

### **TACT Chair's report: January 2019**

We thank the Lord for the year gone by with a growing number of God-initiated projects run across churches to bring fellowship, worship and outreach into our area. Looking at the list of things we do together there is a rich and diverse sweep of initiatives where we can find God's blessings for us and strength for service, and these only represent TACT projects. There have been a number of successful Alpha courses run for instance by TMC and Redeemer and the highly regarded "Messy church" and coffee & crafts services in a number of TACT churches to mention a couple. We thank God for all of these and we are grateful for all who give up time and energy to serve the church and town and area. We are also grateful to God for all the TACT involvement as you will see in the many reports that follow! These all represent significant spiritual input into Tavistock and area.

It has been a year also of some sadness and challenges for probably all of our churches too for different reasons, but we believe God will train us through such times to hold on to him and to one another in love as he brings us into greater faith in Him. Last June, Colin Bond, our dear friend and original pastor at King's passed away suddenly in Uganda at the age of 80. Colin was one of the originators of TACT and had always prayed for its success and unity, which God has been answering so faithfully in recent years. He was well known in the town and we were pleased to celebrate his life.

We miss some dear friends who have moved away this year: Pam & Dave Stranks to Chippenham after many years of service to the Methodist church and to TACT, and Rev Graham Cotter of St Andrew's Buckland to the Exeter area where I am sure he will enjoy a well-deserved retirement. Sadly, we will shortly also be saying good bye to Father John Greatbach from the Catholic Church. John has supported TACT so well in the leaders' fellowship and his kindness and good humour will be missed – happy retirement John, you have served your community well.

We have welcomed Steve & Lorraine Emery-Wright in TMC who are returning to the West Country and we see their time with us as an encouragement and provision from God.

One of the blessings of this year has been the launch of ROC Tavistock after the ROC Conversation held in June. I truly believe that God is building bridges between faith groups and the voluntary sector and we have the opportunity to reach out with other friends to show God's care for the people around us. Jeff Moles once said: "The church has left the building". How true that is so Let us all play our part in working with others to enhance Tavistock and area.

We pray "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". May 2019 be a year where Jesus Christ is increasingly made visible and loved through his people working together in unity with Him. Thank you for all you each are doing as part of the answer to the Lord's Prayer.

David Palmer

**Financial Report for Year ending : 31st December 2018**

Income	£	Expenditure	£
<b><i>Brought forward 1st Jan 2018</i></b>	<b><i>1054.22</i></b>		
<i>TACT Subscriptions:</i>		Public Liability Insurance	136. 00
St Eustachius' Church subs	100. 00	Publicity	69. 50
Tavistock Methodist	100. 00	Hire of Town Hall Risen 2018	270. 00
Bere Alston United	100. 00	Easter Costs	61. 20
St Andrew's Buckland	50 .00	Photocopying	71. 19
Catholic Church	60. 00	Donation to Peter Tavy Methodist	30. 00
Redeemer Church	50 .00	Web domain fees	9. 60
Tavistock Deanery	30. 00	Hire of Town Hall Risen 2019	270. 00
St Paul's Gulworthy	30. 00		
King's Church	30. 00	<i>Gifts:</i>	
Salvation Army	40 .00	Personal gifts	45. 52
United Reformed	30. 00	U3A use of projector	20. 00
Abbey Chapel	50. 00		
St Andrew's Whitchurch	50. 00	<i>ROC:</i>	
Easter Monday Celebration	384.11	Conversation 28/6/18	2500. 00
Pentecost Celebration	362.37	Hire of Town Hall	148. 75
<i>ROC Donations:</i>		Annual Subscription	300. 00
Individual	300. 00	Leaflets	96. 00
Church Donations	1255. 00	Room Hire	54. 00
Public Bodies	1060. 00		
Donations since 28/6/18	163. 00	<b><i>Expenditure as of 31/12/2018</i></b>	<b><i>4336. 76</i></b>
Miscellaneous	20. 00	<b><i>Balance carried forward</i></b>	<b><i>981. 94</i></b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>5318. 70</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>5318. 70</i></b>



## STREET PASTORS

It has again been a busy year of Street Pastor activity, though with some of our longer-serving volunteers having retired and with fewer new volunteers to replace them, our overall numbers are slightly down. Please do continue to encourage others in your respective congregations to come and have a chat to find out more about getting involved. During 2018 we were still able to put out patrol teams on 68 nights through the year and we continue to meet a very real need amongst those out and about in the night-time economy. Our patrols engaged with more than 1,500 people and gave out 120 pairs of flip-flops. Relationships with those that we meet continue to be warm and friendly. The early encouraging experiences of our "daytime patrols" going out in teams of 2 each Friday lunchtime were indicative of what to expect throughout the year. As we now enter our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of weekly daytime patrols, our teams continue to meet every week with many people who are keen to talk, share concerns and seek encouragement and prayer. Regarding finances, with contributions from the volunteers themselves, generous support from local churches, and favourable responses to grant applications (as with the application to the Police & Crime Commissioner during 2018) our financial situation continues to be sound. Daytime and night-time, Street Pastors continue to offer a powerful Christian witness in our town, and we thank God for His ongoing blessing of this work

*Rob Palmer – Street Pastor Co-ordinator*



**School Pastors**

## SCHOOL PASTORS

The work and witness at Tavistock College continues on a weekly basis on Wednesday lunchtimes during term time, and the last year has seen a real sense of acceptance among the staff and students.

This in part followed the tragic death of a pupil from a drug overdose, when School Pastors went into school immediately following the death announcement on the Monday, and continued all of the week, supporting staff and students alike. This brought about a real sense that God was in the situation, and staff in particular were openly expressing their thanks for our presence.

We are invited to every church service which the College holds, and shows the acceptance we have from the College and it was a real pleasure to get a personal Christmas card from the Principal sent to every School and Prayer Pastor thanking us for our presence during the year..

An offshoot of this work is that the students are out on the streets at weekends as they get older, they are aware of the Street Pastors and gladly interact with them.

At present we have a team of 8 School Pastors and 10 Prayer Pastors, so would appreciate anyone who felt the call to this work to take up the challenge and join us. We have the open door to go into the College every day if we could, but our numbers do not allow for this, but an amazing witness as we patrol around the school.

Do contact me if you would like any more information in being involved in this work

*Roger Bird - School Pastor Co-ordinator*

### **IGNATIAN PRAYER GROUP**

The Ignatian Prayer Group is now in its sixth year. After meeting in Mary Tavy last year thanks to Hazel and Nick's kind hospitality, we have returned to 31 Grenville Drive in Tavistock this term.

We are an ecumenical group drawing from a variety of churches in Tavistock. Our aim is to encourage contemplative prayer in the style of St. Ignatius. We normally begin at 7.30 with tea/coffee and biscuits. After a short introduction and prayer, we read a Bible passage together. A time of silence follows in order to contemplate the reading, *either* through Gospel Contemplation as we relate to Jesus in the passage *or* through Lectio Divina, concentrating on a small section of the reading, even just a word, and letting it sink into our hearts. Following this we give the group an opportunity to share briefly anything that has come to them in the prayer time. There is no obligation to do this and there is no discussion as we respect each person during this time. We finish by 9 p.m. with a shared prayer. We welcome new people and the dates for this term are on the TACT website. For further details, feel free to contact us.

Looking to the longer-term future, we are praying about whether to encourage one-off whole day retreats rather than a termly programme. Another possibility is having a week of guided prayer supported by several churches. This would be like a week's retreat but without the expense of going away. Those signing up to it would commit to praying on their own each day, then meet with a prayer companion in a one-to-one session of about half an hour to share any thoughts about their prayer. The prayer companion might then suggest a scripture passage which they might meditate on the following day. It would obviously involve quite a lot of organisation but if you have any thoughts on this, do let us know.

*Liz Moles 61624 / Hazel Butland 811045*

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

This event is an outreach tool for men's evangelism; a kind of first step towards the Kingdom. It involves inviting our non-Christian friends, colleagues and neighbours to the golf club for drinks, a social time, a simple meal all followed by a talk from an interesting Christian speaker to give them 'food for thought'. The idea is that the talk will not try and persuade or preach to anyone but rather it is a lively, interesting, amusing and "cringe-free" talk about the work and experiences of the speaker which will include reference to how they have been guided by their faith or God's intervention or whatever. In other words, it is something that men with no Christian faith can relate to but salted with the speaker's faith. The hope being they may take that next step towards the Kingdom.

This year We have had 3 speakers:

In January Iain Colquhoun a marine engineer for 'Mercy Ships' spoke to us about his work on the world's biggest hospital ship bringing life changing surgery to the poorest of our world.

In April Jim Lewis-Clarke a police officer came to talk with a story of cancer, an encounter with God and healing.

In October Rowland Clear a community chaplain spoke about his mentoring work particularly at Princetown and Channings Wood prisons.

Thank you for your continued prayer and support of this ministry.

*Martin Watts*

## **TASTE AND SEE**

Taste and See is Christian outreach for ladies in the form of supper events, organised by a committee representing churches in the Tavistock area. The aim is to provide a much needed and valued opportunity to invite friends / family / colleagues to an easy-to-access Christian event. Numbers for our events typically range from 60 to 70 ladies though there have been a lot more for the joint events that we have occasionally hosted.

For various reasons we have not held any events in 2018 but we are hoping to hold an event in April when Lea Davis is visiting from France. Lea was one of inspirational people behind the Stilettoes conferences in Plymouth and was a loyal and dynamic member of the committee before she moved to France to do missionary work.

In the past two years a significant number of committee members have had to step down which has left us with depleted personnel. A number of churches in the area aren't currently represented and we really value interdenominational relationships, so if anyone would like to become involved (or knows someone who might be interested) please contact me on 01822 616859 [ruthnewman2005@aol.com](mailto:ruthnewman2005@aol.com)

*Ruth Newman*

## **PENTECOST PARTY IN THE PARK**

After the torrential rain of the 2017 "Pentecost Party in the Park", we were once again blessed with a lovely sunny day for our 2018 event. The setting up of tents, bouncy-castles and sound equipment on the Sunday morning is so much easier and quicker in the dry! Although better attended than the previous year's wet event, the day didn't attract quite as many visitors as the equally sunny day back in 2016 when we held our Pentecost party for the first time. With generous contributions from those bringing supplies for the cream-tea stall, a well-supported duck-race once again on the canal, and the ever popular inflatables, the event received as much in donations as it had cost to stage. It was also a great attraction to have the Trinity Balloon team there on the day and we were privileged to witness the inflation of their brand-new "Faith, Hope & Love" balloon – a wonderful photo-opportunity to help us all share the heart of the Christian message with family and friends.

*Rob Palmer*

## **RISEN – EASTER MONDAY CELEBRATION**

It is wonderful to come together across the churches to praise God and Risen is a chance to do just that in celebration of the Resurrection. The Risen event has now been taking place every Easter Monday for the last seven years and 2018 was again a great evening enjoyed by many Christians from our local area. The aim is to make the evening welcoming & comfortable for all, regardless of church background. As usual there was enthusiastic praise and worship led by a choir drawn from local churches and brought together specially for the Risen event plus the performance of a song written especially for the event. There was also a talk by Revd Phil Griffin from TMC and prayer for our communities offered by members of local churches. Once again, it was an encouraging & uplifting evening. Another "Risen" event at Tavistock Town Hall is being planned for this coming Easter Monday evening. If you have ideas, or would like to be involved, please do get in touch.

*Jackie Palmer 01822 618597*



### OPEN THE BOOK

"Open the Book" is a nation-wide initiative by the Bible Society, encouraging local churches to present dramatized Bible stories to primary schools. We are fortunate in the Tavistock Area that many of the local schools welcome contributions from "Open the Book" teams to Key Stage 1 & 2 assemblies. The dramatized stories are mostly taken from the "Lion

Storyteller Bible" by Bob Hartman, with fully a scripted introduction, conclusion and short prayer published by the Bible Society.

At present Open the Book teams visit the following schools:

- Tavistock Primary School (TMC and St Eustachius) Contact John Harris 613611
- St Peters Primary & St Rumons Infants Schools (St Eustachius) Contact Mary Jane Traber 614417
- Whitchurch Primary School (St Andrews) Contact Brian Eales 614166
- Gulworthy Primary School (St Eustachius) Contact Rev. Judith Blowey 832374
- Mary Tavy Primary School (TMC and Mary Tavy Methodist Chapel) Contact Mrs Prim Skedgell 618353
- Princetown Primary School (Rock Methodist Church) Contact Margaret Holt 855858

New volunteers are always very welcome!

*John Harris*



### HEALING ROOMS AND COSTA HEALING

Monday evening Healing Rooms in the Society of Friends Meeting House in Bedford car park has been running now for 5 years. We are increasingly busy and getting people who travel sometimes quite a distance to find us. We thank and praise God for the healing that takes place. We believe this is a vital part of Christian ministry. It is

not enough to tell people that Jesus heals without demonstrating that He does. One lady who came, had two hearing aids and still didn't hear very well, rang me a week or so later to say she could hear again and wasn't using hearing aids any more. A man who was very ill with cancer and who was very anxious and afraid was brought by his family one evening. He died some weeks later but the family said he had been greatly moved and had complete peace after receiving prayer. It is a privilege to see people come into Healing Rooms and leave again, having met with the Holy Spirit, which is what it is all about.

More people are coming for prayer in Costa on Tuesday mornings and more engagements are taking place with customers there. It is wonderful that Costa is so open to this taking place in their cafes nationally and that our own Costa is so welcoming.

The Regional Directors of the National Association of Healing Rooms, who have a vast experience in both mission and Healing Rooms, came to Tavistock twice last year, once in September for training new members to the team, and again in November for a refreshing weekend and to share their experiences with us. The teaching was very beneficial and encouraging. There are three new members to the team, which is very helpful for filling the rota and great to see more people interested in this ministry. New members are required to undertake training and to acquire a letter of from their vicar, minister or pastor stating their suitability for this ministry. We are in the process of setting up a Facebook page in order to publicise the Healing Rooms more widely.

I would like to thank all members of both the Monday evening team and the Costa team for their commitment to the ministry and to those churches who support us financially, which enables us to keep going. Please pray that this ministry will continue to grow in bringing God's healing to the people of Tavistock.

*Rene Chambers*

## **TAVIPRAISE, TAVIPRAYER AND PRAYER IN THE SQUARE**

These three TACT initiatives have been going for a long time now, and I thank the Lord for the opportunities to worship, pray and evangelise together across the churches.

**TaviPraise** is an evening of contemporary worship led by different TACT music bands and in different church locations. We meet on the first Thursday of most months. These times can be very precious moments when the Lord speaks to his people during the worship, and there are sometimes healings taking place. I would like to encourage you to come along – information is on the TACT website – and take part in a real time of entering God's presence together.

**TaviPrayer** is a meeting which has been held monthly for prayer for TACT projects and particular needs. We are currently looking to change the focus and content of these prayer times for the coming year. The next Taviprayer is at the Methodist Church at 7.30pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February, to which you are all warmly invited.

**Prayer in the Square** – on the third Saturday of most months a group of us goes on to Bedford Square to talk to people and offer prayer. There are often great opportunities for sharing our faith with others and seeing God touch lives. It is all low key and a great way to reach out and bless our town.

*David Palmer*



Last June TACT hosted a community enhancement event in the Town Hall called Redeeming Our Communities. It was funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner the Fire Service, Churches and private donations. The event attracted 150 people from faith and other voluntary sector groups to look at ways to celebrate the good in our town and look for ways practically of working together to fill gaps.

Since then we have set up Action Groups which meet every six weeks to work on setting up small projects to tackle the four main areas of concern for Tavistock were identified as;

1. Youth & Digital Safety;
2. Loneliness and Isolation;
3. Mental Health & Addictions;
4. Communications and Mapping.

Since then a number of things have been achieved including a PCSO arranging a regular drop in at Wetherspoon's for parents to talk over concerns about young people's issues, local coffee mornings, and the producing of a Tavistock Welcome pack for new arrivals.

We have printed leaflets giving information and a face book page has also been started. We would welcome more help and manpower from the churches in starting a number of other small projects such as initiative to help people with dementia working with the Dementia Alliance. Please contact me if you would like to help by joining one of the Action teams. We need you!

*David Palmer,*

*ROC Tavistock Coordinator*

**DATA (DEBT ADVICE TAVISTOCK AREA)**

DATA (Debt Advice, Tavistock Area) has been running for just over 6 years. We are a charity supported by TACT providing completely free advice to anyone in need, helping local people with debt management, debt relief orders, bankruptcy, dealing with creditors and bailiffs. We are affiliated to the Christian debt advice group Community Money Advice (CMA).

**Clients** We have had 27 new referrals during 2018 and currently have in excess of 80 active clients; some are very demanding of time and others much less so. Client debts range in size from around £500 to some in the region of £60,000. The total debt of currently active clients is around £1,250,000;

**Referring agencies** Our referrals this year have come from a range of agencies, outlined below:

Agency	Number (%)	Agency	Number (%)
CAB	15(55)	Children's Centre	4(15)
Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen's Families Association	1(4)	Social Services	1(4)
Friends	5(18)	Flyer	1(4)

We have noticed a big increase in referrals from the CAB; they refer to us because they are unable to easily do Debt Relief Orders so use our facilities for that.

**Advisers** We are very grateful for all the work our advisers do on behalf of our clients, in many cases "going the extra mile" to provide a good service. We have, however, suffered a drop in advisers available to our service over the last year; some have had to suspend their involvement temporarily because of pressure of responsibilities, others have felt it right to bring their involvement with DATA to an end, having worked with us for a number of years. As a result, we need to recruit additional advisers and we will explain more at the AGM. Giving debt advice is a great privilege but it is not for everyone; it requires advisers to be computer literate and to see clients' financial situations clearly. To help our service we are keen to explore the possibility of having a team of "budget buddies" and to increase the number of "Chaperones" we have. Budget buddies would be people who would not give debt advice but would help clients form a budget and monitor it. As most of our work is in the clients' homes, we avoid seeing a client alone and for this reason need "chaperones" who simply accompany us, have conversation with the client and the adviser when appropriate and quietly pray for a good outcome.

**Financial Support** Our Debt Advice group could not operate without the support of parent organisation Community Money Advice. CMA ensures we keep up with current regulations and good practice and it is our helpline for advisers with tricky cases. Annual subscriptions are £995 p.a.; this sum ensures we are well informed, well trained and have a good computer software package. Other **expenditure** for 2017-18 is listed below:

Training	£300.00	Insurance	£400.00
Resources	£314.50	DBS checks	£100.00
Volunteer expenses	£340.00	Computer server rental	£95.00
Data protection	£35.00	Phone	£65.00

**Income** for the current financial year 2017-18 is:

Church donations:	£650.00	Individual Donations	£590.00
Gift Aid	£245.00	Rebate on insurance	£64.00

Balance of account Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 is £62.98

Advice to clients is always free and no money is used to support clients. Our thanks go to churches that have made annual donations to DATA. We ask you please to continue to remember us, both in your giving and in your prayers.

*David Norman*



**TAVISTOCK FOOD BANK**

It is my pleasure to offer this report to TACT, as the Acting Chair. Caroline Mitchell served for one year as our Chairperson and threw herself into that role with great enthusiasm. In a short time, she was able to understand the full operation of the Foodbank, the strengths and weaknesses. Caroline helped us prepare for our annual audit by the Regional Supervisor and has ensured that all the recommendations have been implemented. So, I want to begin by thanking Caroline for her assistance over the past year and wish her well for the future, Caroline is continuing her support of the Foodbank but unable to attend trustees meetings due to her work commitments.

Secondly, I want to thank those who give so much of their time and energy for the Foodbank, in order that together, we may support our community. Many of these people have been in place for a number of years. My thanks go to Anne Luxton our Secretary, Linda Medland our volunteer co-ordinator, Tony Welsh our warehouse manager, Harry Richards who brings in the food from the supermarkets each week, John Medland our Treasurer, Andrew Bruff our Communications Officer and, of course, all the volunteers, who attend regular shifts on Fridays.

Next, I would like to thank our Church Representatives who are a vital link to our local churches who regularly attend our committee meetings. We are continually indebted to Tavistock United Reformed Church who accommodate us week by week, not only as a distribution point, in providing storage for the tonnes of food that we handle and providing food, refreshments for clients and volunteers. We thank the Redeemer Church for their monthly collections for the Foodbank.

I would also like to thank Tavistock Area Christians Together who oversee our work and take an active interest in maintaining the Foodbank and keeping it in focus through its regular email communications and its webpages.

I would like to thank all the generous donors from our community who regularly donate food and money to Foodbank, the vast majority of our donors remain anonymous, to them we are grateful. I would also like to mention our local supermarkets: Tesco, Co-op and Lidl, for their help and co-operation in providing collection points in their supermarkets and, in addition making donations of food and cash to the project.

Usage: It appears from our data base that usage has been slowly increasing over the last four years:

Period	1.9.17-31.8.18	1.9.16-31.8.17	1.9.15-1.9.16	1.9.14-1.9.15
Vouchers given	426	298	294	259
Adults fed	631	403	428	391
Children fed	362	236	214	186
Total fed	993	639	642	577

Christmas 2018 saw a slight drop in the number of Christmas parcels prepared, from 65 to 56, each of these went to families in need. Christmas is a time of giving and the Foodbank received really generous levels of donations, so we were able to meet the demand. We are in touch with other Foodbanks in the South West, as we are able to share the generous donations with other communities in need.

As with any team of people, we have a turnover of volunteers and we are always on the look out for new volunteers in various different roles. We are grateful for the way in which Linda, our Volunteer Co-ordinator approaches the complex task of recruitment, selection and training. We are grateful of the support of Major Pamela Smith who regularly helps as part of her work within the Tavistock Salvation Army, her pastoral gifts are most helpful. I am hoping that we will soon be able to welcome some new trustees to strengthen our links with all the churches in Tavistock and I am particularly keen to identify a new Chairperson in the next six months! It is a privilege to be part of the Foodbank here in Tavistock and we look forward to another year of serving those in need.

*Robert Weston*

### **THY KINGDOM COME 2018**

What an amazing opportunity Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is to gather together to pray for our Nation and community.

The TKC 2018 event was held at TMC between Friday May 11th (2pm -9pm) and Saturday May 12th (9am- 4pm) A big thank you to all the very talented people who helped to arrange the different prayer stations in the church.

The prayer station ideas were taken from the TKC resources website so there was a mixture of family friendly activities as well as more reflective ones.

The event was supported by Christians across the town; however, very few attended. Several people asked about a corporate prayer event which maybe could be explored for 2019.

I look forward to attending the 2019 TKC event this year.

*Sarah Biggs*