



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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December 2018

SUNDAY 2 nd	Service led by Revd Phyllis Ball with Holy Communion
SUNDAY 9 th	Service led by Revd Robert Weston
SUNDAY 16 th	Service led by Mr Mike Dennis
SUNDAY 23 rd	Service led by Revd Robert Weston
SUNDAY 30 th	Service led by Mr Garth Sanders

*May you have
The Spirit of Christmas
Which is Peace
The Gladness of Christmas
Which is Hope
The Heart of Christmas
Which is Love.*



Dates for your Diary

Sunday 2nd December Decoration of the church for Christmas after the service.

Wednesday 5th December - An Advent Adventure - A day retreat- see page 3

Wednesday 5th December 2.30 – 4pm **Daytime Discussion Group** in our church

Friday 7th December Dickensian Evening – Church is open for carols /craft/ photographic displays. Christmas Tree in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Eustachius.

Sunday 9th December Advent Lunch after morning service.

Wednesday 12th December 2.30 – 4pm **Daytime Discussion Group** in our church. Last one until 9th January

Friday 21st December 7pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at the Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St. Mary Magdalene, Tavistock, with the Cantorum choir

Tuesday 25th December – Christmas Day Lunch organised by the Rotary Club, in the Lower Deck Hall. Open to all.

Advance notice:

Tuesday 8th January 2019 - Changes and Choices - A day retreat -see page 3

From Wednesday 9th January every Wednesday 2.30 – 4pm **Daytime Discussion Group** in our church.

From **Revd Rob Weston**, 01566 784990

tavistockurcminister@gmail.com

Minister's Letter

Rushing down stairs to see if there are any presents under the tree and the unwrapping of those mysteriously shaped packages is perhaps the highlight of Christmas for many children and some parents! For many of us the gathering together with loved ones is a precious gift, worth as much as any carefully chosen present.



God's mysterious gift seen in Jesus, is a present that can't be wrapped and left under the tree. For the way of Jesus is not just for Christmas, it is an adventure that lasts a lifetime, it is a journey of discovery which is open for all who seek wisdom, peace and joy. The way of Jesus is open to all of us, no matter how old we are! This Christmas, may you know God's grace and peace,
Robert Weston

New church member

Many of you will know Jo O'Driscoll, who is one of our volunteers in the Lower Deck Cafe, along with her husband Patrick she runs an eight acre small holding at Lamerton. Jo would like to join us as a church member and we look forward to receiving her into church membership in 2019.

Kitchen extraction system

We have accepted the quote from Clear Vent, a ventilation company based in Cornwall and the work is expected to be completed between the 17th December and 21st December - so the Rotary Club will be one of the first groups to test out the new extractors.

News from Traidcraft

Traidcraft is about more than just fair trade:

- We focus on the most marginalised groups in developing countries, often working with suppliers that mainstream businesses would choose not to work with.
- We try to understand suppliers' problems and assist in finding solutions. We seek funding to implement short or long-term projects to help suppliers grow and develop sustainable businesses.
- We try to ensure that the people who make or grow our products are connected to the people who buy them by telling their stories and showing their pictures.
- There are many types of products that are not covered by the standards that allow a Fairtrade Mark to be applied. We invest our time to ensure the key principles of Fair Trade are followed so that we can call a product 'fair trade' even when that product does not carry a Fairtrade Mark.

Painting in the Lower Deck Hall

We are grateful to Hugh Williams for his offer to paint the Lower Deck Hall, which with the lovely new curtains will freshen up this room ready for the new year. Thanks are also recorded, as Hugh installed the curtain tracks for the new curtains!

Wednesday 5 December - An Advent Adventure - A day retreat from 10am until 3pm exploring Advent, the time of preparation for Christmas. Prayers and meditations on the theme.

Tuesday 8th January 2019 - Changes and Choices - A day retreat from 10am until 3pm for anyone facing a time of change or transition. Time of reflection on the theme plus opportunity to wander round eight acres of grounds, sit inside or outside and read or relax in quiet. The address is Down Farm Cottage, Tinhay, Lifton PL16 0EL and our website is www.tinhayretreats.com

CHRISTMAS EVE

*Expectancy hung in the air for it was Christmas Eve,
Once more the season of goodwill, to give and to receive,
The presents gaily wrapped and tied from friends and family
Are neatly placed in little piles beneath the festive tree.*

*And there beside the tiny crib the Christmas Candle stood
Casting beams upon the figures carved in olive wood.
Then joyful carol singers came and sang outside the door,
Their money boxes jingling, collecting for the poor.*



*The Christmas star up in the sky brings sense of mystery,
The air is filled with angel wings or so it seems to me.
And from across the village green the church bells peel and chime;
Welcoming the Saviour's birth, for this is Christmastime.*

Kathleen Gillum

We remember in our prayers those members of our Church Family who are not too well, particularly Liz and Garth, Marlene, Joan, Margaret, Magdalene and Dorothy. May God bless them and all who suffer.

Link to Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal

Many thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to this annual appeal. You contributed 19 shoeboxes, 20 hats and 12 scarves. And 24 knee blankets.

A great effort this year by all. I am sure they will bring a lot of comfort and joy to those who have nothing.

Thanking you all once again. **Liz Sanders**

PS - still plenty of wool to start again for next year!!!



Service of Nine Lessons and Carols - Friday 21st December 2018 7pm at the Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St. Mary Magdalene, Tavistock, with the Canticorum choir. If anyone would like to read a lesson, please contact Fr. John frjohn2256@gmail.com

Fr. John

Wednesday Topics?

I am wondering whether Tuesdays are the best evenings for everyone as there do seem to be a number of other groups which meet on Tuesdays. Wednesdays is a possibility so if you have not been able to attend the Tuesday Topics because you have other activities on Tuesdays please let me know whether a change of evening would be any better for you.

We have had some interesting sessions with material from John Dominic Crossan and Mo Wills recently but it would be good if we could ensure that the evening selected is the most convenient for the greater number. I am in the process of deciding the topics for the early part of 2019. I have some ideas but if you have any which may be of interest, do let me know.

Mike Dennis

Message for all Christmas Angels

Please gather in your hosts in the church on Sunday 9th December ready for commissioning before distributing your messages of hope to the good people of Tavistock. Many thanks,

Jenny, Suzy and Pam M.



Don't miss Reform magazine!

Reform is published ten times a year by the United Reformed Church. It contains refreshing stories of Christian life and mission, as well as interviews, inspiration and a much-loved crossword. Each paper copy of *Reform* costs £4 – but a subscription for year's worth of *Reform* (ten copies) costs less than £30. An annual subscription to digital copies of *Reform* is even cheaper – just £18! To sign up, visit <https://reform.escosubs.co.uk/new-subscription.htm> or call 01371 851 886. For a free, sample copy, email reform@urc.org.uk, or call 0207 916 8630.



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Charissa King, Production and Marketing Officer | Reform Magazine

Do you find it is difficult to keep up?

I mean with the library. There are more new additions for you to browse.

1. "Grounded" by Diana Butler Bass. The subtitle is "Finding God in the world - A spiritual revolution". It deals with the question "Where is God" which is said to be one of the most consequential questions of our times.
 2. "Undiluted - Rediscovering the Radical Message of Jesus". A quotation - "While the church thinks people are walking away from a life of following Jesus, they are actually walking away because they are hungry for a Jesus that's a little more applicable and a little more radical than that which they are being served up by the American church. They are walking away because they are looking for the undiluted Jesus, but far too often aren't finding him in churches which worship Jesus without following him." I find that a challenge to the churches in the UK as well. When you read the book, let me know what you think.
 3. "Morning Sun on a White Piano" by Robert Meyers. This focuses on simple pleasures and the sacramental life. It is a book about the moment and about all the seemingly insignificant things occurring everyday that are worthy of worship.
 4. "Stepping Out with the Sacred - human attempts to engage with the sacred" by Val Webb. Questioning where we can find the sacred in our midst. Some members will remember that she spoke at one of our Tuesday topics during her tour of the UK. Plenty to read over the Christmas holiday.
- Also don't forget to check the magazine racks for other material to dip into. You could be missing a gem.

Mike Dennis

Help would be gratefully received for the **Advent Lunch on 9th December**. Help is needed to clear away and wash up. Please contact **Liz Sanders** if you can help. Thank you.

New look website

Have you been on the South Western Synod website recently? It's changed!

Go to : <https://www.urcsouthwest.org.uk/>

and explore the resource section, see who you are talking to when you ring the synod office and sign up for your own personal e-newsletter which will be sent to your email in-box.

Anne-Marie, URC Communications Officer

A Franciscan Benediction

*May God bless you with discomfort
at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
so that you may live deep within your heart.*

*May God bless you with anger
at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,
so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.*

*May God bless you with tears
to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
to turn their pain to joy.*

*And may God bless you with enough foolishness
to believe that you can make a difference in the world,
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done
to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.*

Any items for January CONTACT should be emailed to Maureen Tulloch by the 27th December (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk). Many thanks.