



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

NEWSLETTER

Volume 68 No 4

MAY 2012

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Columbia Road Flower Market in London's East End

"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

Sona of Solomon 2:12



Dear Friends

Despite the growing popularity of 'e-books' and the fact that Amazon now sell far more downloadable books for the Kindle than traditional printed books, the age of printing isn't quite over yet. Alongside e-books, modern technology has also given us 'print on demand' — which means that there are now more printed books available than ever before. Even in a relatively small, specialised area such as Religion and Theology, it is almost impossible to keep up with just the *titles* of new publications, let alone *read* them all.

I confess that I cheat: I've put myself on the mailing lists of a few of the leading publishers, so that every so often a nice glossy catalogue lands on the doormat, from which I can see what is about to be published and — here's the cheat — read a brief description of what the book says. But that sort of cheating only gets you so far — and truth be told, it isn't very satisfying. Once in a while I do actually buy a new book. Slightly less often, I get round to reading one.

The book that I have just finished is "Who Chose the Gospels?" It's a fascinating exploration of how we came to have Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as our four Gospels — and it's written almost as a kind of detective story. The 'crime' which it investigates is the supposed conspiracy which allegedly suppressed lots of other gospels that didn't suit the ambitions and beliefs of church leaders in the 4th century AD.

Like all good detective stories, the clues are there from the beginning, for everyone to see. But it's only when you get to the end that they each fall into place, and it becomes obvious that our four Gospels weren't chosen as the result of a conspiracy. They weren't really chosen at all: they chose themselves, as it were, because from the very earliest times they were recognised as being quite simply the best, most authoritative and most compelling accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We sometimes speak of someone's life as being like a book, and we talk of 'reading' someone's character. When people read our lives, my prayer is that they will find there not a puzzling detective story, but an open book in which our resurrection faith is there for all to see.

Your minister,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Romilly". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long tail on the final 'y'.

C E Hill: "Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy"
(OUP, 2010)

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES MAY 2012

Tuesday 1 May	8.00 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
Thursday 3 May	8.00 pm	Bible Study Hersham Room
Sunday 6 May (Easter 5)	10.30 pm	Sunday Worship
*Monday 7 May (Bank Holiday)	2.00 pm	Bridge Club Hersham Room
Tuesday 8 May	2.00 pm	Ladies Guild Hersham Room
Wednesday 9 May	2.00 pm	Prayer Group 4 Grange Court, Ashley Road Walton-on-Thames
Thursday 10 May	8.00 pm	Bible Study Hersham Room
Sunday 13 May (Easter 6)	10.30 am	Sunday Worship

<p><i>COPY DATE FOR JUNE ISSUE: <u>WEDNESDAY 15 MAY</u></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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Thursday 17 May	8.00 pm	Bible Study Hersham Room
Monday 21 May	2.00 pm	Bridge Club Hersham Room
Tuesday 22 May	2.00 pm 8.00 pm	Ladies Guild Hersham Room Additional Elders' Meeting
Wednesday 23 May	2.00 pm	Prayer Group 4 Grange Court, Ashley Road Walton-on-Thames
Thursday 24 May	8.00 pm	Bible Study Hersham Room
Sunday 20 May (Ascension Sunday Easter 7)	10.30 am	Sunday Worship
Sunday 27 May (Pentecost)	10.30 am	'All-Age' PENTECOST COMMUNION



Traidcraft stall after the Service on 27 May



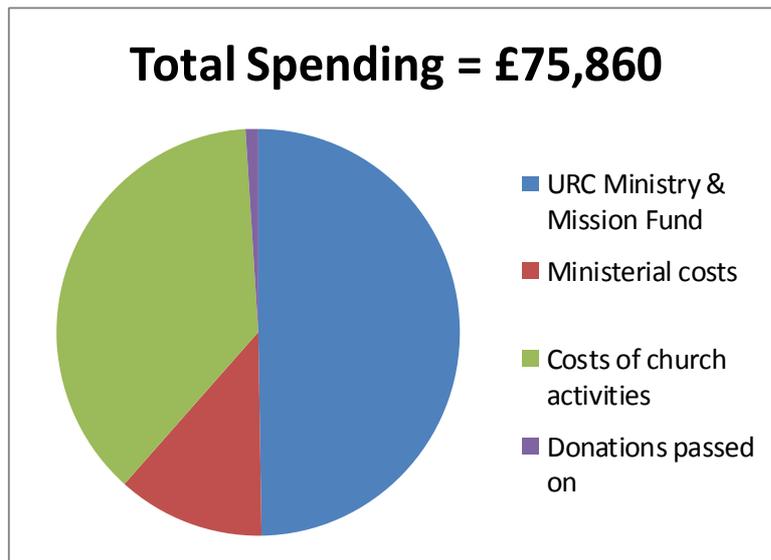
! Remember that Monday 28 May is NOT a Bank Holiday !

Thursday 31 May	8.00 pm	Bible Study Hersham Room
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* As Monday 7 May is a Bank Holiday, you can double-check Bridge with John or Doris (Hutson), if you wish.

Church Money – II: Costs of Church Activities & Ministerial Costs

This is the second in our short series of articles about Church Money, where it goes, and where it comes from. As the pie chart shows, roughly half our expenditure goes on our contribution to the URC's Ministry and Mission Fund, which we looked at last month. This time, we'll consider the other half of our spending.



The Cost of Church Activities amounted to just over £28,000 last year and covers:

- maintenance of the premises, including cleaning and gardening;
- insurance;
- heating and lighting;
- organist's fees, subscriptions; depreciation and music;
- website, newsletter, office and photocopying costs; and
- Junior Church materials.

As you will readily understand, these items are all pretty fundamental to our life as a congregation. There are a few other things, such as our new noticeboards and enhancements to the access control system, where we have chosen to make an investment in our future.

The last big slice of the pie is Ministerial Costs. The size of this slice (nearly £9,000) is misleading, since it includes a housing allowance which is fully reimbursed to St Andrew's from the Wessex Synod. Leaving that aside, the costs are made up of a car allowance (which is a fixed amount agreed nationally); a book grant; and travelling expenses. There are also some office costs (e.g. postage and stationery) associated directly with the minister's work.

What all of this shows is that almost our entire expenditure is on things where we don't really have any choice but to spend the money. We do make economies on running costs where we can, but the trend is for costs to rise.

Next month we'll have a first look at how we raise the money we need to pay all these bills!

Romilly Micklem, on behalf of the Finance Committee

COFFEE MORNING



Wednesday 16 May
10.30 – 12 noon

Your hostess will be
Irene Pearson
12 Lyndhurst Avenue Sunbury
TW16 6 QY

The proceeds and any donations
will go to Diabetes UK

Everyone welcome!

PRAYER GROUP

Wednesday 9 and
Wednesday 20 May
2.00 pm
4 Grange Court, Ashley Road
Walton-on-Thames

SOMETHING NEW!

BIBLE STUDIES
8.00 – 9.30 pm Thursdays

During May, the minister will be
leading a series of five Bible
Studies on the letter to the
Ephesians.

These will take place in the
Hersham Room of St Andrew's
from 8.00pm to 9.30pm on
Thursday evenings, starting on
Thursday 3 May.

Even if you are unable to make
it to all of the sessions, please do
come to as many as you can.

BRIDGE CLUB



*Monday 7 (Bank Holiday)
Monday 21 May
2.00 pm
Hersham Room

** As this is a Bank Holiday, if
anyone would like to double
check with John and/or Doris the
day before, please do*

LADIES GUILD



Tuesday 8 and
Tuesday 22 May
2.00 pm
Hersham Room
Please do come along with your
knitting and catch up with the chat!

THANK YOU

May I thank everyone who
supported my coffee-morning on
4th April, in aid of Cystic Fibrosis
Trust. I sent the Trust a cheque
for £140, for which they were
grateful.

Nan Mercer

EASTER CHURCH LUNCH

There was a joyful atmosphere among the 40 people who enjoyed the Church Lunch on Wednesday 11 April. Paul Reed led the Choir in some traditional favourite music for Easter: *This Joyful Easter tide, All in an April Evening* and *The Lord is my Shepherd*, as well as other hymns. You can see the full programme on page 7, opposite.

There were readings by a dozen friends of poems and prose appropriate to the Season. The varied programme had been arranged by Norma Reid, although, unfortunately, she herself was unable to be present due to work commitments. The speakers and the items were presented by Nancy. Speaking during the meeting, Margaret Ward, who had been due to arrange the programme, expressed her gratitude to Norma and Nancy who had been willing to take this task on at a late date when she had had to stand down. Margaret said how grateful she was that she had been to be able to attend these lunches for the past 21 years, and hoped they would continue, as they were such a good opportunity for members and friends to get to know one another better.

The meeting concluded with prayer and a blessing by our Minister.

*"For the beauty of the Earth, for the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth, over and around us lies.
Gracious God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise."*

(Contributed)



9th Walton (St. Andrew's) Brownies present

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat

6.45 pm Monday 30th April (APRIL!)

St Andrew's Church Hall

Doors open at 6.30p.m – front entrance

*"After weeks and weeks of hard work and practice,
we would love you to come along to watch
our performance of Joseph if you can."*

*The show is being undertaken as both a fundraiser
and to gain our Entertainer's badge*

*Seats are free, but there will be a collection after the show, to raise
funds for Brownie Holiday Equipment and Uniform, that will
allow Brown Owl to take us all on Sleepovers and Holiday's, which
we enjoy so much.*

We hope you can make it!"

The Brownies

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, WALTON-ON-THAMES



EASTER LUNCH - WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL 2012
12.15 – 2.00 pm

HYMN	Morning has Broken (No 45)	All
READING	Home Thoughts from Abroad <i>Robert Browning</i>	Daphne Weston
READING	Very Early in the Morning – <i>G Starr</i>	Sandy McDonald
CHOIR	<i>This joyful Eastertide</i> "This Joyful Eastertide" was originally published in Amsterdam in 1685, where it appeared in "David's Psalmen". It was later arranged by Charles Wood (1866 – 1926).	
READING	A Boy's Song – <i>James Hogg</i>	Bill Murray
READING	April Rise - <i>Laurie Lee</i>	Adrienne Cooper
HYMN	Now the Green Blade Rises (No 243)	All
READING	Thoughts of Pontius Pilate	Anna Crawford
READING	Daffodils - <i>William Wordsworth</i>	Margrit Doust
READING	Music – <i>Walter De La Mare</i>	Iris Collins
CHOIR	<i>The Lord's My Shepherd (Brother James's Air)</i> <i>Brother James' Air</i> is one of the best known musical settings of Psalm 23 based on the translation in the "Scottish Psalter 1650" (as of course is "Crimond"). <i>Brother James</i> is the name by which James Leith Macbeth Bain, composer of the tune, is remembered. His title for the tune was "Marosa". The setting we are singing is an arrangement for mixed voices by Gordon Jakob in 1934.	
READING	SONNET – <i>Edmund Spenser</i>	The Minister
READING	A Prayer in Spring – <i>Robert Frost</i>	Sue Groves
CHOIR	<i>All in an April Evening</i> The text was written by Katharine Tynan in 1891. The music was composed by Hugh Robertson, a one-time Scottish funeral director and self-taught musician, in the early 1900s for the Glasgow Orpheus Choir, which he directed for 45 years.	
READING	Loveliest of Trees the Cherry Now <i>A E Houseman</i>	Anne Fitzgerald
READING	Upon Westminster Bridge <i>William Wordsworth</i>	Elizabeth Edmiston
	A Personal View	Margaret Ward
HYMN	For the beauty of the Earth (No 41)	All

PRAYER AND BLESSING – The Minister

JUNIOR CHURCH – APRIL 2012

EASTER IN PICTURES



"I didn't think it would be this easy to make a palm leaf!"

On Palm Sunday, children from the Children's Church had great fun dressing and enacting the story of Palm Sunday. Each of the children had a turn of being Jesus and riding our "spiky" improvised donkey



Easter Sunday was brought to life by our Easter Garden



The children were proud of their Easter baskets

TRANSPORT PROBLEMS?

DON'T ASK BORIS, ASK YOUR ELDER!

Do you find that journeying to church is becoming more difficult?

Following the business side of the meeting in April the Elders, under the "Welcome" heading, thought about the difficulties that some may have with transport. As part of being *A Welcoming Church* we should all be aware of the needs of others and being able to get to Church is part of that. To be able to worship as one family in Christ and to enjoy friendship afterwards is to encompass the feeling of belonging.

We are very aware that there are a number of lifts for people already in place, and we extend our thanks to those who provide this service. We would like to ensure that all who know they may need a lift feel free to ask, either their Elder or the Church Secretary so that we can look into their request.

We are all here to serve one another, so if you feel you could offer a lift to someone, again, please let your Elder or the Church Secretary know.

Anna Crawford, Church Secretary

STREET ANGELS



Following the Walton Street Angels' visit to the church, this is a reminder to everyone interested to complete and return your application form as soon as possible. Further information and forms can be provided in hard or soft copy and can be downloaded from our website (waltonstreetangels.org.uk) or requested from our co-ordinator, Rachel Grace (waltonangels@live.co.uk or 07796 144132).

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the Street Angels further, please speak to Rachel who would love to hear from you. Many thanks.

STOP PRESS

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to one of our local colleges who have done very well in the current BBC Competition for School Choirs of 2012. St George's College Weybridge have reached the Final of this year's Competition, with their singing of "Be thou my Vision" in the Semi-Final, broadcast on Sunday 22 April. And many congratulations to their gifted Conductor, Tansy Castledene. The final will take place on Sunday 30 April, broadcast about tea-time on BBC1. We wish our neighbours success in this Final.

Members and friends will wish to know that St Andrew's has very close links with St George's Choir. Our Organist, Paul Reed, founded this Choir in 1966. Speaking after 22 April, Paul said he had some difficulties in the early days. At that time, the College took only boys, so the only trebles were teenage boys. Now that the College is co-educational, girls also sing in the Choir, "and older girls are easier to train than boys". Paul had also had to contend with competition from Sport! He was very pleased with the Choir's performance on 22 April.

Margaret Ward

FRIENDS REMEMBERED



MRS LYDIA ILES

We are sorry to record the death of Mrs Lydia Iles, in March. Of Scottish origin, Lydia and her husband, James, were long time members of St Andrew's. They had two daughters and the family used to live in York Gardens, Walton. Jack died about ten years ago. Recently, Lydia was being cared for in a residential home in Chertsey.

We send our sincere condolences to her friends and family

Margaret Ward

LENTEN GROUPS



"Who ever said that animals don't have souls?"

Our five Lenten group sessions were kindly hosted by Chrissie Brooman.

They were enjoyed by all, including, as you can see, Nancy Hampton's 11-year old West Highland terrier, Hamish.

Chrissie writes:

"The Lenten Groups were well and regularly attended. Discussions were stimulating and interesting. I also very much appreciated the church flowers which I received after the meetings ended."



The Olympics are just around the corner and don't we know it! On 19 May, the Olympic torch starts its journey around the UK in Lands End – finishing 70 days later, in the Olympic Stadium in east London. The 70-day Cascade of Prayer begins on the same day. The Olympic flame will come within ten miles of 95 per cent of the UK population and the URC is urging its churches to check out the detailed, street-by-street, route to see how close it will pass to your church: <http://www.london2012.com/olympic-torch-relay>

As the torch travels the length and breadth of the UK, the excitement around the Games will build – and wouldn't it be exciting to see United Reformed churches somehow being part of this wave of energy and enthusiasm!

THE LONDON MARATHON 2012



No, you didn't spot me in the line-up! But I was in London on Sunday, with a friend, to watch, for the first time ever, the Marathon 'live'. Despite the downbeat forecast for rain, the sun blessed the event. We left with a warm glow. It came from being surrounded by happy and caring folk, supporting their loved ones, cheering and clapping with an infectious enthusiasm, the vast majority simply

willing their participating friends and family to complete the course, rather than to strive to win, and delighting in their success. What a tonic! Four hours later, having cheered with the best of them, we left on a high. The runners were doing it not only to achieve for themselves, but, equally importantly, to make their friends and families proud and to raise money for their favourite charities. Millions of pounds were raised. Love, support and caring:: it's how it should be but so often isn't in our all-too pressurised, daily lives. The photograph was taken from our prime position, looking over Hungerford Bridge by Embankment station. Sadly, though, this year there was a tragedy. Claire Squires, aged only 30, collapsed on Birdcage Walk, within sight of the finish, and died. She was aiming to raise £500 for her chosen charity, The Samaritans (one dear to my heart as my mother, Ruby, was one of the original Samaritans at the Walton-on-Thames branch when it was formed in the early '60s). Claire's on-line giving site has been inundated with contributions and looks like topping £500,000 - a wonderful legacy by which she will be remembered.

Have you, or do you know of anyone who has, run in the London Marathon? If so, please let me know as it would be great to hear of anyone's personal experience of the race, possibly (with their permission, of course!) for inclusion in a future issue.

Ed

 **Easter-Zimbabwe style!** Sculptor Godwin Nasho (inset) brother of Lizeni, sent the following account of an Easter service held at his church in Tafara: *'Our service commenced 9pm on Saturday night and ended 1am Sunday morning with a congregation of well over 1000. We celebrated the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ so that's why we lit candles; everyone had a candle. There was also a baptismal ceremony for those who wished to be baptised on this special occasion. We were all singing and dancing whilst raising the candles high as we were in a good mood for Christ's resurrection. We took the lit candles home as we believe they signify the light of God. We walked and sang through the dark streets holding our candles high.'*



Imagine the effect of similar joyful scenes on the streets of Walton on Thames! Zimbabweans have no difficulty in expressing their faith and live it openly seven days a week.

Sculpture sale proceeds & donations arrived before Easter enabling artists from rural backgrounds to visit their families. They received another nice surprise after Easter when additional



donations (2305 US\$) arrived. These were shared amongst Artpeace/other needy families, 31 in all including many mentioned in previous articles.

The Marufu family's plight was recently highlighted by Fortune Masiyiwa (inset), who reported as follows: *'I almost did not get home for Easter.*



Whilst in Honde, Eastern Highlands, I was stranded near the flooded Pungwe River (photo left). In the rainy season it becomes swollen so people cannot cross; during the worst rains it can



take up to 2 months! Many people have fallen victim to drowning and crocodiles. The children cannot even attend school then.' Fortune also took the photo on right of Martin Marufu standing outside his home and said: *'Martin has 6 children none of whom can afford to attend school. His last job was 13 years ago which he lost due to epilepsy. His wife is now doing everything like fetching firewood for sale or going to other people's fields to work for a packet of maize meal. Sometimes the children accompany their mother but some stay with their father as he must not be left alone due to his condition. He often exists a long time without medication as he cannot raise money. He travels far to get medicine and has been attacked and injured many times. This year he cannot get seed and fertilizer so the family expects a tough year.'* The Marufus have since received our support which should cover basic essentials including food, seed and medicine.

The Pemba family is another beneficiary introduced by Godwin Nasho who said:



'Timothy Pemba cares for this little orphaned girl whose 90 year old grandfather Manuel Pidibasha (in white cap) passed away before Christmas. Timothy (a relation) in blue overalls with wife in pink top next to daughter Mercy, said his older daughter had just rushed the child in pain to a clinic with suspected typhoid. He does not have a permanent job hence does menial jobs to cater for his extended family.' St Andrew's support has helped to cover the little girl's medical fees and feed all the family.

Fr Gibson Munyoro : The new Director of Silveira House, studied at the University of Glasgow before taking up his latest appointment. He recalls earlier unhappier times in 2008 whilst deputy director of the centre as well as being the coordinator of the Peace Building department and a young inexperienced priest in the Chishawasha Mission parish. He said many unnamed people died invisible deaths; others disappeared only to reappear with broken limbs; some had their properties destroyed. These were some of the people he encountered in his work at that time. He visited some victims in secret private clinics and listened to accounts of their fearful experiences. He also had opportunities to talk to some political thugs whose voices were hoarse with anger. Although travelling mostly alone, he would occasionally go with a SH colleague. In May 2008, SH gave temporary shelter to about 88 displaced victims of political violence (50 women and their 38 children). Inevitably SH became enemies of the political thugs for sheltering their enemies. At some point their leaders sent a group of youths to summon



him as acting director of SH (Fr David was on leave) to attend a rally during which he was to be disciplined for accommodating the victims and mobilizing the people against 'the party'. He was not inspired to die young, so did not go! Whenever Gibson looks back at his experiences he saw God's hand at work in his life; otherwise where on earth would he have got the courage to visit political violence victims in private clinics and hospitals and look political thugs straight in the eye? Some priests and lay collaborators would call him even in the middle of the night with information of organised attacks by these people. He had

no magical powers to deal with such cases apart from informing the police or driving to the site to talk to the thugs themselves. His experience was painful to recall, but the positive side of the story is that each time he saw people butchered; he came out full of courage to speak and preach about justice and condemn the injustices, political violence and intolerance. He no longer feared death! His sermons became more of a cry for peace and justice than mere spiritual exhortations to the faithful. What kept him going in such challenging and scary situations were the words of the victims: 'Even if they beat us we will still vote for the man we want'. These words of freedom and courage echoed in his mind as he constantly asked himself how were they to heal the social and psychological wounds of the people of Zimbabwe. Even today his prayers and reflections are saturated with such questions and concerns for healing and reconciliation. (Photo shows Fr Gibson Munyoro SJ with Fr Provincial Stephen Buckland SJ and former Director Fr David Harold-Barry SJ in the background). Source : Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat.

Fr Tim Curtis : I will miss Tim, the Director of Jesuit Missions who is returning to Guyana to work amongst the Amerindians, the indigenous people of the rainforest. I have enjoyed a great working relationship with him and his young professional team



based in Wimbledon. Tim said it will be a shock to the system to go back into the field and leave his current job looking after missionaries. He will need to relearn how to sleep in a hammock, get used to bathing in cold

water and to cope with a minimum of electricity. His luggage will include around 18 St Andrew's URC old Good News Bibles many of which found homes in Zimbabwe including condemned prisoners at Harare Central Prison. Now, some Amerindians will also benefit. I wish Tim every success. *(River photo courtesy James Broscombe/Jesuit and Friends)*

Richard Becher, Marlow URC's minister has invited Susan & I to set up a sculpture stall at a Churches Together event called 'Hope in the Park' on Sunday 20 May, 12 noon - 6pm at Higginson Park, Marlow which promises to be an afternoon of fun and entertainment for the whole family. On display will be stunning pieces including Fortune Masiyiwa's 'Abstract Herring Gull' (centre photo) flanked on either side by 'Abstract Flower' by Edmore Sango & 'Shona Princess' by Peter Kananji.



Old Friend : We are looking forward to Fr David Harold-Barry's visit to Walton before returning to Zimbabwe in June. After so many stressful years at Silveira House, David will hopefully find his new dual role at L'Arche and as a chaplain to Harare Central Prison far more relaxing. I am sure he will continue to contribute to these articles.

CfL - World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel



Displacement and Dispossession

28th May - 3rd June 2012

'But they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one will make them afraid'

Micah 4:4

Displacement and Disposition is the focus for 2012's World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel. They have been a part of life for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza for 64 years. The demolition of homes and the destruction of olive groves and agricultural lands are a tragic feature of the Israeli government's illegal occupation of Palestine. This joint action for a just peace is convened by the World Council of Churches of which the URC is a member.

THE URC WINDERMERE CENTRE

The Windermere Centre is running various courses this year, some of which are listed below. Should you require further details please contact me or refer to the website:

<http://windermere.urc.org.uk>

Remember, it's *your* Centre!

Susan Simpson

Craft Heaven from 2 - 6 July 2012

Tapestry? Knitting? Weaving? Needlework? What's your craft? Chances are, you'll have a number of unfinished projects lying around the house, and a long list of things you'd love to be able to try your hand at. If that's you, then Craft Heaven is for you! It's a creative space in which things can happen, and a gathering of people with similar passions. It's your chance both to learn and share ... or maybe even teach! Come and relax in a friendly atmosphere. Bring your own craft, your U.F.O.s (Un-Finished Objects), or learn something new: quilting, beading, lace-crafts and much more. Or simply come and be. There will be a small charge for a new project, and if you can bring a new idea to the group, please offer. Cost: £250



Come and Sing from 30 July to 2 August with Martyn Smith

If you love music, you can be sure to enjoy this week, which will be packed with both learning and fun. Martyn Smith, the leader, is an Elder at Burnley United Reformed Church, and has a real passion for sharing the joys of music. He will be bringing a wide range of music, both sacred and secular, and it is his hope that everyone will learn something new while they are here, as well as getting even more out of some of the old favourites. There will also be some free time to explore the local area, and of course to relax in the Centre and enjoy our hospitality. There's no need to be shy - everyone is really friendly! Come and sing with us, and enjoy the fellowship of the group and the beauty of the Lakes too. Cost: £200



Walk and Talk from 4- 11 August 2012 with Alvene and John Costello



This is a week for anyone who would like to walk in a relaxed social context. It is an opportunity to experience a completely different lifestyle for a few days, and to be refreshed mentally, physically and spiritually.

If you would like to ask anything about the week, you can phone the leaders on 07974 368024.

Cost: £399



FLOWER POWER

Margaret Ward writes:

"I was delighted to receive a lovely bouquet from St. Andrew's, one Sunday at the end of March, while I was recovering from a strained ankle. I was very grateful to Anne Fitzgerald for delivering them, and staying for a chat during which we ranged from Edinburgh in the 1950s, to the 21st birthday of the St. Andrew's Child Contact Centre, in May this year. Also many thanks to the kind donor of the flowers."

Susan Simpson was delighted with a visit from May and Ghislaine bringing some lovely flowers from the Easter service and enjoyed their company over a cup of tea.

Karen Frame says:

"Thank you to everyone at St Andrew's for the flowers delivered to me this afternoon. They are beautiful and a lovely surprise. Thanks again!"

A message from Nan Mercer:

"May I through the newsletter say a very big thank you for the lovely flowers from the Communion Table. It was good to see May and Ghislaine and have a chat, especially as I haven't been out for a while. The orchid is still blooming well!"

Jim Ramage would like to record a thank-you to Anne Fitzgerald for the lovely flowers delivered to him last month when he was feeling a bit low. They really cheered him up.

Irene Pearson was delighted with Anne Fitzgerald's visit and the yellow roses she brought on a miserable afternoon – the sunny colours brightened a dull day.



COVER STORY

Everyone loves to receive the Church flowers. When my turn comes around to provide them, my preference is to buy at a market, Kingston being my nearest. Our cover photograph is of the wonderfully atmospheric flower market at Columbia Road, Bethnal Green, in the heart of London's East End.

This flower market began as a Saturday trading market, but as the Jewish population grew, a Sunday market was established. The Saturday market lapsed, but the Flower market evolved. Plants were brought by handcart from nearby market gardens in Hackney and Islington and market pitches were claimed on the day on the blow of a whistle.

On Sunday the street is transformed into an oasis of foliage and flowers. Everything from the smallest bedding plant (often grown by the stallholder) to a sturdy olive tree is for sale. The air is intense with the scent of flowers and the chant of the barrow boys "Everthin' a fiver". After 2 pm, all plants and flowers are sold off at half price.

Columbia Road began its life as a pathway along which sheep were driven to the slaughterhouses at Smithfield. It was finally built on to serve the needs of a growing London which resulted from the explosion of Empire during the Victorian era. It has had several names over the centuries, but Columbia Road was named in honour of the heiress and philanthropist Angela Burdett Coutts, who had not only built Columbia Market (now demolished) but had instituted a Bishopric in British Columbia. The Victorian shops you can see today were built during the 1860's to service the population of the nearby Jesus Hospital Estate. Wood turning (there was a thriving wood trade in the area) and milling factories peppered the area until the late twentieth century.

Ed