

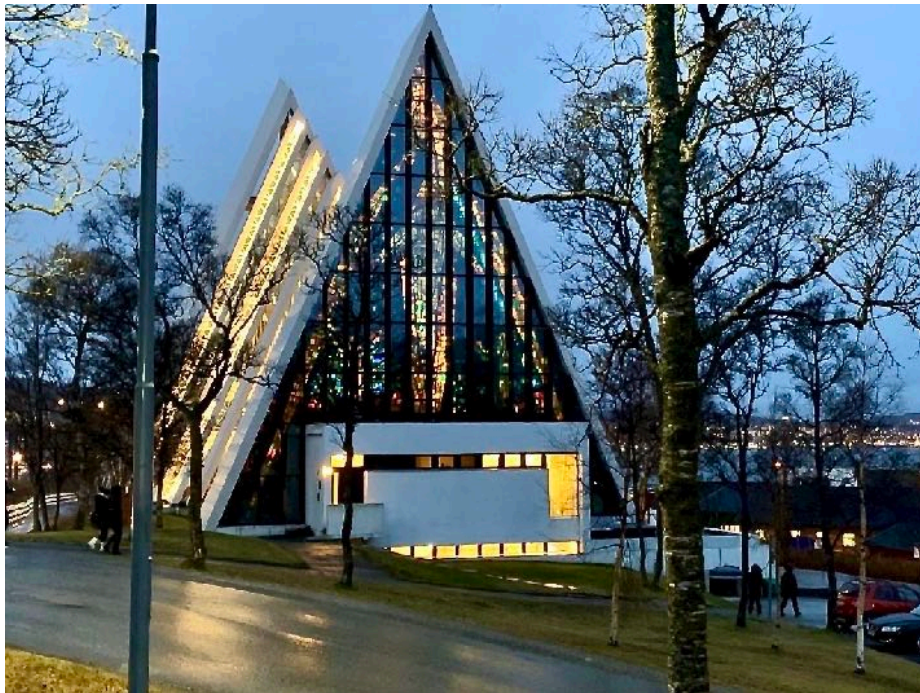


ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
WALTON-ON-THAMES

NEWSLETTER

Volume 78 No 10

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022



The Arctic Cathedral, Tromsø, Norway.

*"And so, this Christmas season
may our hearts with gladness glow,
As we read the blessed story
That took place so long ago."*

Alpha L. Buntain ("The First Christmas")



From The Manse

December 2021/January 2022

Dear friends

I do hope that certain aspects of Christmas 2021 are not going to be a repeat of Christmas 2020. Like many, I found the bottom of my world falling out at tea-time on Saturday 20th December, 2020 as the Prime Minister made his announcement about last-minute changes to the Christmas lockdown restrictions. Like many, I suddenly found myself with a house prepared and a cupboard full of food, but now with no family coming to share it with. Others suddenly found themselves with empty cupboards and being unable to visit family as planned. I was going to be spending Christmas day on my own and I would also be spending my birthday, a few days later, on my own as well. It will be a long time before I forget that sense of emptiness experienced as I went to bed that dreadful Saturday evening. I walked along the landing, past the rooms prepared for Mum and for Janet, with beds made up, clean towels neatly folded on them and cheery poinsettias in place - and knew that they would now remain empty. No one was coming.

Some friends of mine live next door to a holiday property in North Devon. It's quite a large property, often hired by more than one family or else by groups of friends from more than one household. One week in May, my friends were rather surprised to see the week's occupants arrive with what looked like a Christmas Tree amongst their luggage. A few days later they saw the occupants all sitting round the table with the Christmas Tree in the window, surrounded by presents, and with the sound of Christmas carols floating through the open window. It was a family who had been unable to get together for Christmas - so they did it when they could - in May. My friends quickly found a spare Christmas card and popped it through the door, much to the delight of the holiday-makers. Over the summer, however, this became an almost weekly sight for my friends. Christmas was celebrated there, complete with decorations, by a number of families who had been unable to be together last December.

St Matthew, in his Nativity account, recalls the words of the prophet Isaiah, "and his name shall be called Emmanuel, which means, 'God with us'". Let's hope that this Christmas families will be able to be together. I don't fancy another Christmas apart from my family but my friends' experience shows that we can celebrate the birth of Jesus and rejoice in the message of "God with us" any time - even in the middle of August - and let's face it, this August it sometimes felt cold enough for snow as well! I also can't help but think that last Christmas we felt the power of Emmanuel in a very different way. God certainly was with us, even when our planned celebrations lay around us in pieces and, on the plus side, I was spared having to eat a sprout last Christmas - you can't buy just one.

Emmanuel - God is with us - always, and last Christmas we felt the power of that even in a time of sadness and darkness.

With my very best wishes to you all for Christmas and for 2022 and my thanks sincere thanks for all your support and encouragement throughout 2021.

Phil Cal





ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE PASTORATE

Sunday 5 December (*Advent 2*)

St Andrew's	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by the Minister with Communion and Reception of New Members
Weybridge	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Communion taken by the Revd Bruce Stuart

Monday 6 December

Weybridge	7.00 pm	Chitty Funeral Services Memorial Carol Service taken by the Minister
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Sunday 12 December (*Advent 3*)

St Andrew's	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by Mr Graham Pearcey
Weybridge	10.30 am	Family Parade and Toy Service taken by the Minister

Tuesday 14 December

St Andrew's	2.00 pm	Westwood School Carol Service taken by the Minister
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Sunday 19 December (*Advent 4*)

St Andrew's	10.30 am	Zoom only service taken by Anna Crawford, from her home
	3.30 pm for 4.00 pm	Carols by candlelight taken by the Minister (NOT ZOOMED) (preceded by mulled wine & mince pies at 3.30pm)
Weybridge	10.30 am	Carol Service with readings from "A child's Christmas" (Dylan Thomas) taken by the Minister

Christmas Eve

St Andrew's	4.00 pm	Christingle Service (the Minister)
Weybridge	11.10 pm for 11.30 pm	Midnight communion for Christmas (the Minister) (preceded by carol singing from about 11.10pm ish)

Christmas Day

Weybridge	10.30am	Pastorate Family Service taken by the Minister (no service at St Andrew's)
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There is no service on Boxing Day at either St Andrew's or Weybridge churches

ELDERS' DEVOTIONS - NOVEMBER 2021

Ephesians 2:17 (NIV: New International Version amended)

He came and preached peace to us who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we all have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, we are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

Peace was a word often found on Jesus lips. It was his first gift to his followers after his Resurrection. Its general sense is determined by the positive understanding of the Hebrew word '*Shalom*', which in the Old Testament covers the idea of well-being in the widest sense of the word – prosperity, bodily health, contentedness, good relations between nations and individuals, salvation. It has political connotations and a public significance far beyond the purely personal.

The state of '*Shalom*' comes about when the will of God is being done, when there is a harmony of being at one with the purposes of the Creator.

Let us say together Charles Wesley's hymn from the sheet

Jesus Lord we look to the,	Free from anger and from pride,
Let us in thy name agree:	let us thus in God aide;
Show thyself the Prince of peace;	All the depths of love express,
Bid all strife for ever cease.	All the heights of Holiness.
Make us of one heart and mind,	Closer Knit to thee, our head,
Courteous, full of pity, kind,	Nourish us, O Christ and feed!
Lowly, meek, in thought and word,	Let us daily grace receive,
Although together like the Lord.	More and more in Jesus live.
Let us for each other care,	Fill us with the Fathers love,
Each the others burdens bare;	Never from our souls remove;
To thy church the pattern give,	Dwell in us and we shall be
Show how true believers live.	Thine through all eternity.

Let us pray

Oh spirit of God, set at rest the crowded, hurrying, anxious thoughts within our hearts and minds. Let the peace and quiet of your presence take possession of us. Help us to rest, to relax, to become open and receptive to you. You know our innermost thoughts, the hidden unconscious life within us, the forgotten memories of hurts and fears, the frustrated desires, the unresolved tensions and dilemmas. Cleanse and sweeten the springs of our being, that freedom, life and love may flow both into our conscious and hidden life, Lord we lie open before you, waiting for your peace your healing and your word. **Amen**

Anna Crawford

THE UNION OF OUR TWO CHURCHES

November has been a momentous month for both our churches with some very big decisions being made. These have not been easy to make but the Church Meetings of both Walton and Weybridge have voted strongly in favour of uniting and forming a new, united church from 1st January 2022. At this point both sets of premises will remain in use but Sunday services will be held at the St Andrew's site from the date of union.

Many of the practicalities will be worked out over the next few months and hopefully many things will just fall into place fairly naturally. Any questions, however, do ask me. I may or may not know the answer but you may just be asking the key question that's been overlooked.

I look forward to serving the united church and to stepping out on the next part of the journey.

Michael Hodgson

THE FUTURE OF ZOOM SERVICES

As previously reported, in January our services will be Zoomed twice a month before our wonderful Teach Team all collapse in a state of nervous exhaustion. At the time of going to print the patten for which services will be "zoomed" isn't finalised but 2nd January certainly will be. The zoom code will be unchanged whatever happens.

Michael Hodgson



Addlestone & District Scottish Society

Invite you to join them for a
BURNS SUPPER

SATURDAY 22 JANUARY 2022

St Andrew's Church Hall, Hersham Road,
Walton-on-Thames

7pm for 7.30pm - Carriages at 11.00pm

Four Course Haggis Supper - The Immortal Memory - Address to the Haggis -
Toast to the Lassies and Reply - Piper - Dancing - Usual speeches

Bring your own wine (glasses provided)

Dress: Highland/Black Tie/Lounge Suit

Tickets £30

All enquiries to Alan Crawford 01932 244466 or annacrawford972@btinternet.com

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES ST ANDREW'S DECEMBER 2021

Please see separate Advent and Christmas Services on page 3 which lists Weybridge's services, to which all are welcome, not all of which are included here

Sunday 5 December (Advent 2)	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister with Communion and Reception of New Members
Tuesday 7 December	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting on Zoom
Friday 10 December	12.30 pm	People Who Lunch, Weybridge URC (book your place(s) for this Christmas-themed lunch with Margaret Faultless 020 8399 3402 or email: ladieswholunch@weybridgeurc.org.uk)
Saturday 11 December	5.00 pm	Oatlands Singers 'A Taste of Christmas' at URC Weybridge (see page 8)
Sunday 12 December (Advent 3)	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Graham Pearcey
Wednesday 14 December	2.00 pm	Westwood School Carol Service taken by the Minister
Friday 17 December	8.00 pm	Christmas Carols with the Treble Clef Choir at St James's Parish Church, Weybridge (see page 8)
Sunday 19 December (Advent 4)	10.30 am	Morning Worship on <u>Zoom only</u>, led from home by Anna Crawford. Anyone who would like to go to a service in person is, of course, welcome to attend the service taking place at Weybridge URC
	3.30 pm for 4.00 pm	Carols by candlelight led by the Minister (NOT Zoomed) preceded by mulled wine and mince pies
Christmas Eve	4.00 pm	Christingle Service led by the Minister
		<i>Midnight Communion will be at Weybridge URC</i>
Christmas Day	10.30 am	Pastorate Family Service at Weybridge led by the Minister (no service at St Andrew's)

**There is no service on Sunday 26 December (Boxing Day)
at either St Andrew's or Weybridge churches**

A Glasgow church newsletter announced, 'There will be a "Parish Sin-a-long (Sing-a-long) on Sunday at 7.30 pm'. In another magazine an appeal for additional choristers was headed 'Sinners wanted for the choir.'

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES JANUARY 2022

A Happy New Year to One and All !



And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,'



And he replied:
'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'
So I went forth and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And
He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

Minnie Louise Haskins

Sunday 2 January	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Minister
Tuesday 11 January	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting - Bill Topping Room
Friday 14 January	12.30-2.30 pm	People Who Lunch at Weybridge URC (contact Margaret Faultless 020 8399 3402)
Sunday 9 January	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by The Minister

COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER: WEDNESDAY 15 JANUARY

This will be the first joint issue following the union of St Andrew's with Weybridge

ALL ITEMS TO NORMA REID, 3 GWALIOR ROAD, LONDON SW15 1NP
aristocats.2000@gmail.com Tel: 020 8785 4392

Sunday 16 January	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister
	3.00-5.00 pm	Messy Church
Saturday 22 January	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Burns Supper at St Andrew's Church Hall (see page 5)
Sunday 23 January	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister
Sunday 30 January	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Anna Crawford



Oatlands Singers is a Registered Charity - 1049088

A TASTE OF CHRISTMAS

A Choral Concert in aid of the Afghanistan Refugees

A joyful seasonal occasion for all the family with music and festive readings
plus a chance to join in with Christmas carols

Saturday 11 December 2021 at 5.00 pm

United Reformed Church, Queens Road, Weybridge KT13 9UX

Tickets: Adults £10 (includes seasonal refreshments - children free of charge)

Oatlands Singers rehearse on Tuesdays from 7.45 - 9.45 pm
in St Mary Oatlands Church Hall KT13 9TJ

Would you like to sing with us?

If so please call 07900 907738 or visit our website at <https://oatlandssingers.club>



We are back for our

Christmas Carol Concert

with our new Musical Director *Emily Leather*
Accompanist *Hannah Stanley*

Friday 17th December
8.00pm

St. James' Parish Church
Weybridge KT13 8DE

Tickets £10
Accompanied children under 12 free

From **Treble Clef** 01252 326514

www.trebleclefchoir.org





It was with some trepidation that we agreed to restart Messy Church after a long period due to Lockdown and Covid restrictions. Just after we began planning, the number of cases - especially among children - began to rise dramatically, but nevertheless we went ahead with our plans.

I attended a Zoom discussion on starting up again and spoke to people who had already begun. We discovered we could not have finger food, so a change in the celebration meal would be required. The volunteers all agreed to wear masks and we used bought materials, fresh out of the packet. I telephoned our regulars rather than advertise on boards and social media and we waited for the response.



Jean Rigden and I scrubbed and sanitised all the tables and chairs we would use; we set out the various activities and before we were completely ready (a normal occurrence!) the families began to arrive. We were delighted to see them, and they were so happy to be back. Soon, the hall was buzzing with activity. The children were quickly engaged, and we all had a lot of catching up to do. It was lovely to welcome Sebastian who was a regular at both Sunday School and Messy Church, now a tall handsome teenager eager to help with craft work. I produced a photo of him taken at one of our first Messy Church sessions and we marvelled at how long we had been doing this.



Michael learns something new

It was difficult to pull the children away from what they were doing but we eventually went through to the church. We discussed the Christmas story and there was a lot of input

from the children, now older and more able to listen. They sang lustily, accompanied by Michael on the piano, then went through to see what James had in store for them. Pizza was still top of the menu, but we had sausages and beans, lasagne, and for dessert, tiny ice creams.



On leaving, each family was presented with a box of activities prepared by the URC and assembled the week before by a group of volunteers in the Hersham Room. They were happy. We were exhausted but thrilled with the way it had gone. Thank you to all our faithful volunteers and to those who were remembering us in prayer.

Anne Fitzgerald

Michael writes:

With regards Messy Church starting up again, we were bowled over by the response. Thirteen children turned up, plus parents, and it was so lovely to see the hall bustling with life. Lockdown and Covid haven't killed off our Messy Church. This lovely story took place in the worship.

Gathered in the church before we went through to tea, Anne and the children were thinking about Christmas and about the meaning of Christmas. Anne told the children that Jesus had another name. He wasn't only called Jesus but could anyone tell her what his other name was. Wanting to give the children a clue, Anne said that it begins, "Mess....." to which one child shouted out "It's Messy!". That will stay in my mind for a long time and if I look as if I'm about to laugh the next time I say Messiah, you'll know why!

PRAYER TIME

Carol Lee, St Andrew's Church Secretary, shares some of her thoughts about prayer.

A couple of things have made me think about prayer and how this fits in with my own routine.

The first was a conversation with friends about how we know when our prayers have been answered and the second was part of the sermon from Graham Pearcey, which asked if our prayers were a list of requests or an attempt to listen to God.

The first prayer I remember is the child's prayer:

"This night I lay me down to sleep
I pray my soul the Lord to keep
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

When I shared this with my husband, Chris, he thought it was pretty gruesome for a child to be contemplating their own death. And I can see his point of view but, when I was using this prayer as a child, I found it reassuring not scary. My bedtime routine was brush teeth, go to bed and say my prayers.

But to go back to the first question: how do we know when prayers are answered? These days it's unlikely that the Angel Gabriel will descend from Heaven to speak directly to us and perhaps that's not such a bad thing. After all, it would be hard to explain the Heavenly Host to non-believers.

Instead, we might find the answer to our prayers coming via advice from our family and friends, or a random act of kindness from a stranger. Perhaps the answer will take away us from what we asked for and into what we really need.

Another point I've been thinking about is what is prayer time to me? When I was working, my routine was to spend my entire Tube journey praying (with my eyes open I hasten to add). I realised that when I stopped the regular commute I had lost this time and now I need to work harder to bring this into my day.

Does prayer feature in your day to day life? Is it something you keep by you? Is it a set time each day? Or is something to which you turn when things are bleak and you need help? I think that these are questions on which we can work together. Maybe you would like to share your views over coffee after Church?

Carol Lee

CONGRATULATIONS ...

... to the Revd Dr Michael Hopkins, Minister of the Spire Church Farnham and Elstead URC, and Clerk of the General Assembly, who became the first URC minister to gain a Doctorate from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Examination in Theology.

His 80,000 word thesis on the history of English Presbyterianism looked at the tension between those who aspired to being a national church and those who preferred voluntaryism especially.

Church House



ODE TO A CHRISTMAS CAKE

Thanks to Ghislaine for finding this seasonal poem in a Radio Times of 28 November 2015.

It was written by an educated English woman, Helen Maria Williams, born in 1759 in London to a Scottish mother and a Welsh Army officer father. She was a British novelist, poet, and translator of French-language works. A religious dissenter, and a controversial figure in her own time, her comments frequently got her into trouble. She wrote this poem when she received a present of a home-made cake at her Paris home, baked and sent by a friend in England.



TO MRS K-, ON HER SENDING ME AN ENGLISH CHRISTMAS PLUM-CAKE AT PARIS

What crowding thoughts around me wake,
What marvels in a Christmas cake!
Ah say, what strange enchantment dwells
Enclosed within its odorous cells?
Encrusted in its snowy round!
For magic surely lurks in this,
A cake that tells of vanished bliss;
A cake that conjures up to view
The early scenes, when life was new;
When memory knew no sorrows past
And hope believed in joys that last! -
Mysterious cake, whose folds contain
Life's calendar of bliss and pain;
That speaks of friends for ever fled,
And wakes the tears I love to shed
Oft shall I breathe her cherished name
From whose fair hand the offering came:
For she recalls the artless smile
Of nymphs that deck my native isle;
Of beauty that we love to trace,
Allied with tender, modest grace;
Of those who, while abroad they roam,
Retain each charm that gladdens home,
And whose dear friendships can impart
A Christmas banquet for the heart!

"This is the month, and this the happy morn,
wherein the Son of heaven's eternal King,
of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born,
our great redemption from above did bring."

John Milton



Michael would like to send warmest greetings for Christmas and the New Year to everyone at St Andrew's



Jan and Moira de Kok would like to wish all members of St Andrew's and Weybridge churches a blessed and peaceful Christmas. We hope the love and light of the Christ Child will shine in your lives.



Eva Ramage sends her very best wishes to her friends for a Happy Christmas and for the New Year ahead



Marigold Crampton wishes all her friends a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year



Sheila Gardner wishes her friends at St Andrew's a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year



Ghislaine Stevenson would like to send warmest wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all her friends at St Andrew's



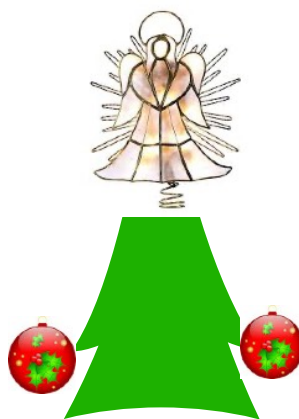
Jim and Janet wish all their friends at St Andrews a Happy Christmas and a Guid New Year



David and Mavis Netherwood send Christmas greetings and good wishes to all at St Andrew's and look forward to being with you once again in the New Year



HAPPY
NEW YEAR



Dear Michael and all the congregation of St Andrew's, we wish you all a very happy Christmas! With love from **Zacc** and **Jackie** xx

To all my friends at St Andrew's, I wish you a happy time at Christmas and a New Year to bring good health and happy times. **Irene Pearson**

As this year, which we are sure has been a difficult one for many of us, draws to a close, we send our very best wishes to you all for a Happy Christmas and 'peace, comfort & joy' in the New Year. **Jane & Malcolm Bryant**

Alan and Anna wish you all Joyous and Peaceful Christmas. A healthy and happy New Year.

A Happy Christmas to everyone! I have missed going to church and seeing all my friends and hope to be back soon. **Nancy Hampton**

Valerie, Fiona, Vic and Katie would like to wish everyone at St Andrew's and Weybridge a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

I would like to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas from Texas! Hello to all my friends, much happiness and health in the New Year! **Sophia Swanson**

Wishing everyone a joyous and peaceful Christmas With love and best wishes, **Anne and Keith Fitzgerald**





Stepwise is making a difference!



What is Stepwise?

Stepwise is an integral part of *Walking the Way – living the life of Jesus today*, the United Reformed Church's focus on whole-life discipleship and mission.

Wessex Synod is delighted that Stepwise is now part of the life of the Synod with people having completed the first stream, while others are just about to start. A Synod Stepwise Advocacy Group has been formed and they have been working hard to make sure that all the procedures are put in place to ensure that Stepwise has been able to happen through the last 18 months.

Stepwise is a programme of learning and discipleship development for everyone – including you! – whether you are exploring and enriching your personal faith life, discerning where God's call on your life may be leading, preparing for a new direction, or developing a specific role within your community or church.

One key aspect is that, as a Stepwise participant, your group will have a facilitator and you will also have a mentor who will be with you throughout your Stepwise stream. The Synod Advocacy Group is ensuring safe recruitment and orientation of voluntary facilitators and mentors.

What is a Stepwise Stream? Stepwise has five streams: Faith Filled Life, Faith Filled Worship, Faith Fuelled Leadership, Faith Filled Confidence and Faith Filled Community. Everyone starts with Faith Filled Life, and then after that depends on you! You don't have to follow any set path through it.

Stepwise is open to anyone who is keen to reflect on and develop their Christian faith. If you're ready to be stimulated and challenged – and want to make a difference in your own life and the lives of others – then Stepwise could be just what you're looking for.

Stepwise is learner orientated and designed to draw on the strengths and to address the needs of individual learners, in the context of their communities and churches. The programme emphasises the vital importance of people learning from their daily lives, wherever and whoever God calls them to be.

There are different start times, so there should be a group that is convenient for you – either online or in person.

This is what you need to know

- All participants wanting to engage in the Stepwise programme will have to begin with completing Faith Filled Life
- If you want to participate in Faith Filled Life, go to our Synod website and fill in an application form, and send this to Ruth Heine, development@urcwessex.org.uk
You will then be contacted by a member of the Synod Advocacy Group.
- Synod will identify where the learning Hubs will be located within the Synod, and what online offering there may be.
- Groups will be formed logically for participants and will be registered with Synod. This will connect you for your login for your online learning.
- You will have a mentor throughout Stepwise, and if you are unable to identify one from your church, you will be given help to find one.

If you want to know any more about this, please contact

Mary Thomas dso-s@urcwessex.org.uk or Ray Stanyon dso-n@urcwessex.org.uk



FRIENDS REMEMBERED



Mary Macdonald Taylor

Mary Taylor was born in 1922 in Swift Current, a small city in southwest Saskatchewan, Canada - its motto is "Where life Makes Sense". Her parents were both born in Scotland, her mother from Grantown on Spey, and her father from Forres, Morayshire. Following their marriage in Perth they'd emigrated to Canada in 1919.

Mary was the middle of three sisters, the other two being Jean, born in 1921, and Iona, nine years younger. She had an idyllic childhood with her sisters and little dog, Laddie. They swam in a safe part of the river and in the winter, loved ice skating having learned to skate with the help of an old chair.

Mary had piano lessons at the age of six but her teacher was of the old school and threatened her that if she didn't get her scales up to scratch for the next lesson the teacher would take her golf club to her. Seeing the golf clubs in the house as she was leaving Mary told her that she would never go back. Her parents bought her a violin and she was happy with it, practising hard enough to play 2nd violin in an orchestra. Mary next decided that she wanted to be a singer and went on to take singing lessons in Toronto at the Conservatoire.

Church was an important part of life at home and when she grew up Mary trained to be a Deaconess, entering Ewart College in 1943. Becoming Director of Christian Education in 1946, Mary served firstly at the First Presbyterian Church in Edmonton, and then at Knox Presbyterian Church in Galt, Ontario. In 1954 she joined the Christian Fellowship Holiday Group and went to Austria where she met Ron, who was on the same trip. They married in Know Church in 1955 set up home in the UK since Ron was working in Farnborough. After five years their son, Tom, arrived and brought them great joy. Tom was head-hunted for a job in Silicon Valley. He met and married Elaine their daughter Grace was Mary's only grandchild. Mary used to travel to the USA regularly to visiting them, the last time being for her 90th birthday.

Ron and Mary moved to Sunbury in 1964 and joined St Andrew's in 1966. She joined the choir at St Andrew's when Eric MacDonald was the Choir Master and Isla Tait the organist. Mary has been a very loyal and faithful member of the church, attending each week until she became housebound and getting her here on a Sunday simply became too much for both her and for those bringing her.

Mary enjoyed her holidays, including trips to Bermuda, Barbados, the Maldives and the Holy Land, bringing back some water from the Holy Land which was used in baptisms at St Andrew's for a time. She also belonged to the Sunbury Bowls Club for 15 years and her appears name on their Honours Board several times.

Ron died in 2000 and shortly afterwards, with Tom living in the States, Alan Westcott began to help Mary with her business and finances. Although Mary's body increasingly failed her mind certainly didn't and her determination to carry on in her own home was fierce. Various good friends enabled that to happen, along with some professional carers. Mary did remain in her flat and people such as Irene and Rosemary, Rose and Moira and Jan de Kok went more than an extra mile to respect Mary's wishes and to support her. So too did Alison and Alan.

Many stories could be told about Mary but a woman of faith is now with her Lord. It could be said that instead of moving into nursing home Mary moved into the place in our Heavenly Father's house which Jesus prepared for her.

Michael Hodgson

NEWS FROM OUR HALL HIRERS

WALTON & WEYBRIDGE FLOWER CLUB



We thoroughly enjoy our meetings at St Andrews Church Hall once a month. Our regular meeting brings a demonstrator to create several flower arrangements on stage, whilst talking through the flowers and foliage used in each arrangement, often telling stories in connection to how the arrangements came to be, or other funny stories about incidents they have experienced. At the end of the demonstration, all of the arrangements which have been created are raffled off, so you may be lucky enough to take one home with you!

We welcome visitors regardless of experience, all you need is to have an interest in flowers. We encourage chat amongst members before the demonstration begins, with tea or coffee and home-made cake for a small donation also to be enjoyed, as our Club is as much about friendship among the flowers as it is about learning how to make beautiful arrangements.

Apart from our monthly meetings, we hold hands-on workshops twice a year which are a great opportunity to learn new techniques, as well as being a social event to get to know your fellow flower-lovers a little better. We have arranged outings in the past, although, of course, in more recent times the pandemic has prevented anything of that nature. We look forward to hosting a Show in May of next year.

The timing for all meetings is from 1.30 pm for a 2.00 pm start and each demonstration lasts up to two hours. The visitors' fee is £6.00 per meeting, with an annual membership of £43.00. Special events are charged individually.

**Our next meeting is on Thursday 2nd December when
Stephen McDonnell presents "Painting the Sky with Stars".**

There is no meeting in January. We begin 2022 with a demonstration on 3 February by Michelle King who will present "Tour de France".

For any more information please do get in touch - we are very happy to answer any questions.
Valerie Saint mobile 07908 778223 or Sylvie Mellersh mobile 07988 951310
or email sylvie.me@ntlworld.com



WALTON ART GROUP

We started using the main hall only a month before the first lockdown! However, we have persevered and members thoroughly enjoy their visits to the main hall. It is just the right size for us easily to put out table and chairs and then for members to paint for a couple of hours.

We are now producing paintings for our exhibition next March at the Riverhouse Barn. We are also able to have refreshments and of course, being an older membership, know the toilet facilities at St Andrew's are very good!

The site was chosen because it is near the old venue, has good car parking space and is for us potentially open all year round. The only downside is we lost several members when our night was changed from a Wednesday to Thursday. We hope to continue using St Andrew's Church hall for some time to come.

David Pilkington

REMEMBRANCE 2021

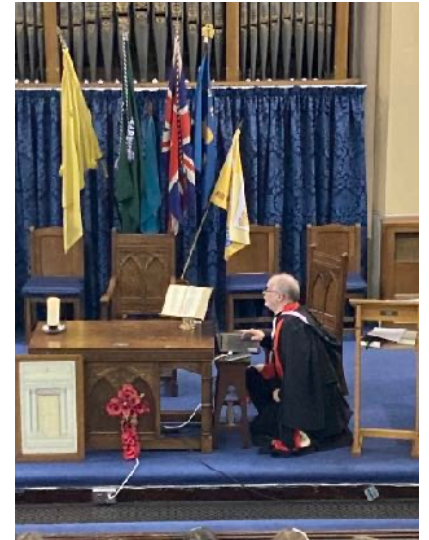


Presenting the Colours

Once again, the two churches of the Pastorate held a united service on Remembrance Sunday but this year was a little different. The 4th Weybridge Brownies were with us as a unit since there was no Civic Service in the afternoon and they are not involved in the wreath laying ceremony at the War Memorial in Weybridge. There was also a slightly greater turn out of Beavers, Cubs and Scouts as well. Normally it's just the leaders and a few representatives since the kids are involved in services in the afternoon. It was also good to have a veteran who had served in Bosnia present, wearing his medal.

It's always a difficult service for a worship leader, having to get things to fit around the silence. This year, as well as using powerpoint for illustrations it was also being used for hymn words so everything had to run tightly to time. Thankfully, though, there was a moment in hand to tell the children what was going to happen next and why, so that they were able to understand more fully what was going on.

Sadly, our trumpeter, Adam, is now at university and so wasn't able to play for us but Teresa played the Last Post and Reveille on the organ. A technical hitch, however, meant that we were unable to see the poppies falling during the silence.



*Praying for resolution of the technical hitch
(but Michael says what was going through
his head at this point is unprintable...)*



100th Anniversary of the first "Poppy Day"; the 80th anniversary of some significant events in the Second World War and a year that culminated with the bombing of Pearl Harbour and the entry of America into the war; the situation now developing in Afghanistan since the withdrawal of the last American troops - there was a lot to remember this year - and we also thought of some of the things that went on in Weybridge URC (then Weybridge Congregational) during 1941.

As always though, the focus of the service was on the reading of the names from the memorials (*right*). The Last Post and the dipping of the colours is so poignant, particularly since for us that mark of respect is effected by young people. To close on a very personal point though, for me perhaps the most difficult part of the service is saying the words, "When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today." Perhaps that's because I know who was missing from family gatherings when I was a child, decades after the First and Second World Wars had finished.

Michael Hodgson





Elmbridge Christmas Fair on Sunday 14th November, we raised £1,403.80p plus we had a donation of £200. We had a lovely time with lots of support from our hall users. Our Tombola was sold out by just after midday and Santa had lots of visits in our sensory room. It was nice of Norma to pop in and see us.

Christmas Parties next and then a Pantomime in January.

Jean Rigden (pictured left)



*Audrey relaxes
between customers*

"The earth has grown old with its burden of care
But at Christmas it always is young,
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair
And its soul full of music breaks the air,
When the song of angels is sung.
Phillips Brooks

SAMARITAN'S PURSE

"Thank you on behalf of the children who will receive shoebox gifts this year. You'll bring a big smile to a child's face and let them know that they are loved and not forgotten."



We collected a total of six Shoe boxes last Sunday filled with lovely colourful pens and other gifts for the children linked to Samaritan's Purse. We also collected £142.00 in donations which I have passed on to Samaritan's Purse. For those of you who filled a shoebox, please see me to collect your barcode which will enable you to track and trace your shoebox so you will know in which part of the world that it ended up in. Thank you to all who supported this very worthy cause last week,

Adrienne Cooper

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR, NORMA

I wish all my faithful readers a Very Happy Christmas and hope that you will have a 'Guid New Year'!
Thank you for your many and interesting contributions without which there would be no Newsletter to speak of and please keep them rolling in.

In those thanks, I would like to give Michael a special mention for all the support and encouragement - including the occasional injection of fun he has provided in times of stress!

From February 2022 we will have a joint issue with Weybridge and can look forward to enjoying their local news and articles in a Newsletter with a wider scope of interest which you can all enjoy.

A CHRISTMAS GARDENING TIP

Every Christmas, my mum gives me a Poinsettia plant to welcome the holiday season. It's the usual small plant that is sold in huge quantities for decoration at home. At the end of December, they typically look poorly and into the bin they go. Two years ago, I decided for the first time to plant the Poinsettia in the garden instead of tossing it. Not sure if it would survive the Texas heat or grow. To my surprise it is thriving and growing! This month is the first time since planting, that the leaves have started to turn red! Give it a try and enjoy your poinsettia year after year.

Sophia Swanson



COOKERY CORNER



Sophia has been busy baking and sent us before and after photographs of a treacle loaf, from May Dow's recipe exchanged when Sophia was living in the UK and a faithful member of St Andrew's Guild. I have checked with May's daughters, Fiona and Valerie, and have their agreement to reproduce the recipe (how we miss May - and not only for her cakes!). Fiona says if her mother were still with us she would have been 'fair chuffed'.

MAY'S TREACLE LOAF

4 oz butter
1 cup sugar
1 cup sultanas
1 cup water
1 Tablespoon treacle
1 teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon allspice (this could be 'mixed spice')
1 teaspoon baking soda

Put all in a pot and bring to a boil. Then simmer 5 minutes.
Set aside and allow to cool.



All ready for the oven ...

Once above has cooled, add 2 cups self rising flour, a pinch of salt and 1 egg.

Mix all together. Pour into a loaf pan.

Bake in oven at 325°F / 162°C for about an hour.



Now all we need is a nice cup of tea !

Thanks to Nita Soliar for our lovely cover photograph of the Arctic Cathedral in Tromso, which she visited recently during a trip to Norway to see the Northern Lights

ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

IN PARTY MOOD: While the world met in Glasgow to talk about protecting our planet, stopping deforestation, and controlling pollution, Zimbabweans learned of their President's delegation numbering over 60 people, to the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference. It included



family members. Some of the travelling party went ahead on the luxuriously fitted jet hired by the president costing US\$12,000 per hour fearing the indebted Air Zimbabwe's Boeing 767 could get impounded over debts. Meanwhile, party supporters based in Scotland were preparing a welcome event, buying expensive whiskeys (left) seeing President Mnangagwa's trip to the UK - the first by a Zimbabwean leader since Robert Mugabe's state visit in 1994 - as a major political coup. Mr Mnangagwa's trip however has nothing to do with his perception by the British government - he is in Glasgow due to rules permitting him to attend UN meetings, overriding any concerns of the host state. He is seen as a pariah in the West, blamed by

critics for economic mismanagement, corruption, and authoritarian rule worse than his predecessor Robert Mugabe, who died in 2019 two years after being deposed in a military coup.

BACK IN IMPOVERISHED ZIMBABWE there was welcome news as long-awaited rains have arrived. Artist Coster illustrated the point by sending this photo (below left) of some neighbours' homes. Lizeni and Fortune make a start sowing maize seed on a spare patch of ground next to his home. No space is wasted as maize is their extended family's staple food for most of the year.



EARLY PROMISE: A few artists like Teddy (left) who live in wetter areas, took a chance by sowing early. Their gamble looks like coming off. Marlow URC will be delighted as it is through their generous donation covering seed and compound fertilisers for the entire cooperative that this was possible. Let's pray for a good growing season free of pests!

WHATSAPP LINK GROWS! Our services continue to spread joy when relayed 'live' to ArtPeace



who in turn, invite friends to listen in, the latest being Judith Maphosa, Fortune's friend from Bulawayo 272 miles south of Harare. Judith (44) is a teacher and sent this photo of her class. She commented: 'Life is very challenging, and I find it difficult to make ends meet-the price of commodities is so high, and it is not easy to afford a decent meal. I walk 4 miles a day to work. The lack of learning aids like laptops and no internet make it difficult to conduct lessons. I played St Andrew's service to my pupils who were very interested'.

ST ANDREW'S CHRISTMAS PROJECT to give

presents to the group's youngest & other poor children is well under way. Catherine, who delivered our used mobiles and cheap Poundland reading



spectacles last month (thereby easing our communication problem) has, with the help of artist Mike, collected 60 children's names. They will start buying gifts next week. Artist Godfrey listed two orphans namely Schola and Devine cared for by Rhoda their Gogo (right) who live near him in Tafara the high-density suburb in which many of our friends live.



A problem the UK does not have – yet! Issued by the Environment and safety management Institute. **SAFETY TIPS:** Beware - it's snake season. Snakes are highly active in very hot weather and get quickly agitated and angry.

1. Avoid leaving windows open for too long. Cobras and Mambas can reach considerable heights.
2. Avoid leaving your front doors open for fresh air in the evenings. These reptiles are stealthy, so you won't hear or see them go inside your house.
3. Before sitting under a tree for shade, check branches that there are no snakes lurking.
4. Check bed/surrounding before you retire as cobras are notorious for hiding under the sheets.
5. Avoid the age-old trend of liking to chill outside the house, with mattresses and wrappers in the evening. Most reptiles are nocturnal (they hunt at night and are more effective).
6. Not only snakes might bite you; the centipede (Mosithaphala), is fast and very venomous. Clear bushes round your house. They attract rats and mice which are the favourite snacks of the most dangerous snakes.

Beware of confronting snakes that enter your homes – some can be killed easily, others like the black mamba are cocky. If threatened, they will chase you at an alarming speed and give multiple bites while still on the chase; bitten victims may not live to see the next forty minutes. Please do have a wonderful day!!!



Now you know! Having unexpectedly encountered a black mamba on my second trip to Zimbabwe, I can personally vouch for their speed but not nearly as fast as yours truly!

Johnston Simpson



ST ANDREW'S URC, WALTON-ON-THAMES

For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2, vv 11-14

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Covid-safe services start at 10.30 am. Services are also accessible on Zoom.

Anyone who wishes to take part in the Zoom service should contact the minister,
who will be able to send them a link to enable easy participation.

You are all most welcome to join us!