

**We'll praise him for all that is past/And trust him for all that's to come (J. Hart).**

On Whitsunday 1757 Joseph Hart (1712-1768) became a Christian under the ministry of the early Methodist preacher George Whitefield. Before then he was never had a sense of inner peace and struggled to find any assurance that he was right with God. Although he was a preacher and hymn-writer, Joseph Hart is perhaps best known simply for the two lines of one of his hymns quoted above. They often sum up just how we are feeling.

***We'll praise him for all that is past***

This autumn, the building at Goodrington Methodist Church is 50 years old. Some of our members will be able to remember the vision that caused the church to be planted on the new estate and how with excitement and some trepidation the new church was formed and the new building planned, built and opened. There are so many things to praise God for in the 50 years since the church was opened. Hundreds of families have come to celebrate God's gift of a new baby in baptism. Hundreds of children have been through Sunday School, Junior Church, Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade, not to mention playgroup and Pre-school. Dozens of couples have set out on married life together from the front of the church. Rather more soberly, hundreds of families have also come to remember and give thanks for the life of a loved one who has died.

Sunday by Sunday, men and women have come to Goodrington Methodist Church to worship God and day by day they have come to learn, to pray, to share in fellowship and Holy Communion. Christian lives have been begun, nurtured and developed. People have served faithfully, taken office in the local church, been called as local preachers and been accepted for the Methodist ministry. The prayers and giving of the people have spread all around the world, something that continues to happen right up to the present day. To celebrate the past 50 years, there are special preachers coming throughout October. To mark the eve of this special month (Friday 30 September) there is a concert in the church and there is also a special Gift Day on Saturday 24 September with a coffee morning from 10.00 am to noon.

***And trust him for all that's to come.***

Earlier in the year, we discussed how we might plan for the next 10 years in the life of the church. In particular, we had a vision to receive 50 new members in the next 10 years. Inspired by a verse from the Bible, 'they devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, the breaking of bread and to prayer,' it was decided to have a new devotional programme on Tuesday evenings (*Tuesdays Together*) with an emphasis on teaching, fellowship and prayer – and perhaps the occasional service of Holy Communion. More recently a programme for Tuesday evenings has been drawn up. There is still time to become involved in organising one of these evenings – 'Tuesday Teaching' (a Bible study group); Tuesday Praying (a group for prayer); 'Explore Together' (an interactive way of looking at the Bible together) and 2B1 (a time of fellowship, singing and learning new songs). If you feel that you could help organise one of the evenings or make tea/coffee, please speak to one of the church stewards. Further details of each of these evenings and dates for your diary or calendar are also available. All the groups are from 7.30-9.00 pm.

***Thursday communion***

Our monthly service of Holy Communion continues on the first Thursday of each month but at the new time of 11.30 am. These services begin on Thursday 1 September and will be followed by a light lunch for those who would like to stay. It is hoped that beginning at the later time will enable more members to come.

This autumn promises to be an exciting time in the life of the church as we look back with thanksgiving and look forward with trust. We look ahead in the same way that are forebears did, with a sense of excitement and some trepidation, and with a new commitment to learn, to pray, to share in fellowship and Holy Communion. Christian lives still need to begin, to be nurtured and developed. I trust that everyone in our community will want to be part of *Tuesdays Together*, to thank God for the past 50 years and to trust him for the years to come.

God bless.

**John Haley  
Minister**