



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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Synod website: www.urcsouthwest.org.uk

Church Website: www.tavistockurc.org.uk

October 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.

6 th October	Led by Mike Dennis with Holy Communion
13 th October	Led by Revd Elizabeth Kemp
20 th October	Harvest Thanksgiving led by Revd Rob Weston
27 th October	Led by Mike Dennis

We thank you, Lord,
for the harvest.



Dates for Your Diary

Monday 7th Oct 2.30pm Prayer and Stillness Group at the St Eustachius Parish Centre

Monday 14th Oct Climate Action Plymouth will be showing Cornwall Climate Care film [Down the Drain](#) at the Sustainability Hub on the University campus.

Monday 14th Oct 7.30pm Midweek Topic at Mike and Jenny's house.

Saturday 19th Oct 10am to 12 noon Shoebox Filling and Knitting hand-in for Link to Hope; also setting up Harvest display in church for tomorrow

Saturday 19th Oct South Western Synod Meeting

Sunday 20th Oct Church meeting and Harvest lunch after the service

Thursday 24th Oct Power to the People at Plymouth Arts Cinema,

Sunday 8th December Advent Lunch after the service

Church Meetings: 20th October

Elders' Meetings: 24th November.

Letter from our Minister

Dear Friends

Harvest celebrations are an indication of a change of season, we are now into the Autumn. This is a great time of year, when we can watch the leaves on the trees changing colour. Gradually they will turn from green to yellow, orange and rusty brown. This is a time to enjoy kicking up the leaves as we enjoy walks in the woods.

Harvest is also a time to give thanks to all those who labour on the land or at sea to bring us food for our plates. I know that many in our congregation are very mindful and aware of the challenges faced by farmers in our community in West

Devon. It is important to remember the people near to us who help produce good quality food but we also need to pray for those farmers and producers in lands far away, such as the banana farmers, the coffee producers and the cocoa bean farmers.

Thirty years ago the Fairtrade Foundation was established to ensure that some of the poorest communities would have the opportunity to work collaboratively to get a fair deal. This enabled farming communities to invest in better education and health facilities. The Fairtrade mark is still an independent scheme that ensures a fairer deal for farmers and producers around the world. The challenge of climate change is affecting farmers across the globe, so learning about and investing in sustainable techniques is essential. The Fairtrade Foundation has always been a champion of eco friendly farming. Our support of Amigos (the charity working in Uganda to help develop sustainable farming) is an important part of our support of farmers across the world. In addition, we are registered as a Fairtrade Church.

So this harvest time, let us celebrate and give thanks to our creator God. Let us give thanks to those who farm and let us give thanks for the food and drink that sustains our bodies! At our Harvest service we welcome gifts that are either 'local', 'organic', 'animal friendly' or 'fair trade' goods. These L.O.A.F. principles are part of our eco church principles, recognising that all these different aspects are important in helping us move to a more sustainable future.

Every blessing

Rob

Season of Creation

Each year from September 1 to October 4, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created.

As people of faith the state of our world should grieve us. In the UK we live in one of the most [nature depleted countries on earth](#), and the decline is continuing. Across the world extreme weather is increasing in frequency and intensity. The Climate Crisis isn't a future issue, it's here now.

But there is reason to hope. In 2015 the [emissions gap report](#) predicted warming of over 4°C with the policies of the time. Since then, progress has been made, the 2023 report now predicts (if current policies remain) that we are expecting around 3°C. It's not good enough but it shows that change is possible.

Amid the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, many are beginning to despair and suffer from eco-anxiety. ***As people of faith we are called to lift the hope inspired by our faith, the hope of the resurrection.*** This is not a hope without action but one embodied in concrete actions of prayer and preaching, service and solidarity at each and every church across the city, nation and world. ***Let's act together in hope for Creation.***

Learn more about the Season of Creation organisation by visiting the website:

seasonofcreation.org

Eco Events Coming up this month:

Monday 14th October Climate Action Plymouth will be showing Cornwall Climate Care film [Down the Drain](#) at the Sustainability Hub on the University campus. This film delves deep into issues around climate change and fresh water – looking at everything from heavier rain leading to more sewage overflows, flooding and loss of topsoil, to how warmer river water is affecting fish, and the surprising carbon footprint of the water we use every day. It offers tips and solutions for how each of us can help to protect this vital resource that we all depend on. The film will be followed by a discussion. Free. All welcome.

Thursday 24th October - Power to the People at Plymouth Arts Cinema, including a Q&A session with Claire Wallerstein, one of the makers of this Cornwall Climate Care film. [Power to the People](#) explores the exciting opportunities (in Cornwall) and huge challenges facing us as we wean ourselves off fossil fuels – from a farmer who's found a novel way to combine food production with solar panels, opportunities to use our historic heritage to power the future, and projects to harness the amazing untapped heat 5km down in the Earth's crust.

From **Rachel Leach, Synod Clerk:**
South Western Synod

Invitation to South Western Synod Meeting on **Saturday 19th October 2024**

Following the success of last year's October Synod meeting we have agreed to run a similar style meeting this year. We'll meet from 9:45am-3:15pm on Saturday 19th October at Westfield URC, West Street, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 7EU. Essential Synod business will be limited and some of the day will be devoted to small group discussions and learning from each other.

We are opening this gathering to up to 10 from each church, it would be wonderful to have ten people from Tavistock to join in this event. (Jenny Dennis, Mike Dennis, Elizabeth Kemp and Rob Weston will be attending).

We want to share with a wider cross section of Synod in celebration (please share transport as much as possible). If you are interested in attending please let Rob or one of the Elders know.

From **Mike Dennis:**

Midweek Topic.

The next meeting will be on Monday 14th October at 7.30 at Mike and Jenny's house.

The theme revolves around religious art. After a previous Sunday service when I showed a number of paintings and icons, there was a request to spend more time looking and discussing the images.

This is an opportunity to do so and we will include some additional pictures as well. All are welcome to join us but it would be helpful if you could let Mike know if you are hoping to come.

From **Stella Rasdall:**

IT'S HARVEST TIME AGAIN!

Autumn is my favourite time of year and the harvest service a wonderful time to appreciate the bounty and beauty of nature and the God given gifts of Harvest time.

The Harvest Lunch will follow the service and Church Meeting on Sunday October the 20th. Please sign up if you can come. Bring your Friends.

If anyone would be able to make a pudding towards the meal I would be very appreciative.

From **Jo O'Driscoll:**

The vestry kitchen

I'm sure that everyone has now had a chance to see the new kitchen in the vestry, we are delighted with the outcome.

Unique Kitchens have done a marvellous job on the fitting with both the units, worktop and the updated plumbing and electrical work. There was somewhat of a challenge with the old floor joists that needed replacing but this only caused a slight delay.

Grateful thanks must go to Hugh for all his hard work overseeing the renovation and to both Hugh and Anne for decorating the kitchen area, also thanks to Maureen for keeping the hirers updated and happy during the disruption.

I know the kitchen will serve us well for many years to come!

We will look forward to the next stage of the project (when funds allow) which will involve painting the rest of the vestry and updating the carpet. (*And thanks to you too, Jo, for all your help*)

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

Date	Preacher	Organist	Elder	Welcoming Steward	Reader	Refreshments
6 th October	Mike Dennis	Jenny	Elizabeth	Stella	Stella	Sabrina
13 th	Revd Elizabeth Kemp	Steve	Anne	Jenny S	Anne	Maureen
20 th	Revd Rob Weston	Jenny	Bob	Sabrina	Mike	Peter and Pam
27 th	Mike Dennis	Jenny	Jo	Anne	Jo	Jo

Maureen's history - (in the absence of anybody else's life story – **please** do let me have **yours** for next month's magazine)

I was born in 1944 to Jim and Bella Smith in the eastern Scottish Borders. I have an older brother (Ralph) and a younger (James) and spent a very happy and carefree childhood growing up on the farm. At 16 I left Berwickshire High School with my Highers and Lowers and joined the Civil Service as a Tax Officer in Galashiels, living in digs and going home at weekends. In 1963 on promotion, I joined the Paymaster General's Office in London. I met Peter a few days after we both arrived in London, through the youth club of St Columba's, the Church of Scotland in Pont Street, and I started going out with him three months later. Workwise I transferred after two years to the Ministry of Transport where I trained as a computer programmer and worked in New Scotland Yard on the West London Traffic Experiment, using CORAL a 'new' real-time programming language.

Peter and I married in Scotland in 1967 and set up home in a maisonette in St Albans. I took a job as a programmer with Elliott Automation at Boreham Wood, using EXEC and COBOL languages. I worked there for two years until the 5th December 1969 – just before the premature arrival of Alison on 8th December– eight weeks early! The family moved to Chiswell Green, the other side of St Albans when Alison was two, and Jackie was born there in 1973.

In 1978 the family moved down to Kent when Peter was offered a job he couldn't refuse in Tonbridge. We set up home in Five Oak Green and stayed there happily for 34 years. When the mortgage rate went up to 16% in 1979, I reluctantly went back to work, initially part time, programming with Southern Software Services, then Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, and finally for almost 20 years with FI as a freelance programmer/analyst /systems manager. I studied for five years (from home, part -time) for a Mathematics Degree with the Open University and was delighted at the age of fifty to be conferred with an Upper Second-Class Honours degree, in the year that saw Alison and Jackie achieve the same result in their university courses. Alison and Jackie both went to Plymouth University, met the men in their lives, married, and both families now live in the Plymouth area. We have 4 grandchildren, two boys and two girls.

During our 34 years in Five Oak Green we attended and were active members of Five Oak Green URC, which in the 90's became FOG United Church when we united with the Anglicans. Both girls attended Junior Church and Pathfinders, where I taught. Peter was Secretary and an Elder, and I was a Church Warden for a year or two.

We both took compulsory retirement at 60, Peter to spend more time in his hobby of photography and I never really wanted to work anyway -I'm quite happy in the garden and with friends and family around.

Peter travelled a lot abroad whilst working, and we had many exciting and adventurous holidays – have travelled to all the continents, including Alaska and Antarctica. As Peter was born in Trinidad, we returned there on several occasions. Lots of happy memories.

In 2012 we moved down to Cornwall to be nearer the families and joined Tavistock URC shortly afterwards - that was like finding a new family! Keeping the bookings for the church premises, preparing and distributing 'CONTACT', knitting and collecting blankets, and filling shoeboxes for 'Link to Hope' are now my contributions to church life.

Apart from the rain (Kent was much drier!) we enjoy being close to Alison and Jackie and their families, and the peace and tranquillity of the garden and the lovely open Cornish countryside. And we are thankful for the friendship and support of our Church and the members thereof .

That's it – a potted history! And please may I have yours now?

From **Jenny Dennis:**

Do come to the Prayer and Stillness Group held at the St Eustachius Parish Centre on the second Monday each month at 2.30 pm. It is a time of music, short readings and shared silence followed by refreshments and fellowship and is affiliated to the Julian meetings network.

From **Mike Dennis:**

Harvest Lunch - Sunday 20th October

The items to be brought for the Harvest display on 20th October should be (LOAF) Local, Organic, Animal Friendly , Fairly Traded, please.

Also, the decoration of the church will be on Saturday morning 19th October when gifts can be brought, though gifts are welcome on the Sunday if people cannot get there on the Saturday. We are also doing the Link to Hope shoebox filling on that Saturday morning, so it will be a busy day!

From **Link to Hope:**

It's the end of the summer so that means it's the countdown to the Family & Elderly Shoebox Appeal. Please help us once again to send thousands of shoeboxes full of love to the elderly and to people who struggle to survive on a day-to-day basis and to people suffering displacement, war, poverty and injustice in Eastern Europe. Link to Hope distributes shoeboxes through trusted partners in Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria and Ukraine. A simple gift of a shoebox shows love and care for people who would otherwise have very little hope.

and from **Maureen Tulloch:**

Just a reminder to continue knitting blankets, hats and scarves for 'Link to Hope' Charity. We plan to get together at **10am on Saturday 19th October** to fill shoeboxes and hand in knitted blankets etc. Also **please collect as many shoe boxes** as you can – we filled about 20 last year.

Shall we do Family Shoeboxes this year, rather than for the Elderly? Let's.

We will put in your Motanka dolls, of course, thanks to Jenny and all who made them...see photo from Jenny

Here is a list of items suitable for a Family Shoebox:

Essential:

Gloves or hat or scarf

Sweets or Chocolate

Soap and flannel

Toothbrushes & Toothpaste

Candles & holders or tealights

Small games(Travel size?)

Plus some of the following:

Colouring pads(A5)

Crayons/pencils

Small toy (Motanka / teddy?), or toy car

Tape measure / DIY tool

Shampoo

Safety razors

Hairbrush/comb



From **Jenny Dennis:**

Fairtrade Tea and Coffee

I wonder what is most important to you when you buy tea, coffee and sugar. I wonder if it is

- Cost
- Quality
- Knowledge that the producers have been rewarded fairly for their work, enabling them to farm sustainably and receive enough income to provide food, healthcare and education for their families
- Buying what you have always bought

A recent Which? survey based on blind taste testing showed that for everyday tea it's possible to buy tea produced to Fairtrade standards which tasters enjoyed the same or more than most other non-fairly traded teas, and which was significantly cheaper than many popular brands. Only Fairtrade ensures a guaranteed price and provides a premium which producer communities can use as they wish to support families and improve farming practices.

The two Fairtrade teas in the tasting (Coop 99 and Waitrose Essentials) scored the same as Yorkshire Tea but the cost per 100g for both of them was less than half. One of the least liked teas (Twinings Everyday) costs around four times as much as the two Fairtrade teas.

It's also possible to buy Fairtrade coffee (instant & filter) which is cheaper than many brands and well liked.

During September we supported Fairtrade Fortnight (9th to 22nd September), perhaps we could all review what we buy against the biblical principles of loving neighbours and "*doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God?*"

We think and pray for Pip, Barry, John, Geoff, Garth, Peter S, David and Dorothy. May God be with them all and keep them in His loving care.

An Old English Rhyme:

*God bless the field and bless the furrow,
Stream and branch and rabbit burrow,
Hill and stone and flower and tree,
From Bristol town to Wetherby -
Bless the sun and bless the sleet,
Bless the lane and bless the street,
From Somerset and all the way,
To the meadows of Cathay;*

*Bless the minnow, bless the whale,
Bless the rainbow and the hail,
Bless the nest and bless the leaf,
Bless the righteous and the thief,
Bless the wing and the fin,
Bless the air I travel in,
Bless the mill and bless the mouse,
Bless the miller's bricken house,
Bless the earth and bless the sea,
God bless you and God bless me.*

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

CONTACT items for November– please email them to me (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk) by the 24th October. Many thanks.