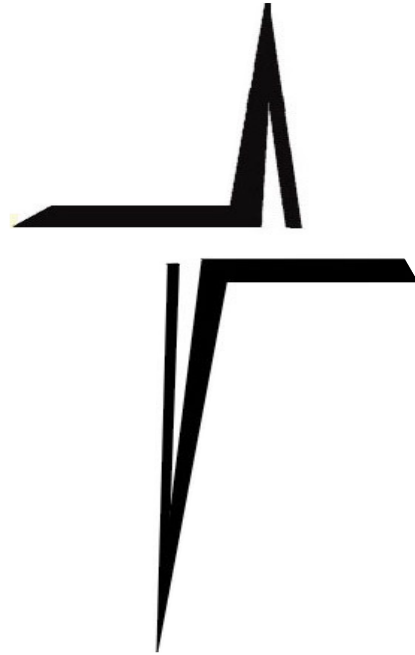


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Vision

April — May 2015

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They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" Mary replied, "They have taken my Lord away and I do not know where they have put him!" (John 20:13)

From Peter, your Bridport-based Minister

Friends,



Many of us will remember the rather successful film 'Four Weddings and a Funeral,' one of those feel-good stories that can't help but make you smile. We have had rather a lot of funerals across the Pastorate recently and I smiled rather differently when I noticed that, since I number all the files in my computer, including services, chronologically, I know at a glance how many funerals and weddings I have conducted since commencing in Ministry in 2003. It adds up to 107 funerals and 22 weddings - so closer to a ratio of Five Funerals and a Wedding, as it turns out.

Which was no surprise to me bearing in mind the average ages in the churches I have served and still serve in. Though I have to say that I am not in any way complaining as personally I believe not only is a funeral a hugely important rite to carry out, it is also a huge privilege to be a part of at such a difficult time for the relatives of the loved one who has died. With Easter just around the corner, it is always worth remembering that we are the People of the Resurrection - and, though death is almost always filled with sadness, regret and pain for those left behind, the Christian Good News includes the promise that it is not the end that at that moment it appears to be.

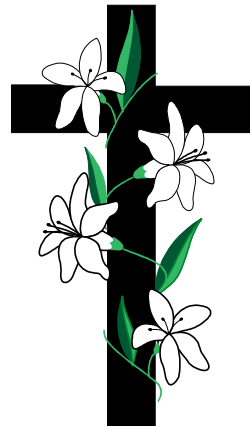
We were talking about such things at the coffee morning the other week and it has prompted me to write this as it is fresh in my mind and before I revert to the British norm of avoiding all talk of death! Because as the old saying goes, two things are inevitable, namely death and taxes. We will all eventually need therefore a

funeral - and no amount of denial will hide that fact.

Which makes me want to suggest that we plan for it. Unless you genuinely don't care what happens at your own funeral of course, but actually think even then, you should. For your relatives will be left with difficult decisions and, frankly it is rather inconsiderate to leave them flailing and uncertain. It is particularly hard on them if they are actually not regular church-goers, especially when it comes to hymn choices. 'All things bright and beautiful' has been chosen completely appropriately by some relatives as a favourite hymn but I have more often had it chosen because the relatives think they know it (though frequently they can't sing it!) and I'm not convinced it would've been the preferred choice of the deceased.

I used to visit an elderly lady who regularly told me her hymns, reading and preferences were in a Bible on the top shelf of her bookcase. "So's you know when the time comes," she used to say. Though ironically she is as tough as old boots and I left the pastorate before having to 'benefit' from her advance planning.

More recently a member who realised his death was approaching very bravely told me of his wishes and the two hymns he would like sung, not to mention his plan to be carried into the church by his golfing mates (prompting his son to tell them in the service that this was because he had been carrying them on the course for years). It was particularly meaningful to know that we were honouring his own wishes.



That being the case, can I encourage you all to have a thought about what you want your funeral to be like. What music means something to you? Which hymns and readings would you like and what, if anything you wish to say to those left behind? And if you think I'm only talking to older people, can I say that I have my choices all written down and sitting with my will. I confess that I have not made arrangements to ensure that the funeral is paid for but I recommend that

too and intend to do it myself, honest.

Which brings me to one other practical suggestion. Recently we have all been in a right old quandary in Bridport after the sudden death of another of our folk. The problem being that none of us



knew any contact details for her next-of-kin. Adding to the sadness and shock, we encountered a disturbing level of uncertainty and inertia. People kept asking me questions that frankly I had no idea the answer to. Fortunately her concerned niece managed to contact us, the service was all arranged and the church folk pulled together magnificently to show the relative how much her Aunt was loved. Nevertheless it was a very frustrating and disconcerting ten days or so. Hence I would like to request that if you have no obvious next-of-kin (such as a spouse or you're living very near relatives) that the church is aware of, that you give to someone else in the church the details of who might be contacted if you died unexpectedly, please?

As I write, we are approaching Lent and the most important festival of our faith and it is worth reminding ourselves that there is always much uncertainty that surrounds death. Poor Mary in the garden was beside herself with it until she then encountered the risen Jesus (as Archbishop Rowan has pointed out, she didn't know it was Easter!) Thanks to that event, though, we are assured that death need not be dreaded. May your Lenten preparations have been a blessing and Easter a wonder as we re-experience the glory of the Resurrection.

Blessings,



Tel - 01308 425978

e-mail - See Web 'Contact' page

Bright Future for Tolpuddle's Historic Former Methodist Chapel



The Former Methodist Chapel was built in 1818. Its continued existence as a chapel can be confirmed through to 1843, until a new village Methodist chapel was built in 1862-63. Since then it has been used for agricultural purposes. The building is currently in a poor state of repair and is not in use. It is on the English Heritage Building At Risk Register. It is listed as grade II* by English Heritage.

In February 2015 the building and site were purchased by a newly formed Building Preservation Trust – **The Tolpuddle Old Chapel Trust (TOCT)**. Its 4 Trustees either live in or are connected with the village. Rev Steph Jenner is one of the trustees. TOCT is a Registered Charity.

The objects of the Trust are:

'The preservation, maintenance and renovation of the grade II listed former Methodist Chapel and its site in Tolpuddle,*

Dorset and its historical, architectural and constructional heritage, for the benefit of the people of Tolpuddle and of the Nation.'

Emergency repairs to make the building wind and water tight and to stabilise the cob walls started on Tuesday 17th February 2015, funded by a £9500 grant from English Heritage and managed by the TOCT. It is hoped that the major conservation works will be completed by 2018 to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the opening of the building.

The Trust has received funding and expert advice from The Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) and from English Heritage (EH). Further funding has come from Dorset County Council. The Bridport and Dorchester Methodist Circuit have kindly provided a loan and assigned the time of their Superintendent Minister to be a Trustee. The Trust also received legal support and advice in relation to the acquisition of the building and site from Steele Raymond LLP, Solicitors.

Later this year the Trust looks forward to consulting local people about possible future uses for the building once renovation work is complete.

The development of the former Chapel will also enhance the visitor and tourist experience as part of the 'rural life heritage corridor' linking Dorchester with Hardy's Birthplace, Athelhampton House and Tolpuddle. The former Chapel is featured on the new Audiovisual Trail being developed by the Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum.

More information can be found on our web site www.tolpuddleoldchapeltrust.org or at tolpuddletrust@btinternet.com

Andrew McCarthy, Chairman TOCT,

Getting to know you

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Due to not having asked for permission from this months featured members we have (due to it being publicly available on the web) have omitted this article from the web version.



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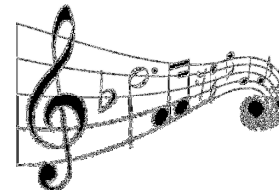


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Christian Aid Week

10-15 May 2015

Christian Aid Week is the single biggest act of Christian witness in Britain and Ireland.

For thousands of people throughout the country, it's a way of answering Jesus's call to help people in need, and showing the community just how much good the church is doing in the world.

Could you help with the house to house collection. Please see Tony Boyden or Peter Green.

Could you offer a loving and caring home to Catpuss a 14 year old tortoiseshell and white spayed female. She is in good health and micro-chipped. She needs to be an only cat, but she is very affectionate and would make a wonderful companion to someone who is at home all day. Contact Heather Bland (*tel removed from web version*).

Outreach slot

Chaplaincy has started at Dorchester Fire Station. The firefighters are all retained so some are at the station on Monday evening and the others on Wednesday. I have been in on both evenings to make contact. A uniform has been issued –never had one before apart from a lab coat! We are expecting a meeting with other chaplains working at other stations in the county soon.



Five people were trained at the Chaplaincy Training Day. All came through successfully and are ready to go ahead. With two from a previous training we now have a team. A good meeting was held with the BID (Business Improvement District) and the Town Clerk recently. Both are very supportive. We are planning a commissioning in South Street soon, so do look out for this. It is hoped that each chaplain will be welcomed in their own churches (ours and Anglican ones). We have requested that each denomination appoints a member for the Chaplaincy Management Group to look after and develop the work. Contact has been made with Muslims and a meeting is due to be held soon.

We have now decided to invite the musician and composer, Paul Field in October. He was well appreciated on his previous visit. In our hope to work on a film ministry we have joined a group called Damaris which arranges films to be shown in local cinemas with notes to then encourage discussion on the spiritual points raised. We would also like to promote a joint presentation event for the Circuit and Pastorate and also with Weymouth and Portland Methodist Circuits. 'Ride Ride' is proposed or we may prefer something less demanding!

We are hoping to finalise posters for putting up in each room, and information/prayers for Wednesday Coffee Morning and Coffee Shop soon.

Chris Warren



One of our shoeboxes was sent to...Zambia

John and Wendy Hilton have received the following e-mail:-

We are pleased to tell you that your Operation Christmas Child shoebox was one of 56,659 that were delivered from the UK to a child in **ZAMBIA**.

Through these shoebox gifts we have been able to show children around the world, living in difficult situations, that they are loved and not forgotten. Many of these children will never have received a gift in their life before. Children like Memory - a local volunteer reported: *"In the Solwezi district, 13 year old Kennedy has a little sister called Memory who is 11. For a long time, Memory had been praying for a doll, but their parents could not afford to buy one. When she was given a shoebox gift she received her longed for doll. The whole family shed tears of joy to see the prayer being answered through a simple shoebox."*

We thank God for your contribution to Operation Christmas Child in 2014 and for helping us to share God's love with children at Christmas.

Do you know where your shoebox went?

STOP PRESS—Traidcraft

You still have time before April 5th, you donate to Traidcraft's Fair Necessities Appeal the UK Government will double every pound donated. This appeal will work with many smallholder farmers in areas of real poverty with training, healthcare etc—"a handup not a hand out". **Donate online - traidcraft.org.uk/mag**

A review of a Revue

The United Church Pantomime Players presented a Revue entitled "At the Movies " on Friday and Saturday 20 and 21 February. The first half was in Black and White with the second in Technicolour. Songs from the Movies .were interspersed with Sketches and other musical items. An all aged cast of 14 including both Ministers donned various costumes throughout the Show portraying such characters as a Scarecrow, Octopus, Tin Man, Lion, Dog named Rex, Academy Award winner, a rejected Actress and a pack of Dalmations (not room on stage for all 101). The show produced by Karen Whiter and Nigel Hewish with Musical Director Heather Reid was enjoyed by all the cast and appreciated by the three audiences. Profit from the Show of £450 was raised for the National Stroke Association. If you missed it DVDs of the Show will be available shortly from Elaine and John Cull.



Maurice Dale

Ed:- Thank you to all those who worked so hard



Book Review

Nearing Home by Billy Graham

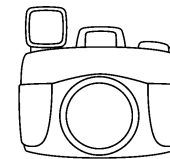
"I never thought I would live to be this old", says 90-something-year-old Billy Graham at the beginning of this popular book on sale in the church shop. He goes on to state that it has been written, not just for the elderly, but for people at every stage in life. The reason? To prepare beforehand in order to meet the challenges and demands that might be in store.



Topics such as retirement, health, hope, grief and death are covered, as well as the importance of a personal faith in Christ to sustain us and help us cope with whatever happens.

In the Bible we read about God using older people again and again as part of His plan, people like Abraham, Moses, Elizabeth, Anna and Simeon. Billy Graham encourages us in this book to realise that God will continue to use us if we are in tune with Him and available, however old.

Pat Smith



Church hall photoboard

After our plea in the last Vision magazine I thought there would be lots of photos given to Susy for the photoboard. She received four. The photoboard is really helpful for new people coming to church. Please, even if you don't like having your photo taken I am sure you have at least one photo that you like. If you have a good photo, but it is not the correct size it can be scanned, resized and you can have the original back. (please mark if to be returned)

Photos can also be given or emailed to Susy Rodgers at *(email address removed from web version)*
Thank you Wendy & Susy

The Fellowship of Meditation



When I moved to Dorchester one of the places I looked for was the Fellowship of Meditation and its house at no 8 Prince of Wales Road. I discovered a friendly group of people who practise a particular form of Christian meditation based around sentences to focus the attention on God. And it works for me. When I came here I knew that silence and stillness provided one of the means by which God speaks to me. And I have found that using the sentences provided (a different one for each week) does have the effect of focussing my prayer on God rather than on myself.

I took my time in deciding to join the Fellowship - there was no pressure to do so. Anyone can come along and join in one of the meetings to see if this form of prayer would be helpful to them. The meetings last for forty five minutes and are divided into three, with some teaching, based on the sentence being used, to introduce each part. For me, meeting together with others makes meditating easier and we are fortunate in Dorchester to have a meeting most weeks. We also have the headquarters of the Fellowship, Marian Dunlop House, in Prince of Wales Road which can provide residential accommodation and houses an office and a quiet room/library. For the past few years I have been looking after the library which houses a large number of volumes, mainly on prayer and meditation and those whose lives have been influenced by those practices. Far too few people know of its existence.

The Fellowship was founded in 1932. There are groups throughout this country and one or two abroad which meet regularly to practise meditation. Its founder, Marian Dunlop, believed that people should understand meditation as a "way of living, a process of remaking the whole consciousness". It

is certainly a process which takes years of practice. It is often not obvious that anything is happening to you during meditation. It is years later that you realise it has had a good effect.

Several members of United church belong to the Fellowship and would be happy to talk further with those who would like to know more. Apart from me there are Carol Springham, David Steel and Pat Smith.

Brenda Stephenson

Dorchester Almshouses—400th anniversary

In 2014, the Dorchester almshouses started to celebrate their 400th anniversary. A fire in 1613 destroyed half of Dorchester and John White, a renowned local minister, saw this as a message that local people needed to be more charitable. This led to 3 prominent citizens building the original almshouses. Today Whetstones and Nappers are located on West Walks overlooking the Borough Gardens. To celebrate 400 years and to improve the long term independence of the 34 residents, the charity is raising £50,000 to improve access to flats and to develop the garden into a space to enjoy from both inside and outside their flats. This will encourage greater independence, socialising and an opportunity to garden.

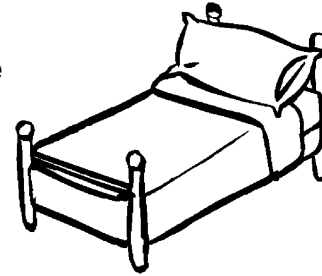
In 2015, this project is well on its way. The garden has been redesigned to remove many of the steps, with the help of students from Kingston Maurward and we hope soon to plant the garden. Financially we are nearly there, but we have two more big fundraisers. On Thurs 30th April at 7.30 pm Paul Atterbury of Antiques Roadshow fame, will be talking in the Corn Exchange. Tickets price £10 are available from Dorchester Tourist Information Centre.

Please support the almshouse charities, one of the oldest charities in Dorchester, which has been providing housing for over 400 years. The current trustees hope this work will continue for many generations to come.

Dorset Nightstop

Firstly I want to say a big and very grateful 'Thank You' to all the ladies in the Coffee Lounge who have donated the money they received in tips over the past two years to the project. In 2014 they raised £400 in tips; this generosity is hugely appreciated and helps to keep Dorset Nightstop in business. Dorset Nightstop is a small local charity which is run under the auspices of Action for Children and is based in Poundbury.

Most of you will know that my husband and I are hosts for Dorset Nightstop which provides emergency accommodation for young people who would otherwise be homeless. The project aims to provide accommodation for up to three nights at a time in the homes of people who have been trained and checked. We are expected to provide the young person with a room of their own, access to bath or shower facilities and meals. We also provide a laundry service, transport and a listening ear. Linda Gundry, a fellow United Church member, is also a volunteer for the project. During the course of the young person's stay with us they are not allowed to be in our homes when we are not there and they are expected to engage and work with the authorities in order to try to sort out some permanent accommodation.



Young people aged between 16 - 25 are eligible.

From January to December 2014 there were 78 enquiries from agencies working with young people seeking help. These were not necessarily 78 different young people, sometime the same young person was referred more than once. The project provided 47 bed nights. We provided some of those to eight different young people.

The 78 young people divided into 44 young men and 34 young women. Reasons included family breakdown (47), supported housing breakdown (14), breakdown in private housing (8), sofa surfing (2), rent arrears (1). The ages of the young people at the point of initial

enquiry showed that the largest groups were 16 years old (27) or 17 years old (26). There were 5 x 18 year olds, 6 x 19 year olds, and 9 x 22 year olds. The rest were evenly distributed across the other ages.

Some of the young people we have cared for have been literally on the streets the night before they came to us. They often eat, shower and fall into bed and then sleep for hours. They are exhausted and frightened when they arrive but a bed, hot food and knowing they are safe is enough for them to relax.

We always welcome donations of toiletries for the young people who often only have the clothes in which they arrive. Toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant are especially welcome.



If you would like some more information or are interested in possibly becoming a volunteer host or driver for the project please speak to Heather Bland on *(tel removed from web version)*

Romanian Knitting Appeal

So far Trish Roberts has gratefully received six jumpers knitted for the orphans, one blanket of squares and gloves. Please leave items in the church shop or give to Mary Brayley. See the notice on the Charles Street entrance notice board under Heart Response which includes pictures of the feeding programmes.



Thank you
Mary Brayley

PS Another big bag of tops has just arrived in the shop

Ready for Forever

In January my daily Bible reading was in the book of Ecclesiastes, a book I find a little difficult with the repetitious 'all is meaningless'. On the 7th January the reading was in chapter 9 verses 1 to 12, and the heading was 'Death Comes to All.



Verse 2 reads "The same destiny ultimately awaits everyone, whether righteous or wicked, good or bad, ceremonially clean or unclean, religious or irreligious." V3 "It seems so tragic that everyone under the sun suffers the same fate."

But as Christians our perspective on death is more positive. The notes on this reading observe "we would all live differently if we were more aware of the certainty of death."

Later in the chapter we are provided with two complimentary responses:

The first is to live well now, that is not indulgently but humbly accepting the life God has given us, being faithful in relationships, joyful in our demeanour and simple in the pleasures we enjoy.

The second response is to recognise we cannot predict or control our future. We cannot know when our time on earth will end.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer would say to us 'live each day ready to face death and whatever awaits us beyond it.'

A prayer:

Measure me up for a new body, Father. Ready me for resurrection. Project a sky-wide vision of all that is promised. May I worship aright as I wait.

Paul Smith

Ed—This was part of Paul's reflections at a stewards meeting that was very thought provoking

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Family News

We give thanks for the lives of Jean Attawell, Helen Barrett, Beth Boothman, Ruth Moon, Brain Toop and Sheila Ward. Some have been members for years and have given stalwart service to the United Church while others have recently moved to the area, but have given years of Christian service in other locations. We remember them and their families in our prayers.

We welcome back Mary Martin, who has been volunteering as a nurse on the Mercy Ship in

THE MAGAZINE TEAM

<i>Editor</i> Wendy Hilton 33c London Road Dorchester See Web Contact Us page	<i>Advertising Manager</i> Linda Odams <i>Photocopying</i> Shirley Hood
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Holy Communion (2nd Sunday in the month)	Sunday	9.00am
Morning Worship (Junior Church, Crèche, Coffee)	Sunday	10.30am
Evening Worship	Sunday	6.30pm
Alive @ 5 - Contemporary Worship on the last Sunday of the month	at 5pm	
Shoppers ☐ Service	Wednesday	10.30 - 10.45am

NUMBER FIFTY ONE

Church shop	Mon to Sat	10 - 12.30pm
Coffee Lounge / Hall	Tues to Sat	10 - 12.30pm
Quiet Room	"	"

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Worship Groups: Church Choir, Instrumental Group, Informal Singing Group, Brass Ensemble, Drama Group.

Bible Study/Discussion Groups: Ministers Bible Class, Fellowship Groups.

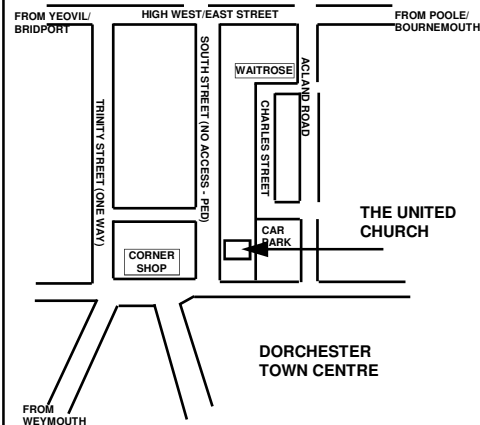
Prayer Groups: Prayer Chain, Prayer & Meditation Meeting.

Children's/ Youth Groups: Junior Church and Crèche, DUC Club Youth Meeting, Friday DUC Club.

Social Groups: Thursday Night Out, Women's Meetings, Coffee Mornings, Art Group, Badminton Club, Country Dancing, Cricket Team, Book Circle.

Christian Activity Groups: Overseas and Home Missions, Methodist Homes for the Aged, Christian Aid, Bible Society, NCH Action for Children, Poverty Action Group.

How To Find Us



For more information about the Church or any of its activities please contact either Minister or the Church Secretary, Margaret Knighton

Your Pastoral Visitor:

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Dorchester,
South Street**

Methodist and United Reform

Reg Ch No 1137996