

SUNDAY 9th March 2025



Local ...
Lively ...
Loving

Use of Time

Last September, we became 'empty nesters' as my son left home to study in Plymouth and as the next chapter of his life started, so did a new chapter in ours – his older sister had already 'flown the nest'. The food bill and utility bills went down, as did the washing in the laundry basket! Alongside this, we found we had more free time, as the parent taxi service, the catering service and the laundry service were all surplus to requirement – all until the Christmas holidays. However, the free time we have now acquired has been quickly filled with more 'stuff' and we have become as busy as ever, so much so that when they phone it can be more of a disturbance than a joy – note to self, don't be such an old grump!

It was five years ago in March 2020, that we were all told to 'stay at home', and we all had time. Time to spend with family, time to start or finish those DIY projects, time to phone a friend. It wasn't always an easy time, especially for those with loved ones living away who were poorly and couldn't be visited. But during this time, we evaluated our use of time, promised to make more time for ourselves, time for our family, time for our friends. To assess our priorities, to focus on what was important, and to use our time in more positive and holistic way.

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Use of Time *[continued from front page]*

Five years on, I wonder how that is going for you? Have you managed to maintain a healthier balance in your life, or have you filled your life with more 'stuff'? It seems to me that time is a gift, a precious gift that we can either use or lose, and we need to commit to using our time wisely.

In [Ecclesiastes 3: 1](#) we read: *'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.'* May be, as the season of Spring approaches, it is a good time to do a 'spring clean' of how we use our time. To focus on the important things we need to do with our time, rather than frittering it away on 'stuff'. To focus our time, not on every activity, but on what is worthwhile to both us and the community we live in, to work with God to make it beautiful – [Ecclesiastes 3: 11](#): *'He has made everything beautiful in its time.'* At this time, take some time to assess how you use your time and how you can better use it.

Major Colin, written for Downend Voice

People

As of writing, we are aware that Francis is still in hospital, as is Molly Angle, for those of you who would remember her. Elise had an operation on her Arm on Tuesday, following her fall and subsequent mountain rescue (see last week's bulletin) - she is home and making good progress. Please continue to remember our friends in your prayers, along with those in our fellowship who are living with long term health conditions.

Happy birthday to Peter Russell who celebrates his 95th birthday today, and to David Jones who will be 90 on Tuesday, and David James who will be 80 on Thursday this week. Congratulations to you all.

Flowers

We are blessed in the hall today by an arrangement of flowers given by Margaret Boxell in memory of her parents, Majors Cyril and Ruby Chadwick.

Early notice of a Christmas date

The group that organises Christmas on the Hill have decided that this year it will be one week earlier than usual, so please put this date in your calendars. It will take place on Saturday 29th November 2025.

COVID-19 DAY OF REFLECTION 9 MARCH 2025

An opportunity to come together to remember those who lost their lives since the pandemic began and to honour the tireless work and acts of kindness shown during this unprecedented time.

**Fountain Square
Staple Hill at 12 noon**

If weather is inclement,
the service will be held in The
Salvation Army on Broad Street.



Staple Hill
Local...Lively...Loving
Love God...Love Others

Recycling

There are now 5 recycling points around the building, in the entrance hall, the Bradbury hall, the annexe, the offices and the kitchen. We can recycle the following:

- Paper and Cardboard
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastics, cans, aerosols and foil

Unfortunately, we cannot recycle 'Greggs' coffee cups so either return to Greggs or place in the general waste bins. Thanks for helping us to be more responsible concerning our waste, and thanks to those who are helping with the day-to-day management of our recycling - our very own Staple Hill Wombles!



The Generous Heart

Our theme 'The Generous Heart' continues – for those who attend on Sunday morning or Thursday Church please make sure you have your pack. For those who worship online with us, there will be a specific message for you added to the online worship this week. As we come to the end of this special time, please make some space this week to think, reflect, pray and talk to your family if appropriate. There will be opportunity to respond by presenting our pledges next Sunday (16th) and in Thursday Church (20th). If you have any questions then please speak to Colin or Nicola.

Note: The celebration meal (invitation only) starts at 6:30pm on Saturday.

The Week Ahead

TODAY – 9th March: *Led by Majors Colin & Nicola*

10am	All Age Worship <i>'The Generous Heart 4: Enter'</i> <u>John 12: 1-11</u>
11:30am-12:15pm	Children's & Youth Activities
12noon	Covid-19 Day of Reflection – <i>Fountain Square</i>
4pm-6pm	Messy Church



Tuesday 11th March:

9:30am-2:30pm	Employment Plus with Tyrone- <i>appointment needed</i>
10am-2pm	Open Doors (<i>soup lunch available at 12:30pm</i>)
10am-11am	Fitness Club
11am-12noon	Extra Slice Group (leader: Kelvin) <i>at the hall</i>
From 6:30pm	YP Band Practice and Singing Company Practice
8pm	Songster Practice

Wednesday 12th March:

9:30am-11am	Tots on the Hill
3:30pm-4:30pm	Extra Slice Group (leader: Gerry) <i>online</i>
8pm-9pm	Extra Slice Group (leader: Linda) <i>at Kelvin & Linda's</i>
8:15pm-9:15pm	Extra Slice Group (leader: Beth) <i>online</i>

Thursday 13th March:

10am-12noon	Open Doors
11:15am	Extra Slice Group <i>at the hall</i>
12:30pm	Lunch Club - <i>booking essential</i>
8pm-9pm	Extra Slice Group <i>at Colin & Nicola's</i>
8pm-9pm	Extra Slice Group (leader: Bethany) <i>at Bev & Jon's</i>
8:15pm-9:15pm	Extra Slice Group (leaders: Ian & Rachel) <i>online</i>

Friday 14th March:

7:30am-12noon	Slimming World Groups
10am-12noon	Open Doors
4pm	Cleaning Hall

Next Weekend

Saturday 15th March:

6:30pm

The Generous Heart, Generous Food
– invitation only – please RSVP

Sunday 16th March: *Led by Majors Colin & Nicola*

Generous Heart pledge Sunday

10am

All Age Worship
'The Generous Heart 5: Love
Matthew 14: 13-21

11:30am-12:15pm

Children's & Youth Activities

12noon

Church 2 U

5:30pm

Pulse Youth Event



Dates for the Diary

Here are some other dates that are coming up soon:

Thursday 20 th March	Thursday Church
Friday 21 st to Sunday 23 rd March	CY Conference
Saturday 22 nd March	Coffee Morning
Sunday 30 th March	Mothers' Day
Monday 31 st March	CAMEO Craft Group
Sunday 6 th April	Youth Pulse Event
Saturday 12 th April	Coffee Morning Community Fair
Sunday 13 th April	Palm Sunday Easter Messy Church