



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

NEWSLETTER

Volume 75 No 2

MARCH 2018

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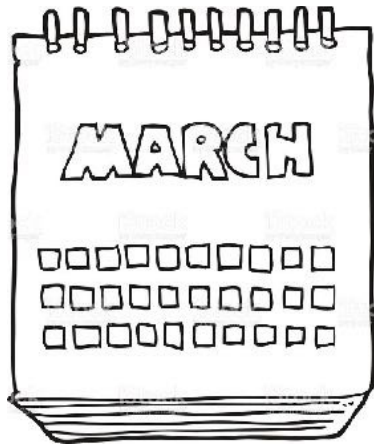
Website: www.standrewsurc.org



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*"Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty."*

'A Winter's Tale' William Shakespeare



Dear friends

A well-loved "Flanders and Swann" song about the weather asserts

Welcome, March, with wint'ry wind,
Would thou were not so unkind.

Personally, I always see March a little more positively; as being a bit of a landmark month. The worst of the winter is receding, the days are beginning to lengthen and at the end of March the clocks alter as we "spring forward". In the garden the early bulbs of snowdrop and crocus are beginning to fade with the golden trumpet of daffodils and the varied colours of tulips taking their place. Once they are over the next of nature's show is the herbaceous plants which stay with us through summer, possibly even through 'til the first frost of autumn. March can still be wintry - in Brecon I vividly remember a heavy fall of snow the night before a funeral causing problems because it covered over exactly where the edges of the grave were - but March also normally holds glimpses of the spring and of the summer ahead. It's a month which lifts my spirits as winter's on its way out.

This year's spring is going to be really strange for me though. Having been working in sheep farming for so long, this time of the year means only one thing - lambing! Everything stops for lambing because it is always a "fast and frantic" period. In farming the demands of the animals always takes total control. I shall not get the chance to hear the sound of a lambing shed or to hold a lamb or to see this new, strong life start appearing in the fields, jumping around, excited and reminding us of the joy of living. I admit that I shall miss it - and I shall miss seeing the meaning of Jesus' words, "I am the good shepherd - the Good Shepherd takes care of his sheep" being played out in front of me.

As the natural year starts to move forward, so too does the ecclesiastical calendar, gathering pace as Passion Sunday and the start of Passiontide comes on 18th March, then Palm Sunday and Holy Week from 25th March. There's a lot of movement in this story with a journey from the top of the Mount of Olives, down into Jerusalem and then the different venues that follow on: the Temple, the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, the High Priest's House, the Via Dolorosa, Calvary, the tomb in the garden.

Our services for Maundy Thursday (7.30pm at Weybridge) and Good Friday (11.00 am at Walton) will try to pick up something of this idea of a journey, using Mark's Gospel to take us through the horror of Christ's Passion to Calvary and prepare us for the joy of Easter Day. I hope you'll be able to join in this journey, just as crowds joined in for some of the journeys upon which we are reflecting.

With all good wishes,

Mike Lad

LIST OF HOSTS & LEADERS FOR LENT GROUPS 2018

*From the week commencing 19 February with
final week commencing 19 March*

TUESDAY afternoon – Hosts: Ruth and Robin Evans 57 Mount Felix, off Rivermount, Walton KT12 2PJ TEL: 01932 229301 maximum 8 people
Email: johnevans963@btinternet.com
Start time 2.30pm
LEADER: Joan Fairhurst email: fairhumnj@btinternet.com

TUESDAY evening – Host: Ingrid Belnevis, 5 Cottimore Lane, Walton KT12 2BT
TEL: 07961 251642
Email: ibelnavis@hotmail.com
Start time 7.30pm
LEADER: Margaret Hawkes email: margothawkes@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY evening – Host: Anne Fitzgerald, The Hersham Room at St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Hersham Road, Walton KT12 1LG TEL: 01932 229336 email: annefitzgerald.uk@ntlworld.com
Start time 7.30pm
LEADERS: Sue & Rob Hart email: Robert.hart4100@ntlworld.com

THURSDAY evening – Anne & Andy Hodge, 24 The Grove, Walton KT12 2HP
TEL: 01932 952235 email: awhodge@yahoo.com
Start time 7.30pm
LEADER: David Paterson email: dave.paterson@hotmail.co.uk

FRIDAY evening – Hilary Kincaid 10 Crutchfield Lane, Walton KT12 2QZ
TEL: 01932 227827 email: Hilarykincaid17@gmail.com
start time 7.30pm max 8 people
LEADERS: Colin & Sandra Wright email: colinewright@hotmail.com

A reminder of the five sessions:

Have I got news for you!
So what? The implications of the Resurrection
'Let Him Easter in us'
Celebrating the praying Easter
A risen Church

ERRATUM IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

The Editor's apologies are due to David Netherwood who was recorded as having been our minister until 2005 when it should have been until **2008**. Should have gone to Specsavers

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES MARCH 2018

Lenten Group meetings take place Tuesday - Friday during the first three weeks of March (for full list see page 3)

Friday 2 March	10.00 am	Women's World Day of Prayer St Erconwald's Roman Catholic Church Esher Avenue, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2TA (see page 9)
Sunday 4 March (Lent 3)	10.30 am	Sunday Worship taken by the Minister
	12 noon	AGM
Monday 5 March	2.00 pm	Bridge Club Hersham Room
Tuesday 6 March	2.00 pm	Ladies' Guild Hersham Room
	8.00 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
Wednesday 7 March	12.30 pm	Midweek Service in The Gateway
	7.30 pm	Lenten Group St Andrew's Hersham Room hosted by Anne Fitzgerald
Friday 9 March	10.30 am	Prayer Group Garden Room
	12.30 - 2.30 pm	Ladies Who Lunch at Weybridge URC (see page 9)
Saturday 10 March	7.30 pm	Concert 'Stainer's Crucifixion' and a feast of choral works for Eastertide with the A Cappella Singers at Weybridge URC
Sunday 11 March (Lent 4 - Mothering Sunday)	10.30 am	Sunday Worship taken by Anna Crawford
Wednesday 14 March	7.30 pm	Lenten Group St Andrew's Hersham Room hosted by Anne Fitzgerald

COPY DATE FOR APRIL ISSUE WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL

***ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR, NORMA REID,
3 GWALIOR ROAD, LONDON SW15 1NP***

Tel: 020 8785 4392 Email: aristocats.2000@gmail.com

Sunday 18 March
(Lent 5 - Passion Sunday)

10.30 am

**Sunday Worship with Holy
Communion taken by the Minister**

3.00 pm



Messy Church

Monday 19 March

2.00 pm

Bridge Club Hersham Room

Tuesday 20 March

2.00 pm

Ladies' Guild Hersham Room

Wednesday 21 March

7.30 pm

**Lenten Group
St Andrew's Hersham Room
hosted by Anne Fitzgerald**

Friday 23 March

10.30 am

Prayer Group Garden Room



CLOCKS SPRING FORWARD at 01.00 AM ON SUNDAY 25 MARCH



Sunday 25 March
(Lent 6 - Palm Sunday)

10.30 am

**Sunday Worship taken by
the Reverend Iain Stewart**



Fairtrade after the service



Thursday 29 March

7.30 pm

**Service for Maundy Thursday taken by
the Minister at Weybridge URC**

Friday 30 March
(Good Friday)

10.30 am

Hot Cross Buns and Coffee in the Church Hall

11.00 am

Good Friday service taken by the Minister

! IMPORTANT !

ST ANDREW'S ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING (AGM)

Sunday 4 March 2018 at 12 noon

Thanks from Anna to everyone who submitted their Annual Report
by the deadline of Sunday 18 February

Any item(s) of a substantive nature to be raised at the AGM under Any Other Business
(AOB) should have been submitted to Anna Crawford by 25 February !



CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN CHINA

James Zhang who has recently moved with his wife to Walton and is about to become a member of St Andrew's, has contributed, with the help of a friend, this interesting article about the current state of the Christian Church in China.

(Photos (taken in China in 1980) courtesy of Ed)

When the Englishman, Robert Morrison, started his missionary work in China in 1807, Christian churches in China had already been active for over 211 years. As a Presbyterian minister, translator, and the London Missionary Society's first missionary to China, he is considered to be the father of Protestant mission work in that country. After studies in theology and Chinese, Morrison was ordained in 1807 and was immediately sent by the society to Canton. He was to serve 27 years in China. In 1809, he became translator to the East India Company, a post he held until his death. Only 10 converts were baptised during his time in China but each proved faithful. Together with a colleague, William Milne, he translated the New Testament into Chinese. Their translation of the entire Bible appeared in 1921. There were many ups and downs for the Christian church in China over a long period of time but its development began to accelerate when China initiated its open policy. It is estimated that there are 80 million Christians throughout China.

There are several reasons for the recent development of Christian churches in China

- The State open policy on religions has allowed people more freedom, relatively speaking, to serve God.
- The Cultural Revolution was responsible for the destruction of much of the traditional culture of China and the people were disappointed with the current political situation.
- People are now better off and able to pursue spiritual things.
- People had gradually lost confidence in government as the gap between the rich and the poor increased and there was no justice in society, while most officials were corrupt. People therefore searched for justice through the study of the Bible
- Through the churches, the love from God and members of their congregations reached out and touched the people.

Different types of churches in China

At the moment in China, there exist two kinds of churches.

The first is "Three Selves": self-Gospel study, self-management and self-financial support. The "Three Selves" (in Chinese the word is "sanzhi") churches are managed by *Christianity Society and Christianity Patriotism Council* in government. The government is responsible for funding to purchase land for church buildings, to remunerate a clergyman and other staff and to run church schools.

The government has set a special rule to forbid the study of the Bible chapter of The Book of the Revelation.

The second is known as Family Churches and, for these churches, family church members put up the money for all expenses. Some members offer to rent a room for the service and others hold their services in a member's home. Members of the congregation pay the salary or wages of the clergy.

The family churches can be divided into two groups:

- those officially registered in government;
- those which are not registered.

The first group is legal and registered churches are normally required to follow government instructions. The second group is, of course, illegal. Those churches which refuse to register believe that Christ is the head while the church is the body: no third party such as government, therefore, can come between the head and body of the church. All family churches, whether registered or not, cannot exceed 30 people of a congregation.

There is a clear trend in the advancing development of the church in China, in that whereas 20- 30 years ago, this mainly occurred in the countryside, within the last 15-20 years, there has been progress in the cities, noticeable, in particular, among intellectuals.

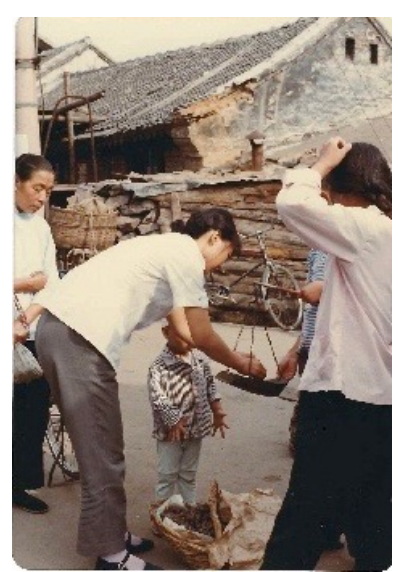
Some problems

It appears that the Chinese government has advised the population of a tightening up on religious policy from 1 February 2018.

Owing to the rapid development of the church in China, it has been difficult to keep up with training for the clergy.

Due to the shortage of clergy, the people are missing out on spiritual guidance. This has resulted in the distressing establishment of a number of anti-religious cults.

James Zhang





Heart Families

Our theme for this month was true family. Jesus is telling us that we are all part of the same loving, supportive family, though we are all different. Activities provided included making thank you cards, paper chains with anchors on the last link to show that Jesus is our anchor, friendship bracelets from loom bands (one of the Mums was able to teach us how to make them) and paper chains of people, each of the two being joined by a heart.



Decorating gingerbread men



Making blood - you can't beat it!

All the children were eager to "make blood". We started by making plasma with water, salt and yellow colouring, then added Cheerios to represent the red blood cells, colouring the mixture with red colouring and finally adding some white blood cells (marshmallows).

Some children helped Beryl paint a Family Tree and we all added leaves with our names on.



Making a family tree



Playdough cakes - YUM!



For Mummy made with love and care

After the celebration in church during which we sang 'He's got the whole world in his hands' and 'Bind us together' we all enjoyed a buffet meal. All afternoon there was a happy buzz about the hall. Many thanks to all our volunteers.

Anne Fitzgerald

COFFEE MORNING



Wednesday 8 March

10.30 am in the Church Hall
Hosted by Nancy Hampton
and Jean Smillie

Any profit will go to Elmbridge Mencap

All welcome!



BRIDGE CLUB

Mondays 5 and 19 March

2.00 pm

Hersham Room



LADIES' GUILD

Tuesdays 6 and 20 March

2.00 pm

Hersham Room

PRAYER GROUP

Fridays 9 and 23 March

10.30 am

Garden Room

A CAPPELLA SINGERS IN CONCERT

Saturday 10 March

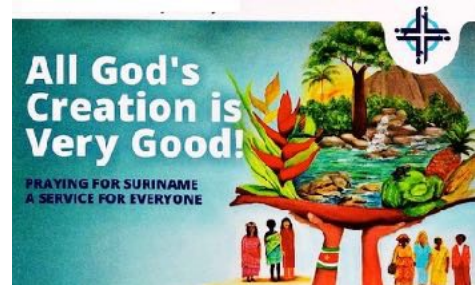
7.30 pm Weybridge URC



! DON'T FORGET THE AGM !

Sunday 4 March at 12 noon

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



Friday 2 March 2018 at 10.00 am

St Erconwald's Roman Catholic Church
Esher Avenue, Walton KT12 2TA

The service will be followed by refreshments

Programme materials for 2018 are being
designed by the women of Suriname

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL

Wednesday 14 March

12.30 pm at Weybridge URC, Queens Road,
KT13 9UX

The March concert features Peter Beaven,
Organist and Director of Music, Royal
Memorial Chapel, Sandhurst

Bring your own snacks - enjoy the music
Tea and coffee available

Free entry with retiring collection in aid of
Musicians Benevolent Fund

LADIES WHO LUNCH

Friday 9 March

12.30 - 2.30 pm

Weybridge URC, Queens Road, KT13 9UX

Soup, rolls, dessert and coffee,
all for just £4.00

Book your place(s) with Margaret Fautless
on 020 8399 3402/email:
ladieswholunch@weybridgeurc.org.uk



**CLOCKS SPRING FORWARD
at 01.00 AM ON
SUNDAY 25 MARCH**

ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

MORE ON DOORKINS! The many cat lovers in our congregation may have appreciated my newsletter article written last June about Doorkins, Southwark Cathedral's splendid cat. Indeed, a book has since been written about her and she has featured in this excerpt from Dean Andrew Nunn's recent blog - Living God, which I thought to share with you. Andrew writes:

A SAFE CHURCH: I couldn't be in the Synod Chamber for the start of today's business, as much as I wanted to be. In fact, I was on the 'Big Breakfast' show on 'Premier Radio' with Lisa Gutwein, a member of the congregation at Southwark Cathedral and also the author of the recently published book 'Doorkins the Cathedral Cat'. The interview had been in the diary for a long time and we were keen to tell the story of Doorkins, so that was why I was there. It may sound very trivial compared with the importance of the debate that was going on just down the road, on Safeguarding in the church and I suppose in reality it is. But there is a deeper message to Doorkins than just the story of a cute tabby cat. Doorkins arrived at the Cathedral doors in 2008. She was a stray who somehow found her way into the churchyard. The vergers noticed her there each morning and after a while put out food. Then they put the food inside, in the warm and very cautiously she made her way across the threshold into the building. And she decided it was safe to stay. Since then she has become a feature of our life and a much-loved part of the Southwark Cathedral family. She is still a bit wild and can be grumpy and challenging but can also be loving - not so different from a lot of people who come to church! We don't know her story or why she was on the streets - and, of course, we never will. She was God's little gift to us.



Her story is a parable of what a safe church should be, simply that, safe, whoever you are. Unfortunately, all the incidents of abuse that are now known about and those yet to be disclosed happened in or around churches perpetrated by people, clergy and laity, who used their power to prey on others, children, vulnerable adults, of whom they took advantage. The safe church became the unsafe environment. We all need a safe space, we can all be vulnerable when all of a sudden there is a power imbalance and the church should and must be safe. Getting there will take a lot of doing and rebuilding trust will take a long time. The debate in Synod today was just another stage on the journey - but as we were clearly told, there has to be a change of culture and that change will involve how each of us thinks and speaks and acts. We have to change.



PROGRESS! The Cathedral shop's new website will soon feature online sales of all Doorkins' merchandise; calendars, mugs, books and mouse mats etc. I have been asked to provide cats from our artists to be sold under the Doorkins' 'brand'. Herbert (left), who attends his local Methodist Church, was



first off the mark and his efforts should arrive in April. He excels at finding seams of rare stone like Red Jasper - marvel at the colour of his friend Chengetai's stunning 'Angry Tortoise' above! Unfortunately, this stone is so hard that artists need expensive power tools to create their magic.

THE DROUGHT has ended but according to artist Christine Ndoro not before a new menace, the deadly army worm, devastated her family's crop in Buhera (below extreme left). Not only that but



prolonged fierce suns burned their field (left). Christine had to replant early January and used the dead crop to mulch her sweet potato mounds. In the UK, we take so much for granted and simply pop into a local supermarket for food but our friends do not have this luxury and precious little money: a situation worsened by very poor sculpture sales last month as the cold weather had a dire effect on Cathedral shop visitor numbers. **So the artists go without and some rest at home to conserve energy trying to ignore the pangs of hunger.** However there is some good news as many fields have survived and most artists can

expect a good harvest - so essential to their families welfare. See cheerful photos (left) of Ignatious and Shingi. It was heartening to learn that Isabel (below right) one of several children whose education has been supported by members of the congregation, gained two 'A' level



passes: a great effort considering she shares text books without electricity at night to study ☺.

ROLLER COASTER: Life continues to prove a roller coaster for most poor Zimbabweans now hit by the death of Morgan Tsvangirai (65), a huge blow to the MDC, the main opposition party. It comes only months before the first election is due to be held since the end of Robert Mugabe's long reign. MT was one of the giants of the long struggle to bring democracy to Zimbabwe and he will be remembered for his courage, humility, humour and relentless determination. The dilemma is now to find someone who will fill that central essential role.

Johnston Simpson

FLOWER POWER



Ghislaine Stevenson writes:

"It was a wonderful surprise to receive some of the beautiful flowers from St Andrew's in memory of Joyce Wallbank. The soft pastel colours seemed perfectly appropriate to Joyce's gentle character and it was good to reminisce with May and Marigold about the enjoyable afternoons we all shared with Joyce at many a Ladies' Guild meeting." (You can see the lovely arrangement above. Ed)

Shona Luther was delighted with flowers from the Communion Table delivered by Netta and Christine - thank you!

Mary Taylor, who has been in hospital, thanks everyone who has been so kind to her, including thoughtfulness in taking her church flowers.

Many thanks to St Andrew's from **Norma** for the beautiful red and white selection of church flowers she received in appreciation of the Newsletter.

"I do my best to make it interesting but remember, much depends on what you send in by way of contributions, so please keep them coming. Anything and everything considered!"

FLOWER OF THE MOMENT (with thanks to Interflora)

LISIANTHUS



'Lisianthus' comes from the Greek words 'lysis', which translates as 'dissolution', and 'anthos', meaning flower. There is nothing more beautiful than a field of glorious lisianthus, also known as Texas Bluebells, Prairie Gentian, or Lira de San Pedro. Descended from a North American wildflower and native to Texas and Mexico. A colloquial name for the lisianthus is the 'poor man's rose', due to its striking similarity to the Queen of Flowers. To keep them fresh, remove lower foliage, then cut the stems under water. Keep away from fruit and other ethylene producing items. Lisianthus are thirsty flowers, so check water level daily.