

**March 2017**

**The Bridge No. 15**

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



**Being the Church**

## Minister's letter

We recently hosted a visit from MTSE (European Methodist theological educators) who stayed at Casa Valdese for their conference on “**Being the Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**” and joined us for worship at the conclusion of their time in Rome. The sun shone and they finished their time here by enjoying the views and conversation on the manse terrace.

Bishop Rosemarie Wenner from Germany, Pastor Giovanni Ceruda from Sicily and I addressed this topic from our different perspectives. What seemed to be common to us all was a desire to see a Church which emphasises God`s love is for all, transforming our lives and creating community, which is engaged in outreach in mission and evangelism. I stressed the theme that we have been looking at in our worship at PSA, that God`s enabling, justifying and sanctifying grace underpins that Call to Holiness which is essential for the well being of individual disciples and the corporate life of the Church.

Marrying the **personal and social holiness** of believers, in works of piety (the inner life of prayer and worship, of bible study, sharing in the sacraments and in conferencing) and works of mercy (feeding the poor and serving others) was the theme also of the sermon we heard at Hoolebury Methodist Church in Jamaica where Methodists and Baptists gathered for our annual dialogue meeting (see report later). It is a liberating message of hope that can share with the world where much seems to threaten peace and undermine God`s justice for all his people.

So many threads come together as we recover our sense of how our history and heritage relate to how we continue to be the Church today in our own context. May we continue to work at

these as we seek to worship week by week in “wonder, love and praise” (using our new piano to good effect), to witness powerfully in our evangelism and service to community and to continue to be a learning community who support each other.

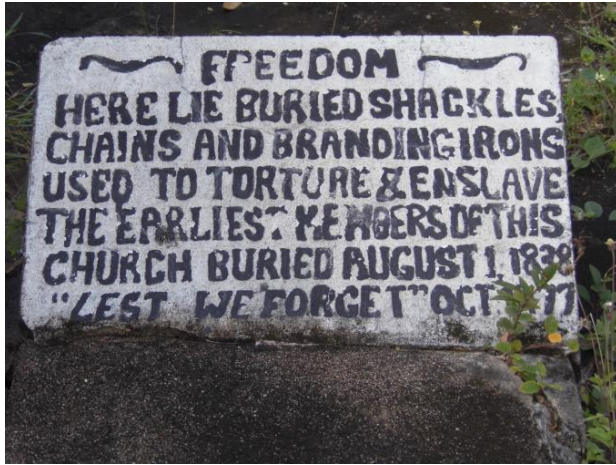
## **Pastor Tim**

### **My chains fell off!**

“And can it be” was one of the hymns I cited in my presentation recently to the Baptist World Alliance/World Methodist Council International Dialogue which I co-chair. Meeting in Runaway Bay Jamaica 12 members of the dialogue met over a week for the fourth of their annual meetings which will conclude next year with the drafting of a report. The overall theme of the dialogue is *faith working through love*. The theme of the conversations this time centred on “**Grace and faith : sung and preached, lived and shared**”.

Participants discussed a range of papers on the works of piety and mercy, in worship and preaching, including hymnody, and in the outworking of faith in practice among Methodists and Baptists in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean.

It was appropriate that we met in Jamaica where Methodists and Baptists made common cause in opposing the imposition of slavery by the colonial government of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sam Sharpe, a black Baptist preacher, who features on a banknote for 50 Jamaican dollars and is a National Hero, died in the cause of emancipation which finally came on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1838. In the graveyard of the local Baptist chapel in St. Ann`s Bay is a grave where some of the chains and shackles are buried.



In the same town is commemorated another National Hero, Marcus Garvey, who was baptised in the Methodist Church in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. He went on to champion the rights of workers and the pan-Africa movement.



On the Sunday we participated in Sunday worship at Hoolebury Methodist Church in the St. Ann`s Bay Circuit of

the Jamaica District. We were joined for the service and lunch by Bishop Everald Galbraith of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas (MCCA). The Rev. Dr. Oral Thomas of the United Theological College (UTC) in Kingston preached the sermon on Matthew 5:20, drawing on the theme of holy hands and helping hands in joining together worship and service.



The Connexional theme for MCCA and the Americas for this year is **Heritage and Mission**. The stories of these heroic women and men, who proclaimed the gospel often in difficult circumstances, is a means of bringing to life the endeavours of early missions as well as speaking to us today through lively worshipping and witnessing communities in places steeped in the Methodist message handed down the ages.

Earlier in the week the group travelled to Kingston to visit the denominational offices of the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) and Jamaica Methodist District and shared lunch at Saxthorpe Methodist Church. They then visited UTC on the campus of the University of the West Indies at Mona before calling at the Bob Marley Museum and having dinner hosted by the General Secretary of the JBU, the Rev. Karl B. Johnson. It was heartening to hear of the ways the denominations work

together in unity and mission in reaching out to the unchurched and the marginalised in society.



## **Report on the visit of Pope Francis to All Saints Church**

Pope Francis' historic visit to the Anglican church of All Saints recently was marked by the 'twinning' of that Church of England community with the Catholic parish of Ognissanti on the south side of the city. It comes within a year which has seen one visit by Archbishop Justin Welby to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the Anglican Centre. Pastor

Tim and Angela were privileged to be at both events representing PSA and wider Methodism.

The Pope's visit came as part of celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the first Church of England service, which took place in a room in Via dei Greci in the so-called 'English ghetto' near the Spanish Steps on October 27th 1816 (very near the piano shop where our recently acquired baby grand came from!) Pope Francis is the first pope to visit an Anglican Church in his own Diocese of Rome.

Members of the two parishes of All Saints and Ognissanti have worked together informally for almost a decade, attending each other's services and reaching out to the hungry and homeless. The Catholic parish of Ognissanti on the Via Appia Nuova is the titular church of Cardinal Walter Kasper, former president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It's also the place where Pope Paul VI celebrated the first Mass in Italian in March 1965, following the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Cardinal Kasper, who once preached here at PSA, spoke recently to Philippa Hitchen, of Vatican Radio who is also a Churchwarden at All Saints, about the pastoral outreach of the parish and about the importance of the Papal visit. He said that it was a further step marking "the growing of our relationship": Pope Francis' presence as the Bishop of Rome, he said, is "very significant". Noting that he is the titular cardinal of the Catholic parish of Ognissanti, twinned with All Saints, he says "for me it's a very joyful event" which will help to further those ecumenical relations. These relations, the cardinal continued, don't just grow through theological dialogue, even though that is important, but also through personal contact and especially

by praying together. He notes that Jesus did not “make an imperative to have unity” but rather he “prayed that all may be one” and ecumenism, he says, is the “sharing of this prayer of Our Lord”.

The service on the 26<sup>th</sup> included a renewal of baptismal vows by all. Cardinal Kasper stressed that being “baptized together in the same Lord Jesus Christ” is the foundation of the ecumenical movement. Today, he said, all baptized Christians “have to stand together and give common witness” against violence and terrorism, seeking to promote justice and peace and learning that “what we have in common is more than what divides us”.

The service also included the blessing and dedication of an icon of Christ the Saviour to celebrate the church’s anniversary and a homily from Pope Francis after which some members of the congregation were able to engage in conversation with him. Pastor Tim and Angela were in the augmented choir which sang at this service. Both are involved in services and events at All Saints as part of our own improving relations between Methodists and Anglicans here as elsewhere.

So where next in the ecumenical pilgrimage? The work of the Methodist Ecumenical Office is to promote dialogue and encourage joint worship and action with different churches here in Rome as well as wider afield. But should we too try to develop closer links between our churches? With Catholics and Anglicans, with Baptists and Reformed? What ideas do you to build on the work we already do?



If you want to see more of the service, here is the web link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrWk1GsARhM>



## **Intern Report**

Wow – February has been a quick month! It hardly feels anytime at all since the last issue of the Bridge.

The newest thing to fill you all in on from this month has been the **start of the crèche!** It was an idea that was proposed a couple of months ago and I was happy to take the lead on it, and it really has been very simple in terms of setting it up. I'm very thankful for the 3 very willing volunteers who have been able to help on Sunday mornings! Unfortunately, it hasn't really been used to its fullest extent yet. However, it is very easy

to bring down a blanket and some toys every Sunday and have a couple of people on hand in case someone does want to use this service, and if not then nothing is lost!

Other than the crèche, I have been carrying on as usual. I was back in the UK for a training weekend with the British Methodist Church just as Tim got back from Jamaica, so it has been nice for us to both be here in Rome this past week to catch up on ourselves!

The **Young Adults group** is going well, and I've been encouraged as we have had a number of new faces joining us! I'm also still teaching at the JNRC at St Paul's each week, and that is going very well too. It's been nice to have the same students coming back each week as it's meant that I've been able to build upon the basic English lessons I've been giving, and see some real progress.

I've also been slowly working on our **Heritage Project**, which we are very hopeful will get off the ground soon. Once the equipment is in place, I can start to produce some leaflets and reading materials for us to use for those who do come to visit.

If you'd like to know more about what I've been up to this month, or have any questions then please do come and chat to me!

**Lucy**

## **Sant'Egidio Community**

Regarding refugees: we have just received a letter from the Comunità di Sant'Egidio, partners with Italian Federation of

Evangelical Churches in **Mediterranean Hope**. The Humanitarian corridors project celebrates its first year! On 27 February and 2 March we shall welcome a further 125 refugees to Italy. The first group from the war in Syria arrived in Italy in February 2016. It seemed the fulfilment of a dream, for them and for us, to be able to help whole families who had lost everything to begin a new life. Around them an amazing solidarity movement was created: many people offered help, and made their houses available. It is the good side of Italy, which encourages us and helps us go forward. And thus, a year on from the first arrivals, the total number brought safely from Damascus, Homs and Aleppo will be 700. Among them many children born during the war, who have been able to find peace in our country.

Pope Francis is supporting this project strongly. Just a few days ago he said that to deal with the question of migrations it is necessary to use "four verbs: welcome, protect, support, integrate". It is the best way to think also for our future.

On Monday 27 February we the new arrivals were greeted at Fiumicino Airport, where news and the welcome press conference was transmitted live. You can follow the events in streaming on the website **[www.santegidio.org](http://www.santegidio.org)** and their Facebook page. Thank you for your help and support.

(To know more visit the page dedicated to Corridoi Umanitari)

## **SUNDAY SERVICES AT PSA**

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|------------------------|---|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> March  | Pastor Tim leading Holy Communion   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> March | Pastor Tim followed by Pot Luck Lunch   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> March | Revd Adrian Burdon (Pastor Tim at the Global Christian Forum Committee Meeting) |

*The Rev Adrian Burdon is a British Methodist minister from the Fylde in Lancashire who is in Rome for a Churches Together in Britain and Ireland meeting. He has previously been a University Chaplain in Leeds and a theological education at the College in Tonga in the Pacific.*

- 26<sup>th</sup> March Pastor Tim and others: All Age Worship for Mothering Sunday.  
2<sup>nd</sup> April Informal service led by Pastor Tim (Rome Marathon this day)  
9<sup>th</sup> April Pastor Tim leads a Holy Communion service for Palm Sunday

## **CHURCH FAMILY NEWS:**

**Birthdays:** Jenny Marinelli (9<sup>th</sup> Feb), Elena Garro (10<sup>th</sup> Feb), Jenny Smith (16<sup>th</sup> Feb), Deinde Ejirinde (17<sup>th</sup> Feb), Mary Hull (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb), Emmy Tranggono, Agnes Domingo, Christiana Hyde Cole and Zeema Mancho (all on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb). Nelle Hendricks (14<sup>th</sup> March).

## **FOR SALE**

Wrist Blood Pressure Monitor - Marcello Marinelli has donated a new Omron Blood Pressure Monitor for sale for church funds. It is a good quality make and would cost some Euro 100 in the Farmacie; we are offering it for Euro 50. If you would be interested, please have a word with Marcello, or Jenny Smith. We also have a smaller Sanitas Monitor for Euro 10.

## CHURCH COUNCIL (12.02.17)

The council met on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February. Matters arising from the previous meeting resulted in Sandra agreeing to explore the possibility of providing new tables and chairs for the Sunday School room and an interactive whiteboard, and Lucy has made action on getting PSA on social media and we can now be found on

[www.facebook.com/PonteSantAngeloMethodistChurchRome](https://www.facebook.com/PonteSantAngeloMethodistChurchRome)

In the Pastoral and Mission discussion, Pastor Tim brought forward the **Heritage project**, proposing a projector, loudspeakers and one screen. The Council agreed this should not exceed 5000 euros. Pastor Tim also advised that the Tavola Valdese is circulating a **questionnaire regarding ecumenical activities**. He has met with Luca Baratto who assisted in explaining exactly what they wanted to know. Council members discussed how PSA responds to ecumenical initiatives and it was mentioned that firstly, our church is attended by many people from other denominations who are united by the English language. Pastor Tim is now Chair of the CTiR (Churches Together in Rome) and PSA always contributes to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. People from other denominations attend our Bible Studies, the church building is used by Adventists, Charismatic and Pentecostal groups, we receive visitors from many other churches around the world, including the regular twice-yearly visits of schools from Holland, choirs from other denominations around the world come to sing in our church and from time to time there is an exchange of pulpits with other English language churches in Rome. Federico mentioned one or two ideas **ideas for raising awareness of our community**, as well as raising

funds. He suggested organizing a summer dinner on the upstairs terrace. Pastor Tim agreed that this could be considered for early July.

Discussing the Financial, Property and other Admin matters, Marcello reported that he had found a good **Yamaha baby grand piano**, which the church has since purchased.

The next Church Council meetings will be on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March and 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

There are various opportunities to engage in Bible Study at PSA.

If you are free on Wednesday mornings, do come and join us at 10.30 once every two weeks for coffee, fellowship and study. If you are not free in the mornings and would like to form part of an evening class twice a month, please speak to Sandra. The next dates for the morning group are 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

Alessia and Federico run a home group in Via del Casaletto 63 (buzz Montelli Milani). They will meet on March 18<sup>th</sup>, April 1<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, and May 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. For more information speak to Alessia and Federico or call them on 3381675680.

## **Young Adults Group**

The Young Adults Group will now meet at the new time of 6.30pm every second Tuesday to continue their study in Ephesians over some tea and coffee. The change was made in order to accommodate those who have to travel a long way to get to Ponte Sant'Angelo. They will meet next on the 7<sup>th</sup> of

March in MEOR. If you would like more information or are interested in coming, please speak to Lucy or email her on [lucy.meorome@gmail.com](mailto:lucy.meorome@gmail.com)

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Merton College Evensong**

The Choir of Merton College, Oxford, will sing at Caravita on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 5pm, and will then also be singing in St. Peter`s Basilica on Monday afternoon on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **New World Choir**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, the New World Choir from First United Methodist Church in Alabama will put on a concert in Ponte Sant`Angelo Methodist Church at 7pm. All are welcome!

## **SUMMER COURSES**

In the summer months, we are hosting 3 courses in the Methodist Ecumenical Office. These are:

**Radical Hospitality (25<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June)** for people who would be interested in experiencing engagement with the theme in the context of a church set in a multicultural city with the contemporary challenge of migration and hospitality for the stranger.

**Methodism and Ecumenism (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> June)** for anyone who has an interest in ecumenical issues, and who wants to think through issues of what it means to be a Methodist in an ecumenical context.

**Photography and Spirituality (15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June)** for people with an interest in photography and open to exploring how this might link with spiritual values and insights. Those of other faiths or no faith also welcome.

**If any members of the congregation would like to join in any of the courses on a non-residential basis, please see Lucy or email her on [lucy.meorome@gmail.com](mailto:lucy.meorome@gmail.com)**

### **SUMMER CAMP FOR THE VERY YOUNG AT ECUMENE**

The Italian Methodist church invites all youngsters from 5 to 13 to join in a summer camp at the Ecumene centre in Velletri, just outside Rome in a magnificent location. The camp will be held from Friday 9 June through to Sunday 11 June and is a great opportunity for our kids to interact and hear God's word in a joyful environment. This camp takes place every year and a great time is always had by all. There will be details later about cost and arrangements, but PSA is always willing to subsidize in case of need. A knowledge of Italian helps, but there is always a good mix of nationalities. Please let Pastor Tim or Sandra know if you are interested.

**Weekly Offerings** [P=Cash, E=Envelopes, BB=Birthday Basket]

### **Totals for January and February**

<b>Jan</b>	P 485,25	E 2306,50	BB 100,00	<b>TTL 2890,95</b>
<b>Feb</b>	P 586,33	E 1606,00	BB 120,00	<b>TTL 2312,33</b>