



**THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE PASTORATE**



**THE GRAPEVINE**



**FEBRUARY 2022**

**Volume 1 No 1**



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*“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement  
give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that  
with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father  
of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

*Romans 15 vv 5-6*

*From The Manse*

*February 2022*



*Dear friends*

I'd like to begin this letter by saying thank you to those who put so much work into our Christmas services and into getting our two churches so beautifully decorated. I am extremely grateful to you, particularly since there were some last-minute alterations as a result of Covid advice. Christmas was certainly busy in the pastorate with various special services taking place, including the last, regular ones at Weybridge. I think that everything went off really well though and it was nice being able to celebrate Christmas "in person" again. I followed Prof Whitty's advice and we focussed on the important things - the things we really wanted to do, and cut the rest. His advice, as ever, seemed sensible.

January 2<sup>nd</sup> is not a day I'll forget in a hurry. It was the first Sunday of the new, united church but with its being a Bank Holiday weekend, still so close to Christmas and with rising Covid rates, I did wonder if many would be there. To be honest, I actually wondered if it would have been better to have postponed the first service for a week and held it on January 9<sup>th</sup>. As I walked into church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> though, I was delighted and astonished to see so many there. Additional communion elements had to be prepared as we ran out and there seemed a quiet joy and hope in the church. Special items from both congregations were brought into the church and used in the service. In our prayers we were able to bring to God our hopes for the future and so the first service of the New Year and of the new church aimed for quiet sincerity and I think that it hit the mark nicely. A day to remember for all the right reasons.

The task of crafting a new church has begun and I am certain that we can move to this task in the faith and the confidence that we are being led by the Holy Spirit and supported by God's care. Behind the scenes a lot of work is currently being done to bring things together and some practical information appears later in the magazine. I hope you'll find that helpful and do please be aware that more information will be forthcoming in due course.

My good wishes to you all as, together, we open a new chapter in the life of St Andrew's URC and of Weybridge URC – now as one church. The future is so exciting and lots of potential has been unlocked. If you've any questions do please ask. If there's anything you don't understand, again, do please ask. I'll do my very best to answer.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "The Revd", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

## SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES FEBRUARY 2022

*Note: On the first and third Sunday of the month the service will also be on Zoom*

Sunday 6 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister (and Zoom) followed by Church Meeting
Tuesday 8 February	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting (in person or on Zoom - to be advised)
Friday 11 February	12.30 pm	People Who Lunch, Weybridge URC (book your place(s) with Margaret Faultless 020 8399 3402 or email: <a href="mailto:margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk">margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
Sunday 13 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister

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Sunday 20 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister (and Zoom)
Sunday 27 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by the Minister

### **A Note from the Editor and Associate Editor**

Welcome to the first edition of *The Grapevine* – the magazine for our new joint church of Walton and Weybridge. You will find that much of it is familiar to you because we have retained the regular items from the two former publications. Although they bore many similarities they also had their own distinct style. We hope to build on the best of both these approaches and to give you a magazine which will reflect the life of the church and its place in the wider world, as well as including articles of more general interest and of particular interest to our congregation.

#### **We can't achieve these aims, however, without your help!**

Please let us have your contributions so that it can really become **your** magazine.

We suggest you send contributions to both of us so as to provide a safety net in case of any computer malfunction - belt and braces that will serve to reduce anxiety on our part! Inevitably, this first issue looks back over the last days of the two separate churches but it also represents the beginning of our new life together as one congregation, and its style will evolve with time.

We look forward to hearing from you and welcome your comments and ideas.

*Norma Reid (Editor)*

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## SOME HELPFUL INFORMATION

The union of St Andrew's and Weybridge has taken place and gradually the new church is beginning to evolve. Let me share with you a few practicalities at this point which I hope you'll find helpful to know.

### Communion

Prior to our union, St Andrew's and Weybridge URC had quite different customs with regard to the frequency of communion services. In reality it had probably become the most obvious difference between the two churches. Now, post union, we need to move to a new pattern and so, following discussion in Elders' Meeting, Holy Communion will now normally be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month and this year, the April communion will move to 17 April so that our Easter Day service(s) will include Holy Communion. Hopefully a monthly communion is the middle ground between twice a month and five or six times a year.

### Elders

The new church is largely being served by the same Elders, who, at this point, all retain their old pastoral lists. This more or less keeps pastoral care undisturbed at a time of change and in Elders' Meetings gives a broad input as we gently move forward. Yes, initially we will have too many Elders but we can live with that for a bit. In any case, we were blessed with such good, caring people on the two Elderships prior to union and I've no desire to upset that when really there is no urgent need. Our Elders are:

Gwenda Cochrane  
Alan Crawford  
Anna Crawford  
Peter Duncombe  
Margaret Faultless  
Anne Fitzgerald

Liz Grimsey  
Sue Groves  
Jan de Kok  
Moir de Kok  
Carol Lee  
Shirley Morley

Hilary Netherwood  
Irene Pearson  
Paula Walsh  
Claire Ward  
Angela Woods  
James Zhang

For your information, Elders' Meetings are going to be held on the second Tuesday of the month.

It was with sadness and regret, but with no surprise that the Elders learned that Brian Ashfield has decided to stand down from being a serving Elder and a member of the Secretarial Team. Brian writes that the circumstances of his personal life and associated responsibilities now require his full attention.

Brian has been an Elder for many years and he has also been the "go to" person at Weybridge, so kind and always with a warm smile. He's kept the maintenance of the premises going for many years and has helped so many hall hirers as well.

There is no way we can thank Brian adequately for all that he has done but on behalf of the church Margaret Faultless made up and delivered a hamper of things we know Brian likes, together with a card to mark our appreciation and love.

*Michael Hodgson*

### The Secretarial Team

The old Weybridge secretariat has combined with those who were doing secretarial jobs at St Andrew's to form a new Secretarial Team. They will sort out the admin between them and the idea of becoming a team is that they can then support each other in their roles. My hope is that everyone in the team will end up doing a little instead of a few doing a lot. A list of post holders is being finalised and will soon be available.

## **The Tech Team**

This group will deal with the sound system and with the Zoom output – but it needs expanding, so if you would like to join it and learn how to help in this important task do have a word with the Minister. The Tech Team has already got an excellent track record of supporting each other! It's actually quite a fun group to be part of. Full training is able to be given to anyone interested in this so have a word if you'd like to join it. If you're not happy about doing the computer bit you can always do the sound system part to begin with – or else just operate the camera positions. You don't have to become expert at all things immediately.

## **Zoom Services**

A reminder that we are currently "zooming" the Sunday service from church on the first and third Sundays of the month only. We currently don't have sufficient people in the Tech Team to be able to continue zooming every week but I am delighted to be able to tell you that we are currently training more people up to join it. My hope is that we can review the Sundays on which we can zoom the service very soon, but bear with us whilst this happens. My thanks to those who have expressed an interest in learning how to do this and my thanks, too, to the existing team all of whom have worked tirelessly thus far.

## **The Financial Team**

This is going to be similar to the other teams. Gradually the accounts are going to have to come together and obviously we shall need to be using internet banking these days. Since both sets of premises are still going to be running, at least until the end of the academic year, there is no rush to combine accounts immediately. Actually, there is every logic in keeping existing accounts running so as not to upset standing orders and direct debits. A new account is being set up in the name of the new church but, clearly, bringing the accounts together is going to take time and effort. There is therefore a place in the new team for all the current people because they know what they're doing and where the monies are. They are also working with the auditor as to the accounting style.

## **'The Grapevine'**

A name for our new magazine – "The Grapevine" which will be produced by Mollie and Norma and circulated to everyone who used to receive a copy of the Church Magazine and the Newsletter. Mollie and Norma are working together and I'm sure that it is in safe, experienced hands. Keep your contributions coming in to them - they'll be pleased to receive your articles and ideas.

*Michael Hodgson*

As a postscript on 'The Grapevine', I would like to give Hilary Netherwood the credit for suggesting the title of our new Church Magazine. It comes from the days when Hilary's father, David, well known to us all from the years he spent as minister of St Andrew's, was minister at Sefton Road URC in Morecambe 1982-1992.

David writes:

*"This is the title of the Church magazine of Sefton Road URC in Morecambe where I was Minister from 1982 - 1992 and where I still occasionally lead worship when returning to the resort on holiday to see family and friends. The reason for this choice was that in 1900 when the Church was founded, over the front entrance door of the original building was a stone lintel into which was carved the image of a grapevine that is still there to this day. This is based on the words of Jesus to his disciples in John chapter 15, verse 5. 'I am the vine, you are the branches'. Most appropriate to remind the members looking up as they entered the building to worship!"*

Thank you, David, for this little piece of history that so neatly links in with ours. *Ed*

## CHURCH MEETINGS

Notice is given of a Church Meeting to be held after Morning Worship on 6 February. This is because we need a short Church Meeting to consider resolutions supplied by the Wessex Synod Trust instructing them about the plans for leaving the Weybridge site. Since it is a listed building we also need to initiate the process of applying for permission to remove and retain certain plaques and memorials from Weybridge, and to re-home their organ.

At this point we are also looking to the AGM being held on 3 April 2022, again after Morning Worship. We may need another Church Meeting before then though to consider our future church name.

Looking ahead, I think the intention is that we shall retain a quarterly Church Meeting pattern but recognise that in these early days we may need to call a few short, additional meetings in order to deal with items as we are ready. Things are still evolving so our structure needs to be a bit flexible to facilitate and support this.

*Michael Hodgson*

## PEOPLE WHO LUNCH

12.30pm Friday 11 February  
At Weybridge URC site



The next *People Who Lunch* is on 11<sup>th</sup> February. Even if you have never been before you will be very welcome and will find yourself in the midst of a friendly gathering. Note the date and venue. Please remember that advance booking is essential and you can reserve your place (£4.00) with me by phone on 020 8399 3402 or email [margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk)  
I look forward to seeing you.

*Margaret Faultless*

## ORGAN RECITALS 2022

At Weybridge URC site

Make the most of these opportunities to come and listen to some superb recitals on the magnificent Henry Willis organ. The recitals have been running for several years as part of the church's outreach into the community and have raised a considerable amount of money for charity. Sadly this will be the last series. Don't miss out. Make a note of the dates. Come along and bring your friends and your lunch (if you wish) – tea, coffee and soft drinks will be provided – and have a relaxing hour enjoying the music.

### MUNCH WITH MOZART and other great composers

Wednesdays at Weybridge  
United Reformed Church

Monthly Organ Recitals  
12:30 Lunch Time

9<sup>th</sup> March ~ Gillian Lloyd,  
13<sup>th</sup> April ~ David Oldfield  
11<sup>th</sup> May ~ Alan Rapley  
8<sup>th</sup> June ~ Peter Breaven  
13<sup>th</sup> July ~ John Wood,  
10<sup>th</sup> August ~ Gina Eason

*Bring your lunch, relax and listen to the music.  
Free entry with retiring collection after costs to  
Parkinsons (Woking & Weybridge Branch).*

## CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

### Harvest Service (Weybridge URC 10 October)

#### Walton and Hershham Foodbank

In addition to the food gifts for the Foodbank detailed on the poster £225 (including Gift Aid) was donated to buy food vouchers for local families in need.



### Shoe Box Sunday (Weybridge URC 7 November)

#### Samaritan's Purse

As well as the shoeboxes several of you filled to provide Christmas gifts for deprived children around the world £112.50 (including Gift Aid) was donated to Samaritan's Purse.

### Remembrance Sunday

#### (Joint Service at Weybridge URC with St Andrew's URC 14 November)

#### Combat Stress

The special collection for Combat Stress amounted to £225 (including Gift Aid).

### Gift Service (Weybridge URC 12 December)

#### Surrey County Council – NE Surrey Children's Services

In addition to the huge number of toys and other gifts brought to the service for children in need in NE Surrey £200 (including Gift Aid) was given for the purchase of food vouchers etc for the families.

### Christmas Eve Communion and Christmas Day Family Service

#### (Joint Services at Weybridge URC with St Andrew's URC 24 and 25 December)

#### The Princess Alice Hospice, Esher

The special collections at these services raised £320 (including Gift Aid) for the Princess Alice Hospice.

Sincere thanks to you all for your generous contributions.  
They will have made a real difference to the lives of so many children and adults.

## News of the Church Family

### In Memoriam

The last few weeks of 2021 were a time of much sadness at Weybridge URC not least because of the loss of three beloved friends – Dorothy Edney on 23<sup>rd</sup> November (as reported in the last edition of the *Weybridge URC News*), Betty Brown on 13<sup>th</sup> December and George Hughes on 31<sup>st</sup> December. We give thanks for their contributions to the fellowship of the church over many years and think of them with great affection. Please remember their families at this time of great change in their lives. Tributes to these friends may be found on pages 20 and 21.

### Prayers

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Brian & Kate Ashfield, Betty Brown's family, David Cheeseman, David Edney and his family, Chris Goddard, Nancy Hughes and her family, John Langdon, Lilian Smith and Michael Stevens.



### Top Tips and all that Chat – Your comments on life today

This lovely rose was amazingly in bloom in my garden on Christmas Day despite the fact that the bush was pruned in the autumn. It is aptly named 'Super Star' and was the last of many roses which have given me so much pleasure for a large part of the year.

It was so good to be able to sing carols in church again this Christmas even though we had to wear masks. I carried on singing them at home while I was doing the housework (mask-less). Not only did it make the tasks seem far less boring but all that lung exercise made me feel much better. Have a go if you are feeling a bit low. I have now moved on to trying out songs from the musicals!

It was nice to have a mixture of old and new carols to sing at Christmas. The 'jiggy' tunes of some of the newer ones were a way of getting a bit of surreptitious exercise.

Christmas Eve at 3.00pm what else but 'Carols from King's! The pure beauty of that solo voice singing *Once in Royal David's City* means Christmas has really begun.

I was interested to hear about research undertaken by psychologists at Cardiff University for a specialist institution into the wearing of masks. They found that many of the population believe that wearing a mask enhances the attractiveness of the wearer to other people. (The published results only refer to the reaction of women but it is said that the data for men has produced similar results.) Presumably this is because a mask covers two thirds of the face (and possibly some less attractive features) leaving the eyes to glow with expression above it. So wearing a mask can have social advantages as well as the usual medical benefits, but now that mask-wearing is no longer mandatory we cannot rely on basking in this imagined beauty!

I have managed to keep one of my New Year Resolutions but have failed the second where chocolate is involved. Now I have decided to carry on eating it until Lent arrives when I will try to be stronger-minded.

Last night I had a dream. St Andrew's was packed to bursting and I couldn't find a seat. All the ladies were wearing fur coats, some with hats and gloves, and pets were much in evidence. A little white Shih Tzu dog was taking up a place next to its human who moved it on to her knee to make space for me and a black and white cat was wandering about rubbing itself on people's legs, as though it owned the place. Food for thought?





We welcomed 14 children and their mothers on Sunday 16 January. Our theme was The Boy Jesus growing up and we told the story of Jesus in the Temple when he was twelve. Activities. Included making tiny scrolls, colouring pictures of the story, decorating heart-shaped boxes, planting cress seeds and laying tracks for a railway and making puppets.

We sang "Tell me the stories of Jesus" and a song I remembered from my childhood, "God made little robin". We served up pizza, sausages and beans and ice cream lollipops followed by a delicious cake donated by Moira.

Thank you to all our volunteers. It was a very happy afternoon. All are welcome to join us on the third Sunday afternoon of the month. We also desperately need someone to serve teas and heat up the meal. Any volunteers?

*Anne Fitzgerald*



# Celebrating Christmas at Weybridge URC



## Cards for Everyone



For almost 60 years the Post Box has been a popular part of Christmas for everyone at Weybridge URC. Before that time it existed just for the children in Junior Church to send cards to each other but the adults felt left out and the children kindly let them join in. It is in place by the end of November and the cards are sorted and made available for people to collect a couple of weeks later. A few years ago several thousand cards went through the letter slot each Christmas but whatever the numbers it has always been a way of making everyone feel part of the church family.

## Gift Service at Weybridge



The church and our Minister were dressed for Christmas; the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Rainbows were in uniform; those taking part in the tableau were in costume and we gathered together with their families joining with us to bring gifts and toys for those families and children in need in North East Surrey. As the Colours came in we stood and sang the first hymn, *Shine Jesus, shine* – loudly and enthusiastically but with our masks on of course! It was a joyful and glorious beginning.

The Minister adopted a new friend to assist him, Eunice the Unicorn, (one of the donated toys). The children's attention was caught immediately and that of most of the adults present too! The talk was of parties past and present and it was

engaging to discover that the games children like most today were games enjoyed by adults in years gone by and one in particular, Pass the Parcel, was likened to the preparations we make for Christmas. Excitedly we join in unwrapping the parcel of its largest and least important outer layers of wrapping until we get to the centre, the most important part which for Christmas is the birth of Jesus laid in a manger in a stable. Then slowly the tableau was created with the Brownies and Rainbows in costume, the Cubs in uniform were drawn in to be shepherds, Eunice the Unicorn became the lamb with the shepherds, and three adults in the congregation (one woman and two men) became the three wise men. The tableau was complete, all the children in the congregation began singing *Away in a Manger* and then all the adults joined in.



The Scouts and Brownies competently gave several appropriate readings. Prayers were offered and we all joined in the Lord's Prayer together. We then sang the carol *Silent Night* and the service concluded with the Colours leaving the church to the singing of the carol:

*See Him lying on a bed of straw,  
draughty stable with an open door,  
Mary cradling the child she bore  
the Prince of Glory is his name.*



The congregation followed the Colours out of the church and appropriately we all passed by the stable scene at the main door and walked through the 'Guard of Honour' of the Colours outside on our way to the hall for refreshments.

A truly memorable Christmas service for all gathered and the gifts we had brought were delivered by Helen Gartside and her team at North East Surrey Children's Services to children who had little to look forward to this Christmas. The financial gifts were given to the families in the form of vouchers that can be exchanged for food, clothing and other necessities.

*Gwenda Cochrane*

### **Christmas DIY**

*The article above prompted the stories below.*

The wooden stable providing 'shelter' for the nativity figures was made several years ago by Edward Snaith (when a member of Junior Church) with a little help from his grandfather! It was a much appreciated addition to the setting for our nativity scene.

The crib was made about 15 years ago in a great hurry by the then Church Secretary, Alex Henham. Checking on the Saturday afternoon that scenery and props were ready for the nativity play the next day he discovered to his horror that woodworm had made a great feast of the crib. After several hours at the workbench the new crib was ready in time to make its debut on the Sunday morning!

### **Carols and Christmas Readings at Weybridge**

The church looked wonderful. Jem and Claire Ward and their son-in-law, Leigh, had led the team of Christmas church-transformers for the last time in Weybridge URC.



The many members of St Andrew's URC who had come to join us for the service must have been surprised to see a 1950s-style sitting room, complete with glowing fire, laid out in front of the organ pipes. The Minister had the lovely idea of incorporating a flavour of Dylan Thomas's poem, *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, into the service. It certainly added another dimension! In the poem Thomas looks back with nostalgia to the Christmases of his childhood, remembering with humour a season of simple pleasures and family traditions that resonated with many of us in the congregation.



Members of Weybridge URC read excerpts from the poem, many in contemporary dress, interspersed with the traditional readings. We were fortunate to have Julia Ahern accompanying the carols with flair on the piano. With our enhanced congregation this was one of several Christmas services when we said goodbye to our lovely old church in style.

*Caroline Gardner*

### **Christmas Eve Midnight Communion Service at Weybridge**

The Christmas services this year felt very special. For Christians, of course, there is always great cause for rejoicing at Christmas. Over and above that, the fact that for substantial parts of the last two years – including last Christmas – we had been unable to worship together in person, meant that we treasured this opportunity to come together for carols and Holy Communion as Christmas Eve turned into Christmas Day. And the church looked absolutely stunning, with fairy lights, a Christmas tree, the Advent candles, nativity scenes around the church and decorations above the entrance doors, as well all those candles high up on stands at the ends of the pews.

Sadly, fears about the rapid spread of the Omicron variant made some people understandably decide the risks were too great to attend and those who did come had to brave heavy rain. Nevertheless, some 25 of us, including members of the congregations at both St Andrew's and at Weybridge, gathered in the church. We began, as usual, with carols requested by members of the congregation, with the Minister acting as master of ceremonies and Teresa Bacon playing the organ beautifully. Then we moved onto the more formal part of the service, led by the Minister, pausing for us all to wish those near us "Happy Christmas" as Christmas Day arrived. It was a really beautiful service.

Because I am temporarily struggling to read small print at the moment, I gave up trying to read the texts of the carols by candlelight. But isn't it amazing how the words just come back to you? Once the congregation had started a verse, I found to my surprise that I could almost invariably remember enough to join in the rest of it.

At the end, I reflected that with Weybridge and St Andrew's uniting at the beginning of 2022, and our regular services taking place in Walton as from January, this might well be the last service I attended at Weybridge. The first was around half a century ago! Of course it made me a bit sad, in some ways, but looking around the familiar faces in the congregation I am sure I will enjoy worshipping with them in the united church next year. I don't know whether we will have the same candle-lit service in Walton next Christmas. If we do, I must remember not to repeat this year's mistake – sitting too close to the dripping candles so that I found myself asking on the way out, "What is the best way of cleaning candle wax off your clothes?"

*Liz Grimsey*

### **Christmas Day Family Service at Weybridge**

The Christmas Day service was attended by members of Weybridge, St Andrew's and various family members visiting for Christmas.



The Minister decided to end the year with an all-out effort, both leading the service and providing the music. He played the more modern carols on the piano and the more traditional ones on the organ. Links between verses were not always what might be expected – there may well be Yorkshire folk who, on their way from the pub to the midnight service at their local church, sing *On Ilkla Moor Baht'at* but I suspect that even they would be surprised to find a few bars sneaked in between the verses of a carol! Despite the obligatory mask-wearing the congregation sang lustily, presumably, like me, to work up an appetite ready for Christmas lunch!

The day was dark enough to allow the candle-light to shine forth from the stands on the pew ends and meld with the Christmas tree lights to bathe the church in a warm and inviting glow. When the candle at the centre of the Advent ring, representing Jesus, had been lit by a couple of young visitors the magic of Christmas was complete.

Our thanks go to all those who have led or taken part in services over the Christmas period, greeted visitors, kept the heating, organ and sound systems working and helped with the decorations.

*Jem Ward*

## MICRO-FINANCE IN ZIMBABWE

We had a wonderful Christmas, seeing our son Richard, daughter-in-law Anne and their three children amongst the wider family, despite the problems of travelling from Southern Africa during Covid.

Richard, Anne and family have moved to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe after many years in Ethiopia. Richard is an orthopaedic surgeon working for the American Christian charity CURE, specialising in paediatric orthopaedics. Anne has been launching micro-finance cooperatives in South Sudan, Tanzania, and Rwanda. We were delighted to learn that she is beginning a new project in Bulawayo in January, in partnership with the Presbyterian Church.



Western countries now recognise that the solution for problems on the ground should be driven by local people who have their own ideas on what they think is needed in their community. In Tanzania, the Anglican Church (with 2.5 million members) is generally run along traditional conservative lines, and women have felt they lacked a voice. So, in partnership with the Mother's Union and Tearfund, they invited Anne, a consultant in micro-finance, to help them implement their vision for women to benefit socially, spiritually and economically from access to micro-finance. Before this initiative, it was difficult for ordinary Tanzanians to save or to borrow money from the banks. Savers often found it difficult to resist pleas from relations and neighbours and the money frittered away.

Anne began with 57 Leaders from 28 Dioceses with a commitment to build a strategic plan at Diocesan level. By October 2021 there were 278 Savings and Credit Cooperatives. The Cooperatives are set up with groups of 25-30. The members create their own constitutional bylaws with guidance from their leader whom they have elected. Members are invited to join and save through two funds. Each member contributes 30c to \$3 to the Loan Fund each week according to their means. The fund then loans money to an individual who has presented a business plan that has been assessed by the local membership. When the plan is approved, a loan repayment schedule is agreed. A second fund – a Social Emergency Fund – is set up to provide help in local emergencies and to assist in the development of village projects.

The members meet weekly to pay their dues and for discussions on building better and closer relationships with one another, the engine of it all being the vitality of their faith. This can bring surprising results. Whilst Christianity is strong in central Tanzania, the Muslim faith is predominant on the East coast putting local Christians under pressure. Closer relationships are being built through shared endeavour and better understanding through the mixing of faiths.

The cycle of savings and borrowings takes a year, at the end of which all members' savings are returned to them to be retained and rolled over into a new account. Money is spent on improving businesses, paying school fees, access to health care and improving their household diet. Many make improvements to their homes. They might replace a leaking thatched roof with sheet metal, the muddy floor with cement or enhance their privacy with a door. At the beginning many men are sceptical – who wants an empowered wife? Within a year the husbands are usually won over. They come to appreciate the benefits of a second income.

Anne derives enormous satisfaction from her work. The benefits for the women she helps are immeasurable. By way of example, at the end of 2021 one town had saved \$80,000 and with this they had rebuilt their church and contributed towards a car for church work.

We shall be very interested to hear how the new Bulawayo project develops. They have started with three of the poorest and most needy churches in the area, from which it is hoped the seed will grow.

*Caroline & Rick Gardner*

# ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

**MAKING IT HAPPEN!** Thanks to St Andrew's, 60 children from our artists' families plus orphans they befriend, were delighted with an assortment of Christmas gifts - juice bottles, exercise books, crayons and clothes. Artpeace were prudent in buying bales of used but nearly new clothes which the children below are 'modelling'. Their smiles from a selection of the many photos received says it all and made the logistics and hassle of this exercise so worthwhile.





**A FEW OTHER GENEROUS DONATIONS** ensured that artists' extended families had a decent meal with meat on the table for Christmas – a change from the usual sadza and other vegetables. Coster Balakasi and his children on left can be seen celebrating.

**LOOKING AHEAD,** I am keen that the group become more self-sufficient. Six months ago, a donation from one of the congregation enabled artist Fortune to buy a few chickens – he now has 37, laying 17 eggs a day and providing a little income from any surplus! Fortune wants to give other artists a helping hand by providing some chicks but firstly they need cash to buy materials



to erect a run at their homes which will take some time to organise. At the end of each month most artists are broke, desperately struggling to cover rents and inflated food costs - even forced to borrow money to pay for the odd bus fare into Harare – it's that or walk 12 miles each way.

**SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL'S DECEMBER SALES** gave 5 artists a lift for January. Readers will recall the Cathedral has a new cat called Hodge who, like Doorkins the previous incumbent, is proving a great favourite. He has his own fan club extending to the USA. Artist Mike Masedza has carved his own version of Hodge in hard Springstone. I hope a traveller can bring it over at Easter and suspect it will quickly sell. He needs sales to cover his son's school fees. Mike (right) is very pleased with the progress of his field of maize but doubtless there will be worrying drought and pest problems ahead – nothing is straight forward in Zimbabwe. However, we have ended and begun the year on a positive note so must be grateful. Artpeace continue to listen in to and enjoy our service via WhatsApp most Sundays despite attending their own earlier services again - they feel blessed. Please keep the support coming.



**Johnston Simpson**



## CHRISTMAS AT ST ANDREW'S



*...resplendent with twinkling lights*

Our candlelit Service of Nine Lessons and Carols that took place at St Andrew's on 19 December somehow seemed particularly moving this year. It was a shame that we were unable to meet half an hour beforehand for mulled wine and mince pies due to ongoing Covid restrictions, but those of us who arrived early were instead treated to a dress rehearsal (although Michael intimated that this was, in fact, their **ONLY** rehearsal!) of Christmas music on two pianos from Michael and our organist, Zacc. The Christmas tree was resplendent with new, smaller twinkling lights. The pew decorations with their individual gold candles and poinsettia flower, wrapped at the base in gold-edged, black ribbon with a bow that fell down over the outside of the pew looked beautiful. As always, those who decorated the church had done us proud.

The Order of Service echoed that of King's College Cambridge and, if we couldn't quite match their standard, we certainly did our best to come close to it. Favourite carols were sung with feeling and we did not let our masks put us off. As an innovation to previous years, in between carols and readings Michael and Zacc provided musical numbers on piano and organ in keeping with the occasion. *Silent Night* (Franz Gruber arr Howard Goodall) sounded beautifully 'different' on two pianos, the second one having been wheeled in (with a bit of help from a friend) from the hall. Very special and quite ethereal in sound was the composition for piano (Zacc) and organ (Michael) of *Cantique de Noel (O Holy Night)* by Adolf Adam. The service ended with a lively medley for two pianos by John Rutter 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'.



*Michael and Zacc - our magical Music Makers*

As well as the Christmas Story Bible readings, two poems featured. The first, read by Hilary Bennett was *'The Annunciation'* by J C Scharl, an American poet from Colorado, and the second, rather longer *'A New Nativity'* by Alan Titchmarsh, which Michael had suggested I might read. I had no idea that Alan Titchmarsh was anything other than a high profile, gardener, as well (or even better) known for his television appearances as for his practical gardening skills. Apart from that, I will readily confess to being a little conservative when it comes to Christmas readings (think St James's Bible!).



Alan Titchmarsh's nativity poem seemed rather too modern for me. I wasn't sure that I would be comfortable reading lines like this (and I confessed as much to Michael):

*"If Christ was born in Walthamstow,  
Would builders drop their tools and go? Would Wapping printers stop their  
presses? Would supermodels ditch their dresses?"*



However, I did a bit of research and found on U-tube a recording of Olivia Rothbury reading the poem with impressive feeling and sincerity at last year's Carol Service at King's. Her interpretation of it It made me see it in a different light with the result that, in the end, now being able to identify with its message, I was very happy to take my place at the lectern to share it with the congregation.

Thanks to all those, starting with Michael, who gave so much of their time to make our carol service one of the best I can remember. *Ed*

*Michael and Hilary - masks notwithstanding*



## CHRISTINGLE



Despite the rising numbers of Covid just before Christmas we decided to go ahead with the Christingle service on Christmas Eve, but with things differently arranged.

It became very much a family affair. I was discussing how we should go about it with my daughter and before the end of our conversation my granddaughter had ordered bags for me. Keith ordered the oranges, sweets and raisins to come with the Sainsbury's shop and I found cocktail sticks in the Messy Church cupboard. I filled the bags with the packets of sweets and raisins; then, on Christmas Eve, Keith and I prepared the oranges with the red insulating tape and apple corer. We had 42 bags.



Initially we thought no-one was coming. My husband had banned my son and family and others were also told not to attend. In the end we only had five bags left. I took three of them with me on Christmas Day to my grandchildren. They grabbed them and within minutes had constructed their Christingles and they became part of the festivities. I realised how much they had missed coming to church this year.



The service went really well. The church looked beautiful, everyone took great pleasure in making their Christingle and when the lights were dimmed and we sang the final carols holding our lit Christingle, it was such an emotional moment,

especially after last Christmas and our worries over the virus. I am so glad Michael decided we should go ahead. To me, the Christingle service has always represented the beginning of our Christmas celebrations and this year it was extra special, even if the family were not there. *Anne Fitzgerald*

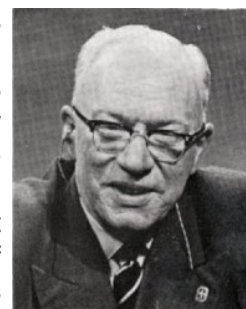
*Footnote: Apologies for the red tinge to some of the photographs which, I understand, is due to the bright red glow of the wall-mounted heaters in church! Ed*

## PRAYER CORNER

O God our Father,  
enable us to be  
cheerful when things go wrong,  
persevering when things are difficult,  
serene when things are irritating,  
helpful to those in difficulties,  
kind to those we meet  
and sympathetic to those  
whose hearts are sore and sad.  
Amen

*William Barclay*

No doubt many of you will be familiar with the name of William Barclay. He was born in Wick in 1907 and in later life was to become well-known as a theologian, academic, author and presenter on radio and television. After completing his schooling at Motherwell he went on to read Classics at Glasgow University (1925-1929) and then studied Divinity completing this period with a year at the University of Marburg (1932-1933) which was founded in 1527 by Philip I, Landgrave of Hesse. It is one of Germany's oldest universities and the oldest Protestant university in the world. It is now a public university of the State of Hesse and no longer has a religious affiliation. On returning to Scotland he was ordained in 1933 as a Minister in the Church of Scotland and was inducted to the pastorate of Trinity Church, Renfrew where he remained until 1946. In 1947 he was appointed as a Lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of Glasgow and became Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism there in 1963. During his professorship he decided to dedicate his life to *"making the best biblical scholarship available to the average reader"*. To this end he produced a set of 17 commentaries on the New Testament under the title of the *Daily Study Bible* in which he took the reader through his own translation of the New Testament. They proved enormously popular and sold 1.5 million copies. The studies were symptomatic of his approach to writing for a lay readership where the many popular books he wrote combined scholarship with a direct and understandable style which appealed to the general readers of his time. William Barclay died in Glasgow in 1978 but his legacy lives on.



### Wessex Synod – Prayer Calendar for February



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

6	Bitterne, Southampton; Walton and Weybridge Pastorate
13	Park, Reading; Ryde, Isle of Wight
20	Westborough, Guildford; Buckland, Portsmouth
27	Elstead; Tadley; Radipole, Weymouth

### LENT COURSE

Ash Wednesday is on 2 March. Details of a Lent Course will be advised.

## LOOK WHO IS KNOCKING ON THE DOOR!

Six or more years ago, in the good old pre Covid days, when working in the front Church garden on a Sunday afternoon whilst the children's Messy Church was in full swing in the sanctuary, a couple stopped by the gate looking over the garden. Nothing unusual about that as a surprising number of passers-by stop for a chat. However, David and Arlene Schmidt had only just arrived from Heathrow from the USA. Prior to the trip, they had literally stuck a pin in a map for somewhere to stay and Walton surfaced! They sought advice on local points of interest and eventually finished up in Edinburgh. They were keen to see the garden in more detail and interested to hear the story behind Harvest, our big Zimbabwean sculpture by the entrance. This led to a visit into the Gateway to view the small sculptures on display and for sale and they bought a couple of small pieces. By this time, 'Messy' had finished and they enjoyed a chat with the helpers.



I have copied them on the Artpeace articles ever since and even posted a few more pieces direct to the States as they were so taken with the art. David recently wrote: 'We

had some snow these past few days so it's feeling like winter. We moved out into the countryside three years ago and always have deer in our yard. Once in a while, we have turkeys pecking at our front door. Arlene and I really enjoy the wildlife around us here. We live in Northern Virginia near the town of Leesburg, about an hour from Washington DC.'



'Arlene and I are animal lovers so they're all safe from the pot here - we spend time feeding the turkeys, so they are decidedly plump. There are thirteen hens and three males that hang out together. Turkeys bond for life so the three boys are always together. The males are the ones that come to our front door. They bang on the door pretty loudly and it sounds just like a person knocking. We're still surprised whenever we open the front door and see turkeys standing there. If we can send a donation to help buy more chickens (reference latest article), we would like to do that. Every time I see our hand carved elephants, I think about the artists in Africa and their families. Have a nice weekend - it's always good to hear from you.' D.

**Johnston Simpson**





## FRIENDS REMEMBERED

### *Dorothy Edney*

*(This additional tribute to Dorothy follows that which appeared in the December/January edition of the Weybridge URC News.)*

It was with great sadness we learnt of Dorothy's death in November. Dorothy loved her family. She was a very loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was also a much loved friend who always wore a smile.

Dorothy joined Weybridge URC when the Hershams URC closed. She was welcomed into the choir as a soprano and her love of classical music was her passion. Dorothy was also a founder member of 'Ladies Who Lunch'. As a teacher in the local school she inspired so many pupils. Dorothy and David moved several times around the district. Her daughter recounted how Dorothy always managed to decorate each new home with great taste – one of her many talents.

Dorothy loved to travel and she was fortunate enough to visit many foreign parts. The last few years of her life she battled with illness which she fought so bravely. She was always dressed impeccably - a real lady who will be sadly missed by us all.

*Margaret Faultless*

### *Betty Brown*

Betty grew up in Weybridge and attended local schools. She undertook secretarial training which was to prove a great asset in future years. Betty became very involved in the children's and young people's activities of our church in Weybridge (eventually working in Junior Church with the very small children) and was received into membership as a teenager in 1948. Her young life was blighted by illness but fortunately she eventually made an excellent recovery in which her strength of character prevailed.

The future pattern of Betty's life was set when she and her friends as usual went to the Sunday evening service with its regular get-together for young people afterwards, at which she met a young man who had moved to Weybridge from Northamptonshire to take up an apprenticeship in the aircraft industry. The previous Sunday Ted had attended another church but not being made to feel welcome decided that the next week he would try our church. That decision led to his marriage to Betty in 1958 and a happy partnership which was to last a few weeks short of 57 years.

They bought a house in New Haw and as they and their children, Jonathan and Joanna, became part of the local community, they decided in 1965 to transfer their membership to the small Congregational Church at West Byfleet where Ted was appointed as Church Secretary – ably supported in his work by Betty. They remained there until the church closed and then transferred their membership back to Weybridge URC in 1981 and Ted later became Joint Treasurer and Convenor of the Fabric Committee while Betty took on responsibility for the Communion Preparation Rota and the Flower Rota. She was an enthusiastic gardener and an imaginative flower-arranger who took delight in using the blooms from her own garden for displays in the church.

Ted set-up his own business developing a relatively small but successful packaging company where Betty's administrative skills came to the fore and in the happy atmosphere they created their employees became like an extended family. Unfortunately the financial crash of the 1990s led to the loss of the company which was a great personal and costly blow to Ted and Betty. They returned to live in Weybridge and Ted found new employment – once more with Betty's support. Their life was to undergo a dramatic change as Betty's health deteriorated and she became wheelchair-bound and then unable to leave the house at all. Despite his own poor health Ted looked after her diligently with the help of carers but he died very suddenly in 2015. Betty then moved to a care home in Horsham, West Sussex close to her daughter's home. There the wonderful staff made the last six years of her life very happy, re-establishing a little mobility for her and enabling her to share in some of the home's activities. It was in those comforting surroundings that she came to the end of her long life on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

*Alex Henham*



## *George Hughes.*

'A real gentleman' has been how many people have recounted their memories of George and how true that has been. He was a proud 'old boy' of Southend-on-Sea Grammar School and when joining in a group on-line chat discovered he was the oldest 'old boy' taking part!

George was happily married to Moira for more than 50 years. They had two sons. After Moira's death he married Nancy and had 19 more happy years. Prior to this George served his National Service in Egypt with the RAF. This led to a bond with Roy Bones and many a 'forces' conversation round the coffee table after church.

George's working life with Shell took him abroad to many foreign lands. He was also responsible for Shell's part in finding oil in Aberdeen in 1987.

Gordon and I met both George and Nancy when they moved to Weybridge. We found many common links and a strong friendship developed. We holidayed together and have fond memories of Gordon and George making a bee-line for the oyster bar on arriving at Henley!

George will be sadly missed but, along with those of his many friends and family, our happy recollections will serve as a tribute to 'a real gentleman'.  
*Margaret Faultless*

## *Memorial Carol Service Weybridge URC*

At the beginning of December we hosted the annual memorial carol service for Frederick W Chitty & Co. An invitation is sent to those who have lost loved ones during the year and during the service there is the opportunity to light a candle to remember them by. With some of the traditional Bible readings, some non-scriptural readings and some well-known carols, the service has a quiet, reflective feel to it and is certainly appreciated by the families who attend. Covid restrictions meant that refreshments were not served this year although tubs of chocolates were freely shared. It's a very pastoral occasion and it went well. At the end of the service everyone was given a fresh candle to take away so that they could light it on Christmas morning to remember that person.

*Michael Hodgson*



## *Flowers in Church*

Would you like to provide the flowers for our Sunday Services?

It could be an anniversary, birthday or anything that you wish. The flowers are distributed after the service as part of outreach, often to those who are unwell, housebound to let them know that they are still part of the family.

Do not worry if arranging is not your thing, there are those who will do them for you. There is a list in the gateway for you to put your name down. Or you can ask your Elder to do it.

*Anna Crawford*

## HALL HIRE

Hall hire has picked up quite a bit at both our sites and so a reminder that the premises on both sites are in more frequent use. Some of these groups are therapy groups where security and confidentiality are of huge importance and so a tactful reminder not to enter rooms when they are in use by outside hirers. If you need to get into a room to do something you can always check with Jem and Claire ([hallhire@weybridgeurc.org.uk](mailto:hallhire@weybridgeurc.org.uk) Weybridge) or Jenny ([roomhire@standrewsurc.org](mailto:roomhire@standrewsurc.org) St Andrew's) to see when the room is free, to save you a wasted journey.

Michael Hodgson

### NEWS FROM OUR HALL HIRERS

#### YOGA



*"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." Heraclitus*

Yoga for flexible & inflexibles, Tuesday evening 6:30-7:45, beginners welcome. For all adult ages including teens with parents, and anyone that can get themselves on and off the floor with ease. Expect a combination of slow flow transitions and longer passive stretches, exploring breathing techniques and yoga philosophy principles to restore calm and build healthy body-mind habits. Spacious hall so plenty of social distancing, and easy on-site parking.

Florendia Buckingham [hello@florendiayoga.com](mailto:hello@florendiayoga.com)



#### PILATES

Rosa from [Pilatespluswellness.com](http://Pilatespluswellness.com) has chosen the Upper room at St Andrew's to do her bespoke Pilates classes for all. Classes run Wednesdays 09.30am - 10.30am Mixed Ability Pilates (beginners welcome), Tuesdays 11am -12noon Healthy Backs Pilates for all or 12 -1pm(based on demand), Friday's lunchtimes 1pm - 2pm Beginner/ Improver Pilates. Please visit Rosa's website for more information on how Pilates can help you [www.pilatespluswellness.com](http://www.pilatespluswellness.com)

Rosa has provided Pilates classes for all ages based in London for 16 years and has moved to the area recently. She now teaches in Weybridge in her home studio and on zoom, but is really happy to find the upper hall to provide her classes for clients in Walton. She loves to teach small bespoke classes in the upstairs room of no more than eight clients per class. Rosa runs her Pilates classes in sync with school term time, so holidays we have a break. The room upstairs in St Andrews Church has more like a studio feel as there is lots of light coming in and we have carpeted floors. It has a really calming relaxed feel which is so important when teaching Pilates and providing that experience of a great class with excellent teaching but also making sure every client walks away feeling de-stressed and lifted in their energy by attending. Rosa also has a medical background originally as a Neuro Radiographer so she draws from her knowledge to provide safe effective classes for you.

*Joseph Hubertus Pilates was born 9 December 1883 in Mönchengladbach, Germany. His father, Heinrich Friedrich Pilates, who was born in Greece, was a metal worker and enthusiastic gymnast, and his German-born mother was a housewife. Pilates was a sickly child. He suffered from asthma, rickets, and rheumatic fever, and he dedicated his entire life to improving his physical strength. Pilates came to believe that the "modern" life-style, bad posture, and inefficient breathing lay at the roots of poor health. He ultimately devised a series of exercises and training techniques, and engineered all the equipment, specifications, and tuning required to teach his methods properly. (from Wikipedia)*



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## A beautiful prayer from Pete Greig for St Valentine's Day



*'We pray today for those in love, those out of love, and those in between. We remember especially those who find themselves a little bit lonelier than normal.*

*We do not pray today for loved-up couples, exchanging overpriced flowers and foil wrapped hearts, leaking pheromones like diesel fumes at candlelit dinners.*

*We are pretty sure, Lord, they will be OK (for now).*

*Instead, we hereby dedicate this happy-crappy day to all the brave teenagers who dared to send a card (hoping in vain with every fibre of their beings for something back.) Let them be a little bit more OK because we prayed.*

*We think of the mother, coping alone, who quietly bought herself flowers yesterday.*

*Let her kids be kind today. Let her teenagers tidy their bedrooms.*

*And if that's a miracle too far (we realise you've got a lot on in the Middle East right now), could they at least initiate a hug?*

*Finally, we ask you to look upon the elderly gentleman gazing today at a fading sepia photograph in a silver frame of a wedding in another time. Look at him and look with him and be with him in the remembering and the un-remembering too.*

*King of Love, on this day named after an unmarried saint, embrace the unlovely, unloving parts of our world, of ourselves today. Song of Songs, inspire simple thoughtful acts, scatter sparks and rekindle the fires of romance wherever marriages are mired in the mundane.*



*Melt our tiny, tinny expensive chocolate hearts. And forgive us today we pray for this cheap, gaudy, hysterical, isolating thing we have sometimes somehow tried to make of love and of You.*



## FAREWELL TO 9TH WALTON BROWNIES

*(Quotations are the Brownies' own from a Pack Holiday)*

I was asked just before Christmas to say farewell to 9th Walton (St Andrew's URC) Brownie Pack. Very sadly, due to lack of Leadership, the final pack still going in Walton has been forced to close.

*"Brown Owl, who lays down the laws, by which you must abide, snores in bed and wakes the rest. But blames it on the dog."*

The first meeting of the Pack was on 10 October 1959. My relationship with the Pack, which was to last for the next 37 years, began in May 1972. The Leader had had to resign because she had been diagnosed with cancer. I never actually met her, but my cousin volunteered my services, offering to look after my two children, David then 2 and Gill just five months old. When my cousin wasn't available, I would push them both in the pram round to the hall. Girls then included Pauline and Jennifer McCrorie, the daughters of our minister at the time, Bill McCrorie. Thus started a very happy and fulfilling period. I still meet people in Walton who recognise me as "their old Brown Owl".

*"Tawny Owl does the first aid but she can not cure her voice. She just goes on working without a sound."*

The Pack was sponsored by St Andrew's and we had frequent visits from our Elder, Chrissie Brooman, for many years. We regularly attended Church Parades along with Cubs, Scouts and Guides, a chance to show off our banner and, later, our flag. We took part in all district organised events, such as Brownie sports, revels at Littlehampton or other exciting places, Christmas Carol services and joint Thinking Day parties, with sausage sizzles at Whiteley Village a real highlight.



*Fun in the forest*

*"We went on a trail through the woods but Brown Owl wanted to take pictures so we had 10 seconds taken off and we won."*

In 1978 when St Andrew's celebrated its Jubilee, the Uniformed Organisations held a parent and children's evening. Nan Mercer coached us in Scottish Country Dancing to provide a display during the evening, and we performed a rendering of Widdecombe Fair. We would serve Ploughman's lunches at the St Andrew's annual Christmas Fair and give out daffodils each Mothering Sunday. We held several sales in support of Blue Peter Appeals which were well attended by St Andrew's members.



*"We walked up a hill and saw some cows. Brown Owl walked into the field and stroked one of the cows and then we went in the forest. We played on the trees. We walked in long grass."*

The girls loved gaining badges and in those days we would have Testers who came to the meeting. We were able to call on many members of the church to perform this task. We loved doing the First Aid Badge, trained by David and later Sandra Cheeseman. Another favourite was the Entertainer Badge, where we would produce a concert. I was able to call on Gemma Jenkins to adjudicate, an ex-Brownie and at that time a producer with Radio 4.

*Toasting marshmallows in pensive mood*



One of the highlights of the year was going to Mayfield to entertain the residents. Eager Brownies proudly played the first pieces on their new recorder or violin (not always in tune, but they were nevertheless enthusiastically applauded by their audience!). We were rewarded with a delicious tea, with German biscuits prepared by the warden, Ursula Downer, another member of St Andrew's.

*"The Water Crest. Today we went to a place where there was lots of water crest. There was a man there who asked us if we wanted to ask any questions."*

Each year we would have Pack Holiday with Vivienne Wilson and Mary Ratcliffe - Kanga and Roo to the Brownies - acting as Cooks. We stayed in some beautiful places in the Surrey Hills and had loads of fun. I now cannot believe the energy Vivienne and Mary had then.

*"On Saturday afternoon we all went to the teddy bears picnic on the cricket green. All the brownies went with their teddies. There were 9 rounds, Miss Unibear 1988 ... there were lots of stalls and a bouncy castle. I bought quite a few sweets but so did most people."*



During the time I spent with the Brownies, I had several Tawny Owls - Rosemary Topping, Jill Haslett and Barbara Mudd - as well as very good parent helpers. Jill and I were invited to a National Scout and Guide Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving and Breakfast Reception at Westminster Cathedral in 2015 to celebrate our long service.

*Jill and Anne at Westminster Cathedral*

When I retired at 65, Suzanne Hirst took over the Pack. She produced a fantastic musical with the Brownies, based on Joseph (photo right), to a packed audience of parents, friends and members of St Andrew's. She also organised sleepovers in the church hall, and we were able to welcome the girls at our Sunday morning service. Suzanne was forced to move away from Walton due to health issues and groups of mothers took over. Initially, a trained Guider was appointed but she had to give up very shortly when her husband was transferred to America. This was the start of leadership difficulties and meetings had to be reduced to one a fortnight.



Due to newer regulations, we were unable to have the close relationship with the present members of the Brownie Pack as I once had, which meant that they could not attend church parades, although they did occasionally send us little reminders of their presence. We kept in touch taking Easter eggs or chocolates round at Christmas. We are very sad that the pack has had to fold and thank the leaders who held on for so long. We wish them and the girls all the best and hope that some might be able to continue in Guiding, something that I hugely enjoyed, and which was so much part of my life from the age of seven.

*Anne Fitzgerald*



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*'Good name in man and woman is the immediate jewel of their souls.'*

*William Shakespeare, 'Othello'.*

I've never had to choose a name for a child but I think that it must be a pretty onerous task. Use a family name and is someone going to think that you've named your child after them - or else be offended that you named them after someone else? So do you go for a name that's not been used in the family before? (No other Michaels in my family.) And then you have to be careful what the resultant initials might spell out. And I can think of a few children who must curse their parents for the name they were lumbered with. For example, anyone calling my mother by her actual first name is asking for trouble. So, I think that choosing a name must be quite a difficult task - one which could be fraught with problems.

That's what we have to do now for our new church though. Since we're a union we're temporarily using the old pastorate name - 'The Walton and Weybridge Pastorate' - but what do we call ourselves in the future?

Walton and Weybridge URC is a totally new name and it identifies with both our communities so should it be that? There is good argument that it should.

On the other hand, St Andrew's has been part of community identity since the 1920s and if we want to reach out to the community is it wise to use a name that the community don't know us by and reject a name by which they do? After all, how many of us still refer to a small, chewy, fruit-flavoured sweet as being "Opal fruits", or to a certain kitchen cream cleanser as "Jiff" or even a chocolate bar with peanuts in it as being a Marathon?

Does using the two "town" names somehow have a more secular feel to it since we'd be losing the sacred part of the name? Or is using a saint's name too "religious" in these days?

Should we try to come up with a name which identifies with both our communities but which doesn't totally lose "St Andrew's" either?

Or should we have a new name because otherwise it won't be a union of equals?  
"Past put behind us, for the future take us" sort of thing.

Questions; questions; questions. Thankfully, we don't need to rush into anything because this probably does need some very careful consideration but please put your thinking caps on. Inspiration is definitely required here.

What's our name to be?

What's your feeling on the subject?

Have you got a brainwave?

*Michael Hodgson*

*Thanks to Astrid McGechan for our spirits-lifting cover picture  
taken at Las Alpujarras, Spain*



**MESSAGE FROM ZIMBABWE:** Christine, a member of Artpeace - a painter - is a single mother who has had a very difficult time of late, nursing her mother back from Sepsis and a brother with serious medical issues. She also suffers from a major eye problem. Her message shows how our support can and has touched many lives outside Artpeace. **JS.**

Dear Mr Simpson,

I wanted to share a story that I hope will uplift you and your congregation as it did for me. I had been in a space where I was struggling with my faith and my spirit was dried out. It's like you know all the facts in your mind, that God is good, and God is great, and you see all the works that He has done but the fire in your heart is just depleting. Nothing you try helps and even your prayers feel half-baked, and your compass seems to point in many directions at the same time.



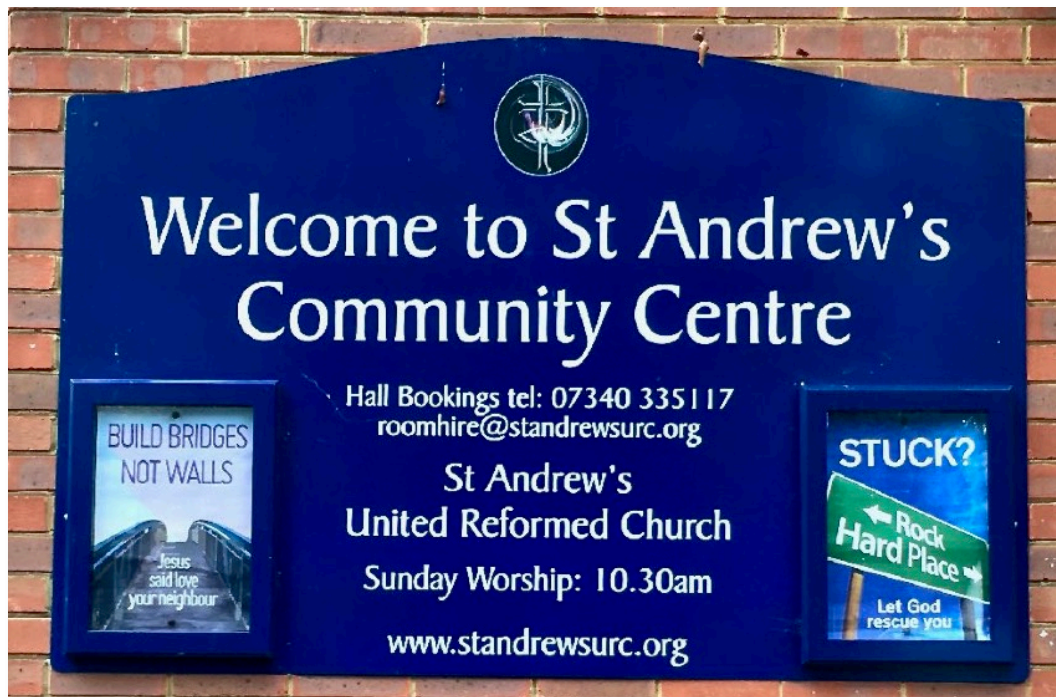
That's how I feel of late. Perhaps it was burnout, but nothing seemed to move my spirit and I was crying out for a stirring in my soul.

Yesterday I overslept and was woken abruptly with only a few minutes to get to church because the wall clock was not reflecting the correct time. Someone wanted to see me. My heart warmed when I saw Judith and Beata in their Christmas clothes. Judith, who is behind me in the picture is a very bright young girl who is not going to school. Her father is known but refuses to take a birth certificate for her. Beata's parents abandoned her. These virtual orphans do

not normally go to church. They were wearing the clothes from the Bale (part of St Andrew's children's Christmas donation) when they came to our house, so that we could go to church together. One grandmother is Catholic but stopped going because of health issues. Their almost new clothes motivated them to want to come to church and specifically with me. So, I quickly got ready and found some offertory money for myself and to give them also. I gave them the offering and told them to pray about what was important to them. We got to church, and they were separated from me to attend the youth mass. Mass was beautiful - it seemed it was ministering to me personally. After church I felt a tug on my arm. The girls had found me. They asked me about getting baptised as there is baptism next week. I found one of the tutors who confirmed my suspicion that they would only be baptised after some lessons. She told me to bring them on Saturday so that they can begin.

God bless you and the work that you do. You may not see it, but it does make a difference. I shared the story with you to help spread the warmth that unexpectedly filled my heart when the girls came to fetch me to take them to church. It is both an honour and a challenge. It is a challenge in that they could be my fish that Jesus said we will become fishers of men and it is such a huge responsibility. I believe that God began it all and He will make a way and give me the tools to do so. I don't yet know how but I believe it will happen. When you plant various seeds you never really know when and how they will grow. I want to say thank you again Mr Simpson and the URC church for the seed you planted at Christmas in these children. Their enthusiasm lit a fire in my heart. The responsibility is overwhelming but without saying a word, God is moving me to help these children to get baptised and to keep the faith. They are the stirring I was asking for and a confirmation that God moves among us. May God grant me the strength to see it through.

**Christine N.**



#### MINISTER

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Covid-safe services start at 10.30 am.  
Services are currently accessible on Zoom on the first and third Sunday of the month.

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!

Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.  
Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve  
one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

**1 Peter 4 vv 8-10**