

CONTENTS

p24 Health

Know your bunions

p26 Gardening

Bring in the bees

p28 Nature

Gazing at gannets

p29 Books

Custer on the stand

p30 Travel

Colourful Costa Rica

p30 Food and Drink

Getting in the World Cup spirit

p34 What's On

Your entertainment guide

p39 TV Feature

Alison Steadman in Shetland

p44 Photography

Readers share their pictures

CONTACTS

features@jerseyeveningpost.com
@JEPFeatures

Features editor:

Caroline Moody 611660

cmoody@jerseyeveningpost.com

Deputy features editor:

Ramsay Cudlipp 611784

rcudlipp@jerseyeveningpost.com

What's On, including shows, concerts and exhibitions:

Gill Kay 611635

gkay@jerseyeveningpost.com

Temps Passé, Health and Books:

Diane Simon 611626

dsimon@jerseyeveningpost.com

Diary:

Andy Noble 611633

diary@jerseyeveningpost.com

Methodism in his mission

Most of us know and love the façade of St Helier Methodist Centre at the top of Halkett Place, but how many are aware of the community behind the building? Tony Morling, the new minister at the Centre, spoke to Caroline Moody

TAKE a pew,' says Tony Morling as he puts the kettle on. I turn around and there is, next to the kitchen table, a church pew covered with multi-coloured cushions.

Bought from a second-hand shop, it came from Galaad Chapel, where he was baptised.

Tony, who is Jersey-born, moved here with his family last September, having been appointed minister for St Helier Methodist Centre. It was quite a coincidence, because ministers have little say in where they are going to serve.

'It does feel like I've come home,' he said. 'I love London [he is a Freeman of the City of London] but I love Jersey, too. Yes, there are issues here, but there's something decent and good about Jersey.'

His parents, Ron and May (née Luce), were living in Africa when she became pregnant, and she came back to her home Island for Tony's birth. He was brought up in north London but returned to live and work here in his late teens, training as a gemologist.

'I was a certified diamond grader, and I found it fascinating,' he said. But increasingly he was aware of God's calling. 'I was brought up with church but it was not forced, it was all about choice, whether to follow Christ. There came a time when I had to face up to a growing sense of God's influence that leads you to do something different, and it wouldn't go away. It wasn't a natural thing to do, but there came a time when I had to say, if this is real then maybe I have to offer myself to the church to see whether they too sense that this is right.'

He went away to train in the UK – he has a Master's degree in theology and philosophy from Cambridge University and a Master's in organisational studies and mission theology from York St John's University – and he also travelled extensively.

'In 1987 I walked 1,500 miles from Samarès Chapel (the southernmost point of the British Isles) to the Shetland Isles (the northernmost) to raise awareness and funds for a homeless project in London. It took 82 days, and most of the time I was by myself. I had a dog for a while, but he gave up!'

The minister does love a good walk, although by that he means a couple of hundred miles. 'You always see something different when you walk,' he said.

He has been walking around town too, introducing himself to people. 'There's nothing like meeting face to face and having a cup of tea and a chat, especially in this age of social media,' he said.

And it is the practical outworkings of faith in community that he



St Helier Methodist Centre at the top of Halkett Place continues to play a role in society

You have to ask what is special about this place and what is special about this time. Are you clear about what this place has as its heartbeat?

is passionate about. 'St Helier Methodist Centre is the physical building, which continues to play a role in society, but we are running the building throughout the week to serve the community. It's essential that any church seeks to support, care, affirm and be open to and

enriched by the wider community. That is our reason for being.'

He says he has inherited from the Rev Liz Singleton a fine church that is 'committed, loyal, imaginative and willing to take risks and do things differently'.

Tony's latest appointment is



Tony Morling has been out and about in town introducing himself to people: 'There's nothing like meeting face to face – especially in this age of social media' (4548501)

PHILOSOPHIES IN LIFE

Favourite catchphrases:

■ 'Are you well? I am well if you are well.' (East African exchange of words when meeting someone.)

■ As a rule of life: 'Not because you must, but because you may.'

■ Ministry: 'Methodism with a slice of lemon' (by which he means that the lemon can bring flavour, edge and surprise).

Favourite Bible verse:

'Old men and old women will come back to Jerusalem, sit on benches on the streets and spin tales, move around safely with their canes – a good city to grow old in. And boys and girls will fill the public parks, laughing and playing – a good city to grow up in.'

Zechariah 8:4

quite different from where he has been before, including a challenging post-war housing estate in Portsmouth. 'But they were wonderful people and I loved them to bits, and learned so much,' he said. 'It was ecumenical, it was Church of England and Methodist, and that taught me something, which was always to work outside my own box, and not be limited by my own experience, always to look beyond and be enriched by people who are different from my own tradition.'

Tony moved to Boscombe, in Bournemouth, one of the most deprived wards in the country. There he helped to set up a family support centre which, he says, changed the lives of hundreds of families. For the last nine years he has been in Loughton, Essex, again working with other churches and other agencies.

'When you move to a new place, I think that you do well to listen,' he said. 'What works somewhere else may not work here. You have to ask what is special about this place, and what is special about this time. Are you clear about what this place has as its heartbeat?'

'People don't always know the needs of those around them, but they can be extremely generous when they know there's a way they can respond, which will

make a direct difference to people's lives. There is a warmth here.'

It's this aim to make a difference to people's lives that comes across strongly when talking to Tony, and he is keen to help people in Jersey who are struggling, particularly young families.

'I would like to work with people with an interested heart so that pre-school children have every opportunity to flourish. I want all children to have a great start in life, and no one agency can do that on its own.'

'I firmly believe that prevention is better than cure. It's far better to have a fence at the top of a cliff than an ambulance at the bottom. Early intervention for pre-school children will have long-term benefit.'

'There are some people for whom life in Jersey is pretty tough,' he continued, 'and that includes diverse communities in St Helier and the elderly. One of the worst forms of poverty is social isolation if it is unchosen.'

The church, he says, cannot be self-serving. 'David Bosch once wrote: "One of the most important things the church has to learn is that church is not the most important thing". And as much as I serve the church, I believe its function is to be an agent for God's kingdom, making practical realities that transform lives for everyone.'

St Helier Methodist Centre now has a 'tag line' which is 'A place of belonging ... A purpose for life'.

'There is a power in a Christ-focused community,' Tony said. 'It's about finding a welcome, finding acceptance, finding a place where you can belong, a place to give, too. A lot of people feel you have to believe before you belong, but actually you can come as you are.'

His mother passed away one week before he took up his appointment in Jersey. He is here with his wife Cathy, a TV actress (she was Mrs Drake in the first two series of *Downton Abbey*) who also does radio and voice-over work. They have two sons, Columba (12) and Ronan (10). The names, he says, reflect the free and generous Celtic spirituality of Iona, the Scottish island where he met his wife one windswept day.

A recent survey put clerics at the top of the list of contented people. The Rev Tony Morling certainly comes across as a happy, giving man, and he is what he calls a pragmatic optimist. 'It's a fascinating role,' he said with a smile. 'You meet the most incredible people at critical moments in life. It's an amazing privilege to try to connect faith with the causes of justice and peace.'

'You never know what the day will bring. For me, it's the best job in the world.'

"I can't wait to pay extra this month for exceeding my usage allowance."

#SaidNoOneEver

The biggest usage bundles in the Channel Islands, only from JT.



10,000 minutes

For just £16.99 per month you can enjoy a massive 10,000* minutes, 10,000 texts and 10,000MB of data. That's a lot!



10,000 texts

So what are you waiting for? Pop in store today.



10,000 MB of data

Search 'JTsocal'  

#SaidNoOneEver

www.jtglobal.com/SaidNoOneEver

*10,000 minutes are JT to JT mobiles only. T&C's apply.

JT
JOIN TOGETHER