



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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March 2024

Our Church is open for worship on Sundays at 10.30am.
The Service of Worship will be emailed or posted to those who want it.

3 rd March	Led by Revd Elizabeth Kemp with Holy Communion
10 th March	Led by Mr Mike Dennis
17 th March	Led by Dr Noel Morgan
24 th March	Led by Revd Phyllis Ball
31 st March	Led by Revd Rob Weston

How should one live?
Live welcoming all.

Mechtild of Magdeburg,
Medieval Christian Mystic



Dates for Your Diary

Thurs 7th Mar 12.30 to 1.30pm Lent Lunch, in St Eustachius Parish Rooms

Thurs 14th Mar 12.30 to 1.30pm Lent Lunch, Salvation Army & URC at the United Reformed Church

Sat 16th Mar 6.30 - 8pm Green Quiz, In aid of A Rocha UK at Tavistock Methodist Church

Sun 17th Mar Church AGM after the service

Mon 18th Mar 7.30pm Midweek Topic at Mike and Jenny's.

Thurs 21st Mar 12.30 to 1.30pm Lent Lunch at the Kings, Pixon Lane

Sat 30th Mar 10am – 12noon Easter Decoration of the Church

Thurs 25th Apr 9.30am - 2.30pm Training Day at St Peter's Primary School in Tavistock

Church Meetings: AGM 17th March, 26th May, 28th July and 20th October

Elders Meetings: 28th April, 16th June, 29th September and 24th November.

Letter from our Minister

Dear Friends

This Lent I'm thinking about the journey that God's people took, as recorded in the book of Exodus. It was a journey from slavery to freedom, from despair to hope. It was a time of great action and activity for a community on the move. Sometimes we can get swept up in all our action and activities.

Lent is a time that invites us to pause. To pause *in order that we might make space for prayer*, in order to receive the word of God. To pause like the Samaritan *in the presence of a wounded brother or sister, in order that we might make space for care*.

In a world in which many people are rushing from one thing to the next, we need to be reminded 'Slow down, take your time and pause!' The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energy. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we can discover companions and fellow travellers. This is God's dream, the promised land to which we journey, if we choose to take that path.

As we journey through Lent, may we become even closer to understanding the journey Jesus took. Entering Jerusalem to the cheer of the crowds, sharing a final meal with his disciples, spending time in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. We recall that Jesus was led off to be tried and crucified, before his death and resurrection. Jesus took the path of love and compassion to overcome death and to reveal God's love and compassion for each of us. May we know that love as we journey through Lent.

Every blessing,
Rob Weston

Premises News

Good news, we have been awarded a 20% grant from the synod towards the work to refurbish the vestry and the work in the Lower Deck kitchen. In the kitchen we are updating the water heaters to the washing up sinks and adding special rinse taps (they have a flexible pipe and spray tap which you may have seen in a commercial kitchen). The work in the Lower Deck kitchen is scheduled for March 11-14th.

Nominations for Church Charity this year

At the January Church Meeting, everyone was asked to submit suggestions for this year's church charities. In 2023 we chose four charities, and each received £1000. At the AGM in March we will be choosing the charities for support in 2024.

Prayer Cards

Have you found our new prayer cards that are in the church foyer and in the Lower Deck Hall? Each prayer card is on a different theme. There are twelve colourful prayer cards, and they are displayed in a special rack. These are already proving to be popular, and we will restock as required.

Eco Church Ideas

As a Gold Award Eco Church our work for the environment continues. Here are some suggestions of ways we can be even more eco-friendly - please let us know if you have other suggestions:

- Install one or more bird boxes
- Install one or more bat boxes
- Twin more of our toilets with the Toilet Twinning charity
- Support an overseas environmental charity (such as Amigos)
- Carry out a carbon footprint audit
- Investigate the cost of secondary glazing in the church and hall
- Investigate the possibility of increasing our PV solar panel installation.

Some of these will require big investment as they are big projects, but many are small investments for a greener world. These apply to Tavistock URC but might also be actions for us at home. We will discuss further at our next Church Meeting, all ideas welcomed.

Pastoral news

The sudden death of Len Woodland on Monday 12th February at the age of 91 came as a shock to many of us. We are grateful to both Steve and Jenny Moore who were able to be with Len in his final days. Len had many connections with churches in the area having played the organ for 47 years at Wotter Methodist Church and then at Crownhill Methodist Church, in addition to being a local preacher within the Methodist Circuit.

In the last few years Len has been a regular at our Sunday morning worship and at St Eustachius in their Sunday evening worship. My thanks to everyone for the love and support given by members of our church to ensure Len had regular lifts to and from church in the past few years. The service of thanksgiving for Len's life will be at Tavistock URC on Monday 4th March at 11.30am.

Sadly, we have also heard of the death of Pearl Pearson who passed away on 21st February, her daughter Anita was with her. Pearl had only recently moved to a Nursing Home in Torquay to be near her daughter. Pearl has been a member of Tavistock URC for a very long time and served as an Elder and a Church Secretary. Many will remember Pearl's involvement in the Lower Deck Cafe, where she was pleased to help.

Arrangements for Pearl's service of thanksgiving will be circulated when they are known.

From **Revd Phyllis Ball:**

'If there is anywhere on earth a lover of God who is always kept safe, I know nothing of it, for it was not shown to me. But this was shown: that in falling and rising again we are always kept in the same precious love.'

[C14, Julian of Norwich]

As far as we know, Julian was the first woman author of a book in English.

From **Revd Rob Weston:**

Tavistock Fairtrade News

On Tuesday 20th February we hosted the **Tavistock Fairtrade** soup lunch, which was a great success, with around 30 supporters joining us and raising over £100 for the Fairtrade group. This will be used for further promotion and education events to raise the understanding in Tavistock of the importance of Fairtrade. 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the launch of the Fairtrade Mark. In 1994 this was one of the first independent schemes that enabled consumers to verify that a product was produced in a way that ensured farmers and producers were receiving a fair wage for their crops or products. As a Fairtrade Church we are delighted to continue to serve Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar on Sundays and at our Lower Deck Cafe each Friday.

The next event will be our **Tavistock Fairtrade children's art competition** and entry forms will be available in the library from 1st May, artwork to be submitted by the end of May. The Fairtrade prizes this year have been donated by the Cooperative supermarkets in Tavistock.

Ukrainian Community Support

The conversation cafe continues to support a good number of people as they develop their English language skills. We've started the year with themes including New Year traditions, flowers and most recently animals.

In February we were asked if we would host a Ukrainian Film evening, to show a cultural film entitled 'Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors' directed by Sergei Parajanov. The film was released in 1965 and earned Parajanov international acclaim for its rich use of costume and colour, it is based on a book that was written in 1911. The film gives a real insight into various aspects of life in a small Hutsul village in the Carpathian Mountains of Ukraine. It was good to see the church full of people interested to find out more and see this aspect of Ukrainian culture that rarely gets attention in our media.

From **Jenny Dennis:**

Church AGM on Sunday 17th March following the service.

As usual at our AGM we will elect Elders. This year Suzy and Mike are due to stand down. Suzy will have served two terms of 3 years so is not eligible for re-election this year. Mike is willing to be nominated for a second term of three years should someone wish to nominate him. Nominations in writing or by email should be with me by Sunday 3rd March. Please ensure you get written permission from the person involved! Nominees need to have been in membership at our church for at least one year.

I will need all reports by **Sunday 3rd March** in a Word document format so they can be collated and distributed by Sunday 10th March.

This year the focus of our AGM will be a discussion about the future mission of our church so the reports will not be read out individually but there will be an opportunity for any questions or queries.

Agendas and reports will be circulated by email or hard copies by 10th March to give people time to read them.

Sunday Morning Rota for March: (Please ensure that you swap with someone if you are unable to fulfil your duty)

Date	Preacher	Organist	Elder	Welcoming Steward	Reader	Refreshments
3 rd Mar	Elizabeth Kemp	Steve	Stella	Jenny S	Steve	Stella
10 th Mar	Mike Dennis	Jenny	Jo	Malcolm	Jo	Jo
17 th Mar	Noel Morgan	Jenny	Suzy	Jo	Suzy	Elizabeth
24 th Mar	Phyllis Ball	Jenny	Sabrina	Stella	Sabrina	Maureen
31 st Mar	Rob Weston	Steve	Stella	Malcolm	Stella	Elizabeth

From **David Palmer** (Chair of Tavistock Area Christians Together)

TACT leaders, along with Jack Hodge from Catalyst youth project, are investigating whether it might be possible to instigate Prayer Spaces in local schools, and other venues. We have an opportunity to find out exactly what "prayer spaces" are and how they might work in our town and surrounding villages.

There is a link below for you to see more information on this national project - which is an initiative that comes out of the 24/7 Prayer movement, headed up by Pete Greig. There are many creative ideas and different kinds of prayer to explore. We have booked a room at **St Peter's Primary School in Tavistock** for a **Training Day: 9.30 - 2.30pm on Thursday, 25th April** with **Tim Abbott** who is the **national leader for Prayer Spaces in the UK**.

It is open to everyone who has an interest, not just church members. Please visit the website for more information: <https://prayerspacesinschools.com/>

We would like to encourage everyone to be there. Prayer plays a significant part in the well-being of our town and villages, and our schools. This will be advertised further but please save the date if you are interested.

From **Maureen Tulloch**:

We were very saddened to hear of Len Woodland's death, in Derriford Hospital, on 12th February, and also Pearl Pearson's death on 21st February. Both Len and Pearl were very faithful members of our congregation, attending Sunday services almost to the end. They will be sadly missed. May they rest in peace.

We also think and pray for Barry, Dorothy and Geoff in their Care Homes, Pip, John, and Garth, praying also for Peter (Snook) as he faces surgery. May they all be kept safely and lovingly in the palm of the Lord's hands.

From **Mike Dennis**:

Midweek Topic

The next meeting will be on Monday 18th March at 7.30pm at Mike and Jenny's. It was requested that we use a theme related to Lent and/or Easter. Consequently, I have selected a 25-minute sermon by John Shelby Spong entitled "The cross as the moment of Glory" as a starter for reflection and discussion. All are welcome to join us.

From **David Palmer** (Chair of Tavistock Area Christians Together)

Thank you to those of you who are hosting one of the TACT Lent Lunches this year. We look forward to a great time of fellowship.

TACT Churches - Lent Lunches 2024



This year Lent Lunches for TACT churches will again be hosted by different churches in the town. Everyone is welcome. We are providing a soup and bread lunch with tea and coffee and a short reflection at the end. Please come and share fellowship and prayer together during the weeks of Lent. The reflections will be led by different church ministers.

Each lunch will run from **12.30-1.30** at:

Thursday	7th March:	St Eustachius, Parish Rooms
Thursday	14th March:	URC Church/Salvation Army
Thursday	21st March:	King's Church, Pixon Lane

There will be an opportunity on each occasion to make a donation which will be split between the work of **Catalyst**, our youth project and to **CARE International** for the **Gaza Humanitarian Crisis Appeal**.

Please come as often as you can and invite friends to make this a special Lent season as we prepare the way to Easter with the Lord Jesus.

From **Kit Harbottle** (Tavistock Methodist Church)

Saturday 16th March, 6.30 - 8pm
Green Quiz
In aid of A Rocha UK
at Tavistock Methodist Church

Also from **Kit**:

Local Christians are encouraged to make prayerful constructive comment as Tavistock Town Council invites views on Tavistock's draft Neighbourhood Development Plan, which will affect decisions about the town over the next decade, including on homes, green spaces, business and community facilities.

Full details are online at tavistockplan.info. Printed copies of the plan can be viewed at Tavistock Town Council office, Tavistock Library, and at drop-in public events listed on posters. Copies will also be displayed at some Lent lunches.

The consultation runs until 25th March.

From **Transition Tavistock Newsletter**:

Tavistock Refillery

Tavistock Refillery is in need of more volunteers to support the great work they do in providing zero waste shopping alternatives for our local community. As a non-profit project, the Refillery works hard to keep these options affordable but without volunteers the project cannot survive. Are you able to give some time to help support this project to continue?

There are various roles available, including but not limited to, marketing, volunteer recruitment and shop assistant so please get in touch, whatever your skillset and time available - many hands make light work!

Call into the shop, message on Facebook "Tavistock Refillery" or email tavistockrefillery@gmail.com to start your volunteer journey with them.

In a nutshell:

*Journey inward, journey outward,
stir the spirit, stretch the mind,
love for God and self and neighbour
marks the way that Christ defined.*

As a Gold Award Eco Church we email out copies of our magazine and use recycled paper for our printed copies.

CONTACT items for April– please email them to me (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk) by the 27th March. Many thanks.

