



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Tavistock U.R.C.

Russell Street, Tavistock PL19 8BD
Founded 1652
Loving God,
Encouraging Questions, Welcoming all.

CONTACT

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August 2016

SUNDAY 7th 10:00am Led by Revd. Iain McDonald ,Holy Communion, church meeting.
SUNDAY 14th 10:00am Service led by Canon Tim Newcombe
SUNDAY 21st 10:00am Service led by Revd. Phyllis Ball
SUNDAY 28th 10:00am Service led by Mr Garth Sanders



The Man Machine - not as God made us exactly - but wonderful nevertheless (Photo by Peter Tulloch)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th August. Special Church Meeting after the service.

Following the agreement of the URC General Assembly that individual United Reformed Churches should be able to offer the possibility of marriage to same-sex couples, it is required that certain formalities are in place. These include the agreement by the church to the resolutions below on a date subsequent to the General Assembly. Though the Church Meeting gave its consent at the meeting on 25th May 2014, we still need to formally minute our agreement to the set resolutions. Therefore there will be a Special Church Meeting following the service on 7th August 2016 to ensure that the appropriate procedures are complied with. The service will be taken by Rev Iain McDonald who is our Interim Moderator. His presence will assist in our compliance as one of the signatures on the documentation should be that of the Minister or Interim Moderator presiding at the meeting.

The resolutions are:

1. As the governing body of the United Reformed Church, in relation to consent to marriages of same-sex couples in Tavistock, the Church Meeting resolves to give such consent.
2. The Church Meeting requests the trustee or trustees of the church building at Tavistock United Reformed Church to apply for the church building to be registered for the marriage of same-sex couples.

Saturday 13th August from 10.30 to 12 noon -- Coffee morning in the church.

Advance notice: Saturday 3rd September. Garden lunch at Maureen and Peter Tulloch's home (Trewoodloe Barn, Callington, PL17 7NJ) at 12.30pm. Ploughman's with Pudding! Also quizzes and gentle garden games. Cost £6 per person. All are welcome. Transport can be arranged if you speak to an elder. Please put your name on the list in the vestry.

Tuesday Topics – None in August, restarts in September.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

We are concerned about the health of **Janet Dashper** (after a fall), **Isobel Houldin** and **Jill Dudley** and have been praying for them. Isobel is still in Tavistock Hospital, but hoping to come home this week with extra care set up for her. **Sue Cornish** is better but is waiting for a meeting with a specialist to establish how successful her treatment has been.

In spite of the mist and light rain, forty of us enjoyed the BBQ at **Stella and Raz's** home on the 9th July. They have a lovely garden, with covered areas for us to sit, and they cooked a delicious meal for us all. Lamb burgers, hot dogs, tasty salads, home-made strawberry Pavlovas and Bakewell Tarts-- what a feast. Thank you, Stella and Raz, we appreciated your hospitality and hard work.

Editor's Letters

Rev Phyllis Ball has shoe boxes for anyone who wants one or two, to fill for the shoe-box appeal in the autumn

Interim Moderator for our church from **Mike and Jenny Dennis**

'At our church meeting on 17th July it was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation that **Rev Iain McDonald** should be our Interim Moderator. We are already pleased to benefit from the occasions he is able to lead our worship for us and look forward to working more closely with him and receiving his guidance during the period that we are without a minister as we work in partnership to live out the Kingdom values in our town and community. Welcome Iain.'

(Nationally)The URC inducts two new Moderators from the URC webpage

'On the opening day of its General Assembly, 8 July 2016, the United Reformed Church inducted two new moderators – the Revd Kevin Watson and Mr Alan Yates. Moderators of General Assembly are the URC's national figureheads, representing the denomination both at home and abroad.

Mr Watson and Mr Yates will serve as moderators for two years, continuing the URC's leadership tradition of ordained and lay ministers serving together. The duo succeeds the Revd David Grosch-Miller and Mr John Ellis, who were thanked for their hard work during the induction service'. John Ellis is still the URC Treasurer but also takes on the role of treasurer to the Council for World Mission, which links the URC to 31 other churches worldwide.

August Poem by **William Henry Davies** (well-loved, but can you recite it word for word?)

'Leisure

What is this life, if full of care
we have no time to stand and stare.
 No time to stand beneath the boughs
 And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
 No time to see, in broad daylight,
 Streams full of stars, like stars at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
and watch her feet, how they can dance.
 No time to wait until her mouth can,
 Enrich the smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.'

Excerpts from URC South Western Synod Web-page

By **Ruth Whitehead**, SW Moderator

(Luke 9: 51-62, Galatians 5: 1, 13-25)

I daren't ask whether you were left crying tears of delight or despondency when the result of the referendum was announced on June 24th. The result itself (52% in favour of leaving the EU in total, but with widely different results from area to area) shows that the citizens of the United Kingdom are anything but united on this point.

So what are we to think, as Christians, about the state of our country? What are we to do, as Christians, in response to these new circumstances? What do we believe about our role in any changes that happen in our country?

I just use the word 'citizens' and you might remember (or you might not!) that the word is used in the statement concerning the nature faith & order of the URC. It's in the hymn book – at number 761, just before the national anthem.

We first have this statement:

'We believe that Christ gives his church a government distinct from the government of the state. In

the things that affect obedience to God the Church is not subordinate to the state, but must serve the Lord Jesus Christ, its only Ruler and Head.'

This claims our non-established history: church and state are separate, and we, the church, are accountable to God. The congregation are then invited to affirm this by saying 'while we ourselves are servants in the world as citizens of God's eternal kingdom'.

In Jesus, we believe, our identity is not primarily as a citizen of this or any other country, but as a servant in the world and as citizen of God's eternal kingdom.

Whichever way you voted on the 23rd and regardless of the result, you are now what you were last week – a citizen of God's kingdom. What does this mean for how we live?

Firstly, how we handle division and difficulty and difference.

James and John are busy getting it wrong again. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem, and has sought hospitality in a Samaritan village. The village has refused to accept and welcome someone they see as a Jewish pilgrim to Jerusalem. We know that tensions between 'us' and 'them' are nothing new – they are basic human nature – and the gospels tell us of the real conflict at the time between Jewish and Samaritan people – so this is no surprise.

Jesus has previously sent out the 12 disciples to proclaim God's kingdom and warned them that they will not be received well everywhere. He has told them 'As for those who will not receive you, when you leave their town shake the dust off your feet as a warning to them.'

But faced with this lack of hospitality to Jesus himself, James & John want to retaliate more strongly 'Lord, do you want to call down fire from heaven to consume them?'

Jesus turns and rebukes them. However extreme the rudeness they endure, they are not to lash out against those who are different.

Whatever happens in this country and beyond in the years to come, it will never be right to attack or demonise those with whom we disagree.

When we commit ourselves to following Jesus, we will never be alone – we are walking with Jesus, following his way, guided by the Holy Spirit. The letter to the Galatians speaks of freedom in the Spirit. Paul understands human nature – he warns against 'fighting one another, tooth and nail.. all you can expect is mutual destruction'. But he tells the church that the answer to fighting our human nature is to submit to and be led by the Spirit.

We know we are told to love one another, but we find it so hard to do, as human nature leads to conflict and sin. 'But the fruit, or the harvest, of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self-control' says Paul.

In a divided world, the Spirit unites us.

As we seek to commit ourselves to follow Jesus, the Spirit leads us.

Where our human nature lets us down, the Spirit transforms us.

So, citizens of God's kingdom, be of good cheer, and continue to serve the world by following Jesus in the strength of the Spirit to the glory of God the Father.'

Any items for September CONTACT should be emailed to Maureen Tulloch by the 24th August (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk). Many thanks.