



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, WALTON-ON-THAMES

NEWSLETTER

Volume 67 No 4

MAY 2011

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Life is sometimes not fair!



Dear Friends

I'm sure that you are all familiar with the ancient Chinese saying: "May you live in interesting times" - and you will also recall that it is generally pronounced in a spirit of ill-will rather than as a benediction. The idea behind it is that a boring life is the best life, in the sense that certainty and predictability offer the most promising framework for security and prosperity. So, according to that ancient Chinese wisdom, when times get more than a very little interesting, the things we tend to value most in the world are put in jeopardy.

We have to acknowledge that it is very easy to be pessimistic about the times we live in. They are often much too 'interesting' for comfort, not only with the climate of fear and uncertainty which goes along with spending cuts, high unemployment and sluggish economic growth, but also in terms of changes in our home circumstances - children moving on to university or leaving home; accidents which leave us more nervous or frail; health concerns and near misses. And, of course, we face 'interesting' times in our life together as a congregation, with change and the fear of change threatening to cloud our horizons.

In these circumstances it is natural to look for reassurance in the customary cycle of Christian festivals, as they come round with certainty and predictability. We know what to expect of them, and when to expect them - though I hope that doesn't make them boring! We can find comfort and stability in the regular pattern of the year, with familiar readings and themes, as well as favourite hymns and carols - and as we make our Easter proclamation that "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!" we can remind ourselves that, however embattled we may feel as Christians in this country, we share our faith with over two billion people across the face of the planet.

But for the disciples on the first Easter Morning, the words: "The Lord is risen!" didn't carry that comfort and reassurance. Instead, they made 'interesting' times even more interesting: they were a game-changer. All the old certainties and predictabilities had gone, and what replaced them was exciting, unexpected, vibrant and new - life in which possibilities and opportunities had suddenly become boundless.

The Lord is risen — may we too live in His interesting times!

Ronilly

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES MAY 2011
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Sunday 1 May <i>(Easter 2)</i>	10.30 am	Sunday Worship taken by Mrs Vivien Gerhold (Woking)
Tuesday 3 May	8.00 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
Wednesday 4 May	10.30 am to 12 noon	Coffee Morning at the home of Netta Philip Flat 36 Thames Court, Victoria Road East Molesey
Sunday 8 May <i>(Easter 3)</i>	10.30 am	Sunday Worship conducted by the Reverend Phillip Jones (Weybridge)
Monday 9 May	2.00 pm	Bridge Club Hersham Room
Tuesday 10 May	2.00 pm	Ladies Guild Hersham Room
Wednesday 11 May	2.00 pm	Prayer Group 4 Grange Court, Ashley Road Walton-on-Thames

<p><i>COPY DATE FOR JUNE ISSUE WEDNESDAY 18 MAY</i> <i>ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR, NORMA REID,</i> <i>3 GWALIOR ROAD, LONDON SW15 1NP</i> <i>Email: aristocats.2000@talktalk.net</i></p>
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Sunday 15 May <i>(Easter 4)</i>	10.30 am	Sunday Worship with induction of three new Elders <i>(There will be a retiring collection for Christian Aid)</i>
Saturday 21 May	7.30 pm	Claygate Choral Society Concert Bach B Minor Mass Holy Trinity Church Church Road, Claygate
Sunday 22 May <i>(Easter 5)</i>	10.30 am	Sunday Worship
Tuesday 24 May	2.00 pm	Ladies Guild Hersham Room
Wednesday 25 May	2.00 pm	Prayer Group 4 Grange Court, Ashley Road Walton-on-Thames
Sunday 29 May <i>(Easter 6)</i>	10.30 am	All-Age Worship


 Traidcraft stall after the Service on 29 May
 

ELDERS' NEWS

The Elders meetings are an interesting and lively forum, from the day-to-day business of running our church, to the vision and future of our mission and ministry.

All meetings start with a thought and inspirational words lead by an Elder. There follows the nitty gritty of agreeing minutes, matters arising and the inevitable amount of correspondence. We always share news of members and friends, and uphold all those mentioned in prayer.

At the last two meetings we have had discussion on new notice boards, and other possible ways to project ourselves to the community. With the agreement of the Church Meeting the new notice boards should be in place shortly. Also in the last months we have discussed the employment of a youth worker, as well as the possibilities of Street Angels in Walton.

It was agreed that the June Church Meeting would be moved to **12 June**, so as to accommodate a celebration of 400 years of the Authorised Bible, led by our organist, on 19 June.

Anna Crawford



15-21 May 2011

As highlighted last year, Christian Aid Week is Britain's longest-running fundraising week and has been a firm fixture in the calendar of many thousands of people each year since 1957. It is famous for the distinctive envelope that drops through the letter boxes of millions of homes each May – and for the massive impact that the week has made in the fight to end the scandal of poverty throughout the world.

There will be a retiring collection at St Andrew's for Christian Aid on Sunday 15 May.

CHORAL CONCERT



BACH
B Minor Mass
Conductor Martyn Daldorph

Saturday 21 May at 7.30 pm

Holy Trinity Church
Church Road
Claygate

(full details on separate page)

COFFEE MORNING



In aid of The Rainbow Trust
Wednesday 4 May
10.30 – 12 noon

Flat 36 Thames Court
Victoria Avenue, East Molesey

! ADVANCE NOTICE !

JUNE CHURCH LUNCH



Wednesday 1 June
(Details to follow)

BRIDGE CLUB



Monday 9 May
(only one this month)
2.00 pm
Hersham Room

LADIES GUILD



Tuesday 10 and
Tuesday 24 May
2.00 pm
Hersham Room
Please do come along with your
knitting and catch up with the chat!

PRAYER GROUP
Wednesday 11 and
Wednesday 25 May
2.00 pm
4 Grange Court
Ashley Road
Walton-on-Thames

*No House Groups for
the time being*

! ADVANCE NOTICE !



WESSEX SYNOD

"Steaming Away"
Saturday June 18

This promises to be a great day out
for the family.
The event will be held at Fawley Hill,
Henley-on-Thames, the home of Sir
William McAlpine, which is not
generally open to the public.

*The Editor would like to thank the
friend who sent her an e-mail with
the photograph on this month's front
cover. Thanks, also, to the
(unknown) photographer who, she
hopes, will have no objection to our
using this wonderful picture in such
a good cause!*

JUNIOR CHURCH

APRIL

The first Sunday in April was Mothering Sunday and some brothers and sisters of the Brownies joined us. The theme for the day was “Is seeing believing?” To set the scene, we looked at a range of optical illusions and discussed what we could see. Not everyone saw the same thing. Some were quite convinced that a series of blots was a picture of Jesus, whereas others interpreted them as an island. I still cannot see Jesus in this example.

We heard the story of the healing of the blind man, when Jesus put mud on the man’s eyes. We made “glasses” with coloured cellophane in the frames. The blind man when healed could see clearly, but we, like the Pharisees sometimes cannot.



On the second Sunday in April, the young people learned the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. We started a discussion about times when we have been really sad and who we turned to during such times. We drew the parallel with how the death of Lazarus made his sisters, Martha and Mary, very sad, and it was to Jesus, their great friend, to whom they turned. We discussed how much the sisters trusted Jesus to help, even when everyone around them thought it was a lost cause. The children then made a model of Lazarus coming out of the tomb and we talked about how this event signalled Jesus' own resurrection at Easter.



On Palm Sunday, the children helped to distribute the palm crosses. They were impressed with the journey the crosses had had to make from Africa to Walton-on-Thames. We set up four stations in the hall - a picnic space where I told the story of the Last Supper. We then moved on to a garden area, the Garden of Gethsemane, and heard about the happenings there. We followed the soldiers with Jesus to a Courtyard and heard how Peter denied knowing Jesus. Finally we walked to the foot of the hill where Jesus was put on the cross.

The children enjoyed decorating biscuits with messages of love to remind them of the most important message that Jesus loves us all.



We will continue this as we celebrate Easter making empty crosses and decorating biscuits, emphasising “He is risen”.

*Anne Fitzgerald
Paula Walsh*

KIDS STUFF

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother? “Why is the bride dressed in white?” Her mother replied: “Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life.” The child thought about this for a moment and then said: “So why is the groom wearing black?”

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers.

The first boy says: “My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem and they give him £30.”

The second boy says: “That’s nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song and they give him £100.”

The third boy says: “I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon and it takes eight people to collect all the money!”

A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied: “They couldn’t get a baby sitter.”

Bach

B Minor Mass

*Conductor
Martyn Daldorph*



Claygate
Choral
Society

Registered Charity Number: 1067825

Saturday 21 May 2011 at 7.30pm

Holy Trinity Church, Church Road, Claygate

Adults £15.00

Schoolchildren £6.00

Tickets available at the door or Advance Booking:-

secretary@claygatechoralsociety.co.uk

www.claygatechoralsociety.co.uk

This will be Martyn Daldorph's last concert as the Musical Director of the Claygate Choral Society. Do come along to support what promises to be an inspiring evening.

St Andrew's will be represented with Romilly and Bridget Micklem in the choir

Martyn has preached at St Andrew's on several occasions and will be preaching here again in June.

APRIL CHURCH LUNCH



Our lunch with the theme of Approaching Easter, held on 6 April, was a great success. Margaret Ward organised the speakers and, as always, did an excellent job. Many thanks, Margaret. We are very grateful to you, and hope you now have Christmas in mind! May Dow and Marigold Crampton were the hostesses, aided by Jessie Robertson and Ethel Pritchard. You did a wonderful job girls and we thank you. Thanks, also, to all those who provided food.

Paul, accompanied by the Choir, joined us and by request sang 'A New Year Carol' which we so enjoyed at Christmas. This was followed with 'All in an April Evening' which, I think, is everyone's favourite. A big thanks to Paul and the choir, not just for joining us at Easter but for their musical input throughout the year.

We will not be having a lunch in May. Instead, there will be a coffee morning on Wednesday May 6 from 10.30 – 12.00. This will be held at the home of Netta Philip, Flat 36 Thames Court, Victoria Road, East Molesey. It is in aid of the Rainbow Trust, set up to help terminally ill children and their families.

For those of you who were unable to be with us on 6 April, here is the programme.

- | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------|--|
| 1 | Hymn: | All | <i>Morning has broken</i> |
| 2 | Reading: | Sue Groves | <i>He came all so still (Hymn)</i> |
| 3 | Choir: | A New Year Carol: | <i>Here we bring new water from the well so clear</i> |
| 4 | Reading: | Bill Murray | <i>Spring</i> |
| 5 | Reading: | Daphne Weston | <i>When that April with her showers
so sweet (Chaucer)</i> |
| 6 | Reading: | Iris Collins: | <i>Spring the sweet spring (Thomas Nashe)</i> |
| 7 | Choir: | | <i>All in an April evening</i> |
| 8 | Reading: | Norma Reid | <i>Oh to be in England (Robert Browning)</i> |
| 9 | Reading: | Anna Crawford | <i>I wandered lonely as a cloud (Wordsworth)</i> |
| 10 | Reading: | Elizabeth Edmiston | <i>Loveliest of trees (A E Houseman)</i> |
| 11 | Reading: | Anne Fitzgerald | <i>It was a lover and his lass (Shakespeare)</i> |
| 12 | Reading: | Sandy McDonald | <i>The Donkey (G K Chesterton)</i> |
| 13 | Reading: | Doris Hutson | <i>Hot Cross Bun (URC Prayer
Handbook 2008)</i> |
| 14 | Hymn: | All | <i>My Song is Love Unknown</i> |

The next lunch will be on Wednesday 1 June. Details will follow.

Nancy Hampton

Over the past four or five months I have attempted to give an idea of the background and general problems faced by CfL partner countries. The next few months will in the main, focus on specific examples of how our donations are used by Christian Aid.



BANGLADESH: Getting rid of the old taboos:

“I had no idea about keeping myself or my baby safe during motherhood,” said Salma Khatun, a member of a People’s Forum established by the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh.

Salma was married at twenty to a young man called Jakir Hossain, who worked as a teacher in a local school. Soon afterwards she found she was pregnant. Her husband’s family, with whom she lived, encouraged Salma to follow the old ways which meant many nutritious foods were taboo during pregnancy. There was no clinic nearby so she did not see a doctor and the birth took place on the floor of a hut with an unskilled birth attendant. She gave birth to a girl but her own health deteriorated and she became very ill. It didn’t occur to the family to get help so it was a long struggle back to full health.

When she was feeling stronger, someone suggested that she join a local Forum or People’s Institution formed by Christian Aid partner, The Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB). These PIs give training and support according to what the group feel is a particular problem in their area. Training is a continual development. When their classes on pregnancy and child care were advertised, Salma persuaded her husband to go with her. There, they began to understand how many of the old ways were dangerous to the mother and baby and received help in understanding how a child is born and many dangers that can be avoided.

Superstition and old taboos passed from mother to daughter or daughter-in-law meant that practices such as tying a belt around the top of the stomach to make sure the baby goes out the right way and not upwards were discouraged and shown to be dangerous for both mother and baby.

URC Giving: At last year’s URC General Assembly, Loretta Minghella, the newly appointed Director of Christian Aid, delivered an inspiring speech to Assembly, moving and motivating all in the hall. She related a little of the personal and professional journey that had led her to her new role, and of the work to which she and Christian Aid are committed. Talking about her first three months in the post, Ms Minghella said: “I wasn’t expecting the overwhelming passion and energy inside the organisation. Ms Minghella also spoke about the URC’s Commitment for Life programme, praising the work it funds and the difference it makes, and thanking all the churches that were part of it: “You need to know how much it means to us,” she said, adding: “The URC is Christian Aid’s single biggest church donor.” She concluded by saying: “Together we can be extraordinary, let’s be the good news for peace and justice in a better world.”

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES: Although some artists are managing to smile for this group photo taken at my request a few days ago, their body language tells a



different story; one of unease. Only a few are currently in a position to work at Silveira House. Fortunately, sales proceeds from the Windermere URC Centre, Cambridge URC plus a generous donation from a very good friend of SH at St Andrew's have now reached Zimbabwe and been gratefully received by the group. St Andrew's gifts (they keep coming!), give enormous cheer and relief. It is no exaggeration to say they are life savers. One of many beneficiaries will be ailing 41 year old Lloyd Chikede who has an extended family of 13 to support.

I was shocked at Lloyd's condition: he is simply wasting away. Friends visit most days to pray for him. He said:



“John. The problem here is everyone is trying to survive. It is so bad that we are not coming to SH everyday because there is no food. Most artists prefer to work at home so as to cut costs. Life has been quite difficult for me health wise. I have experienced swollen legs, chronic headaches and diarrhoea. I am taking some time to recover. So I go to SH to collect some small stones and I am working at home because my medication demands a lot of food as at home the meal that's cooked we share, while at work you often go without eating.” Lloyd has Aids and struggles to raise money to buy vital

antiretroviral drugs. Photos: (above) *Left:* Lloyd today. *Right:* Lloyd in happier times.

The artists still attempt to help others despite their own considerable difficulties. See photos below. *Left:* Godfrey William befriends an orphan. The shack is home to the little boy. The other scene on the right is of street cricket: youngsters are sport mad.



Good news! Hazel Bambridge and Janet Thompson, two Elders from Toller URC,



Kettering whom readers may recall visited me in January and left loaded to the gunnels with boxes of crafts. Along with Eleanor Patrick (seen on left on a previous visit to Walton), they organised a two day sale. These inspirational ladies, well supported by their congregation, raised £1000. Just over a year ago, Toller excelled themselves by mounting a week long exhibition of crafts in their sanctuary which attracted 100s of people raising

a large sum of money for our impoverished friends. Our monthly newsletter articles moved them yet again to help relieve the suffering. This will put smiles on faces and provide Easter cheer!



Members of the congregation unable to attend Good Friday or Easter Sunday services may be interested in the sculpture on the left, 'Christ Arising', displayed for the occasion on our porch window ledge. It was carved entirely by hand in lemon opalstone by Andrew Mabanji who 'looks to stone sculpture as an expression of the moral strength of the customs and value of his Shona culture and the similar values inherent in the beliefs of the longer traditions of the Christian Church.' This moving piece is available for sale to *any* reader of this article with proceeds going direct to the artist to help support his family. If interested, please contact: jbsimpson@hotmail.co.uk

Every Saturday since October 2002, whatever the weather, Zimbabweans and sympathisers have met outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London. Their Zimbabwe Vigil is a protest against the illegitimate regime in Zimbabwe as an effective way to raise awareness in the UK to the plight of the Zimbabwean people. Their colourful posters, banners, singing and dancing draw lots of attention. They are currently petitioning the European Union Governments their dismay at the failure of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to help the desperate people of Zimbabwe at their time of trial. They are urging the UK government and the EU to suspend government to government aid to all 14 SADC countries until they abide by their joint commitment to uphold human rights and suggest that



the money should, instead, be used to feed the many starving people in Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, judging by the media coverage here in the UK, the rest of the world remains largely unaware of what is going on in Africa south of the Sahara: the main focus now being on Libya. Colonel Gadaffi is a friend of President Mugabe's and the old man in Harare is surely watching and learning perhaps how to stick it out to the bitter end – for bitter it will surely be.

Finally, Fr David Harold-Barry at Silveira House occasionally sends his articles my way and, in return, I send him copies of Reform! I found this story thought-provoking:

THE WEAK WHO SHAME THE STRONG: A blind man came during the week to ask a colleague for help with his studies at Silveira House. He waited for hours and evening came. I discovered him standing outside and asked him some obvious questions. Had he told my friend he would come? What was his plan for the night if he did not come? How would he get to wherever he was going? The more questions I asked the more I realised I was just indulging in excuses for doing nothing. It was easier to keep the blind man at a distance and treat him 'officially' than to admit that, as a brother, he had a claim on me and I should do something to assist him. Worse, I recognised in myself the urge to humiliate him rather than to help him, to enjoy the power I had over him at that moment rather than to show compassion.

Later, as I felt ashamed of these dark forces within, I realised how comfortable it is to fall back on 'correct procedures.' If someone is not following them it becomes an excuse for doing nothing. 'You should follow the proper channels.' Yet we know how difficult that is. But we insist on it because it allows me to do nothing. I passed the passport office the other day with a friend and he groaned as he recalled the time wasted there 'following the correct procedures' to obtain a passport.

As we read the gospels we realise how often Jesus is 'diverted' from his own plans. He goes away to rest for a while with his close friends but the people 'guessed where they were going. So from all the towns, they hurried there on foot, arriving ahead of them,' (Mark 6:33). Another time he was on the way to the house of Jairus whose little daughter is sick. But he is interrupted by a woman who had a great need, (Mark 5). He stops to attend to her and, in the meantime, the little girl dies. Well, we know what happens. A greater event than healing the sick takes place. It is almost as though Jesus likes interruptions! I wonder why?

Zimbabweans are also good at accepting interruptions. As in so many other ways, there is an inconsistency between their public life - in offices, hospitals, etc - where they insist on 'the correct procedures' and their private way of dealing with people 'outside the office' where they will easily abandon what they are doing to help someone in need. Maybe we should welcome the blind men who come into our life and ask us for help. They remind us not to run for safety behind our walls of 'correct procedures.' Correct procedures is a superficial modern business layer laid over a deeper cultural belief in the worth of people as they are. Are we to give in to the superficial and lose what is deeper?



Sunset over Lake Karibam

SPOT THE STAR!



This photograph may come as a bit of a surprise to a certain gentleman in our congregation who, in his day, was reputed to be the fastest winger in Highland League Football.

Study the front row. Do you recognise him in the dark shirt 7th footballer from the left? Yes, it's Sandy McDonald who hasn't changed a bit since this friendly match in 1949, playing for a Buchan Select which included players from Peterhead and Fraserburgh FCs against the mighty Glasgow Celtic! Sandy will remember the game well as he was sitting his finals at Aberdeen University at the time. The match took place at the Recreation ground, Peterhead, in front of a crowd of 6,300 – large, considering the population of the town in those days was probably around 11,000! Celtic's players were all household names.

The Teams

Celtic players only

Rear from the left: McGuire, Milne, Miller, McAuley, Boden.

Front: T Docherty, Not known, R McPhail. J Weir, C Tully, J Paton.

Select - All Peterhead players unless signified by 'FRG'

Rear from the right: F Middleton, James Dutch (FRG) W Bruce, John Dutch (FRG) Jimmy Simpson, Bill (Cutty) Strachan.

Front: Alistair McDonald (FRG), Jimmy Paterson, Abby Law, Johnny Martin and Charles F Smith

So there you have it! I am sure Sandy will be only too happy to autograph newsletters after the service. One wonders what other secrets are lurking within St Andrew's congregation....

Footnote: The congregation may be fascinated to learn that there was - and still is - great rivalry between the two towns. Natives of Peterhead are called Bluemogganers (the fisher folk used to wear blue socks or moggans) whilst Fraserburgh (Brochers) are known as Puddlestinkers, the latter which perhaps only Sandy can explain!



FLOWER POWER

Shona Luther thanks St Andrew's for the beautiful flowers she received, kindly delivered by Marigold Crampton and Irene Pearson. Both flowers and the visit really cheered her up.

Ron Knight writes on behalf of Tess to say thank you and to express her appreciation of the beautiful flowers delivered by Marigold and Irene. He says: *"Their visit gave Tess a lot of pleasure as she had been in great pain following a fall five weeks earlier. She has now had a hip operation when a CT scan the day after receiving the flowers revealed an impacted fracture of the hip."*

Connie Radford writes on behalf of herself and of Keith, who is in Norfolk House:

"On Keith's behalf, I send sincere thanks for the flowers Marigold and Irene took to the care home for him. He had been taken to St Peter's at the time but is now back at the Home and enjoying the lovely tulips. He really was very touched knowing he hadn't been forgotten. We both are very grateful to the Church for all the kindness we receive."

Connie then received flowers on her own behalf and says:

"I've had another lovely bunch of flowers from the Communion table, almost worth getting shingles after a fall. It was so nice to see Netta and Christine – we enjoyed a good chat and now Keith and I enjoy the roses which are in pride of place in his room at Norfolk House. Thank you so much to everyone involved in the flowers."

A message from **Malcolm Wilson**:

"On behalf of my father David Wilson, could thank you very much for the lovely flowers that he has in his room at Clare House. It is very thoughtful of you for thinking of him. He very much values his friends and association with St Andrew's and so was touched to receive the flowers."

Nancy Hampton says:

"I would like to thank Christine Carlisle and Netta Philip for delivering the lovely roses from the Communion Table on Sunday. Pleased to say my eye is back to normal now and I am trying to avoid all insects. My warmest thanks"

Hilary Netherwood writes:

"I was absolutely delighted when Christine and Netta brought round some beautiful spring flowers from Church prior to my 40th Birthday. It was a lovely surprise and very much appreciated. Many thanks for this kind gesture."

Ann Gay has sent this message:

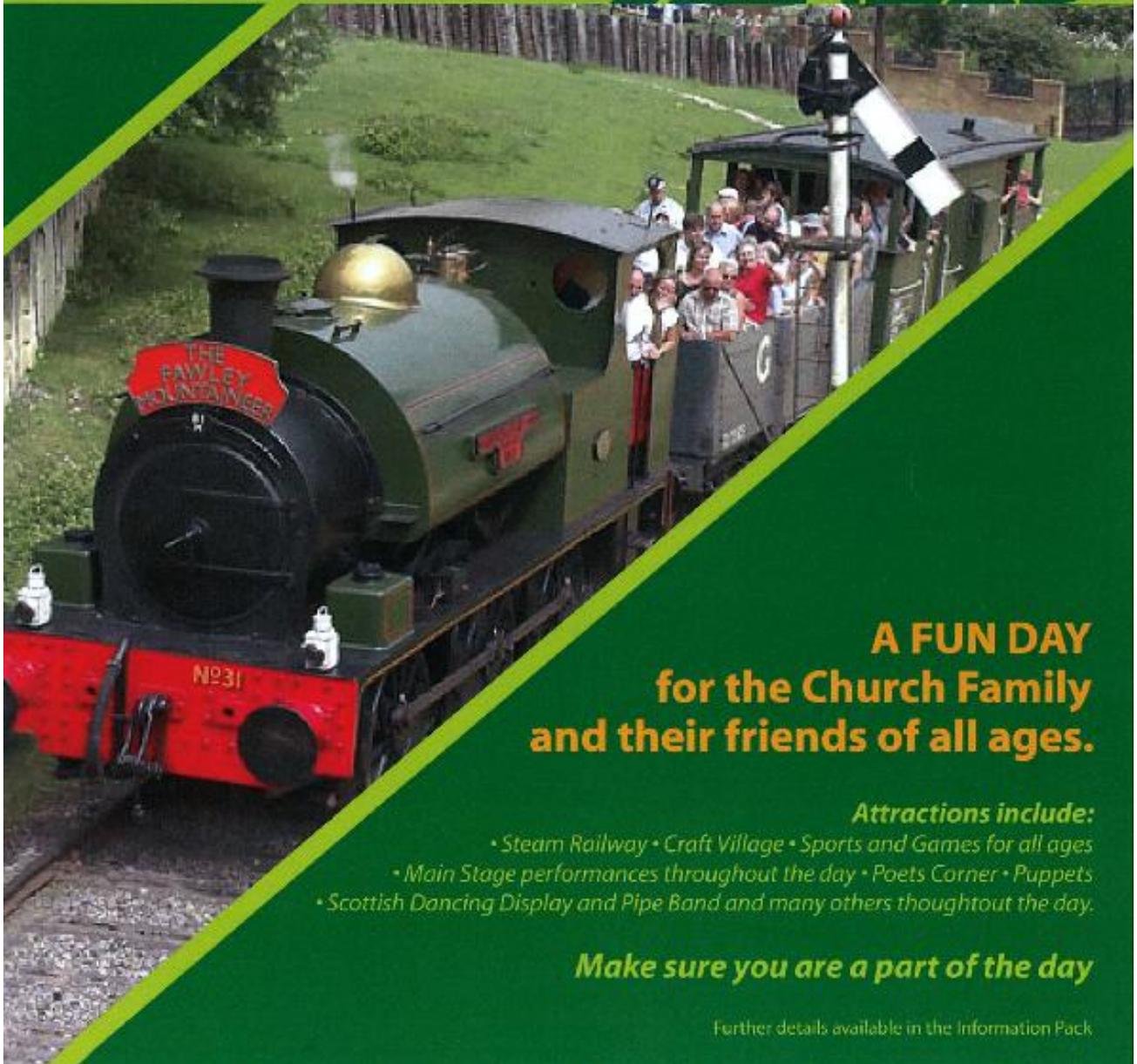
"I would like to thank Netta and Christine for the lovely flowers from the communion table which I received last week. I would also like to add my thanks to the members of St Andrews. Everyone has been so kind and encouraging over the last few weeks. I am very grateful for the flowers."





Saturday 18th June 2011
at Fawley Hill, Henley-on-thames

STEAMING WITH WESSEX SYNOD **AHEAD**



A FUN DAY
for the Church Family
and their friends of all ages.

Attractions include:

- Steam Railway • Craft Village • Sports and Games for all ages
- Main Stage performances throughout the day • Poets Corner • Puppets
- Scottish Dancing Display and Pipe Band and many others throughout the day.

Make sure you are a part of the day

Further details available in the Information Pack