



THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE PASTORATE



THE GRAPEVINE



APRIL 2022

Volume 1 No 3



*"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some
have entertained angels unawares."*

Hebrews 13 v2



Dear friends



From The Manse

April 2022

The cover picture of this month's Grapevine is of some beautiful daffodils - a plant which always seems to bring cheer and hope after the harshness of winter. You probably know that one of the names for them in German is "Osterglocken" - Easter Bells - ringing out the joy of the Easter Message of Resurrection. We certainly could do with some cheer and joy in the world at the moment. My letter this month is, as always, being written a little before publication date and so things could have changed by the time you read this, but I am writing as the war in Ukraine continues to unfold and further atrocities are committed. The pictures and stories from the streets break the heart and we wonder how this is all going to end. Chilling parallels can be drawn between now and the lead up to the start of the 2nd world war. A 3rd World War is just too horrific to contemplate. What is going to happen next?

Outside a war zone, when there is a tragedy, like, say, after the London Bridge bombings or the Manchester Arena attack, there is the opportunity for people to take on board what has happened, or to recover within a calm atmosphere. In the Ukraine that's not possible as those recovering in the hospitals are still able to hear and to feel the war going on around them, never knowing if the hospital they are in is about to be the next building to be hit. There is no escape. There is no area of peace or sanctuary. Even going underground, they can still feel the ground shake and they dread what will await them later. Over two million people have fled the country. Praying for the people of Ukraine may seem a poor response from us and I suspect that I'm not alone in feeling a great helplessness as the tragedy unfolds.

We are, however, an Easter people and in that faith we affirm that, "The Lord is risen!" Thinking about the war in Ukraine I can't help but think that on Easter Day we shall be celebrating that the tyrants of Jesus' day found that they did not have the last word after all. For all their plotting, their brutality and their cruelty - for all their darkness and for all the fear that they built around them - they weren't actually in control. The Lord is risen! As Martin Luther has commented about all tyrants, "theirs was a short-lived day". They are also never remembered well.

St John famously writes about the light that shines in the darkness and of how the darkness has never been able to put it out. On Easter Day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The darkness could not put out the light of Christ then- or since. Darkness never does have the final word and I am certain that the light is still shining in the darkness of the war in Ukrainian. Darkness never wins.

I was struck by a picture I saw the other week of a Russian woman showing her protest against the war. Putin has made demonstrations against the war illegal. It's illegal to refer to it as a war at all and yet this elderly lady found a way to show her protest. As she went about her ordinary living, her ordinary clothes just happened to be in the same colours as the Ukrainian flag. You may have seen the picture of the Russian Embassy in Lisbon lit up in the Ukrainian colours - the lights being beamed on to the building by neighbours. Apparently, the Russian Ambassador was apoplectic.

Sidney Carter famously wrote, "They buried my body and they thought I'd gone but I am the dance and I still go on." He also writes saying, "I am the life that'll never, never die". We celebrate the truth of that again this Easter. In this country we shall be celebrating it surrounded by the joy of Spring. In the Ukraine it tragically seems likely that it will be celebrated in a time of war but wherever we are, may the light of the resurrection shine in this world, bringing hope and encouragement in place of despair.

May the Osterglocken on the cover of this month's Grapevine peal out the joyous message that, "The Lord is Risen" - darkness is still unable to alter that no matter how hard it tries.

With all good wishes,

Phil Lad



Holy Week and Easter Services

Sunday 10th April: Palm Sunday

10.30am Morning Service with distribution of palm crosses

Thursday 14th April: Maundy Thursday (Weybridge Site)

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Friday 15th April: Good Friday

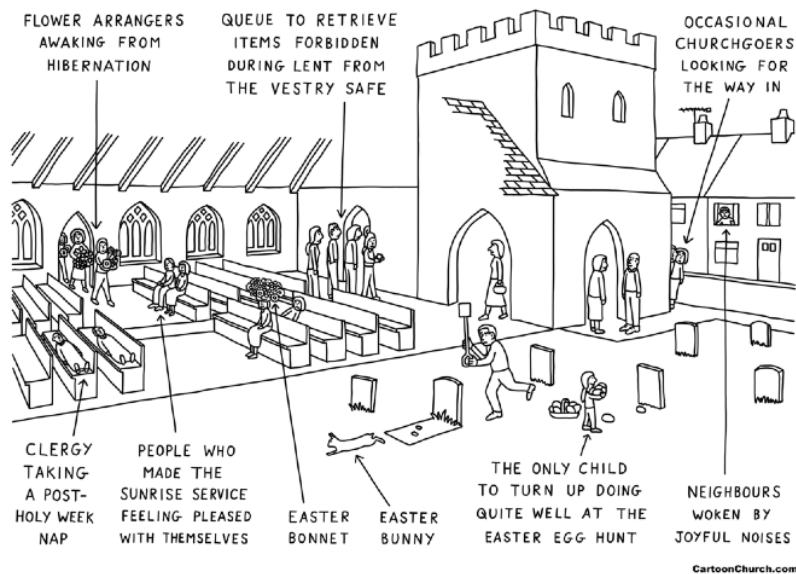
10.30am Service of Meditation for Good Friday

Sunday 17th April: Easter Day (Zoom)

10.30am Service for Easter Day with Communion



THE EASTER SERVICE



This CartoonChurch.com cartoon originally appeared in the Church Times and is taken from 'The Dave Walker Guide to the Church', published by Canterbury Press.

COVID UPDATE

In church a few weeks ago I asked you what you wanted to do about Covid prevention measures in church, particularly social distancing and face masks? On the latter, there were quite a few mixed views and so I referred it back to Elders and there have been quite a few emails between us about it.

The point is made that what the Moderators issue is only guidance and that it may be based on out-of-date data, which is why we must decide what is best for us in our situation. That being said, the Moderator's guidance recommends the continued wearing of masks in church.

The lifting of the Covid restrictions means that the Government's stance is now that individuals have the responsibility for making their own minds up about when and where to wear face masks. We have no legal right to refuse access to church if someone isn't wearing a mask; in any case, would we want to turn anyone away? We have people within our congregation who can't wear masks for medical reasons, and we have people who are uncomfortable wearing them for a variety of reasons. At the same time, we also have people who feel able to come to church because we are wearing masks and who don't go through for coffee where we are not.

Obviously, as the ambient temperatures increase it's easier to open more windows. There also seems to be total agreement within the Elders that we should continue sitting in alternate rows so that we take advantage of the space available to us.

The kindest way forward at the moment seems to be (a) to thank people for continuing to wear masks if they can; (b) to accept that not everyone can; (c) to increase ventilation in church so as to counter the potential risk from those not wearing masks because they can't; and (d) that we continue sitting in alternate rows.

The comment made by a number of Elders was that whereas they long for the day when they don't have to wear a mask in church, as individuals they are willing to do so a bit longer in the circumstances. As one Elder commented, "It would be awful to make anyone unable to come because they feel vulnerable." So, if you are able to wear a face mask we are asking you to do so for a bit longer, partly out of courtesy to our vulnerable people.

Finally, for the time being, it was decided to review this each month in Elders' Meeting. The next phase of the Government's vaccination programme is about to begin and that will benefit a number of the congregation. Current variations do seem to be less serious, with fewer hospitalisations and fewer deaths. Nonetheless, those catching Covid at the moment can still be pretty poorly and it is a fact that at the time of writing we have more people within this congregation ill with Covid than we did at the height of the pandemic.

Remembering all the issues about mental health and loneliness during lockdown, we probably all want the church to be somewhere we can be together and a place in which we can feel in as safe an environment as possible.

Michael Hodgson

In moments of extreme confusion ministers have spoken of:

'the evening service being halled in the hell below' (held in the hall below)
'my text being from the Juke of Bob' (Book of Job)
'Jordan baptising Jesus in the John' (John baptising Jesus in the Jordan).
'the poets Kelly and Sheets' (Shelley and Keats)
'Jesus as the shoving leopard' (loving Shepherd)

from Holy Wit - The Revd James Simpson




SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES APRIL 2022



Easter is an ancient festival of rebirth, but it's also an excellent excuse for eating eggs. I really like eggs, of both the chocolate and chicken variety. But the chocolate ones you must admit, can sustain only a fleeting interest. A sweet, sugary hit - and then it's gone.

Alice Roberts



For all the Easter services at a glance see page 3

Sunday 3 April	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by the Minister (Zoom)
 Friday 8 April	12.30 - 1.30 pm	People Who Lunch at the Weybridge site (see page 7)
Sunday 10 April (Palm Sunday)	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by the Minister with distribution of Palm Crosses
	12 noon	AGM in St Andrew's Church Hall
	7.00 pm	Oatlands Singers performance of Beethoven's Mount of Olives at Esher Parish church (see page 7)
Tuesday 12 April	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting

COPY DATE FOR MAY ISSUE WEDNESDAY 13 APRIL

***ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)
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Thursday 14 April (Maundy Thursday)	7.00 pm	Maundy Thursday service with Communion at the WEYBRIDGE site
 Friday 15 April (Good Friday)	10.30 am	Good Friday Service of Meditation
 Sunday 17 April (Easter Day)	10.30 am	Service for Easter Day with Communion (Zoom)
Sunday 24 April	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by the Minister



Celebrating Easter

An Easter Poem

This poem was written by one of our own members, John Langdon, and was used several years ago at Weybridge URC in 'Nine Steps to Easter' – a service telling the Easter story with music and drama by members of the congregation. John has kindly given his permission for the poem to appear in this issue of The Grapevine.

Steps to Easter

A few short days ago they cried, 'Ride on, in majesty'
with waving palms and joyful psalms; and then the travesty
of broken vows beneath the boughs
of Gethsemane's quiet retreat.

A traitor's kiss. The dark abyss of mockery, torture, trial.
The cock thrice crowing and Peter knowing the anguish of denial.
Hands washed by Pilate, who found no guilt but could not set Him free:
Barnabas offered in exchange but it was not to be.

The bearing of the heavy cross on the road to Calvary's hill.
Cruel nails embedded, the temple veil shredded, the storm and then
the still interment in a barren tomb, with guards their watch a-keeping.
Came Mary at the break of day, heartbroken, sadly weeping.

The stone was rolled away. Through misted eyes she saw
the gardener, who softly spoke her name, and Mary knelt in awe.
O joyous news that Easter morn; the risen Lord has shown
that mortal man can conquer death and is never more alone.

For Jesus lives in past and present; in future and forever.
His covenant of endless love not even death can sever.
This greater love redeems us and what blessings we receive
if we receive him in our hearts and truly do believe.

John Langdon

Say it slow..

On a beautiful late summer's day, two American tourists were driving through Wales. They reached

Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogogoch

(yes, that place in Wales) and stopped for lunch.

Still gazing in fascination at the place name on the sign outside one of the tourists approached the waitress and said: "Before we order, I wonder if you could settle an argument for us.

Can you pronounce where we are, very, very, very slowly?"

"Sure," the girl shrugged. She leaned over the counter and said: "Burr-gurr-king."

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT A GLANCE

**AGM
SUNDAY 10 APRIL
12 NOON**

St Andrew's Church Hall

Meeting
Reminder!

A Child's statement!

In the first book of the Bible, Guinessis,
God got tired of creating the world,
so he took the Sabbath off.



LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL

Wednesday 13 April

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

The March concert features David Oldfield

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

Free entry with retiring collection after costs to
Parkinsons (Walton & Weybridge Branch)

*Details of this concert and the organist on
pages 16 and 17. A full list of concerts is in the
February issue (page 6)*



PEOPLE WHO LUNCH

**Friday 8 April
12.30 - 2.30 pm**

**At Weybridge URC site
Queens Road, KT13 9UX**

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

Even if you have never been before you will be
very welcome and will find yourself in the midst of
a friendly gathering.

We look forward to seeing you.

Advance booking essential.

Reserve your place(s) with Margaret Faultless
email: margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk

A man who had been dating a girl for a number of
years took her out to a Chinese restaurant.

As they studied the menu he asked:

"How would you like your rice - fried or boiled?"

She looked at him sadly. "Thrown."



**CHRIST CHURCH, ESHER
WEEKEND SPECIAL**

The Parish of Esher Choir & Oatlands Singers present

A CONCERT for PALM SUNDAY

**Sunday 10 April 2022, 7pm
Christ Church, Esher**

Beethoven

'Christ on the Mount of
Olives' Oratorio, Op. 85

Fauré

Cantique de Jean Racine

Passiontide Motets

by Brahms, Mendelssohn,

Lassus, Palestrina & Victoria

Conductor Stuart Whatton

Organist Samuel Ali

Seraphi Isla MacEwan

Jesus John Vallance

Peter Matt Secombe

Admission by programme £13 - Interval refreshments

Reservations can be made via the Parish Office
Join us in person or watch on YouTube at 'Music on the Green Esher'

For further information contact the Parish Office. Tel: 01372 462282
Email: office@esherparish.org.uk. Website: www.esherparish.org.uk
Address: Christ Church, Church Street, Esher, Surrey KT10 8QS

News of the Church Family

Reception of New Members

It was a great pleasure to welcome David Edney and Valerie Horton into membership of the church at the service of Holy Communion on 6 March. Both David and Valerie had become part of the church family at Weybridge in recent months. David attended with his wife, Dorothy, who was already a member, and when she died he decided that he, too, would like to be received into membership. Valerie joined the congregation after moving from Birmingham to be nearer to her family.

In Memoriam

In last month's magazine the sad news that James Erwin had died on 17th February was recorded. You will find a tribute to James on pages 10 of this current issue.

Prayers

Please remember these friends in your prayers : Irene Allen, Brian & Kate Ashfield, David Cheeseman, Chris Goddard, John Langdon, Lilian Smith, Michael Stevens, Moira de Kok.

(If you know of any member of the congregation who would like to be included in this list please let us know. We always seek permission of the person involved before any name is added.)

Wessex Synod – Prayer Calendar for April



The
United
Reformed
Church

- | | |
|----|---|
| 3 | Richmond Hill St Andrew's, Bournemouth;
Godalming |
| 10 | The Beacon Church, Canford Heath, Poole;
Twyford (Berks); |
| 17 | Immanuel, Southbourne, Bournemouth;
Portsmouth Road, Guildford |
| 24 | Trinity United, Ringwood;
Elvetham Heath |

Answers to Easter Travelogue (separate attachment to the issue)

1	Catalan	Feliç Pasqua	13	Polish	Wesołych Świąt Wielkiej Nocy
2	Chinese	复活节快乐	14	Portuguese	Feliz Páscoa
3	Czech	Šťastné Velikonoce	15	Slovak	Šťastnú veľkú noc
4	Danish	Glædelig påske	16	Slovenian	Veselo veliko noč
5	Dutch	Gelukkig Pasen	17	Spanish	Felices pascuas
6	French	Joyeuses Pâques	18	Swedish	Glad påsk
7	German	Frohe Ostern	19	Turkish	Paskalyanız kutlu olsun
8	Greek	Καλό πάσχα	20	Ukrainian	Христос Воскрес or Воїстину Воскрес
9	Hungarian	Kellemes Húsvéti Ünnepeket			
10	Italian	Buona Pasqua			
11	Japanese	ハッピーイースター			
12	Norwegian	God påske			

FROM THE ORGAN BENCH



A FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO ZACC

We currently are fortunate in having two organists in our church who share responsibilities, with Zacc playing first and third and Teresa playing second and fourth. That will soon be changing. Zacc, as you know, is a teacher and he has a new job at a new school in September - in China - and he sadly doesn't think that he can commute. Zacc is a fine musician and we have been extremely fortunate to have had his services for a number of years. Zacc has brought a lot to our services and, with his friends - "Stratus" has given some superb concerts for us as well. There is no doubt that we are going to miss him and his totally calm and unflappable character. Nonetheless, we wish him well and look forward to hearing from him about living and working in China in the future.

What's going to happen after Zacc has left is that Teresa will play first, second and fourth Sundays and, with help from others in leading the service, I'll play third and fifth when there is one. So are so fortunate in having Teresa and love the contribution she makes to our worship. That she is willing to take on one more Sunday a month is brilliant. Teresa is currently studying for her Grade 8 on the organ and we have enjoyed hearing her playing her exam pieces as she learns them. We also have a number of pianists whom we can call on as well. I'm also hoping that by playing a bit more regularly I'll become more proficient again. (I left Muswell Hill URC as their organist in summer 1983.)

So, we have a plan for the future, but I'd like to conclude this note (!) by again paying tribute to Zacc for all that he has done. I could sometimes come up with mad ideas and spring them on him at the last minute - and he'd just hold his hand out for the music and say, "Cool"! Our slightly busked two- piano version of "We wish you a merry Christmas" last December will long be a very happy memory for me of working with a gifted musician.

Michael Hodgson

URC 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Free tickets are now available for the United Reformed Church (URC's) 50th Anniversary Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving taking place on 1 October 2022, at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London. The venue is where the Uniting Assembly of the URC took place in 1972. The intergenerational Communion service is free and open to all in the URC. To ensure adequate provision is made, tickets for under 5s, 5-11s, 11-18s, and wheelchair users are available. Find all you need to know and how to book tickets [here](#).

Dear Sir

I note that the new church newsletter has been printed in a Calibri 11-point font on light green paper. Why? The newsletter has been in Times New Roman since 1924, and the vicar has changed things without consultation. This is not the church I grew up in.

Chas 'Charlie' Charkle (*from Writes of the Church, Gary Anderson*)



FRIENDS REMEMBERED

James Erwin

A tribute to James Erwin who died on 17th February

James was in some ways a very private person and yet behind that gentle persona lay a most interesting character. Northern Ireland was his home country and although he spent most of his life in England he still retained that lovely, soft, lilting accent which we came to know so well. He came into membership at Weybridge in 1990 when life was far from straightforward for him and within the fellowship of our community he found a home. Although generally he kept a low profile he sometimes read the lesson in church, operated the sound system and became a steward welcoming people as they came to the service. Then, quite unusually, he put himself in the limelight last Christmas and delighted everyone with his appearance alongside other members of the congregation at Weybridge taking part in the Carol Service with its presentation of “A Child’s Christmas in Wales” by Dylan Thomas.

James had a highly successful career in the financial world holding very senior posts with international companies. This led to a spell working in Spain which was a period he enjoyed greatly. His high intellect and ability to grasp and assimilate facts quickly were obviously valuable assets in often demanding situations. Towards the end of his working career James was able to deploy these talents in managing the financial aspects of a charity providing accommodation for the homeless.

Some years ago James was diagnosed with a debilitating illness but refused to let it dominate his life. Then about five years ago he underwent a pioneering electronic procedure at a London hospital which was to bring his health issues under relative control. This transformed his life and he was able to take up his hobby of cycling again often doing a 20 mile ride before turning up at church for the service. One day he told me his three best bikes had been stolen despite high security and I discovered that he had actually possessed six! Obviously he had all cycling conditions and situations well covered. James was also a prolific car-owner who seemed to change his vehicles with great frequency. His choice of cars could be described as extensive – ranging from a Porsche to a Fiat 500 and seemingly covering everything in between. Whenever he had a new car he would say to me “Do you fancy coming for a spin?” We would set-off at great speed with James demonstrating all the ‘gadgets’ along the way. The most exhilarating ride, however, proved to be not in the Porsche but in his Abarth 595 Competizione – a top of the range Fiat 500 with a high-powered-engine housed in a small car!

Sometimes James would phone because there was something he wanted to discuss but always with his innate politeness concerned that he wasn’t intruding in any way. Our last chat on the phone was a month before he died so unexpectedly in hospital. I shall miss those calls and, like so many of you, I shall miss that quietly, friendly man. Here, on the next page, are memories of James shared by some of you in an immediate response to the news of his passing.

Alex Henham



***Shared memories of James from some members of the
former congregation of Weybridge URC***

Years ago, when I was attending weekly classes in Danish at the City Lit in London, I was quite often on the same home-going train as James and we used to chat. Also, after our holiday in Northern Ireland a few years ago, we chatted quite a bit after church because we found we had stayed very near to his home area. I also remember when he read the lesson in church – very well – at Phillip's induction service. A nice man, and this is sad news.

What sad news. We have had so many deaths this year. James was always happy to help out on Sundays. He will be missed.

I am so very sorry to hear this sad news.

It is very sad about James. We were very pleased when we saw him at church for the first time about three weeks ago so this is very unexpected news.

Very sad to hear this news. I got on well with James and his choice of cars was always a topic we both enjoyed.

I was shocked and saddened to hear that James had passed away. He was a good man and I enjoyed our chats – James was a mad keen Manchester City fan and he was a formidable Group Finance Director for a large company. A great loss, he was a kind and gentle soul.

What sad news. James was in such good form a week or so ago when we chatted over coffee.

James will be missed – sadly he had many ailments to cope with.

Very sad as he is another nice person who has sadly left us.



Below are some recent arrangements of church flowers, often given in memory of a loved one.



THE STORY OF ST ANDREW'S WALTON-ON-THAMES



St Andrew's today



In 1876 the Presbyterian Church of England formally came into existence. Presbyterianism had been one of the reformation strands (from the Greek, Presbuteros = Presbyter/Elder) but which had all but died out in England after the Reformation. (Gross simplification there but I don't want you to lose the will to live by the end of the first paragraph.)

St Andrew's story begins back in the 1920s when a group of people with known Presbyterian sympathies (probably mainly Scots or people with Scottish roots) began to meet for services in the Walton Playhouse. They were led by a number of Presbyterian Ministers both in pastoral charge in other churches and by Ministers who were retired, and in 1931 Revd Hugh Macluskie became the first Minister here.

Funds were not plentiful and the early minutes tell of the church being in deficit and guarantors being called on to make up the difference. Through dogged determination funds were raised to buy a site for a new church with ancillary accommodation to be built on Hersham Road. With the country in a time of depression getting the funds together was not easy but meeting at the Playhouse for worship on a Sunday had proved far from ideal and so the building project began as quickly as possible, adopting a phased programme. The intention was that the church hall would be built first so that church life could develop and that services could be held there, instead of the Playhouse, whilst a "proper church" was built alongside.

The foundation stone was laid on 21st November, 1931, bearing the Latin motto of the Presbyterian Church, "*Nec Tamen Consumebatur*" (and yet it was not consumed) taken from the Old Testament story of Moses and the Burning Bush. That stone, by the way, is to the right of the front porch as you approach the building.



The Foundation Stone



So, the first part was built and opened on 20th February, 1932. It was L-shaped with the intention that the upright could be used initially as a church and a hall (now the church) and the base of the L had three rooms – a kitchen and two other rooms (now the vestry and the two rooms have been knocked into one – the Hersham Room).

The Order of Service for the Dedication

As the 1930s wore on, the economic depression the country was in continued and it also became increasingly obvious that war was likely. Plans to build a new worship area were postponed. After the war, with a shortage of building materials, the idea of building a new church was abandoned. Instead,

in 1957 a new hall and kitchen were built, turning the L- shaped-building into the U-shaped one we see today. In the 1980s, a new hall entrance and front meeting rooms were created – the Garden Room, the Leslie Noble Room and upstairs, the Bill Topping Room.



Most recently the entrance to the worship area has been significantly altered and the area we call “The Gateway” was created. New toilets were added shortly afterwards, replacing old ones which by all accounts had become pretty dire. The creation of The Gateway (left) saw a major improvement to the church’s main entrance. The Gallery, which had been the home of the organ and the choir, was removed as part of this project although the organ had already been brought down to the ground floor level when the then organist struggled to get up the narrow, winding stairs to the gallery. Originally the main porch was open, with gates over it and then you turned either left or right.

The back part of the church had two aisles, only becoming a central aisle for the front part. The font and the big chair behind the lectern were placed in this area, following the tradition of symbolically placing the font near to the entrance of the church.

Initially there was a small pipe organ in the gallery but this was only a temporary instrument and was replaced with an electric one which was, in turn replaced with the current organ.

If you know where to look there are lots of little clues that give the game away that the current church was never intended to be the worship area for long. The pews, for example – they’re not screwed to the floor. There are a few bolts to stop them sliding but they were never permanently fixed so that they could be moved to clear space and so that they could be moved into the new church when it was built. The pulpit, too, is really only positioned and boxed round. If you ever go into the meter cupboard behind the church apse you’ll also see how the apse is a relatively temporary feature too, presumably with the intention that the area would be converted into a stage, accessible from both sides, once the proper church was built. Many “fixtures” have actually been installed in such a way as to be able to remove them and re-site them in the church which was never built! Look around the church, though, and you’ll also see many, many little plaques which tell of how people responded to appeals to equip the place in the past. It didn’t all just come together. Instead, it evolved into what we have today.



View from the Communion Table



Other things tell us how the buildings have changed over the years. For example, look up in the hall at the Hersham Road end. High up you’ll see a blocked up window. Originally, that was an outside wall. Now, it’s the back of the Bill Topping Room. Perhaps what all this reminds us of is that our forebears had a vision but they also had to be flexible in their thinking. What we have today “works” – and it works well – but actually it bears little relationship to what was initially intended by those who began meeting in a rented room in the Playhouse.

In this way I can’t help thinking that perhaps our building is reminding us of something quite important to help us as we move forward.

Michael Hodgson

“Harvest”, a sculpture by Michael Mukolosi of ArtPeace, welcomes people to the church



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

Are our two Editors psychic or merely intuitive? I had been thinking that with a magazine called *The Grapevine* it would be nice to have a cover design on the theme. Then, lo and behold, that happened with the March edition. Thank you.

I like the cover design for our new magazine. What a good idea in view of the title. The grapes looked so enticing I went out and bought some – a healthy eating move!

(Note from the Editors: The cover design will vary according to the season)

Magazines seem to be full of ideas for getting our gardens ready for spring. One article I read was headed '*10 Tips to transform your garden in an afternoon*'. It did sound a bit unbelievable but I am an optimist and set about the task. Three jobs completed – the afternoon had gone and I was shattered. I think the answer might be to invite nine friends round so that working together we can get the jobs done and still have plenty of time to chat and consume a quantity of suitable refreshments! Perhaps we could repeat the routine for each other – 10 gardens on we would all be experts and could write our own (more realistic) articles.

I settled down one Sunday afternoon to read the paper when in the 'homes' section an article about gardening in spring attracted my attention. The 'to do list' contained 12 headings covering every conceivable garden situation plus one other heading '*Take a Breath*'. The very sensible author (a lady!) made the point that gardening was not outdoor housework and should be a pleasure not a chore. Her advice was to take breaks between doing the jobs to sit with a cup of tea, listen to the birds, soak-up the first rays of sunshine and enjoy the spring. That sounds like very good advice to me.

My gardening routine is making sure there is a flask of coffee or tea and a tin of biscuits on the patio table plus something interesting to read. I might also get round to doing a little bit of weeding!

We shall be putting our Easter tree up in our hall again this year. This has become part of our Easter celebrations ever since we were on regular visits to Germany where families put the trees in their porches along with wreaths on the front door.

Boiled eggs for breakfast on Easter Day have always been a part of our family life and the younger generation is continuing the tradition. The shells, of course, have to be painted and the general rule seems to be 'the brighter the better'.

(If you have an Easter tree or painted eggs or have any other Easter traditions you would like to share with other members of the congregation please send a photograph to the Editors for inclusion in this column in the May issue of The Grapevine.)

Gordon's Trombones

Kate and I recently had an afternoon visit from our friend Margaret Faultless for tea and cake (a delicious Waitrose Lemon & Lime iced sponge provided by Margaret). After putting the world to rights, we started to discuss the trials and tribulations of sorting unwanted items and clothes from our homes for the charity shops. Our son, Christopher, popped in to see us as we were talking about Gordon's music scores and instruments. Margaret said that she now had three unwanted trombones and thought she should try to sell them. Apparently, one trombone was very old and not in good condition – but Christopher said he would be interested in trying to play it as he already played the double bass in a small band and, if he could master it, it would add to the cacophony of sound his group made. He also thought that one of his friends who was involved with a local orchestra, might be interested in the very good-conditioned one but not the plastic one. Margaret said that she would bring the two trombones round to us a few days later and would let her grandson try out the plastic one. We finished our tea and cake and went our separate ways.

Some days later I had to visit Britten's music shop in New Haw on behalf of the Genesis Chorale and I mentioned the trombones, now in my possession, to the manager and he gave me the name of someone who might be interested. Interested he was, as he came round the next day to see the best trombone which was housed in a bespoke travelling case. He was, in fact, an ex-Coldstream Guardsman and now a music teacher. After playing a couple of tunes, beautifully, he agreed to buy it on behalf of a girl pupil of his at the asking price. She had now passed several exams and had been offered a scholarship in a music school, so the time was right for her to own this special instrument.

We should like to think Gordon would be very pleased that, via Margaret's generosity, his trombone was going to a good home with a promising future before it. *Brian Ashfield*

Organ Recital – given at Weybridge URC on 9 March

The person originally scheduled to write this report unfortunately had to withdraw and I was the Associate Editor's last-minute draft-in. Normally I just sit back and enjoy the recitals knowing that later in the church magazine I shall be able to read an informative account by a musically-knowledgeable author. Whilst I am interested in music (particularly organ music) that is not a talent I claim to possess!

The first in the current programme of monthly organ recitals – sadly the last series to be given at Weybridge URC – was by Gillian Lloyd, Director of Music at Guildford URC.

After briefly introducing the pieces in the programme Gillian settled onto the organ bench and began her wide-ranging and, in several cases, challenging selection on the theme of 'Times and Seasons'. This started with a very lively piece, *Offertoire in C major* by the 19th century French organist, Antoine-Édouard Batiste. Hearing this piece it is not surprising that he won so many awards, including the Prix de Rome when he was only 20 years old. In many places in this piece he used long-held chords with the melody played over the top, interesting to watch from the projection on the screen of the organist's actions.

Next we heard two works by Johann Sebastian Bach, whose organ compositions from the 18th century are rarely absent from any recital. The cheerful start to the programme was continued in the first of these, *Prelude in C major BWV547*. The second was *In dir ist Freude BWV 615 (In you there is joy)* – a celebration for the New Year demanding considerable dexterity of hands and feet by the organist.

Then we listened to two 20th century preludes by the well-known and popular English composer, Hubert Parry, both based on tunes to be found in Rejoice and Sing. The first of these, *Melcombe (New every morning R&S 536)*, was appropriately quicker-paced than the second, *Eventide (Abide with me R&S 336)*. The latter piece explored each line of the famous hymn followed by variations and continuing in the same way, all in a more meditative mood.

Next we came to the only contemporary composer in this recital – Martin Setchell was born in Blackpool, graduated from the University of Exeter (with a languages' degree) and achieved his FRCO in the UK, moving to New Zealand when he was 25 to take up a post in the University of Canterbury. He is said to believe that music should be fun and Gillian certainly demonstrated this in her performance of *Trumpet Tune (from 'Three Piece Suite)*, conveying that feeling very well.

Another British composer's work followed. Christopher Steel had an extremely varied career in his short lifetime: teaching, composing a wide range of music including a children's opera and a cantata, broadcasting, recording with several famous choirs and performing solo in concerts. His bright piece included in this recital, *Dancing Toccata*, showed his unusual style involving a great number of changes between swell and great organs throughout. This proved to be a very lively piece.

In contrast to this and to each other were two Bach items that followed. In *O Mensch, beweine dein' Sünde groß BWV 622 (O man weep for your sins)* in which the appropriately gentle, contemplative style was well portrayed while in *Heut' triumphieret Gottes Sohn BWV 630 (Today the Son of God triumphs)* the celebratory theme recurred throughout the piece conveying the force of the title.

The composer of the next item in the programme has various connections with our Willis organ. Harold Darke gave lessons to the organist who served this church for 66 years, Wilfred Rogers, when Darke was organist at St Michael Cornhill. In 1916, during Harold Darke's 50 years as organist there, he established the lunchtime concerts said to be the longest-running lunchtime organ recitals in the world as they have been continued by his successors as organist. Wilfred had the privilege of giving one of these recitals. A further link is that in 1957, when the restoration and updating of the organ here was celebrated in a service of re-dedication, Harold Darke was the guest organist. We are all familiar with the basic tune of

Brother James' Air, possibly from schooldays, but Darke's *Meditation* on the basic tune is less familiar and Gillian's interpretation of this reflective piece wafted gently around the church.

20th century Belgian Organist Flor Peeters' *Von Liebe kommt groß Leiden* (*From love great suffering comes*) is based on an old Dutch hymn with a haunting melody played in a mood which inspires meditation on the meaning of the title to Christian communities especially during the present period of Lent and Easter. No frills or trills in this piece!

This connection with the Christian year was continued in a brighter and triumphant vein in the next item by another 20th century organist (this time French), Jeanne Demessieux, who has the distinction of being the first female organist to be given a record contract. What would a Christmas service be without *Adeste Fidelis* (*O come all ye faithful*)? This version is one of her 12 Choral Preludes on Gregorian Chant themes, all with Latin titles, presumably used in the Parisian churches where she served as organist.

Continuing the Christmas references, the first of the two pieces by Noel Rawsthorne (born on Christmas Eve 1929 so he has an appropriate Christian name!) was *We wish you ...*, based on the spritely traditional English carol, (a very lively and light piece, with dominant melody played at different levels) this was clearly chosen by Gillian to be a bit of fun towards the end of a programme with a very wide variety of moods. This fun element of Rawsthorne's music was also apparent in the last item – his *Hornpipe Humoresque* which, as the title suggests, he based on the *Sailor's Hornpipe*, bringing with it inevitably visions of Promenaders' bobbing up and down on the last night of the proms. Our younger selves may have been tempted to dance in the aisles but we had to be content with tapping along in our seats. In this set of variations the composer uses the well-known tune to link together parts in the styles of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto*, Vivaldi's *Spring* (from the *Four Seasons*), Arne's *Rule Britannia!* and Widor's *Toccata*. Gillian had said that she did not know how he fitted so many tunes together but it really enabled her to demonstrate her mastery of all these styles while obviously enjoying herself! Her fingers flew in a very fast ending with a triumphant 'whoosh' across the keyboard, not often used by organists.

A very lively end to a most enjoyable, almost non-stop, hour of music which lived up to the title: spanning the year from New Year to Christmas and the day from morning to night. Incidentally composers from five nations and music from five centuries were represented. Looking back over the years of our recitals I think that with this recital Gillian can claim the record for giving a programme containing the largest number of pieces. In his vote of thanks the Minister commented that it was a wonderful and varied programme and it was quite obvious why Gillian had been asked so many times to take part in organ recitals.

Alex Henham

Organ Recital Weybridge URC site

12.30pm 13 April

It is with great pleasure that we welcome David Oldfield for the second in the last series of organ recitals to be given at Weybridge.

David was born and educated in Sheffield where he attended King Edward VII School. He was offered an unconditional place at the Royal Northern College of Music where he studied organ, singing and choral training.

David worked in education for many years often as Head of Music in several schools and has had successful posts as organist and choirmaster teaching organ, piano and singing. He has worked in varying roles for the Royal School of Church Music since 1977 including Housemaster, Course Director and Examiner for Bishops' and Deans' Awards.

David specialises in early music, Baroque music and 20th/21st century music but has an eclectic taste and wide repertoire outside these periods. He made a special study of Tudor Church Music and the vast choral repertoire of English Church Music.

David directs the choir Coro Novus (giving concerts in various Cathedrals) and continues to pursue his recital career – which later this year includes Wilmslow and Lincoln.

Please come along to support the organist and to get this season of recitals for our own united church and community off to a good start. Bring your friends and your lunch (if you wish to do so) – coffee, tea and soft drinks will be provided – and relax whilst listening to what is guaranteed to be an hour of superb music. Admission is free but there will be a retiring collection. After running costs have been deducted the balance will go to the Woking and Weybridge branch of Parkinson's UK.

Brian Ashfield

Programme for Organ Recital by David Oldfield
12.30pm Wednesday 13 April
Weybridge URC

War March of the Priests	Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)
Organ Concerto No. 12	George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)
Three Hymn Tune Preludes on Song 24 Melcombe St Columba	Healey Willan (1880 - 1968)
Prelude & Fugue in C – BWV 545	Johann Sebastian Bach (1668 - 1750)
Toccata Nuptiale	Christopher Maxim (1971 -)



Genesis Chorale Concert
St John's Church, Camphill Road, West Byfleet KT14 6EH

7.30pm 23 April



The next concert by the well-known local choir, Genesis Chorale, is a presentation of Verdi's 'Requiem'. This will be our first concert since the pandemic started and we were all in lockdown so it is a very important occasion and we are hoping for a large audience. It will also be the last concert conducted by our popular Music Director, Lewis Gaston, who has been with us since April 2013 producing a total of 21 concerts in that time. In the past we have been supported by members of the Weybridge URC congregation and it would be lovely to see them present again plus, of course, any other interested friends from the new combined congregation who would be very welcome, too. *Tickets (£15.00) are available from:*

Brittens Music, 13 The Broadway, New Haw, Addlestone KT15 3EU
(01932 351165); on the door or through the website
www.genesischorale.org.uk

Brian Ashfield



ST ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, MOSCOW

The BBC Radio 4 early morning Sunday programme on 20 March featured a short interview with the vicar of St Andrew's church in Moscow. I have transcribed some of it, given that it makes interesting reading in relation to the current situation in Ukraine.

Canon Malcolm Rogers, the man who is 'keeping this far flung outpost of Anglicanism ticking over,' told the interviewer about his church.

"There has been a church here since 1884 - an actual Anglican building. It's a very typical Manchester church that was built and designed by a Manchester architect. What makes it astonishing is that it is situated 10 minutes' walk from the Kremlin. It has been here and has had an amazing history. It has been here and served as a church, it was closed in 1917 when it served as a machine gun post because it was the next highest point to the Kremlin in the Battle of Moscow. It served as the Finnish Embassy and it then served as the principal recording studio in the Soviet Union. Someone like Rostropovitch would have been first recorded here. In 1994 after a visit of The Queen it was returned to the Anglican community. It still belongs to the Russian government but we have it under lease. We have quite a big congregation about 120 - well, we had 120 people or so. I arrived here four and a half years ago and we had in that time the Skripal and the Salisbury poisonings which cut our congregation significantly at the beginning, with diplomats being sent back. We are a very international congregation made up of people from UK, US, Australia, Canada, Indonesia, the Philippines, Nigeria, East Africa, China, Vietnam and also Russians, increasingly Russians - I would say 50% of our congregation on a normal Sunday which, as I say, used to be about 120.

Until this crisis, for instance, we used to fly outside our church both the Russian flag and the United Kingdom flag just as a way of saying, you know, we are here, we are present, we want to do something that can sort of bring people together and in many ways we do, as well."

In answer to the interviewer's suggestion that he was constrained during their conversation by the current laws, Canon Malcolm Rogers said that laws did exist as to what you can and cannot say. He admitted that the current war had, indeed, affected the once very lively congregation. He had calculated that of their foreign congregation, 40 people had had to leave at the request of corporates and businesses that feared orders would completely close. Many foreign students had not left as it would mean defaulting on their courses. Diplomatic staff from both the British and American Embassies had also been affected.

When asked about his own relations with Russians both within his congregation and those that he came across in everyday life, Canon Rogers said:

"People have been - are still - incredibly friendly. We haven't experienced any hostility at all. However, I suspect that will change as Russia gets cut off from the world and as the world gets cut off from Russia - and more and more the only information the Russians are going to be hearing is from the inside and now there is a slightly new element after the President's speech yesterday one which sort of talking about people who may have some sympathies towards the West which potentially could be considered as national traitors." Ed

Footnote In 1983, I was working at the British Embassy in Moscow, then housed in a beautiful old mansion that had belonged to a sugar baron, with the most wonderful view across the river to the golden domes of the Kremlin. I had no idea, then, of the existence of an Anglican church building in the city, as church services were held alternate weeks in the British and American Embassies. In our case, the service was held in the Ambassador's office and it was my job to get the office ready for the event. I remember having to negotiate the huge triffid-like cheese plant that took over a whole corner of the office and threatened to break through the ceiling! The services took the form of the normal Anglican one, and were conducted by visiting clergy or lay members of the community (one of these, from our Embassy, a Salvationist). The faithful few of us did our best to feel spiritually uplifted, but the hard communist line, together with the fact that we were not allowed to worship in a church building at the time, often made this difficult - yet another of the many restrictions for foreigners that made living in the then Soviet Union a real challenge. NFR



We were without several regular volunteers due to Covid, illness, holidays and work commitments but despite this we had a most enjoyable time with everyone working well together, parents enjoying working alongside the children, trying out the activities. We were again grateful to Monika, one of our Mums who took over the kitchen, keeping us supplied with tea or coffee throughout the afternoon and cooking the meal.

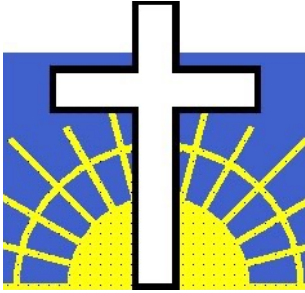


The theme was Easter, and we offered quite a few things which kept all engaged for the afternoon. We made Easter biscuits with a Jammy Dodger representing the tomb and a small Easter egg for the stone that was rolled away. One little one on being offered the base biscuit grabbed it and ran to a corner to eat it, with a huge grin. All enjoyed covering paper with paint. I had prepared the paper with a masking tape cross which when removed when the paint dried left a beautiful picture. We also added black silhouettes of three crosses on a hill to painted sheets with amazing results. Another painting activity used forks for painting and with wobbly eyes and a red beak rows of chicks arrived. Not so successful was decorating foil covered crosses. It was very difficult to actually cover the cross. Most children made a daffodil Mother's Day card and decorated hard boiled eggs.

In the Celebration, we talked about the Easter story and presented all the families with palm crosses. We will not be having a Messy Church in April as it will be Easter Sunday, so the next one will be in May. *Anne Fitzgerald*



PRAYER CORNER



A Prayer for Easter

We are often not the Easter People
that we should be,
living in the certain knowledge
of your great mercy and love.
Distracted by the world around us
we fail to hear your voice,
or hide when faith is challenged
as we wander off the path.
Forgive us, we pray;
restore the love that we first had,
a faith that can endure.
We will keep our eyes fixed on you, Lord,
and with you at our right hand
we shall not be shaken.
Amen

*John Birch
faithandworship.com19*

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of all,
with alarm and concern
we bring before you the military intervention in Ukraine.

In a world you made for peace and flourishing,
we lament the use of armed force.
We mourn every casualty of this conflict,
every precious life extinguished by war.

We pray comfort for those who grieve and those who are fearful.

Hear our longing that leaders and nations will honour the worth of all people
by having the courage to resolve conflict through dialogue.

May all our human failings be transformed by your wonderful grace and goodness.
We ask this in the name of Christ, the author of peace and sustainer of Creation.
Amen.

*Joint Public Issues Team: the Baptist Union of Great Britain,
the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church*

SPRING JUMBLE SALE

Our jumble sale on 13 March raised £1205.18p. Big thanks to those who donated items. We had a good day with good attendance and are intending to hold another sale in September.



Sister power at the Jumble Sale



SENSORY GARDEN UPDATE

I am delighted to say that at last work on our sensory garden is scheduled to start on 18 April and should take eight weeks to complete. It has been a long time in the planning and fundraising with many frustrating times along the way and I am very excited that we can at last build it. The garden will not only be for our people with learning disabilities but also for people who have had a stroke or have dementia. The plan shows the garden but of course the raised planters will be full of plants and flowers, there will also be outdoor musical instruments,

chimes, marimba, drums, rain machine bell, and also a bubble machine. Small trees and seating and a water feature will make a very sensory, stimulating garden to enjoy.

Those of you who have purchased bricks will be able to see your name on the wall. Thank you for the interest you have shown and support you continue to give to Elmbridge Mencap.

Jean Rigden

BEAVERING AWAY

(with thanks to the BBC Website and PA Media)



Beavers have been brought back to London for the first time in more than 400 years to help restore nature and river habitat and reduce flood risks. A male and female beaver, both aged two, have recently been into a specially designed enclosure in the grounds of Forty Hall Farm in Enfield.

The species was hunted to extinction in Britain in the 16th Century for its fur, glands and meat. They are seen as natural engineers who restore wetland habitats through dam-building and felling trees, slowing, storing and filtering water in the landscape, which attracts other wildlife and reduces flooding downstream. Enfield Council and Capel Manor College devised the north London project.

Ian Barnes, Enfield Council's deputy leader, said it was "quite emotional" when the pair - who have been temporarily nicknamed Justin Beaver and Sigourney Beaver - were released into the wild.



ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

WHILST the war in Ukraine is justifiably headline news each day, Zimbabwe continues to face its own 'war' not least against poverty. Decent peace-loving Zimbabweans were dismayed to learn that their government and many other African governments who enjoy commercial links with



Russia abstained from the 'Aggression against Ukraine' vote in the UN General Assembly to 'demand an immediate halt to Moscow's attack on Ukraine and the withdrawal of all Russian troops.' Campaigning for by-elections is underway and again the ugly face of politics is on show. Iron bars and machetes were in evidence when a mob attacked Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) supporters at a rally held by Nelson Chamisa (left), the leader of this recently formed main



opposition party. At the end of this month, I hope to attend a keynote address by this charismatic Zimbabwean advocate, lawyer and pastor, hosted by a charity: The Mike Campbell Foundation. Despite being intensely persecuted (including several assassination attempts), he is continuing courageously to mobilise people for change in his country. Also, advocate Fadzayi Mahere (right) the National spokesperson for the opposition who has been imprisoned several times in appalling conditions, will continue to speak out fearlessly for freedom and justice for all in Zimbabwe. It should prove an interesting evening.

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: St Andrew's service link with ArtPeace continues to grow. The idea



initially was to provide a service whilst their own churches were closed owing to Covid but our friends are keen for the link to continue albeit via WhatsApp. Indeed, the lesson was recently read by artist Peter Kananji (above). Some of the artists' children listen in – for example Godwin's family, Tinashe and Tapiwa (above right). Peter is now on a mission to find rather special stone to make more crosses. Whilst his lavender crosses in semi-precious lepidolite (left) are on route to the UK, he will be making the long journey by bus to Kewkwe to find 50kgs of red jasper (right). His task will not be helped by police requesting bribes. Although this stone is one of the hardest to work, Peter



is a superb artist as his 'head' centre shows but I feel sorry for his struggle home with that load!

POVERTY: Artist Ignatius Chinyama took this photo of a 104-year-old walking home to Musami village in Murewa. Ruth Mairosi's husband passed away 45 years ago. Ruth had 3 children Mavis, Shorai and Sarah



who have all passed away. Ignatious said: 'She struggled the long walk home after the headman gave her a small bag of mealie meal.' Left, Ruth's cooking area with a clay pot resting on an open fire cooking pumpkins and green maize cobs. Artpeace said they can no longer find or afford to buy firewood so are forced to use plastic bottles although the fumes are overpowering.

TEACHERS are still on strike over paltry salaries. Children arrive at school to face empty classrooms – photo on right taken by Herbert. Hundreds of teachers have already left the public sector to start illegal back-yard schools, where parents who have the money to spare pay for tutoring to get their children through exams. Many worry that children out of school will be caught up in petty crime and drugs, which have seen a big upsurge among young Zimbabweans during the pandemic.



SALE: On a brighter note, a recent ArtPeace sale at St Andrew's raised almost £600. Friday Chingwarus (below) did particularly well with his sale of 'Fat Ladies' (stoically taken over by Lucy from Jesuit Missions) snapped up by our Zoom



service member from Norway courtesy of Norma our editor. I hope to run another sale in early May thanks to Verity at



CAFOD Harare, who kindly arranged for friends to drive 24kgs of pieces the five hours plus trip to Bulawayo. They will be dropped off at a hospital where the doctor son of members of our congregation works. His parents are soon to holiday in Zimbabwe and will visit Bulawayo. They have bravely agreed to take this formidable load home – well that's the plan but nothing is straight forward in Zimbabwe! **Johnston Simpson**



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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!