



The
United
Reformed
Church

Tavistock U.R.C.

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

CONTACT

Interim Moderator : Revd Iain McDonald

Church Secretaries : Mike & Jenny Dennis Tel: 01822 618142

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Synod website: urcsouthwest.org.uk

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Church Website : www.tavistock.unc.org.uk

December 2016

SUNDAY 4th 10:00am Service led by Rev Phyllis Ball with Holy Communion

SUNDAY 11th 9.30am Service led by Mr Mike Dennis

SUNDAY 18th 10:00am Carol Service led by Mr Garth Sanders

SUNDAY 25th **Christmas Day ---- No Service**

[SUNDAY 1st Jan. 10:00am Service led by Mr Garth Sanders with Holy Communion]



'Happy Birthday,' Jesus ... and 'Merry Christmas' to one and all!

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 6th December 2.00 pm Daytime Fellowship - see Page 3

Sunday 11th December Advent lunch after the service. Please put your name on the vestry list.

Tuesday 13th December 2-5 pm 'Muslim Hands' at Quaker House, Mutley Plain, Page 5

Wednesday 14th December 2.30pm Daytime Fellowship – see Page 3

Friday 16th December at 2.15pm – Lower Deck Café Christmas Party – see Page 3

Wednesday 21st December 2.30pm Daytime Fellowship – see Page 3

Sunday 25th December Christmas Lunch organised by The Rotary Club - see Page 3

[**Sunday 8th January** Church Meeting – see page 4]

Advance notice: the Tavistock Passion

Plans are in hand for the **Tavistock Passion** on **Good Friday morning (14th April)**: an outdoor dramatic presentation in the town centre, telling the story of the trial, crucifixion and triumph of Christ – open to all to participate or watch. Revd Dr Steven Martin, Assistant Curate at St Eustachius' Church, who is leading the project, said "We need people with all sorts of skills. I am very keen that both Christians and non-Christians engage with the Tavistock Passion, because it is not simply a lofty tale for the initiated, but a universally compelling story of betrayal, revenge, tragedy and the power of the love of God to transform death into life."

While April may seem far away, practical preparations and rehearsals will start soon. If you are interested in taking part on or off "stage", do contact Steven to make sure you get further information (contact details on www.tavistockparishchurch.org.uk). Even if you can't take part directly, please pray for this venture – and spread the word that something special will be happening in Tavistock next Good Friday.

No Tuesday Topics - restarts in January

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

It is good to see Isobel Houldin able to come to church again, and enjoying her stay in Red House. Marlene Horrell is back to baking her superb cakes for the LD Café and Clifford Doidge, now in his 90's, is still doing what he can at church services. You are all marvellous. God bless you.

We pray for Tony and Thelma Newell – Thelma is in Derriford Hospital having tests for memory loss – and for all our church family.

Keep healthy and have a very **Merry Christmas!**

Editor's Letters

From **Jenny Dennis**:-

We have decorated our Christmas tree for the Christmas Tree Festival at St Eustachius.

Thanks to everyone who helped. More news about it next month.

From **Liz Sanders**:-

'A very big **thank you** goes to everyone who contributed in any way, to providing the Christmas Shoe Boxes and Blankets. Final Totals were fifty shoe boxes, twenty three from our church and twenty seven from a craft group who support us. Our Church also sent off twenty three blankets. So thank you all once again, and look out for notices to restart our efforts for next year.'

From **Stella Rasdall**:-

*Party Time
Lower Deck Café*

*Please join us for a Christmas Celebration
On Friday 16th December at 2.15pm*



*All are Welcome
Please bring a small plate of food to share.*

From **Norrie Philip (Rotary Club):-**

Christmas Lunch at the United Reformed Church

Are you alone at Christmas? Would you like to share Christmas Day with others?

Tavistock Rotary Club would love you to join them at the Christmas Day Lunch in the United Reformed Church in Russell Street, Tavistock



Traditional Christmas turkey dinner with fun, friendship and music!
Volunteers will happily pick you up before 11.30 and take you home at around 3.30

The Queen's Christmas Message is at 3.00, followed by a drink, mince pies and Christmas Cake.

There is no charge, but places at the lunch are limited, **so it is vital to book in advance**. To book a place, please contact Norrie Philip, 5 James Road, Whitchurch PL19 9NJ or by Email norrie.philip@btinternet.com or telephone on 01822 611357 or 07788 283175

From **Revd Phyllis Ball:-**

'Daytime Fellowship

Not so much a Bible study group: more a group where we hope people can feel free to raise questions about the Bible, and about the Christian faith in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The group members decide the agenda. Each session is 'stand-alone' so if you feel you'd like to join in, but can't always attend, it's not a problem. The dates and times of meetings in December are in Dates for your Diary on Page 2. If you're more a listener than a speaker, if you feel shy about expressing your views, but would like to hear other people's views, this group is for you too: no-one is put on the spot! Meetings are at 22 Chapel Lane, Horrabridge and transport can be arranged if you need it.

Do contact me if you're interested. 01822 855731'

From **TACT (The Adolescent and Children's Trust):-**

TOYS FOR CHRISTMAS

We are organising the local Christmas Presents appeal this year and are looking for a total of around 70 new, unused toys for children aged between 0 and 14 years. Monetary gifts are also very welcome—preferably sealed in an envelope (cheques should be made payable to St Eustachius' Parish Church). Please drop off the toys at your church or let Steve Martin have any unwrapped, new toys and gifts by Sunday 11th December. It is important that the toys are unwrapped so that we can ensure that a suitable toy reaches the right child.

(Any queries, please contact Steve direct: 01822 611 148)

From **Jenny Dennis:-**

'Daily Devotions from the United Reformed Church will be sent out by email every day from the First Sunday of Advent. A team of writers from different places and perspectives in the URC are reflecting on a reading and offering a short prayer each day for us to use in our own journeys of discipleship. In order to sign up please simply go to: <http://tinyurl.com/URCDailyDevotions> and complete the form.

Each day they will send out a reading, short reflection and prayer which helps us reflect further on our discipleship. We may be challenged by a new perspective, moved to prayer, urged to action or bemused by a thought we'd not encountered before. The purpose is to encourage us in our daily journey of discipleship as we resource God's people.

We hope these prove a useful resource for you as we enter this season of waiting and expectancy. '

From **Mike Dennis:-**

'January Church Meeting

There will be a church meeting on January 8th after the morning service. Rev Iain McDonald will lead worship and also chair the meeting.

The agenda will not be comprised of the usual business but will be an opportunity for sharing with our interim moderator how we are coping with the vacancy; what we hope for the future and a discussion as to the process for agreeing an appointment when someone makes an offer to fill the vacancy. There will be some time to express general matters of the ministry and mission of the church. Any other business will be restricted to any urgent issues requiring an immediate decision of the church meeting.'

Post-election hopes and prayers for the US - from the **URC website:-**

'On the 9th of November the United States of America elected a new President, Donald Trump, in a victory which culminated in his pledging to be 'a President for all Americans'.

Yet many in the US have been deeply disturbed by the bitterness of the campaign, and particularly by the use of racist, misogynistic, homophobic and Islamophobic rhetoric. One of the United Reformed Church's long-standing partner churches in the US, the United Church of Christ, has published the following comment:

'We, the Officers and Council of Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ, call upon the church to seek a pathway that envisions a just world for all. Those who celebrate this election must show a humility that honours the pain of those whose dreams were dashed by the outcome. Those who grieve must find a courage and hope found in a faith not in earthly power, but in the redemptive love of our Risen Christ.' The United Reformed Church, and its people, have many links and friendships in the US. In a statement sent to partner Churches there, the Revd Kevin Watson, General Assembly Moderator, stated: 'Mr Trump has been elected to the most influential political office in the world. This is an office which holds immense power, which must be wielded with care and consideration. We shall pray for the President-elect, and his family, as they prepare to begin this new period of their lives.'

However, the politics of hatred that emerged during the campaign has inspired fear and anxiety not only amongst minority groups within the United States, but around the world. As children of God, we are called to persist in the work of love, compassion, justice and peace. So, as we pray for the American people and their new President, we look for a new era of unity and togetherness to emerge.'

Prayer

Dear Lord

We pray for the American people and their new President,

That they might find love,
compassion, honesty and peace;
That power is used with care,
humility and consideration for others;
And that all are shown respect and given justice.
So that the people of the world might live united
in a safer and kinder place.

Amen

From **Mike Dennis**:-

'I have received an invitation from Pete Squire of the Quakers about an event in Plymouth on Tuesday 13th December 2-5 pm at Quaker House Mutley Plain.

It is about an organisation called Muslim Hands and is hosted by the Quakers.

In 1993, a community in Nottingham, moved by the devastation of the Bosnian war, sprang into action. A small group of volunteers began collecting money, clothes and medicine for the people of Bosnia. Muslim Hands, an international aid agency and NGO, grew from this grass roots movement and since these first efforts, we have responded to countless more emergencies, as well as establishing long term projects such as schools, healthcare clinics and livelihood programmes worldwide. We are working in over 50 countries and have field offices in over 30 of these. By working closely with our partners and offices on the ground, we are able to distribute aid in an effective, efficient, transparent and wholly accountable manner and to make a lasting difference to the communities we work with. Dedicated to tackling the root causes of poverty around the world, Muslim Hands is passionate about working beyond the provision of immediate relief, towards supporting communities over the long-term.

See more at <https://muslimhands.org.uk/about-us>'

From **Stella Rasdall** (Trustee) 01822 832806 :-

Ford Street & Maynard Almshouse Charity

'Ford Street & Maynard Charity provides residential accommodation for local people. We have 12 flats in Ford Street, Tavistock providing convenient and comfortable accommodation primarily but, not exclusively, for older people. Each flat contains a bedroom, living room, separate kitchen and bathroom. There is also a delightful, communal walled garden at the back of the properties. The earliest of the buildings dates back to 1762, while the newest (Hope cottage) was opened in August 1996.

Ford Street and Maynard is a registered charity (no 202643) which is also registered with the Homes & Communities Agency. The charity is governed by a board of voluntary local Trustees with the day to day administration delegated to the Clerk. Under the terms of the Charity's Trust Deed, applications are invited from people who are, or have been, inhabitants of Tavistock or Gulworthy who would benefit from the provision of this accommodation. Applicants are required to be in a satisfactory state of health at time of application and able to care for themselves.

Vacancies crop up periodically, so if you would like more details or to add a name to our waiting list, please contact our Clerk, Karen Woodward on 01822 860425 or by email at

fordstreetmaynard@gmail.com'

Any items for January CONTACT should be emailed to Maureen Tulloch by the 28th December (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk). Many thanks.