

**November 2017**  
**The Bridge No. 22**

**Newsletter of**  
**Ponte Sant'Angelo**  
**Methodist Church Rome**



**A bridge between two communities - Methodist and Catholic**

## MINSTER`S LETTER

Last month has been one on the busiest ever in the life of Ponte Sant`Angelo and the work of the Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome. We have had so many visitors, to worship on Sundays and to MEOR in the week. We had 60 Dutch students and staff with us for whom the view from the terrace on a fine October day was one of the highlights of their trip. We have hosted the Stakeholders of MEOR for their 24 hour meeting, coinciding with the meeting of the Steering Committee of the World Methodist Council and the members of the Methodist Roman Catholic International Commission meeting at Palazzola. These three groups came together to have an audience with Pope Francis, attend a lecture at the Centro Pro Unione celebrating 50 years of the Dialogue work and an Ecumenical Service at Caravita, presided over by Bishop Brian Farrell with Bishop Ivan Abrahams preaching.

One of the persons lecturing at the Centro was Gillian Kingston, well known to you all at PSA, who is currently Vice President of the World Methodist Council. She came to stay with us over the weekend and preached here. She took as the theme of her sermon *Whose image?* arising out of the gospel reading for the morning.

John Wesley in his Notes on the New Testament, commenting on Matthew 22 wrote:

*The current coin of every nation shows who is the supreme governor of it. Render therefore, ye Pharisees, to Caesar the things which ye yourselves acknowledge to be Caesar's: and, ye Herodians, while ye are zealous for Caesar, see that ye render to God the things that are God's.*



This was a clear criticism of those in society who put conformity to the powers that be and the laws of the land above obedience to God. Methodists have been proud to be non-conformists but have rarely been revolutionaries. John Wesley said in his day “Fear God, honour the King”. We are challenged today to give our primary allegiance to God which should shape the way in which our civic responsibilities are carried out. Sometimes this may put us out of step with the rest of society on social and ethical matters. But we are to be shaped in the image of God and not in the image of society. We are in the world but not of the world. We are to conform to Christ and not the world.

The Roman Catholic Church too wrestles with such issues. Although we may not always agree on doctrine we can join with our Catholic sisters and brothers witnessing to Christ and serving him together in some many different ways in our needy world today. Evangelism and Ecumenism belong together. We walk together. And that is why it has been important to celebrate 50 years of our Dialogue.

Pastor Tim

## **INTERN NEWS**

October has gone by so quickly! It has been a busy month but I am still really enjoying my role and I feel I am getting to know the city better. I have also now finished my Italian course and it was sad to say goodbye to the friends that I made on the course from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem who flew back to continue their studies. In October from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> I helped to host the MEOR Stakeholders Forum meeting and the World Methodist Council Steering Committee. It was a very busy and great week that was a good opportunity for me to meet a variety of interesting people and to make connections. During this week I also had the opportunity to attend a lecture at Centro Pro Unione, with two principal speakers Dr Clare Watkins and Ms Gillian Kingston, who both reflected on 50 years of Methodist Roman Catholic Dialogue. After the talk I had the chance to have good conversations with many people who attended the event . Following on after the lecture at 7pm at the Oratory

of St Francis Xavier (Caravita) I was able to attend an Ecumenical Service of Celebration.

I have had to chance to help out with various organisations such as Sant' Egidio volunteering at their charity shop sorting out 'stuff' for them to sell and I went along to Termini again this month to help with the work of feeding the homeless in partnership with Pozzo di Giacobbe. I hope that I can continue supporting these organisations by continuing to go along to help in the coming months. This month I have really enjoyed the fortnightly Bible class at PSA, which started at the beginning of October. We are currently studying Paul's letter to the Romans. Even though I have found some of it challenging I really like attending the Bible class as we have many good discussions and I feel that studying the book of Romans is very fitting with us being in Rome! I have now resumed the Young Adults Group where we looked at the topic of poverty and what the bible says. I felt like we had good discussions and gave us a lot of things to think and pray about. I am now planning for us to study Women in the Bible, starting with Ruth and how the book of Ruth still has the power to shape our thoughts and impact our lives.

Abigail

### **UPDATE FROM LUCY**

Hello from a wet and chilly Scotland - I can't believe it's been over 2 months since I left Rome! I hope the weather is considerably cooler for you all since last I was there, and that you are enjoying the Autumn.

Things are going well with me in St Andrews. I got back to Edinburgh at the end of August and was very fortunate to have 3 weeks before I started at university, meaning that I had time to catch up with friends and family. My parents were back in Scotland for a week during that period too which was special. I'm very thankful for those few weeks as they gave me the time and space to readjust before launching straight into classes.

I moved to St Andrews a few days before classes started in order to get settled in and meet my flatmate. She is really lovely and we've become fast friends. She's working for a church here, and it has actually been really

nice to share with someone who isn't studying – it means that I get a break from thinking about work when I go home!

The course itself has been very intense, but also incredibly interesting and I've loved it. There are only 12 of us on the course, and I'm the only one from Scotland! We have a couple from England, one from the States, two from Sweden, one from France, one from Germany, one from Spain, one from Egypt, one from Ethiopia and one from Japan! So it's very multicultural, which makes the classes that much more interesting. The work is hard and the days are relatively long, but I'm enjoying doing something that I find so interesting. As it's only 12 months, I'll need to start thinking about what next year holds fairly soon but I'm hoping to leave the job-hunting until after Christmas.

I've found a church to be a part of here in St Andrews too. It's a fairly large (considering the size of the town) non-denominational church. The people are very kind and I enjoy the Sunday services, and have joined a mid-week Bible Study group which has been a great way to meet people and to continue to grow in my faith.

All in all, I am enjoying being back in Scotland (though am yet to decide whether I want to stay over here to work), but of course I miss Rome and you all! I'm planning to come back for a visit in January, and will be at PSA the Sunday of the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, so hopefully I will see many of you then! God Bless!

Lucy

### **CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

Juliette Johnson and her husband Albert are leaving Rome to move to the UK where they have family. We shall miss her here at PSA and send our greetings for a blessed time there. She will be sadly missed at the Anglican Centre where she has been Housekeeper and Cook. We have enjoyed many of her lunches on Tuesdays!

## **WELCOME ANGELITA (OUR NEW STUDENT MINISTER)**

Hello! My name is Angelita. I live in Rome, even though I was born in the South of Italy in a city called Reggio Calabria.

I earned a Degree and a Master in Humanities in the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy of Messina in Sicily. I study Theology at the Waldensian Faculty of Theology in Rome as I want to be a pastor. I'm a member of the Waldensian Church in Forano, near Rome. On an international level, I'm the Chairperson of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe.

Looking forward to meet all of you very soon and I'm happy to spend time together during my internship this year in the Methodist Church of Ponte Sant'Angelo!

Warmest greetings, Angelita

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

'Here our children find a welcome.....' (Singing the Faith 25)

We now have a small number of pre-school age children regularly attending our services and enjoy seeing them among us in church and upstairs during refreshments in the hall. Last year Lucy started a creche in one of the classrooms with a small team of helpers but the little ones preferred to remain in church for the service with their families!

They are all very attentive and participate in worship in their own way but it has occurred to some of us that they might enjoy having something to look at or do while in church, especially during the sermon. We have acquired some simple and colourful Bible story books which we will put in plastic wallets with a few wax crayons and some drawing paper so the children can look at and do something while their family carers can concentrate on the sermon!

If you bring small children to church and would like to try one of the packs they will be available from Sunday 12th November. Please let me know and I can let you have one before the service begins.

Angela Macquiban

## **MISSIONS AND OUTREACH**

### **HENRY JAMES PIGGOTT, THE FOUNDER OF WESLEYAN MISSIONS IN ITALY**

The founder of Wesleyan Methodist missions to Italy was born in Lowestoft, England, in 1831, the son of a former missionary to Sierra Leone. He was educated at Kingswood School and Wesley College Taunton, before attending the University of London where he obtained a first class degree in Classics. He entered the ministry of the Wesley Methodist Connexion and served in local churches in Oxford, Hastings and Hammersmith in London. He resisted the call to overseas work until challenged to respond to the new opportunities for mission to Italy following the Risorgimento.

In 1861 he and Richard Green came to Italy. Piggott initially worked in the north, and then the Veneto, founding churches in Ivrea, Intra, Cremona, Parma, Padova and La Spezia. Then in 1873 he moved the centre of his work to Rome where he remained until his death in 1917. He was superintendent of the work of Methodism in the Italy District until his "retirement" in 1903, during which time he travelled and preached throughout the country. With the demand for more ministers, as the denomination increased in numbers of members and preaching places, schools and a theological college were established.

Piggott was a great advocate for Protestant missions in Italy, writing articles in the British religious press. He also contributed to the work of biblical scholarship in Italian (he was President of the Italian Bible Society as well as its Sunday School Union). He admired the work of the great orator and founder of the Italian Free Church, Alessandro Gavazzi, former chaplain to Garibaldi (buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Zone 1.13,15), whose Rome base at Ponte Sant`Angelo Church came into Wesleyan Methodism in 1903 when the churches merged. It is there that the memorial tablet, formerly housed at the church in Via della Scrofa where he lived, is now displayed, recording his death in Rome on 30th November 1917 after 56 years of ministry in Italy. In his grave (Zone 2.14.22) are also buried his wife and daughter Mary. This great preacher and pastor, scholar

and theologian, was the bedrock upon which Methodism in Italy was established and grew.

Tim Macquiban

## **VI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON METHODOLOGY STUDIES ROME, 9 NOVEMBER 2017**

Dear sisters and brothers,

The Methodist Documentation Center has the pleasure of inviting you to the VI convention promoted together with the Department of History Culture Religions of the Sapienza University of Rome. The conference is based on the centenary of the death of British Methodist missionary Henry James Piggott, who was to start and organize the Wesleyan Methodist presence in Italy, to analyze the theme of missions of the past and today focusing in particular on the elements of continuity and discontinuity. It will be a special occasion for reflection and discussion on a topic that is still topical also for the links with the presence of communities of so-called migrants in the Italian territory and in our churches. The conference will have a historic, sociological and theological slant and an international and ecumenical character, also dealing with Catholic missions yesterday and today.

You will find a leaflet with a program, address and contacts to inform you of your participation at the back of the church.

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday 9th November at La Sapienza University in Rome.

Cordially

Secretariat Methodist Documentation Center

## **THE ITALIAN SCHOOL FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

As you know, Ponte S Angelo church hosts the Italian School for refugees and migrants coordinated by the Consulta of the Italian Evangelical Churches, and I am a sort of go-between to link the teaching side - who are mostly retired and very experienced Italian teachers - and the PSA church administration. The classes started again on 2 October, and I went along



the following afternoon on a courtesy call to check all was going smoothly. In fact, they had started with two classes - beginners and new arrivals, and those with a slight knowledge of Italian - and the second teacher was at the last minute unable to be present. The coordinator, Annapaola Comba therefore asked me if I would sit in with the second group for the first hour, and then she took over. It was a fascinating hour! There were four students only - but they came from four different continents!

First to arrive was a Syrian girl with a small baby - she was of course a recognized refugee, and had a most complicated history - with her husband she had gone first to Dubai, but as the situation became more serious in Syria, they were not welcome any longer, and fled to Italy, and then the Netherlands where she had a sister. But since their asylum request had been lodged in Italy, they were sent back here. She already had a little son of 6, and now has a 4 month old baby. Her parents and several of her family are still in Syria - and one of her brothers there was killed by a bomb some months ago. Her husband is now working, and the little son goes to school near the Pantheon.

Next came another girl - she was from Rwanda and in Rome to do a Masters Business Administration (in English); she is trying to do a 2 year course in one year. She met her Italian husband when he was working in Rwanda on a dairy farming and restaurant project; he too is now doing a similar course in Business Administration. It was interesting to hear that although in Rwanda the main European language had until recently been French, it is now English. She in fact speaks English with her husband, so her Italian is hesitant.

Then a fellow from Columbia appeared - he's been in Italy only a few months, but came through a friend who got him a job working in a "B&B" - and he's settled in quite well. His Italian was better than that of the others as he doesn't have relations and has to make himself understood.

And finally a girl from Romania - who also found work through a friend. I think she is working in a family - she is probably a more recent arrival and was less communicative than the others, though of course Italian should not be too difficult for her as Romanian is a Latin base language. Altogether a very interesting afternoon! Apparently there have already been 30 plus registrations, and there will doubtless be a steady flow of others during coming weeks.

Jenny

## COURSES



### Peripheries in our lives

'Peripheries' is a word Pope Francis has used to describe going to the boundaries, or beyond our comfort zones, to reach out to others experiencing physical, intellectual or spiritual poverty. It is the theme taken up by the Lay Centre here in Rome for their autumn series of talks by speakers each addressing a different aspect of it.

In introducing the series the newly appointed Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome, Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, spoke about peripheries from an African context. In his country, Burundi, society groupings are significant and those who aren't considered 'part of us' are on the periphery. But even in remote areas of the country solar-powered cell phones are now enabling people to connect with each other through social media so the peripheries are becoming closer.

Archbishop Bernard spoke about people in the gospels whom Jesus brought in from the margins, often calling them by name such as Mary Magdalene after the resurrection. He often asked his followers, "Why are you troubled?" then told them not to be afraid. Fear and ignorance are on the periphery. When Jesus told them to receive the Spirit they were renewed.

Missionary activity involves crossing borders to reach the peripheries. The Anglican 5 Marks of Mission include proclaiming the good news through faithful living and relationships and radical hospitality. When fear is gone



Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:  
*All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.*

I have to admit to liking this hymn a lot. Here are words we want to believe in, something that we are doing in our local church - warm, comforting, fuzzy even. And that's the problem: inclusion is NOT comfortable. When we think (or sing) about inclusion, there is an assumption that it is an easy thing, where we remain as we are and others come and join us without disturbing the status quo we have created. That's not inclusion; it's a gathering of the like-minded, a dinner party with our friends. Inclusion is a messy place with messed up people. It is having to sit next to people who might not share our views or our hygiene habits. It is taking seriously people that society has already written off. It is serving others who have nothing to offer in return. It is going beyond the exterior of rhetoric or people's pasts to live in reality. And it is being willing to acknowledge that we have a need to be with people we don't like because, without them, the Church - and we - are incomplete. That's not to say that there is no place for exclusion. As Barbara Glasson [British Methodist minister] often says: Where all are welcome, none are safe. Those of us who belong to minorities, we know that we still need places where people are like us and we can be sure of a welcome and no judgement. We need places where people 'get us' and we talk a common language. But let's be clear: that is NOT inclusion. Safer spaces are boundaried and entry is restricted. The Church must provide both kinds of places if it is to fulfil its vocation. Inclusion does mean vulnerability and risk for those involved and some

have risked too much to be part of that. But Blessed Oscar Romero reminded us that participation in the Missio Dei is a corporate activity and we do it together or not at all. We are not all called to do everything, but only to play our part:

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

## **FRESH FROM THE WORD**

Fresh from the Word - daily Bible notes for 2018

If you are able to spare 10-15 minutes a day for Bible Study, the notes in Fresh from the Word are most helpful and provide food for thought. The

book costs about 12 euros and I shall shortly be ordering copies from the UK. As Pastor Tim has mentioned, there is a celebration edition of Fresh from the Word at the back of the church for you to have a look at. If you would like a copy please let me know by Sunday 12 November so that we can be sure they arrive before Christmas. (no need to pay until the books arrive!)

Jenny Smith

## **TEDDY BEAR PROJECT**

Donations needed for nearly new clothing, shoes and toys/books for babies and up to age 5. This program benefits immigrant mothers and their toddlers. A box will be provided at the back of the church marked TEDDY BEAR PROJECT into which items may be put week by week.

For information please contact:- Leslie Kiely

T. 380-126-2916 E.

[LesliemKiely@yahoo.com](mailto:LesliemKiely@yahoo.com)



## **CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **STEWARDS**

Thank you to those for responding and offering to take on a role in the Church. The lead Stewards are as follows:

Children and Young People's Steward – Sandra Mi

Welcome Steward- Angela Macquiban

Flower Steward- Gladys Annan

Communion Stewards- Arosh and Nayomi De Mel

Social Steward- Nelia Suratos

Pastoral Steward- Lindsay Twomlow

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Alternative Worship at All Saints** resumes at 6pm on Sunday 26th November.

The commemoration of the **100th anniversary of the death of Henry Piggott** will take place at the Protestant Cemetery at 11 am on 30th November

## FORTHCOMING SUNDAY SERVICES

Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>            Pastor Tim and Communion  
Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>        Pastor Tim (Remembrance Sunday)  
Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>        Pastor Tim followed by Church Council Meeting  
Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>        Pastor Tim with birthday basket

## WEEKLY OFFERINGS [P = cash; E = Envelopes; BB = Birthday Basket.]

1 Oct. P 153, 00	E 507, 00	TTL. 660,00
8 Oct. P 254, 66	E 410,00	TTL. 664, 66
15 Oct. P 173, 35	E 445, 00	TTL. 618, 35
22 Oct. P 133, 06	E 345, 00	TTL.478, 06
29 Oct. P 66,30	E 303,00 (BB 80, 00)	TTL. 449,30

**TOTAL P 780.37 E 2010, 00 BB 80, 00 TTL. 2870, 37**

ALL WE CAN: Thank you to everyone who contributed to the harvest appeal for All We Can. Overall, 284 euros was donated.

