

TORRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2024 - Issue 146

Welcome to Edition Number 146

**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.

Circuit Contact details: -

Superintendent Minister – Rev Rob Blackhall – 01805 628041 – robertjblackhall@gmail.com

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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

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer stands at the heart of our prayer life. It is the pray that Jesus taught to his followers. Some would say, with some justification, that is the only prayer we need. It says it all.

I have highlighted **Thy kingdom come**.

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

Since it began in May 2016, God has grown TKC from a dream of possibility into a movement which unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions- so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Every person, household and church are encouraged to pray during the 11 days in their own way. They hope & prayer, that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.

Specifically, they again invite each and every Christian across the globe to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 people who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

To mark the **start and end of Thy Kingdom Come** we will be holding an event at **Torrington on Thursday 9th May at 4pm – Ascension Day**.

Similarly, there will be a **celebration at Northam on Sunday 19th May at 4pm; Pentecost**.

There will be an **opportunity to pray together at Bideford on Tuesday 14th May from 10am until 12 noon**.

Prayer is vital to the Christian life. There are many episodes in Jesus' life where he goes off to pray – often alone; sometimes, but not always, at times of great stress such as in the garden of Gethsemane. Sometimes, those prayers are short, for example on the cross.

That prayer is very much part of the early church's life is evident from Paul's letter.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

To others prayer is a way of life, a state of being; of continually awareness of the presence of God in our lives.

So, why the need of Thy Kingdom Come? Well maybe an opportunity to evaluate our prayer life, together and as individuals. Or, just to take the opportunity to pray.

I commend **Thy Kingdom Come** to you.

With every blessing - Rob

MAY DATES

Wednesday 1 st	10-12 Time for God	Black Torrington
Thursday 9 th	4pm Ascension Day Start of TKC	Torrington

Monday 13th
Tuesday 14th
Sunday 19th

7pm Treasurer's Meeting
10am-12noon TKC
4pm Pentecost Celebration

Torrington
Bideford
Northam



Prayer Journal



Novena

These two resources for TKC are available in the circuit. Copies will be sent to the Chapels.

Thursday 9th	4pm	Ascension Day	Torrington
		Start of TKC	
Tuesday 14th	10am-12noon	TKC	Bideford
Sunday 19th	4pm	Pentecost Celebration	Northam

BIBLE MONTH - JUNE 2024 - GENESIS

There are two strands to Bible Month

i) **Individually**

Daily Reading Guide Available on request from Frank Watson and in Chapels
Daily reading to work through Genesis in the month of June.

ii) **Study Sessions**

Tuesdays 2pm at Northam on June 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th

Thursdays 7.30pm at Langtree on June 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

The Sovereign God who creates Genesis 1-11
Genesis 1:1-2:3

The God who calls and Blesses Genesis 12-25
Genesis 12:1-3
Genesis 22:1-15

The God who comes to people in their struggles Genesis 25-36
Genesis 25:21-23
Genesis 28:11-17
Genesis 32:24-32

The God who Confirms and safeguards Divine Purposes Genesis 37-50
Genesis 37:1-8
Genesis 39:2-3, 21 and 23
Genesis 50:15-21

FROM THE CIRCUIT STEWARDS

The Revd. Robert Blackhall has informed us of his intention to retire in August 2025. In line with Methodist stationing procedure the Invitation Committee will consult during the summer so as to draw up a Profile of a new Superintendent.

Further details will be made available when the programme for that is fully worked out. At the next Church Councils, the future of each Church and its mission will be discussed. All members and friends will be welcome at these meetings.

FROM REVD ANDREW VIDAMOUR

Dear friends,

Ascensiontide, as a season in the Christian calendar, is sometimes underplayed, though in recent years it has been partly reclaimed by Thy Kingdom Come, an ecumenical prayer initiative centred on the ten-day period between Ascension Day and Pentecost (9th-19th May this year).

So why is the Feast of the Ascension sometimes overlooked? Perhaps partly because it is mysterious and its significance is hard to convey in words. I remember when I was in Infants School, going up the hill from the School to the Parish Church in our West Yorkshire mill village, for an Ascension Day Service, and I wish I could remember how the meaning of the story of the Ascension of Jesus was conveyed to us as such young children.

Though perhaps it is a story easier for children to grasp, with a due sense of awe and wonder. If you start to try and analyse and 'explain' the episode too much, it may be that you then lose some of the essence of it, for to my mind, at least, it is there to say something about who Jesus was (and what his life was for and about) as much as what actually happened.

We read that 'he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight' (Acts 1:9), and rather than speculating about how this applies to the laws of physics, for example, it may be more helpful to draw on words and understandings such as 'exaltation' and 'glorification', which offer a sense that the earthly work of Jesus had been completed and fulfilled, and that now (after a brief pause before Pentecost), it was up (or down) to the followers of Jesus to continue his ministry and mission.

So the Ascension was a marker, a transitional moment, and the few days between this and Pentecost was and is an opportunity to process grief at the loss of Jesus' visible presence, while also preparing for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

With all this in mind, here is a prayer of dedication from St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582):
'Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which to look with Christ's compassion to the world, yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now. Amen.'
Andrew

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION

Revd Andrew Vidamour hopes to run a Church Membership Preparation Course (probably five meetings) for Bideford, Littleham, Northam and Parkham over the Summer. If anyone is interested in this, please let Andrew know.

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 Bible in One Year

May	Old Testament Reading	New Testament Reading	Reading from Psalms/Proverbs
Wed 01	Joshua 19:1 – 21:19	John 2:1-25	Psalms 54:1-7
Thu 02	Joshua 21:20 – 22:34	John 3:1-21	Psalms 55:1-11
Fri 03	Joshua 23:1 – 24:33	John 3:22-36	Psalms 55:12-23
Sat 04	Judges 1:1 – 2:5	John 4:1-26	Proverbs 11:9-18
Sun 05	Judges 2:6 – 3:31	John 4:27-42	Psalms 56:1-13
Mon 06	Judges 4:1 – 5:31	John 4:43 – 5:15	Psalms 57:1-6
Tue 07	Judges 6:1 – 7:8a	John 5:16-30	Psalms 57:7-11
Wed 08	Judges 7:8b – 8:35	John 5:31-47	Proverbs 11:19-28
Thu 09	Judges 9:1-57	John 6:1-24	Psalms 58:1-11
Fri 10	Judges 10:1 – 11:40	John 6:25-59	Psalms 59:1-8
Sat 11	Judges 12:1 – 13:25	John 6:60 – 7:13	Psalms 59:9-17
Sun 12	Judges 14:1 – 15:20	John 7:14-44	Proverbs 11:29 – 12:7
Mon 13	Judges 16:1 – 17:13	John 7:45 – 8:11	Psalms 60:1-4
Tue 14	Judges 18:1 – 19:30	John 8:12-30	Psalms 60:5-12
Wed 15	Judges 20:1 – 21:25	John 8:31-59	Psalms 61:1-8
Thu 16	Ruth 1:1 – 2:23	John 9:1-34	Proverbs 12:8-17
Fri 17	Ruth 3:1 – 4:22	John 9:35 – 10:21	Psalms 62:1-12
Sat 18	1 Samuel 1:1 – 2:26	John 10:22-42	Psalms 63:1-11
Sun 19	1 Samuel 2:27 – 4:22	John 11:1-44	Psalms 64:1-10
Mon 20	1 Samuel 5:1 – 7:17	John 11:45 – 12:11	Proverbs 12:18-27
Tue 21	1 Samuel 8:1 – 10:8	John 12:12-36	Psalms 65:1-13
Wed 22	1 Samuel 10:9 – 12:25	John 12:37 – 13:17	Psalms 66:1-12
Thu 23	1 Samuel 13:1 – 14:23	John 13:18-38	Psalms 66:13-20
Fri 24	1 Samuel 14:24 – 15:35	John 14:1-31	Proverbs 12:28 – 13:9
Sat 25	1 Samuel 16:1 – 17:37	John 15:1 – 16:4	Psalms 67:1-7
Sun 26	1 Samuel 17:38 – 18:30	John 16:5 – 17:5	Psalms 68:1-6
Mon 27	1 Samuel 19:1 – 20:42	John 17:6-26	Psalms 68:7-14
Tue 28	1 Samuel 21:1 – 23:29	John 18:1-24	Proverbs 13:10-19
Wed 29	1 Samuel 24:1 – 25:44	John 18:25-40	Psalms 68:15-20
Thu 30	1 Samuel 26:1 – 28:25	John 19:1-27	Psalms 68:21-27
Fri 31	1 Samuel 29:1 – 31:13	John 19:28 – 20:9	Psalms 68:28-35

Encircled in Care

The three remaining sessions of our Encircled in Care Course will take place at Northam Methodist Church on the following dates, each session will start at 2pm.

- Thursday 23rd May 2024 – Mental Health
- Thursday 30th May 2024 – Loss and Bereavement
- Thursday 20th June 2024 – Domestic Abuse

Circuit Book Club

The current group have all but finished reading 'Lydia', and have had an enjoyable time doing so. Book Club will now take a break. The plan I have is that the next book will be something a bit a

different, and the group will one meet once to discuss the book. People will have a good amount of time to read the whole book and then we will meet up in person for a couple of years in the summer and discuss the book over tea, coffee and cake. Look out for more information in the June Newsletter.

If anyone would like to borrow a copy of the books we have already read please just contact me and I will happily get a copy to you.

- 'Unleashed' The Acts Church Today by Gavin and Anne Calver
- 'Lydia' A Story by Paula Gooder

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Online Training Programme 2023 - Foundation

This training will now only be delivered in person in & by 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

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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 18th May from 10am till 12noon.

FROM JUDY ROSS @ Northam

PRAYER FROM THE METHODIST DAILY BIBLE STUDY

*Lord, when it is so easy to criticise, help me to encourage;
when it is so easy to grumble, help me to be thankful;
when it is so easy to hold back, help me to offer;
when it is so easy to complain, help me to appreciate;
when it is so easy to hold a grudge, help me to forgive;
when it is so easy put down, help me to build up;
when it is so easy to be negative, help me to be positive;
when it is so easy to be despondent, help me to be hopeful.
And give me the will and strength to do this. Thank you, Lord. Amen*

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 11th May.

Saturday 11th May is also the date of '**PLANTS for SALE' ON THE Village Green from 10am-3pm** – many items for sale including Bedding, Trailing, Perennials & Vegetables. Proceeds for the **Parish Church Roof Restoration Fund.**

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

Buckland Brewer
SAFARI
LUNCH
Sun 26th May
Adults £12.50 &
Primary School children £8
under 5s free
Starters & main course - Hall
Desserts - Chapel
Cheese and biscuits - Church
A fun event
with good food & good company.
To book a ticket contact
Betty Banks on 01237 451132

FUNDS ARE FOR METHODIST & PARISH CHURCHES & the HALL

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

Ecumenical Bible Study

Our Bible Study in conjunction with Thornbury/Bradford Anglicans starts again on Tuesday 30th April at 10.30 am in Milton Schoolroom and will continue fortnightly. Revd Stephen Skinner

continues to lead our sessions. We completed the Lent Study based on 'A way through the Wilderness' by Paula Gooder – based on Isaiah 40, providing many insights on how we need to live through and respond to 'wilderness' times. We welcome anyone able to come along and join in – open to all interested in exploring the Bible.

Please contact David & Janet Fisher (Tel: 07858506973) or Grace Millman (Tel: 01409261251) for further details.

BIDEFORD METHODIST CHURCH

An enjoyable evening was had at Bideford Methodist Church on 20 April with Ricky Knight and Jules Moberly raising funds for the Bideford Community Welcome Group to help settle refugee families.



The poster features a blue background with a white central box containing text. At the top, the choir's name is written in a white serif font. Below it is a photograph of the choir members in black robes with blue stoles. A circular logo with the choir's name and the motto 'FIDES. ET. JUSTITIA' is positioned below the photo. The word 'CONCERT' is written in large, bold, red letters. To the left, a black box contains the date and time in white text. To the right, text describes the event's purpose, location, and entrance details. At the bottom, the choir's mission statement and email address are provided.

Barnstaple Ladies Choir



CONCERT

FRIDAY
31 MAY
2024
7.00pm

In aid of **christian aid**

at Bideford High Street
Methodist Church
EX39 2AN

Entrance is free
with collection for Christian Aid

Singing to Entertain and Fundraising for Charity

barnstapleladieschoir@gmail.com

Deep Time **by Frances Young.**

Around eighteen months ago we retired from Birmingham and settled in Sheffield – our 2022 Christmas letter gave notice of our new address. Believe it or not, a contact in the Mid-West of America, prompted doubtless by Wikipedia, responded with the information that there is a Neolithic stone carving in the Eccleshall Woods close by us. For me the woods were already a regular retreat for exercise and reflection, and the search began. Discovery was by no means immediate. Our son eventually found a hint as to its whereabouts and walking “off-piste” in that area I probably passed it at least once without finding it! Then, one day, descending the slope rather than ascending, I almost tripped over a flat rock protruding out of the leaf mould, looked down and there on its top were carved shapes, predominantly spherical – there it was, stylistically similar to carvings we had once seen at Carnac in Brittany, where there are avenues of standing stones and other prehistoric monuments.

Since the discovery I have often included it in my walks, either alone or showing it off to interested visitors. I’ve contemplated it while listening to the amazing variations of a song thrush in spring. I’ve walked to it under the perpendicular fan vaulting of the leafless trees in winter – a natural cathedral. And I have reflected on deep time – the thousands of years that humankind has contemplated the mysteries of which we are a part, responding with art and music, fear and celebration, wondering at beauty and otherness, acknowledging smallness, transience and vulnerability, seeking meaning and truth.

In the perspective of deep time such essentially religious responses to life and its environment are seemingly natural, and in the perspective of multiple historical cultures they are seemingly universal. Yet modernity has produced the first post-religious society, as more than one generation has reacted against the faith of their forebears and deprived the next generation of serious engagement with it. Secularised the world has lost its enchantment. Yet maybe there’s something instinctive in the use of symbols in a search for meaning, something now suppressed by the illusion that truth is mere facticity while metaphor and myth are but the false product of mere imagination?

On a previous occasion I wrote about consciousness and the remarkable work of Iain McGilchrist offering my summary of his work as a neuroscientist with detailed references. His basic thesis is that our culture is dominated by left-brain analytical reasoning and has lost the wisdom that comes from the right-brain’s wholistic response to experience, its capacity to deal with mystery and symbol rather than reduce everything to what is quantifiable, logical and manipulable – indeed, under our control. Wonder, mystery and humility he reckons we need to reclaim: “...while fully acknowledging the problematic nature of the word God, I feel our repudiation of God is not a wise move,” he writes. He affirms metaphor and myth, over against mechanistic reductionism, for “deep truths about reality are likely to appear initially paradoxical” – he cites the way science has uncovered interdependent processes – “flow” rather than “things”. “Mystery does not mean muddled thinking,” he writes; “on the other hand, thinking you could be clear about something which in its nature is essentially mysterious is muddled thinking. Nor does mystery betoken a lack of meaning – rather a superabundance of meaning in relation to our normal finite vision.” He challenges fundamentalisms whether in science or religion – propositions and rationalisation in terms of left-brain analysis may be useful, but such conceptuality needs to be taken up again into the right-brain’s experiential response to the whole. McGilchrist takes on the “New Atheists”, suggesting that other ages and cultures had a wisdom we have simply lost.

Our culture is being challenged from various directions – its exploitation of nature, its casual despoliation and toxic disregard for natural ecologies, its consumerism and constant economic growth, all factors contributing to mass extinctions and climate change... Humankind has overreached itself – been too clever by half ... I guess post-Covid there is more talk of our connectedness to the natural world... but ???

An awareness of deep time – maybe the religious instinct is not quite dead yet ... though I guess institutional religion remains problematic for many – there's a general bias against institutions in our individualistic culture. But might the resurgence of Orthodoxy in the post-communist, once atheistic, societies of Eastern Europe be a sign of religion's ultimate resilience?

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

Frances Young was Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham 1986-2005. She taught New Testament and Early Christian Studies there from 1971, and supervised the President's MA. She was ordained as a Methodist minister in 1983, and still leads worship regularly in her circuit. She remains active in research and writing: *Arthur's Call* (SPCK 2014), subtitled *A Journey of Faith in the Face of Severe Learning Disability*, reflects on the life of her disabled son. She also continues to respond to invitations to lecture, the most recent series being the Didsbury lectures at the Nazarene College in Manchester, now published as *Construing the Cross* (SPCK 2016).

DON'T USE ASYLUM SEEKERS AS A 'POLITICAL FOOTBALL' WARN CHURCH LEADERS

Senior leaders from the Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Churches have expressed their gratitude for those who work alongside refugees and asylum seekers, in the face of rising hostility and unjust malignment of this support from some quarters in recent weeks.

Their statement follows the passing of the Safety of Rwanda Bill through parliament, and news of further lives lost in the English Channel overnight.

"We retain deep misgivings about the Safety of Rwanda Bill, passed in Parliament last night, for the precedent it sets at home and for other countries in how we respond to the most vulnerable. This includes victims of modern slavery and children wrongly assessed as adults, whom we have a duty to protect.

As leaders in Christian churches, we wish to express our profound gratitude to those who live out Jesus's call to feed and clothe the poor, and to welcome the stranger, through their work with asylum seekers and refugees, at times in the face of opposition and prejudice.

We note with sadness and concern the rise in hostility towards those who come to these islands seeking refuge and the way in which the treatment of the refugee and asylum seeker has been used as a political football.

We are disappointed that the kindness and support offered by churches and charities to the people at the heart of this debate - those fleeing war, persecution and violence trying to find a place of safety - has been unjustly maligned by some for political reasons.

In their response to the tragic attack in Clapham earlier this year, some former Home Office ministers, MPs and other commentators sought to portray churches and clergy as deliberately facilitating false asylum claims. It was for this reason, at the request of Anglican leaders, that representatives of our Churches met the Home Secretary in February. When asked, neither he nor officials could provide evidence to support the allegations of widespread abuse. Home Office Ministers have since confirmed this in a written parliamentary answer, and on questioning by the Home Affairs Select Committee. Follow-up meetings have since been agreed to promote closer cooperation and co-working between the churches and the Home Office.

Like so many in this country, we seek to support a system that shows compassion, justice, transparency and speed in its decisions. We grieve the appalling loss of life in the Channel today. There may be differences between our churches and Government on the means by which our asylum system can be fair, effective and respecting of human dignity, but we do agree that borders must be managed and that vulnerable people need protection from people smugglers. We have pledged to continue to work with the Ho Office, and we do so in good faith.”

Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby

Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell

Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees

Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Bishop of Southwark, Christopher Chessun

Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary, The Baptist Union of Great Britain

Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, United Reformed Church General Assembly Moderator

Revd Gill Newton, President of the Methodist Conference

The following is the Plan for 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

Buckland Brewer – EX39 5LP

Littleham – EX39 5HW

Northam – EX39 1BS

Shebbear – EX21 5SJ

Bideford (High Street) – EX39 2AN

Langtree – EX38 8NF

Milton Damerel – EX22 7DJ

Parkham – EX39 5PG

Torrington – EX38 8AL

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

	May 5	May 12	May 19	May 26
	Easter 6	Easter 7	Pentecost	Trinity
At Home Worship	X	Potter Zoom 6.30pm Easter Offering	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am
Bideford 10.30am	Withall	Price	Vidamour HC	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

Activities, Events and Meetings - May 2024

Wed 01	Philip and James, Apostles Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
	Worship and Community Lunch (<i>Booking for Lunch required</i>)	11:30	Northam
Thu 02	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Alverdiscott
Fri 03			
Sat 04	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 05	Rogation Sunday Vocations Sunday Rogation Service followed by Lunch	11:00	Parkham
Mon 06	Early May Bank Holiday		
Tue 07	Toddlers Tune Time	09:00-10:30	Northam
Wed 08	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 09	Ascension Day Thy Kingdom Come (until Sun 19) Thursday Fellowship (Outing) (<i>Booking required</i>) Circuit Reflective Service for Ascension	16:00	Torrington
Fri 10			
Sat 11	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 12	Christian Aid Week (until Sat 18) Christian Aid Service Christian Aid Service Coffee and Fellowship Sunday Breakfast Circuit Easter Offering Service	10:30 10:30 10:30 11:00 18:30	Northam Torrington Shebbear (Lake) St James's, Parkham Zoom
Mon 13	Mental Health Awareness Week (until Sun 19) 'Time Together' Toddler Group Church Treasurer's Meeting	09:30-12:00 19:00	Buckland Brewer Torrington
Tue 14	Matthias the Apostle Toddlers Tune Time Thy Kingdom Come Quiet/Prayer Morning	09:00-10:30 10:00-12:00	Northam Bideford
Wed 15	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 16	Thursday Fellowship (Cream Tea)	14:00	Yeomead, Northam
Fri 17	Endangered Species Day International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia*		
Sat 18	Coffee Morning Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15 10:00-12:00	Northam Torrington
Sun 19	Pentecost Café Worship Circuit Pentecost Celebration	11:00 16:00	Milton Damerel Northam
Mon 20	'Time Together' Toddler Group	09:30-12:00	Buckland Brewer

Tue 21	Shebbear Church Council Toddlers Tune Time Torrington with Alverdiscott Church Council	19:00 09:00-10:30 19:00	Langtree Northam Alverdiscott
Wed 22	Coffee Morning Northam Church Council	10:00-12:00 19:00	Buckland Brewer Northam
Thu 23			
Fri 24	Wesley Day		
Sat 25	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 26	Aldersgate Sunday Trinity Sunday		
Mon 27	Spring Bank Holiday		
Tue 28			
Wed 29	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 30			
Fri 31	The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth		

* International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia aims to coordinate international events that raise awareness of LGBT rights violations and stimulate interest in LGBT rights work worldwide.

The following prayer has been written by Sandra Lopez, MCB Partnership Coordinator for the Americas, as a prayer of solidarity with the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas, Haiti District and the people of Haiti where on-going violence continues to affect the country.

Almighty God,

We weep with our Haitian brothers and sisters as they continue to suffer violence, injury, fatalities, aggressions, food insecurity, water shortages and insecurity across the country. We pray that your holy spirit would intervene and change the hearts of all those involved in perpetuating this violence.

We pray for wisdom for international partners who are supporting Haiti in seeking a peaceful, democratic transition following the resignation of Ariel Henry, the interim president.

We pray that Haiti will become a nation that offers security and peace to all its citizens.

We pray for Haitian children who attend Methodist Schools across Haiti. We pray that they would soon be able to return safely to their schools to continue their education. We pray for all teaching and school staff who are having to adapt their lessons to virtual classrooms.

We pray for the Methodist Church in Haiti, its Sunday services and other activities that have been affected by the violence that is stopping participants from gathering. May they find comfort in you during this time.

Lord, we pray that our Haitian brothers and sister will find hope in you, so that they may overcome this seemingly unsurmountable challenges. But we thank you that what is impossible for people, is possible for God (Luke 18:27).

In Jesus' name, Amen.

TEA TIME PUZZLE BREAK

April 2024 - Solutions

BIBLE CROSSWORD V - SOLUTION

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

Across: 1 Hushed, 4 Assigned, 9 Lands, 10 Chaldeans, 11 Nets, 12 Roof, 13 Leave, 15 Saffron, 16 Idea, 19 Deaf, 20 Escaped, 23 Lured, 24 Hail, 25 Fool, 27 Shepherds, 28 Shine, 29 Trespass, 30 Hungry.

Down: 1 Holiness, 2 Sanctify, 3 East, 5 Sea of Tiberias, 6 Indulgence, 7 Naaman, 8 Dishes, 10 Crown of thorns, 14 Friendship, 17 Opposing, 18 Adultery, 21 Closet, 22 Greece, 26 Esau.

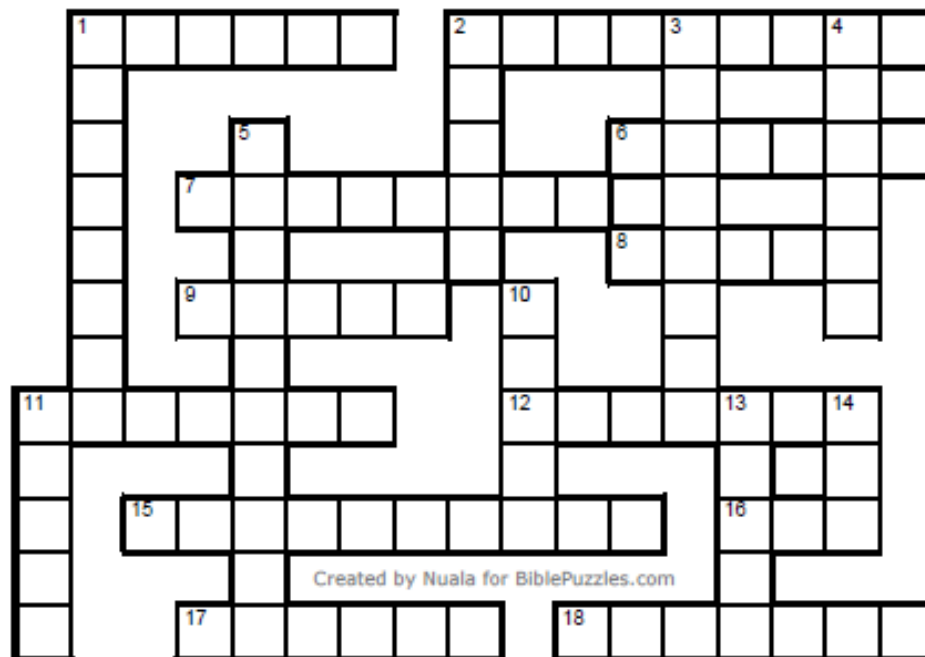
Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.org.uk

The Resurrection of Jesus Word Search – Solution

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

Paul's Missionary Journeys

(Acts 13-20)



Created by Nuala for BiblePuzzles.com

Across

- 1 The sorcerer in Paphos who tried to stop Paul from preaching to Sergius Paulus (6)
- 2 Usually, when Paul entered a city, where he first went to preach (9)
- 6 The ruler of the synagogue became a Christian along with his _____ household and many other Corinthians (6)
- 7 He accompanied Paul and Barnabus on the 1st missionary journey (4,4)
- 8 In Ephesus (part of the Roman Empire), Demetrius the silversmith and his friends made and sold statues of the goddess _____ ('Artemis' in Greek) (5)
- 9 The 'seller of purple' who was baptized (5)
- 11 The keeper of the prison thought that all the prisoners had _____ (7)
- 12 What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, by _____ up Jesus from the dead (7)
- 15 While Paul and Silas sang praises to God in prison, at midnight there was a great _____ (10)
- 16 The law has been handed down from days of _____ (3)
- 17 The place to which Paul travelled alone and saw that the city was completely given to idolatry (6)
- 18 The ruler of the synagogue in Corinth who became a Christian (7)

Down

- 1 He went into a deep sleep while listening to Paul preaching in Troas and fell out of a window (8)
- 2 He accompanied Paul and Timothy on the 2nd missionary journey (5)
- 3 Paul preached the good news of salvation through Jesus to Jews and _____ (8)
- 4 Paul's teachings about Jesus often created an _____, as at Lystra, Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus (6)
- 5 Chose Paul and Barnabus for the 1st missionary journey (4,6)
- 10 When some people in Thessalonica tried to kill Paul and Silas, the disciples sent them away by night to _____ (5)
- 11 The Lord of heaven and _____ does not live in temples built by human hands (5)
- 13 Christians must not eat food that has been offered to _____ (5)
- 14 In Athens, Paul found an altar with the inscription 'To the unknown ____' (3)

PENTECOST WORD SEARCH

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

AMAZED

HOLY SPIRIT

SITTING

APOSTLES

HOUSE

**SPEAKING IN
TONGUES**

DAY OF PENTECOST

LANGUAGES

TONGUES OF FIRE

HEAVEN

MULTITUDE

WIND