNDATION TRAINING SESSION – Dates for this will be announced later so people who need to do the training again as a 'Refresher' can be accommodated.

Thanks for all those who attended the last 'In person' Foundation Training – another will be arranged & details sent out.

**OPTIONS FOR ADVANCED TRAINING:
E:Learning - Online through the MCBX platform**

A learning experience which allows the learner to move through the course at their own pace. With a facilitated Gathered Session at the end of the learning via Zoom. Booking for this option will now be through Eventbrite, where delegates will first book onto a gathered course, which will generate their registration to the e:learning site automatically. These dates will be advertised shortly.

Streamed Training Events

Designed to offer a face-to-face experience for more people across the District at once, the Advanced Module (Live-Streamed) allows leaders in your church to do this training all together, but without needing to travel as far. Teaching will be offered over a live-stream, delivered via YouTube, with space for conversations in your local context, and ways to interact with the trainers. This option is open to Circuit Safeguarding officers to host in Circuit venues. Individuals will not be able to register and do course alone

Onsite Facilitated Training Events

Central locations will host District wide events facilitated by the District Safeguarding Officer, Revd Julian Albrow and Learning Network colleagues.

The courses coming to PEMD in 2023-2024:
South Devon Circuit. Saturday 8th June 2024. 9-30am/4-00pm.
More details regarding venues to follow.

Streamed Training Event explained and booking guidance

Designed to offer a face-to-face experience for more people across the District at once, the Advanced Module (Live-Streamed) allows leaders in your church to do this training all together, but without needing to travel as far. Teaching will be offered over a live-stream, delivered via YouTube, with space for conversations in your local context, and ways to interact with the trainers.

We will offer the Advanced Module Training as a live stream. This includes:

- All the teaching content, taught in-front of a live class, with breaks for discussion and coffee in your local venues
- A way to interact with the training team live during question and answer sessions
- A register sheet to enable your attendees to have a certificate of completion. This will be sent to them directly, or to yourself if for later distribution, via email

Host churches will offer:

- A warm, comfortable venue for 4.5hrs of training
- A chaplain for attendees
- A Circuit Safeguarding coordinator/officer for local questions and answers
- A way to show and interact with a live-stream, suitable for the size of your group. The solution you use depends on the size of the group: for a 5 or below, a TV with a laptop plugged in may suffice. A larger group may benefit from using a projector and PA system connected to a computer. Regardless, a reliable internet connection will be required throughout the event

- Printed or electronic copies of the Participant resources available here:
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/training/advanced-module-2023-edition-participants/advanced-module-2023-edition-materials/>.

To register your venue as a host:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/creating-safer-space-advanced-module-live-streamed-registration-588260221157?aff=oddtcreator>

TORRINGTON METHODIST CHAPEL

Torrington Methodist Church welcome all to their Coffee Mornings where delicious Bacon Butties are served and where cakes and bric-a-brac are sold. The next Coffee Morning is on Saturday 20th April from 10am till 12noon.

EVENTS AT ALVERDISCOTT METHODIST CHAPEL

Coffee Morning

The Coffee Morning in March was for **North Devon Talking Newspapers**, and we raised £125, so well done to everyone. The next one is on Thursday 4th April and is for **Water-Aid**. Please do come along - between 10am and noon - to support this worthwhile cause.

Garden Club

The Garden Club meetings are normally on the last Monday of each month (except Bank Holidays when it will usually be the Monday before) at 2.30pm in the Chapel schoolroom. The next one is on 25 March when there will be a talk by Alison and Stuart Mair on the subject of Beekeeping. Everyone is welcome and the cost is just £1.00.

For the latest information contact Philip Squire on 01237 473692.

BUCKLAND BREWER

We continue to Live Stream Services on the Buckland Brewer Methodist Church You-Tube Channel on the 3rd & 4th Sunday in the Month & the 5th Sunday if there is one.

The Weekly '**Time Together**' **Toddler Group** continues Mondays, during Term Time at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** with both Methodist & Anglican volunteers being present. We meet on Monday's from 9.30am to about 12noon, The cost is £1.50 per family– so if anyone is aware of any Babies & Toddlers, who with their parents, grandparents or carers are looking for a 'chilled out' session of play & chat with tea/coffee/biscuits – just point them in the direction of Buckland Chapel – Dave Watson 07484 223515 or bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com

We are back again on Monday 15th April.

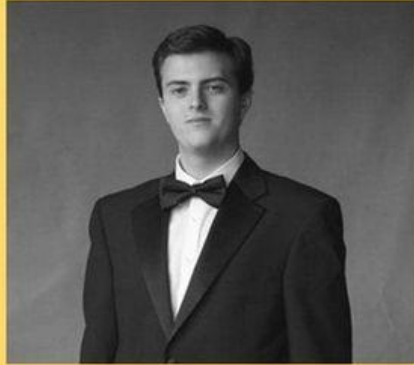
The **Wednesday Weekly Coffee Morning** also continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** from 10am-12noon – this is for **ALL** but especially for those who have moved into the parish/village since lockdown or anyone who would like to meet others in the community over a mug of tea/coffee with Biscuits & possibly Cake!!

The **Monthly 'Mini Market'**, raising funds for Community Groups in Buckland take place at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church**. – Tea/Coffee/Biscuits will be available for Chapel Funds. The next Market is on Saturday 13th April.

The **Community Choir**, based in the Chapel has returned to practice after having a couple of months off.

Gregory Steward in Concert

A concert of light opera and favourites from musicals
in aid of Buckland Brewer's Education Support Fund



Friday 19th April 7.30pm

Buckland Brewer Parish Church

Tenor Gregory Steward is a graduate of the Welsh College
of Music and Drama

Tickets £10; Children and students free

Available at the door or from 01237 451193/ 452389,
Buckland Brewer Community shop,
Torrington Jewellers, Walter Henry's
Bookshop (Bideford), or
e-mail pblosseedsupp@gmail.com

Drinks and nibbles will be available in the interval

Sponsored by West End Precision Ltd

NORTHAM AND BIDEFORD BIBLE STUDIES UPDATE

An Invitation to Northam and Bideford's Bible Study

'ON THE THIRD DAY' - A York Course

Dates APRIL 30th MAY 7th 14th 22nd and 28th

This group is open to all: If YOU would like to join us you would be **VERY WELCOME**,
even if you can only come now and then.

We are very much a discussion group where we all learn from each other.

We meet on Tuesday Afternoons at 2pm – except on May 22nd which is a Wednesday.

At the home of Diana Yendall.

01237 477836 or 01237 425361

Led by Julia Spencer.

01237 425361

Session 1. April 30th - John 20: 19-28 - **Have I got News for you**

1. The empty tomb
2. The resurrection appearances
3. The transformation of the disciples
4. The existence of the church
5. What they said about the Church

Session 2. May 7th - 1 Corinthians 15: 1-8 - **SO WHAT? The implications of the resurrection**

1. Death is defeated.
2. Jesus is vindicated as the Messiah, The Son of God.
3. The Cross is victory, not a defeat.
4. We have seen the beginning of the End.
5. Christ is alive!

Session 3. May 14th - Colossians 3: 1-4 & 12-17 - **LET HIM EASTER IN US**

1. We are an Easter people and alleluia is our song
2. We have new moral imperatives
3. We have a transforming agenda.
4. We offer hope to a world of confusion and low hope
5. We can approach death confidently.

Session 4. WEDNESDAY May 22nd - Romans 8: 31-39 - **Celebrating and praying Easter.**

1. Celebrating the Day
2. Praying Easter
3. Light and Dark

Session 5. May 28th - 1Peter 2: 9-12 and 23-25 - **A Risen Church**

1. Joyful
2. Life affirming
3. Flexible
4. Everyone a winner
5. A Church that looks like Jesus

MILTON DAMEREL NEWS

Our new **BIBLE STUDY** group, a joint 'venture' with Thornbury St Peter's Church, will be meeting in our Schoolroom, at Milton Damerel Chapel, and will usually be held fortnightly. A warm welcome to anyone wishing to join us. This will be led by Revd Stephen Skinner. During Lent the sessions will be weekly starting on Tuesday 20th February at 10.30am until Tuesday 19th March. We will be using a Study entitled 'A way through the Wilderness' by Paula Goodier. Please contact David & Janet Fisher (Tel: 07858506973) or Grace Millman (Tel: 01409261251) for further details.
Many thanks – Grace

MILTON DAMEREL METHODIST CHURCH

GRASS CUTTING of GRAVEYARD

We need a person(s) to take on this work for the graveyard requiring grass cutting and strimming and weed control.
Visits required about every 3 - 4 weeks during 'growing season' depending on weather conditions and vegetation growth.
Enquiries to Grace Millman Tel: 01409 261251 / 07970 792557

CHRISTIAN AID COFFEE MORNING - (Maggie Smale)

A happy time was had by all last Saturday in our Church Hall,
At the 'Christian Aid' coffee morning with many an exciting stall.
There was much hustle bustle and a lot of noisy chatter,
And Lindsey and Lynne's yummy cakes trying to make us fatter.

There were plants galore big and small, many shapes and sizes,
Flowers in cups with colours bright they ALL could win prizes.
Amazing cards without compare made with love and much care
So WE can write our greetings there and all OUR love to share.

'Christian Aid' helps families in need, usually result of peoples greed,
Such terrible happening in the world that we read,
People with NO cakes so yummy, but WE help put food in their hungry tummy.
That time for US with friends raising money, makes OUR day just a little more sunny.

LANGTREE METHODIST CHURCH

Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal Delivery Update

We decided last year to support the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal as in previous years. This is an international charity which aims to give Christmas gifts (packed in a shoebox) to children in need across the world.

In November a total of 146 thoughtfully filled boxes were taken to Grosvenor Church, Barnstaple.

These boxes were delivered to children in Belarus, Central Asia and Serbia.

Thank you for your continued support and help with this charity.
Many blessings - Cathy



BIDEFORD STREET PASTORS

Greetings in Jesus' name.

Thank you for all the support you have given us in the past. The future beckons.

We are being asked by the Police and the Town Centre Partnership to increase the frequency of our patrols, so we need all Street Pastors to cover as many patrols as possible. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel the last 3 scheduled outings for lack of volunteers. Please consider if you are able to cover any Saturday nights or Friday afternoons this month and let me know by email.

Without new recruits we will be unable to continue and this valuable church outreach into the community will be lost. A recruitment campaign is starting now. At this stage we are looking for about 20 new volunteers. The best recruiters are existing Street Pastors! Please look out for possible new volunteers and direct them to me.

We need Street Pastors to cover:

Saturdays 10.00 p.m. - 2.30 a.m.

Afternoons (initially Fridays) 2.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Training will start on 18 May so now is the time to start the application process.

God bless you – Duncan Withall

The fields are very white for harvest but where are the labourers?

Exciting times are being offered to Bideford Street Pastors, but we do not have enough volunteers to take advantage of them. Recent meetings with the Town Partnership and Police have highlighted the continuing need for our presence at weekend evenings but also afternoons during the week.

Since starting in 2009, Bideford Street Pastors and School Pastors has provided a supporting presence in the town; firstly, during the evening and night-time economy (ENTE) but also at daytime events.

During nearly 15 years of caring, listening and helping we have.

1. been credited with enabling a reduction in anti-social behaviour of more than 50%.
2. engaged with hundreds of people needing support and
3. even be credited with physically saving several lives.

There have been a lot of faith-based conversations too; a privilege afforded to us by our Lord and the people we meet.

Street Pastors are church members who have a caring heart to take the love of Jesus into the community. People are pleased to see us when we patrol and continually thank us for being there for them. We provide the training, uniform and the tools you will need.

Our active volunteer base has shrunk due to a combination of retirement after long service, illness and promotion (to glory!).

To keep this valuable Christian outreach going we need to recruit up to 20 additional Street Pastors and several Prayer Pastors. Yes, to keep going we need you!

A new training programme starts on 18 May. To join that, apply now....

- I. Ask your church leader for an application pack or
- II. Email bideford@streetpastors.org.uk

God bless you – Duncan.

Lamenting and Hoping: A resurrection song for Christ and the world by Ken Howcroft.

Why, O Lord, do you seem far off?
Why are you hard to find in these times of trouble,
when the world is distorted, disrupted
and fragmenting around us,
when abuse, isolation and broken relationships
surround us,
and we find ourselves awash with tears
in the deserts of desolation?
How has it come to this,
when people rage and politicians thunder
as waves of pandemics crash down upon them,
and we are all drowning in sickness, poverty and war?
Save us, Lord!
The waters are up to our neck.

Where is your healing?
So when you speak words of peace and forgiveness,
how can we hear them,
and experience your grace,
allowing it to transform us and our ways?
We have heard of new life,
of new beginnings
and a return to a normal
reshaped from the past for the future.
We have heard the talk,
but how are we to walk it?

We are out of our minds with anxiety and fear,
yet suddenly and unexpectedly
you come to be with us,
in our meetings and homes;
in our conversation on a journey;
and when we are striving to go back to what we did before,
trying to fish but catching
nothing.

Again and again
you come to us,
gathering us for meals,
strengthening us,
comforting our confusion,

prompting us to hear your voice
as we read the scriptures in heartening new ways;
miraculous banquets celebrating new life in the world,
foretastes in the present
of our past coming to us
reformed from the future:
a new heaven and earth but no longer the seas of chaos;
a new paradise garden now found in the city;
and a new people of God now including all peoples.
But as suddenly and unexpectedly as you come,
you vanish.
We cannot touch you.
We cannot hold on to you.
You are gone.

Why abandon us, O Lord?
Are you raising us up to forsake us again?

Or...
are you really just going ahead,
and if we share in your mission,
is it there we shall see you?

Remember, you say,
that heavenly banquet which we shared on that night,
celebrating the triumphs of God's love
rooted in the Cross.
Did you see when I showed you my body
that it still had the holes from the nails
and the wound in my side,
raised to new life?

So, Lord,
are you gone from our table
to be with what the world belittled,
to create there your feast,
sharing food with the hungry and drink with the thirsty,
welcoming migrants and strangers,
providing cover for those with inadequate shelter or clothing,
caring for those who are sick,
and visiting those locked away?
Is it as we become one with you and with them
that they share with us
the bread of life
and the wine of mercy?

Is it when tears of gladness become tears of sadness
that tears of sorrow become tears of joy,
suffering, dying,
despairingly waiting,

rising and praising
commingled?
Is this the pain
that those who seem impaired
sometimes seem able to bear
and redeem?

Lord, help us become an openly broken people,
open to be raised to life with you,
raised with wounds still in hands and side.
As you wept over Lazarus with Martha and Mary,
and wept over the city, both institutions and people,
may we weep with those who weep
fresh tears of grace,
and discover in you the grace of tears.

April 2021; revised Easter 2024

Every Monday, a short article is posted which brings some theology to bear on an issue or topic. This offers some theological reflection people can read quickly to start their week, ponder on and contribute to as the week goes on. It is a way of flexing and using our theological muscles to keep them fit, as well as an opportunity for those contributing to offer new ways of thinking about a topic or looking at an issue theologically perhaps for the first time.

The **Theology Everywhere** website is made available by the Methodist Church as one of the actions being taken to create a learning church. Contributors are from varied backgrounds; many but not all are Methodist. The views expressed are the responsibility of the authors and do not represent the position of the Methodist Church.

The moderator of Theology Everywhere is Rev'd Dr George Bailey. Enquiries should be addressed to him at george.bailey@methodist.org.uk

Ken Howcroft is a Methodist presbyter, now living in retirement as a supernumerary in Lichfield but is still kept busy in the life of the Church. As a former President of the Methodist Conference, he has chaired a number of bodies, including the Task group on Marriage and Relationships which produced the report 'God in Love Unites Us'. He is the President of the Governing Body of the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education, Birmingham. He serves as a member of the Walking with Micah Reference Group. He has a passion for biblical theology.

EXTENDING A WARM WELCOME TO COMMUNITIES

20 March 2024

Over the winter, the cost of living crisis continued to bite into stretched household budgets and Methodist Churches across the Connexion were on hand to provide a warm, welcoming space for their communities. Warm Welcome, the new name for the Warm Spaces initiative, emphasised the need to tackle isolation, as well as the cold, by building connections and community.

Over 280 Methodist Churches were registered with the Warm Welcome website for the winter. Many more simply opened their doors and events to those who were cold and in need of company.

The Methodist Church was second only to the Church of England in providing the most Warm Welcome spaces in the UK. However, measuring the scheme's impact is about far more than the numbers says Andrea Campanale, Mission Projects Officer, who takes care of the Warm Welcome initiative for the Methodist Church. "It's about local churches making a difference in their communities. Although kick-started by the cost of living crisis and the shock rise in energy prices last winter, research showed that the value of Warm Welcome spaces was in combatting loneliness and isolation.

"Neighbours who have lived close to each other for years have got to know each other at a Warm Welcome space and have grown into relationships that now provide support and company"

Many of the Warm Welcome spaces are becoming community hubs. Open all year round, one idea being considered is how Warm Welcome could provide essential respite from the heat as summer temperatures increase to dangerous levels.

The Warm Welcome Space at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Sheringham is open each Tuesday between 10am and 3pm to welcome friends from the local community. Tea, coffee, hot chocolate are offered all day and at lunchtime there is soup and a roll.

Barbara George is a church steward and one of the volunteers for the Warm Welcome at St Andrew's Methodist. "We have a table of ladies whose friendship has grown and they enjoy playing a game of cards together or a game of bingo. Two gentlemen enjoyed playing backgammon and chess together. It became obvious that as well as people having a warm safe space to meet, the need to challenge social isolation was especially important."

Those who used the space were keen to share how it made a difference to their lives. "I've enjoyed sitting and chatting; having people to listen; lovely soup and unlimited tea and coffee," said one. Another commented, "Our flat suffers from being in a very cold building. The social interaction has been equally beneficial and we have had lots of fun and laughter with the obvious health benefits that brings."

A poem by someone who received a Warm Welcome at a Methodist Church.

Tuesdays are the highlight of our week
When with friends we get the chance to speak
About where we've been and what we've done
And the fun we have is second to none.

So thanks Julie for all you do
For the coffee, the tea and lunches too
I know we may cause you a bit of strife
But having friends gives us a purpose in life

The following is the Plan for April & May

HC= Holy Communion
 MC= Methodist Church
 Café= Café Worship
 T = Transport

PC= At Parish Church
 C& F= Coffee and Fellowship
 SB=Sunday Breakfast
 LUAL – Light Up A Light

Post codes of Chapels

Alverdiscott – EX31 3PT
 Black Torrington – EX21 5QF
 Langtree – EX38 8NF
 Milton Damerel – EX22 7DJ
 Parkham – EX39 5PG
 Sheepwash – EX21 5NA

Bideford (High Street) – EX39 2AN
 Buckland Brewer – EX39 5LP
 Littleham – EX39 5HW
 Northam – EX39 1BS
 Shebbear – EX21 5SJ
 Torrington – EX38 8AL

Lectionary Readings – April

Easter 2 Year B - Acts 4.32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1.1-2.2; John 20.19-31
 Easter 3 Year B - Acts 3.12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3.1-7; Luke 24.36b-48
 Easter 4 Year B - Acts 4.5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3.16-24; John 10.11-18
 Easter 5 Year B - Acts 8.26-40; Psalm 22.25-31; 1 John 4.7-21; John 15.1-8

Lectionary Readings – May

Easter 6 Year B - Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17
 Easter 7 Year B - Acts 1:15-17,21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19
 Pentecost Year B - Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 104:24-34,35b; Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27;16:4b-15
 Trinity Sunday Year B - Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Activities, Events and Meetings - April 2024

Mon 01	Easter Monday		
Tue 02	World Autism Awareness Day		
	Circuit Book Club (Session 5: Lydia, Chapters 15-20)	19:00	Zoom
Wed 03	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Worship and Community Lunch (<i>Booking for Lunch required</i>)	11:30	Northam
Thu 04	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Alverdiscott
Fri 05			
Sat 06	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 07			
Mon 08	The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary		
Tue 09			
Wed 10	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 11	'Time for God' Quiet Morning	10:00-12:30	Northam
	Time Out Lunch Club	12:15	Black Torrington Village Hall
	Thursday Fellowship (Quiz & Cake)	14:15	Northam
Fri 12			
Sat 13	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 14	Coffee and Fellowship	10:30	Shebbear (Lake)

	Sunday Breakfast	11:00	Parkham
	Circuit Online Evening Worship	18:30	Zoom
Mon 15	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Shebbear Pastoral Committee	19:00	Shebbear (Lake)
Tue 16	Toddlers Tune Time	09:00-10:30	Northam
	Torrington with Alverdiscott Pastoral Committee	14:30	Torrington
	Circuit Book Club (Session 6: Lydia, Chapters 21-27)	19:00	Zoom
Wed 17	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	West Torridge Pastoral Committee	14:00	Littleham
Thu 18	Bideford Pastoral Committee	10:00	Bideford
Fri 19	Northam Pastoral Committee	14:00	Northam
Sat 20	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Torrington
Sun 21	Café Worship	11:00	Milton Damerel
	Presidential Visit District Service	18:00	Bude Methodist Church
Mon 22	International Mother Earth Day Stephen Lawrence Day*		
	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 23	Toddlers Tune Time	09:00-10:30	Northam
	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting	14:00	Torrington Manse
Wed 24	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 25	Mark the Evangelist World Malaria Day Thursday Fellowship (First Responder)	14:15	Northam
Fri 26			
Sat 27	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Bideford
	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
	PEMD Representative Synod	10:00-16:00	Temple Methodist Church, Taunton
Sun 28	International Workers' Memorial Day**		
	Fellowship Service (Sankey Evening)	16:00	Northam
Mon 29	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Tue 30	Toddlers Tune Time	09:00-10:30	Northam
	Circuit Book Club (Session 7: Lydia, Chapters 28 – Epilogue)	19:00	Zoom

* Stephen Lawrence Day is an opportunity for people, communities, and organisations to come together and honour Stephen's life and legacy, stand up against discrimination in our daily lives, and work towards a more hopeful tomorrow. Through reflection, learning, and action, we can inspire change and create a better future for the next generation.

** International Workers' Memorial Day takes place annually around the world on 28 April, an international day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, injured, or made unwell by their work.

	Apr 7	Apr 14	Apr 21	Apr 28
	Easter 2	Easter 3	Easter 4	Easter 5
At Home Worship	X	Vidamour Zoom 6.30pm	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am
Bideford 10.30am	Bate	Macbeth	Burgon	Vidamour
Northam 10.30am	Hall-Tomkin	Hill	Vidamour	Davis Fellowship @4pm
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Vidamour on 12th Apr	X	D Watson on 26th Apr
Langtree 11am	LA	@Parish Church	Blackhall	@Lake
Milton Damerel 11am	X	Price	Cafe	@Lake
Shebbear 10.30am	C&F	Blackhall	United @Parish Church	Harris United
Sheepwash 11am	Ley HC	@Baptist Church	@Parish Church	@Village Hall
	TORRINGTON	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST CHURCH
Alverdiscott 11am	Potter	X	Spencer T	X
Torrington 10.30am	Sambles	Harris	Bate	Sheriff
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC) 10am (MC)	Spencer T @Methodist Chapel	F Watson @Parish Church	Skinner HC 9.30am @Parish Church	Blackhall
Littleham 10.30am	X	D Watson	X	Potter HC
Parkham 11am	Harris	Vidamour SB @10am	@Parish Church	HC @Parish Church

District Service on Sunday 21st April at 6pm at Bude Methodist Church with the President of Methodist Conference

	May 5 Easter 6	May 12 Easter 7	May 19 Pentecost	May 26 Trinity
At Home Worship	X	Potter Zoom 6.30pm Easter Offering	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am
Bideford 10.30am	Withall	Price	Withall	Potter
Northam 10.30am	Vidamour HC	Spencer T Christian Aid	Harris Circuit Celebration 4pm	Bate
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Blackhall HC on 10th May	X	Vidamour on 24th May
Langtree 11am	Hall-Tomkin	@Parish Church	Bate	@Lake
Milton Damerel 11am	X	Ley HC	Cafe	@Lake
Shebbear 10.30am	Booth HC	C&F	United @Parish Church	Withall United
Sheepwash 11am	Blackhall	@Baptist Church	@Parish Church	@Village Hall
	TORRINGTON	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST CHURCH
Alverdiscott 11am	Hill HC	X	Ley	X
Torrington 10.30am	D Watson	Blackhall HC	F Watson	Blackhall
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC) 10am (MC)	Hayes HC Parish Church @9.30am	D Watson @Parish Church	 Anglican	 Burgon HC
Littleham 10.30am	X	Davis	X	Vidamour
Parkham 11am	F Watson	SB @10am Parish Church	Blackhall HC	@Parish Church

Thursday 9th May – Ascension Day 4pm at Torrington

TEA TIME PUZZLE BREAK

March 2024 - Solutions

BIBLE CROSSWORD IV - SOLUTION

B	E	M	O	A	N		F	O	R	E	K	N	E	W
R		O		T			P		P		A		E	
E	Q	U	I	T	Y		S	E	N	A	T	O	R	S
A	N	A		R		N	P		M		T			
D	E	T	A	I	N	E	D		T	H	R	I	C	E
T		A		N		V		R		R				R
H	E	I	R		R	E	V	E	L	A	T	I	O	N
		N		D		N		P		S		N		
M	E	S	S	E	N	G	E	R	S		S	T	I	R
U				S		E		O		M		E		E
R	I	B	B	O	N		T	O	M	O	R	R	O	W
R		O		L		H		F		R		P		A
A	S	S	U	A	G	E	D		U	S	U	R	E	R
I		O		T		R				E		E		D
N	U	M	B	E	R	E	D		P	L	A	T	E	S

Across: 1 Bemoan, 4 Foreknew, 9 Equity, 10 Senators, 12 Detained, 13 Thrice, 15 Heir, 16 Revelation, 19 Messengers, 20 Stir, 23 Ribbon, 25 Tomorrow, 27 Assuaged, 28 Usurer, 29 Numbered, 30 Plates.

Down: 1 Breadth, 2 Mountains, 3 Attain, 5 Open, 6 Epaphras, 7 Naomi, 8 Western, 11 Revenge, 14 Reproof, 17 Interpret, 18 Desolate, 19 Murrain, 21 Rewards, 22 Morsel, 24 Bosom, 26 Here.

Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.org.uk

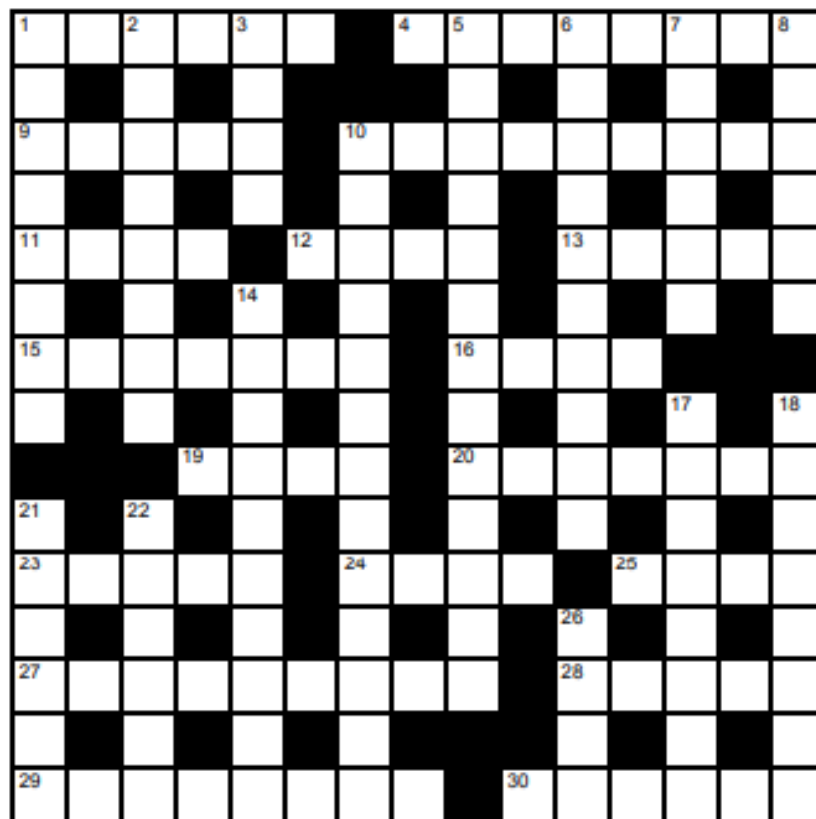
Garden of Gethsemane Word Search – Solution

S	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D	Y	R	F	W	S	A	H	U
C	S	T	S	E	I	R	P	F	E	I	H	C	D	R	A	P
T	I	J	O	S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G	O	R	R	S	M
O	M	C	A	T	L	T	I	C	U	P	W	Z	O	E	B	Q
I	O	F	L	M	V	E	S	P	Z	Q	J	C	W	S	B	B
R	N	O	M	Y	E	P	H	B	S	A	K	N	S	T	J	B
A	D	P	C	D	P	S	E	X	I	O	H	R	V	E	H	W
C	T	X	P	E	X	T	S	V	X	O	N	L	J	D	C	O
S	B	O	D	Y	R	G	U	S	J	L	X	O	V	W	T	Y
I	S	E	N	A	M	E	S	H	T	E	G	L	F	E	A	A
S	Q	I	Y	R	U	S	E	N	Q	E	C	S	B	M	W	U
A	P	E	K	P	C	R	J	U	G	A	R	D	E	N	A	Y
D	D	R	X	R	N	B	P	K	R	P	O	U	X	Z	O	N
U	F	V	I	G	E	L	D	E	R	S	W	L	C	H	Z	C
J	N	B	N	V	A	J	Y	A	Y	O	D	C	S	C	U	D
A	E	Z	R	A	B	B	I	W	N	Y	R	K	Z	G	K	Z
S	C	Z	H	G	C	Y	Q	E	L	N	U	Y	Q	G	V	Y

BIBLE CROSSWORD V

Across

- 1 Silenced (6)
- 4 Allocated (8)
- 9 Kingdoms or domains (5)
- 10 Babylonians (9)
- 11 Left behind when Peter and Andrew followed Jesus (4)
- 12 Lame man's entrance to the house where Jesus healed him (4)
- 13 Depart (5)
- 15 Stamens of a crocus (7)
- 16 New thought (4)
- 19 Unhearing (4)
- 20 Absconded (7)
- 23 Enticed (5)
- 24 The coldest of the ten plagues (4)
- 25 Insult rendering the giver in danger of hell fire (4)
- 27 First visitors to the baby Jesus (9)
- 28 Twinkle (5)
- 29 Sin (8)
- 30 Physical state after absence of food (6)



by Philologus

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Down

- 1 Written on the Priest's headband (8)
- 2 To set apart for sacred use (8)
- 3 Wise men's domain (4)
- 5 Location where Jesus met the disciples for breakfast (3,2,8)
- 6 Greediness (10)
- 7 Cured of leprosy by washing in the River Jordan (6)
- 8 Crockery (6)
- 10 Worn by Jesus on the cross (5,2,6)
- 14 Amity between David and Jonathan (10)
- 17 Against (8)
- 18 Forbidden in the seventh commandment (8)
- 21 A place to pray (6)
- 22 Country visited by Paul (6)
- 26 Hairy Old Testament hunter (4)

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS WORD SEARCH

R Z H S Q R C M A M E S S I A H S
 V Q J D D L G P W O R S H I P Y E
 A Z M R R I O Q S F N P S T O N E
 N H S A T R S U A K S M R I S E N
 G T A U Q M P C V T S G A O A M R
 E I L G N E E L I L A G W R U B E
 L A V W T O L G O P U P T K Y E S
 W F A R E J I D R Q L H R W G K U
 V U T F E H E S W E Q E Y V K R R
 V I I Q M G V M S U J K S G W A R
 Y L O T P N M E A I W O M C E P E
 T R N P T M L K R W M R I F D G C
 Y T O X Y T E T E R N A L C V R T
 W T K L S H O R I P M Z O S E A I
 I V O O G O K J E S U S V J S V O
 V S P M A P M A G D A L E N E E N
 O A H R B E L I G H T N I N G Y A

ANGEL	GALILEE	LIGHTNING	RESURRECTION
APOSTLES	GLORY	LOVE	RISEN
DISCIPLES	GOSPEL	MAGDALENE	SALVATION
EARTHQUAKE	GRAVE	MARY	SAVIOR
EMPTY	GUARDS	MESSIAH	STONE
ETERNAL	HOPE	MISSION	TOMB
FAITH	JESUS	REJOICE	WORSHIP
FEAR	LIFE		