



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE

## *THE GRAPEVINE*

*JUNE 2023*

*Volume 2 No 5*



*Sailing boats at Ullapool*

*"It is the month of June,  
The month of leaves and roses,  
When pleasant sights salute the eyes,  
And pleasant scents the noses."*

*Nathanial Parker Willis*

*From The Manse*

*June 2023*



*Dear friends*

I should like to begin my letter this month by reminding you that at the end of the church notices (intimations!) on 30<sup>th</sup> April you were asked to pray for the Elders' Meeting which was going to be taking place a couple of days later on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. You heard that Ray Stanyon, our Synod Training and Development Officer, was coming to the meeting and that we had given the entire evening over to thinking about mission and outreach. As you know, this is the key issue before us now and I am pleased to say that the meeting went extremely well. Ray provided some extremely thought-provoking input and then broke us into groups to discuss things further. We're going to be sharing with each the outcome of the individual group discussion at our next meeting, on 13<sup>th</sup> June, and will be thinking about how to take things further and so please continue to pray for the Elders in this task.

One of the points which Ray made was that when asked by others about our weekend we could give a positive message by saying we had gone to church and we had enjoyed time at church, meeting our friends there. Some people would welcome the thought that one could make friends at church. It was important to chat to them about what happened at church. We should make a point of inviting people to suitable events and services, and we noted that "Messy Church" and "People who Lunch" already provided opportunities to invite people along. Ray quoted research information which indicated that there's a surprisingly high number of people who say that they would like to go to church if only they were asked by someone to go.

Reflecting over the meeting I realised that we have missed a significant anniversary in our church's story - and one which seems to tie in very directly with what we're doing now. On 4<sup>th</sup> January, 1923, one of our founders, J B McArthur (who lived at Cottimore, Walton-on-Thames), received a letter from George Feasey, the Convener of the Church Extension Committee of the Presbytery of London South (Presbyterian Church of England). The letter began, "I have been approached ... with a view of establishment of a Presbyterian cause in the district of Walton on Thames."

The letter continues, "I should think there must be a number of Presbyterians in the district and it may only be a question of getting them together." So, Mr McArthur was asked if he could, "feel disposed to render any help" to gather a nucleus of people.

Sadly, the next bit of the story is missing I think because our first minute book starts on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1928 but it implies that committee meetings had been taking place before then, following on from that initial letter.

So, 100 years ago someone was being asked if he could ask around and see if there were others interested in forming a new church. A hundred years ago it was from a nucleus that a church was grown. A hundred years on, it seems to me that Ray is effectively asking us, the current members, to be the nucleus from which the future church can be grown.

I have said before that I could easily argue that during Covid God grabbed us (kindly) by the scruff of the neck and put Walton and Weybridge URCs down in a very different place. Our union has been remarkably harmonious and as I look at where we are today - and all the things we have learnt - I could be very proud

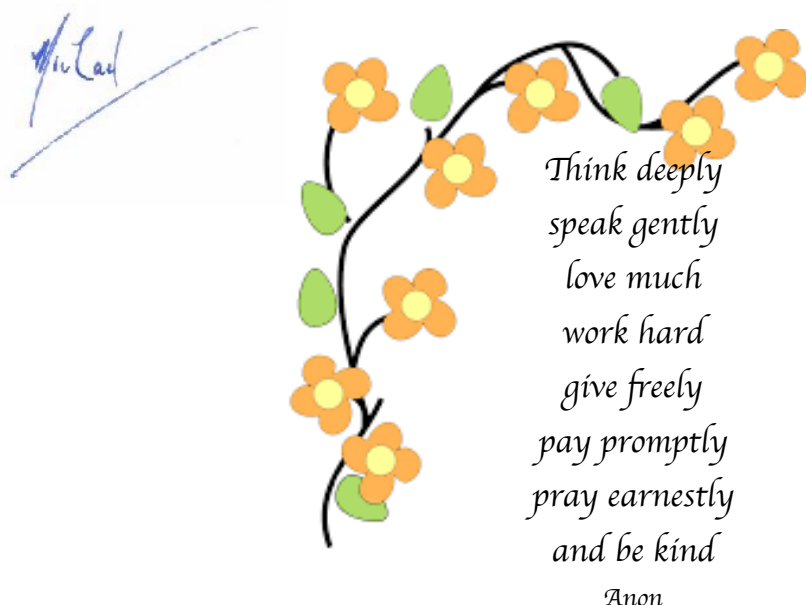
and could very much think that we have been given a second chance. From a simple letter sent to a local resident who responded to that request, an incredible story has unfolded. By June 1933, the congregation had its own church buildings, its own minister, had become an independent congregation with a membership of 78 and was growing rapidly.

I think that you can probably see why the letter from 100 years ago came strongly to my mind in my post-Elders' reflection. (Weybridge's beginning was rather different.) We are being challenged to be more proactive in outreach - but not in a big and daunting way. We are not being asked to go out and start preaching in the two High Streets on a Saturday morning - just, "when asked by others about our weekend", we could give a positive message by saying that we had gone to church and we had enjoyed time at church, meeting our friends there. We're not being asked to organise a big, Billy Graham-style rally culminating with a big altar-call for people to come forward and give their lives to Jesus - just make a point of inviting people to suitable events and services, remembering that research information indicates there are a lot of people of people who say that they would like to go to church if only they were asked. They want someone to take them there and be with them when they go in for the first time.

One final thing about Mr McArthur though - I suspect that he didn't live to see the vision fully realised. A letter dated March 1929 refers to his "being unwell again". I can't immediately see a record of his death or his resignation from the committee but the last meeting he is recorded as attending was in May 1929. His name does not appear on the first formal Roll of Members in 1933 but the name of his wife does. I think that says something to us as well.

At the end of June (25<sup>th</sup>) there's a Church Meeting and I can't help thinking that outreach is going to be a prominent item on that agenda. I should like to leave you with this thought though. What would have happened if Mr McArthur had received the letter from Mr Feasey and binned it? What would have happened if Mr McArthur had thought that he was too busy, or too old, or that someone else would do it instead?

With all good wishes,



Our cover picture, taken by the Editor, shows a tranquil afternoon at Ullapool on the West Coast of Scotland

# *News of the Church Family*

## **In Memoriam**

It was with sadness that we heard Margaret Parker died on 11<sup>th</sup> May following a short illness and shortly before the first anniversary of her husband Ron's passing. Margaret and Ron were received into membership at Weybridge in 1995 on transfer from London Street, Basingstoke URC and quickly became very active members of the congregation. Margaret's gentle, quiet nature won her many friends who soon discovered that behind it was a strength of character and a great sense of humour whilst her seemingly effortless elegant appearance was perhaps envied a little! Everything she undertook she did well and without fuss and not seeking recognition. Ron's many career moves around the country meant that they lived in many different places and Margaret was adept at creating a family home immediately. They also always made contact with a local church and of all the churches with which they were involved Weybridge held a special place in their hearts. So much so that when they retired to New Milton they still made a monthly return visit until sadly for Margaret her declining health made the journey impossible and they transferred their membership to Lymington URC. Now we send our sympathy to Margaret's son and daughter, Andrew and Caroline, and their families. For them May will obviously always be a poignant month. AH

We were also much saddened to learn of the death of Holms Carlile on 20 May. He will be enormously missed by so many. We send our love and condolences to his wife, Christine and their daughters Alison, Kate and Lindsay and would like them to know that we are thinking of them at this sad time. There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for Holms in the church on **Tuesday 4 July** at 2.30 pm.

There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for Keith Fitzgerald in the church at 1.30 pm on **Friday 23 June**, preceded by Committal at Randalls Park crematorium at 11.45 am.

## **Prayers**

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Brian & Kate Ashfield, David Cheeseman, Anne Fitzgerald and her family, Chris Goddard, John Langdon, the Parker family, Lilian Smith and Michael Stevens.

*If you know of anyone who would like to be included in this prayer list, or if you wish to be included yourself, please let the Editors know.*

## *Church and Community*



Following Michael's appeals on the Sundays at the beginning and the end of Christian Aid Week, the sum of £587.50p, including Gift Aid, was given by the congregation. As some of you donated separately, rather than through the church, we can be sure that at least £600 has been raised by your efforts. We know that the money will be used wisely by Christian Aid, through its local partner organisations, to benefit those in most need.

Thank you for your gifts.

*Jem Ward*

## SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES JUNE 2023

***On the first and third Sunday of the month, services will also be on Zoom***

<b>Sunday 4 June (Zoom)</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship with Holy Communion</b>
Friday 9 June	12.30 - 2.30 pm	People Who Lunch, Church Hall - Advance booking essential! (see page 7)
<b>Sunday 11 June</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship</b>
	4.00 pm	Concert - 'Songs for a Summer's Day' with the Ian Engelmann Singers, Riverhouse Barn, Walton (see page 7)
Tuesday 13 June	8.00 pm	Elders' Meeting Bill Topping Room
Sunday 18 June (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by Mr Graham Pearcey
	3.00 pm	 Messy Church

### **COPY DATE FOR JULY ISSUE WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE**

*ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)*  
**NORMA REID, 3 GWALIOR ROAD, LONDON SW15 1NP**  
**Email: [aristocats.2000@gmail.com](mailto:aristocats.2000@gmail.com)**

*Or ASSOCIATE EDITOR, Mollie Henham Email: [18amh65@gmail.com](mailto:18amh65@gmail.com)*

Saturday 24 June	2.00 pm	Summer Afternoon concert and Cream Tea at the Riverhouse Barn, Walton (see page 7 and for further information contact Hilary Netherwood or Gwenda Cochrane)
	7.30 pm	Weybridge Male Voice Choir at St Peter's Church, Burwood Road, Hersham (see page 7)
<b>Sunday 25 June</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship followed by Church Meeting</b>

The Church Meeting on 25 June is going to be a very important occasion for us. The main topic is "Mission and Outreach" and, unusually, I am planning that the meeting and the morning service will run concurrently. That is so that we can think and pray about this within the context of worship and service. Prior to then, you will be given copies of our Community Audit to read and to reflect upon and on 11 June and I'll be setting the scene for this during our morning service.

So, an important Church Meeting coming up, with a little bit of preparation and "homework" to go with it as well.

**Do put this in your diary because this really is a crucial subject for us now.**

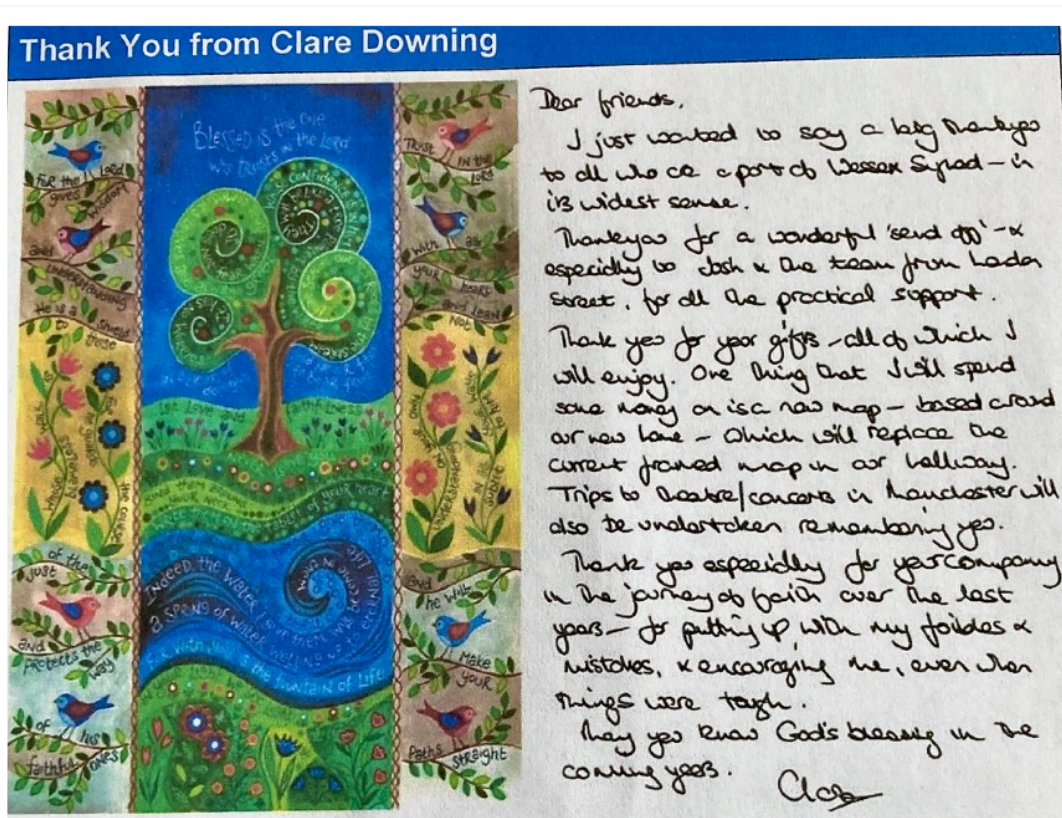
*Michael Hodgson*



## NEWS FROM WESSEX SYNOD

### Wessex Synod - Prayer Calendar for June

- 4 Broad Chalke, Salisbury;  
Caversham Park, Reading
- 11 Hedge End, Southampton;  
United Church, Godalming;  
United Church, Ferndown
- 18 United Free Church, Bishop's Waltham;  
Holy Family, Blackbird Leys, Oxford;
- 25 Meeting of URC General Assembly  
(30 June – 3 July at The Hayes, Swanwick);  
United Church, Dorchester;  
Beacon Hill, Hindhead



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT A GLANCE



### IMPORTANT DATE TO REMEMBER!

**Sunday 25 June**

**Church meeting after the service**



### PEOPLE WHO LUNCH

**Friday 9 June**

**2.30 - 2.30 pm in the Church Hall**

If you are someone who enjoys having lunch with a group of friends then People Who Lunch is definitely the place for you. Everyone is welcome at this monthly get-together held on the second Friday of the month in the Church Hall. For just £5 you can have soup, a roll, dessert, cheese and biscuits and coffee/tea.

**Advance booking essential!**

To book your place please contact Margaret Faultless either in church or by email [margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk)

## *The Ian Engelmann Singers* *Musical Director: John Tudhope*

### *Songs for a Summer's Day*

#### *An Afternoon Concert*

*of unaccompanied part-songs,  
including works by Vaughan Williams, Holst,  
Britten, Debussy and Tomkins, with readings  
both serious and light-hearted*

*at the*

### *Riverhouse Barn Arts Centre*

*Manor Road, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2PF*

*on*

*Sunday 11th June 2023 at 4:00 pm*

Tickets £15  
from the Riverhouse Barn Box Office  
E-mail: [boxoffice@riverhousebarn.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@riverhousebarn.co.uk)  
Tel: 01932 253354, or at the door

Give me a sense of humour, Lord  
Give me the grace to see a joke,  
To get some humour out of life,  
And pass it on to other folk.

**Treble Clef Choir**

You are invited to a  
**Summer Afternoon  
Concert and Cream Tea**

Saturday 24th June 2023 at 2.00pm  
Riverhouse Barn, Manor Road, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2PF

A concert of light music with special guest  
solo violinist

The choir is supported by the Robert Phillips  
Trust for music in the local community.

**Tickets cost £12.50 and this includes a cream tea.**  
Tickets are available from  
<https://thelittleboxoffice.com/riverhouse/event/view/179464>  
or by phoning 01932 253354

## Weybridge Male Voice Choir



*Musical Director: Jonathan Kilhams*



Tickets £10, under 16s £5

From The Parish Office

☎ (01932) 253452

✉ [theoffice@stpetershersham.com](mailto:theoffice@stpetershersham.com)

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/t-ojmyzmz>

**Saturday 24th June**

**Starting at 7.30pm**

**Refreshments from 7pm / Raffle**



**St. Peter's Church, Burwood Road,  
Hersham, KT12 4AA**

## Help us support our local community through the cost-of-living crisis and your donation will be tripled!



Rising food, energy and housing costs are putting extra pressure on already stretched households and more and more people in our local area are struggling to make ends meet.

With your help, we can support our local community through these challenging times and stop more Elmbridge children and families being tipped into poverty.

**Every £1 donated will be matched by Walton Charity and Elmbridge Borough Council so, together, we can make three times the difference to local lives.**



**Please donate through the link below:**

**<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WaltonCharityCostofLiving>**

Thank you for considering.

Kind regards  
Janette Butler  
Corporate Partnership & Communications Manager  
0735 902 0731  
Working hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday



Charity number: 1185959

**Follow us on**





## MEET THE CONGREGATION - JEAN RIGDEN



My association with St Andrew's started many years ago in 1942. This is the year in which I was born and my Mum, Elsie Ness, was the Beadle at St Andrew's. Mum cleaned the church and kept watch on the heating, set up for the Ladies' Guild and washed up afterwards. For all this she was paid 10 shillings a week [*that's the equivalent of about 50p today!*] with an extra one shilling and sixpence (1/6d) for setting up and clearing away for the Ladies' Guild.

My sister, Elsie, was three and rode her little three-wheeled bike up and down the aisle. Dad was away fighting in the war. The Revd Tucker was the minister and after the war my dad often did jobs at the Manse at 16 Hersham Road. Elsie and I came to Sunday school because we were made to and Leslie Noble was our Sunday school teacher. As we got older, we stopped coming to Church. When I was 14, the new minister, Revd Eddie Lane, came to our door and I returned to church out of guilt. I had a go at helping at Sunday school and was later confirmed into the Church membership. I stopped attending again after I had my children. All our family - my sister, me and later my brother David - were baptised at St Andrew's, as were our children. My sister and I were also married in the Church. Then the big tragedy struck. I was widowed at the age of 34 when my husband drowned while we were on holiday in Cornwall, our children then only eight and 10 years old. This is when I returned to St Andrew's, in 1976, this time because I wanted and needed its support. I get so much from coming to Church - the friendship and feeling of belonging now means something to me that is hard to explain.

My involvement with Elmbridge Mencap started after my brother David, seven years younger than I am, was born. My Mum was almost a founder member of Elmbridge Mencap, so we have grown up around people with learning disabilities ever since. We had some heartbreaking times with David. He didn't speak until he was seven years old. When commercial TV started he used to watch the commercials, one day when my mum was doing the washing (she used Tide washing powder) David suddenly said "Tide clean clothes". After this the floodgates opened and by the time he was 12 he was speaking very fluently. Then, when he was 12, he got measles and encephalitis; it destroyed all the speech part of the brain and he has never spoken since. We were all devastated, as you might imagine, but these things can make you strong. I love my brother so much and he has moulded my life and taught me patience and gives me unconditional love. I have many happy and funny memories of things David and I did together before he was so ill and damaged. I see him often at Burview Hall and he will give me smiles and kisses. Everyone has problems and sad times in their lives, it's how you deal with them that makes a difference.



*Jean with David on his 74th birthday*

It is an absolute joy to be involved with all the great people I meet at Burview Hall. My lovely husband, Eric, has been with me for over 35 years and when we met, he said "it's love - you love your Mencap!" He was right as he knew it was so much a part of my life. He has joined in and has given many hours of his time to our charity, taking on all sorts of important roles for us - maintenance, finance, planning procedures and health and safety to name but a few.

I could talk for hours about learning disabilities; being a sibling can be hard although it seems normal at the time. My brother is now a gentle old man but when we were kids he was, shall we say, 'challenging'!

*Jean Rigden*

**The Coronation Bank Holiday weekend** went with a swing and was celebrated locally as befitted such a special occasion. After the service on Sunday 7 May, there were delicious cakes on offer, decorated in Royal fashion.



**People Who Lunch** had a similar Coronation theme. One of those present has been kind enough to send in this contribution.

"Such a disappointment...!"

After all the hard work put in by Margaret Faultless and her team of helpers to provide a Coronation Special edition of People Who Lunch, I was terribly disappointed that the principal guests did not turn up! Not only that, they didn't even bother to send apologies. So disappointing! It wasn't even as if it clashed with their Coronation - that was 6 days later for goodness sake, so there really was no excuse. On reflection, though, maybe they had a better offer elsewhere.

However, there was no better offer for lunch than the one provided for the members and friends of St Andrew's Walton and Weybridge URC on Friday 12 May in the Church Hall. It was spectacular. Some 31 people attended and, as a result of the convivial company, there was fun and laughter everywhere.

As always, Margaret controlled the enthusiasm of those present by the use of her "shut up and listen" bell which announced the beginning of proceedings. Then, after a short prayer, she informed the company that instead of the usual soup and rolls, the meal would be a choice of coronation chicken and rice (served cold of course) or chicken in parsley sauce (served hot of course) both accompanied by delicious small white pitta breads, salad and salad dressing, bowls of nuts and jugs of water. Unfortunately, despite his valiant attempts, Michael was unable to turn the water into wine. Plates were cleaned in no time by the enthusiastic guests and seconds were offered and gratefully accepted by those eager for more.

Then came the desserts. An enormous choice, including Margaret's legendary home-made meringues, cheesecake decorated with raspberries, lemon posset, mixed fruit salad, sherry trifle and apple crumble with custard (apologies if I've missed any) and as a final touch, biscuits with cheese were available. All subsequently washed down with tea or coffee.

All in all a wonderful occasion. Those attending went home with full tummies and big smiles or if they didn't it was their own fault.

I look forward to a repeat following the next Coronation!!!"

*Alistair Cochrane*



### ...and then there were the Street Parties

Street parties were a highlight (with the added bonus of local Councils not charging to close off the street). Here's a flavour of the one enjoyed by the residents of your Editor's street in Putney. Everyone went overboard with an abundance of food and drink, a particular hit being delicious Spanakopita (savory spinach pie with cheese, typically feta) made by one of the Greek residents in the street, aided and abetted by Coronation Chicken, home-made filo pastry cheesy morsels, pizza, extremely moreish little sausages marinated in honey, a varied selection of quiches and lots of yummy puddings, not forgetting the miniature jellied vodka shots, the coup de resistance contribution of another of the residents. There is musical talent in the street and the live music was hugely appreciated, with lusty rendering of old favourites which included Sweet Caroline, Dancing Queen, the Macarena (with all the actions) and a wonderful solo rendering of 'On the street where you live'. We organised a hobby horse race - The Coronation Stakes - separate races for children and adults. The creativity of the paper horses' heads designed by the daughter of one of our residents and taped on top of broomsticks was admired by all. Our friendly bobbies who were doing the rounds of local street parties even put in an appearance and said it was lovely to see everyone so happy and enjoying life. The weather was kind despite a dodgy forecast and everyone had a great time!

*Norma Reid (aka Ed)*







## FRIENDS REMEMBERED

### DAVID EDNEY



David was born in Cheam in October 1931 to Ed and Win and moved with his brother, John, to Ashley Road in Walton before being evacuated in the war, ultimately spending a few years in the North Wales seaside town of Rhos-on-Sea. The house overlooked the cricket ground and David played there whilst at the same time going to the local school where he met Dorothy, the lady who was to become his wife for over 60 years

He worked in the oil industry and loved his job very much. The combination of camaraderie and strong work ethic throughout his whole career, firstly for BP and latterly for many other independent oil companies, ensured much travel away from home and ultimately a very fulfilling life. Outside work, David was a keen sportsman and was a founding member of the Old Tiffinians Strollers football team over 50 years ago. That gave him great satisfaction and enjoyment, including tours to Jersey as well

as much sociability. As April came around each year though, shorts and muddy knees would give way to cricket whites with grass stained knees and long summer days spent at Ashley Park and the cricket grounds of the County. Dorothy would help with the afternoon teas and the children, Chris and Susan would play on the sight screens and be plied with coke and packets of crisps to ensure a longer evening discussing the competitive game of the day.

At some point, David and a group of friends thought it would be good fun to buy an old tugboat called Lorelei, which they were determined to renovate together. It sank! Undeterred he acquired a fibreglass cabin cruiser which was sailed up and down the inland waterways with the family on board, thankfully staying afloat much to everyone's relief. A cabin cruiser followed which eventually gave way to a new boat, a 35ft narrow boat called Columbine on which to cruise along the Oxford and Grand Union canals. In time, another narrow boat replaced this one; Tamarisk which was painted a fetching shade of brown with pink tamarisk flowers on the side. Eventually though boats gave way to a small, stone cottage in the beautiful Derbyshire village of Great Longstone, near Bakewell. Many friends and family enjoyed it and many happy memories were forged.

Whilst the weekends were busy with sport, David's passion and involvement with Rotary never ended. He was awarded the prestigious "Paul Harris Fellowship" for his contribution to Rotary, which he received with incredible pride. His Rotary involvement stretched over many years, in community projects, in international relations, and with vocational projects where money was raised.

David and Dorothy travelled widely, visiting far-flung places. A favourite was Florida. They swapped their house for a house or apartment in Florida or else stayed with the hospitality offered by Florida Rotarians. They'd hop on a plane for a few weeks to exchange the wintry weather for the sunshine, usually around the time of the Augusta golf tournament so that David could watch the competition whilst Dorothy sat in the sun.

Family was tremendously important to David and he was never happier than being in their company. He was proud of his children, Christopher and Susan and when the much-loved grandchildren arrived, Sophie, Annabel, Christian and Martha, his cup overflowed. The arrival of great grandchildren Harry and Alfie brought even more joy and happiness.

During Covid Lockdown, whilst our church services were transmitted on Zoom David found great enjoyment in participating with Dorothy at the virtual Sunday service. He started attending regularly when the church buildings reopened in May, 2021 and formally became a member in 2022, one of the first to become a member of the united church. David really enjoyed his membership and the support given after the death of Dorothy in December 2021.

Following a short illness David died peacefully on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and the large congregation at the service of thanksgiving for his life is testament to the affection, respect and regard in which he was held.

*Susan Mangum and Mich*





## KEITH FITZGERALD



Keith was born in Mount Alvernia, Guildford. His mother was living in Paddington, London, at the time and it was considered safer to give birth away from the capital. He has no memories of his father and the house in London. He grew up in South Marston, a village outside Swindon in Wiltshire. His mother was working at Vickers Armstrong and the house backed onto the airfield where they tested aircraft. With limited transport into town, during visits to his grandmother in Eastleigh they would ask the guard on the train to stop at Stratton Halt and walk back along the lanes to South Marston. He enjoyed going to the monthly film showing in the village hall and visits to the cinema in Eastleigh while his mother and grandmother went shopping. After he left school, he started work at Radio Rentals in Swindon in the packing department. His experience there came in useful at Christmas time. He worked his way up through various departments, taking accountancy exams, one of his last jobs being responsible for decimalisation of all of Radio Rentals.

He was very proud of the fact that he passed his test very shortly after his 17th birthday and bought his first car, having learnt to drive on the airstrip in South Marston. He was awarded by the AA for having 70 years' membership. His love of driving continued to the end of his life and he hated being driven. We enjoyed many motoring holidays all over Europe from the North of Finland to Croatia in our own car and in hired cars in less accessible places. His first holiday abroad was to Italy in 1966 with a friend. The following year they joined a tour of Austria and it so happened that also on that trip was Anne with her mother, father and cousins.

Anne and Keith were married in 1968 and set up home in Highworth. David was born in Swindon. Keith decided to move on from Radio Rentals and got a job with Business Press as Training Manager working in Fleet Street. His first year there was spent commuting daily from Swindon Station, which put a strain on the family. We would drop him off at 7am and picked him up at 8.00pm. We moved to Walton in 1971 where Gill was born in 1972.

Keith became head of Personnel and Training within Business Press and spent a lot of time away, running courses and attending conferences so was rarely at home during the week. He still found time to edit the church Newsletter from 1973 to 1991 and chair the PTA of Ashley Road School where the children attended, and I was a teacher. Handling a huge budget at work, he couldn't get to grips with the constraints in the public sector. During this time, he was seen in Walton High Street as a Dalek one year and another as a chicken, to advertise the school fete.

He organised the major move of Business Press from London to Sutton, getting involved in local Sutton Charities and he worked with Harry Secombe on various projects. However, it was at this time he became seriously depressed and he took redundancy from the company. After a period of recovery, he discovered that Ian Allan was starting a scheme to train mature adults for the travel trade and he was fortunate to be accepted. Here began his second and most enjoyable and exciting career. He loved the travel business and rapidly became manager of shops in Staines, Brentford and Putney with WH Smith travel and then at Broadway Travel in Wimbledon. At this time much of the business was done through advertisements on Ceefax but Keith set up the first web site for Broadway Travel and went to classes to learn about computing becoming very adept and later it gave him hours of pleasure. When Broadway decided to move to Luton Keith refused to go with them and basically retired, working on the checkout in Marks and Spencer meeting customers such as Cliff Richard and then moving to Miko Coffee as Logistics Manager. When he finally gave up work, together we enjoyed many years of childcare, first with Angus, then Hester and finally Duncan, which lasted right up until Lockdown - some of the happiest times in our lives. We spent many happy hours at Wisley, where Angus would test every bench, forever to be known as a grandpa bench.

Travel has always played a very important part of our lives. Whilst in the travel business, apart from the many educationals Keith attended, he was able to organise some wonderful trips driving through Mexico from Mexico City to Puerto Vallarta, to Argentina and Chile visiting Iguazu and another trip through the Andes from Bariloche to Puerto Montt, driving up the coast of Chile to Santiago, then Hong Kong, Macau and Thailand, and a cruise up the Yangtze to Shanghai. Sars broke out while we were there, so we missed Beijing. Later we discovered cruising, but latterly the love of Keith's life was Budleigh Salterton where, once his mobility was difficult, he spent many, many hours gazing out to sea and enjoying visits from our Devon Grandchildren, Ellie Sophie, and Billy plus Wispa the dog.

The last few years were difficult for Keith health-wise but he was able to work on the computer doing the service sheets for church, helping me keep the roll up to date, and before Contact closed he did all the admin work. He was very meticulous and sought perfection which has helped greatly with all the paperwork needed following his death.

*Anne Fitzgerald and the family*



## Tribulations of a Treasurer – Chapter 4



Those of you from Weybridge may recall a couple of items that I wrote for the Church News a few years ago: one about my problems with a Church building society account and the other about the joys of the manse Council Tax. Here is yet another tale, related, as usual, in a rather fanciful way.

You will realise that we have set up a new bank account for the new church, which is why so many of you have kindly moved your standing orders to pay your offertory into it. (If you have not done so, please can I encourage you to make the change as soon as possible?)

Now, your offertory goes to pay for many things. It was rather a convoluted hop, skip and jump to enable us to pay the monthly Ministry and Mission from the new account, but, with the assistance of the URC HQ in London, we managed that before the end of 2022. This proved the crucial fact that a Direct Debit Mandate could be set up from the new account, even though two people from the Finance Committee have to sign it. (It also proves that Claire and I will NOT be able to take a Grand Tour of Europe at the church's expense.....)

Now, all we had to do was to write to the various purveyors of energy, water, broadband etc, get them to cancel the old DDMs and set up new ones.

As you know, I don't write about things which go smoothly.....

Some did – I went onto the websites of a couple of providers and got myself set up as a “super-user”. (This is apparently like being a super-hero, but you can only change a couple of things on a website and you are not granted X-Ray vision or the ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound.) I downloaded DDM forms from their website, got that nice Mrs Lee to counter-sign them, sent them off and our problems were solved.

However.....

I wrote to or telephoned just about all the other firms which would need paying. Some sent me a form, which was good; others wanted to set a DDM up over the 'phone. (I wasn't quite sure why this could happen – an unknown stranger 'phones in and you can set up a DDM normally requiring two signatories without him signing anything at all – but apparently it is permissible..... until it dawns on the person on the other end of the line how silly this is!)

Other firms had been sent e-mails via such addresses as I could find on their website. I wrote to one firm at the end of October and chased it up at the end of November. The correspondence was addressed to “Customer Services”. (Logical, I thought – we are customers and they are providing a service to us.) However, it is only recently that I have received a reply – from “Accounts Receivable”! These are the good folks who chase up outstanding payments. We now have three of the latter, as we had not made the January, February or March payments. I have e-mailed them to ask for a DDM which Carol and I can sign to sort the problem out – we hope!

To get round the other firms, Alan and I cancelled the DDMs still running from both our former churches' bank accounts in mid-January.

It is amazing how rapidly a firm responds when you cancel a Direct Debit!

One got so annoyed that I had done so that I had a series of letters: “You owe us this money!”, followed by another saying “We are adding a late payment charge!” and then followed by another saying “There will be an admin charge as well and we are thinking about charging interest on the debt!” (I began to wonder if bailiffs would burst into the Sunday service, kidnap Michael and hold him to ransom.....)

Such are the joys of computer-driven systems where no-one checks what is going out, before it is sent.

“Stay calm!” I instructed myself, “Remember the Three Ps of dealing with a bureaucracy: patience, persistence and politeness.”

I found their customer services telephone number and rang them. I spoke to a very pleasant young lady.

I explained that the two churches had come together and that all I wanted to do was pay the DDM from the new bank account.

“No problem,” she said, “have you got a DDM form?”

I explained the lack of replies to any contact, apart from the computer’s apoplexy about the cancellation of the old DDM.

“No? Sorry about that,” she said, “I’ll send you one.”

Progress, I thought. I asked about the outstanding payments.

“No. Sorry about that,” she said, “The computer says that you need to pay all the outstanding money, plus the late payment and admin charges.”

So, the new DDM would not be of any help?

“No. Sorry about that,” she said, “You need to get up-to-date before it can start.”

Hmmmm.....

Could I pay the outstanding money immediately, without having to pay the late payment charge?

“No. Sorry about that,” she said, “The computer says that you need to pay it all.”

Even though the computer’s own letter said that I had until the next day to pay, before the late payment charge came into effect?

“No. Sorry abo.....,” she said, “That does seem strange, doesn’t it? I’ll take the outstanding payment now and then I’ll check.”

So, I paid immediately and she was able to make the late payment charge disappear!

Would the admin charge now also disappear?

“No. Sorry about that,” she said, “The computer says I don’t have permission.” (Thus proving that there are limits to being a super-user, even within an organisation!)

I thanked her for her help – don’t forget that folks in her position, too, have to remain patient, persistent and polite, despite having to field calls all day from people moaning about their payments!

She sent me a DDM form, which Carol signed and I sent back.

Two weeks later, Alan handed me a sheaf of no less than FOUR invoices from them, in separate envelopes, dated consecutively.....

This was the computer’s way of adjusting what we owed step-by-step and getting rid of the admin charge.

“Sorted!” I hear you cry. But, no – sorry about that! The DDM has not worked its way through their administration system, so I was forced to pay the balance of the 2023 / 2024 fees in early April. We shall see if anything ever comes of our attempts to set up a DDM with them.....

Watch this space.....

*Jem Ward*

## FLOWER POWER



Anne, Fitzgerald, David and Gill would like to thank everyone for the tremendous support they have received through prayers, cards and gifts of flowers over the last few weeks, as well as visits and chats. It has been much appreciated.

**Irene Pearson** was delighted to be presented with a bunch of sunshine - a selection of yellow and white flowers - after church in mid-May. *"Thank you so much - they brought a spring to my step!"*

**Norma** would also like to say thank you for the beautiful assortment of pale pink, cream and lilac flowers she received recently. They were not as professionally arranged at home as they were on the Communion Table but nonetheless much appreciated and enjoyed for the rest of the week!

Here is a selection of the lovely floral tributes that we were able to enjoy over the past two months.

If anyone would like to donate flowers, please sign in for the relevant date on the chart in The Gateway. We know how much they are appreciated by recipients be it for a happy occasion or to bring comfort in sad times. A big thank you to all those 'flower fairies' who distribute the flowers after the service every week.



30 April, provided by Ghislaine Stevenson  
in memory of Tom, Ethel and Cheryl



7 May, provided by the Flower Fund



14 May, provided by Denise Scorer and Barbara  
Fielding in memory of Alfred Fielding



21 May, provided by Claire Ward in memory of her  
late husband Brian and their wedding anniversary





## RECIPE CORNER

*These recipes are all from my own recipe book. They are easily prepared and have always been favourites. Ed*

### **ESCABECHE DE POLLO (MARINADED CHICKEN)** *(A staple Argentine dish made often by my mother)*

#### Please Note:

*This is not a recipe for anyone who needs to know exact measurements and exact time for cooking!*

#### **Ingredients**

1 small chicken (either whole or in pieces)  
2 large carrots (chopped)  
1 large onion (chopped)  
Other vegetables can be added if desired  
1/2 cup vinegar  
2 cups oil  
Juice of one large lemon  
A little white wine  
Salt and pepper

Put all ingredients into a pan and simmer on a low heat until it starts to smell delicious - probably about an hour or until the chicken is tender. Can be made a day ahead and kept in the fridge.

### **CHOCOLATE BRANDY CAKE** *(not for the weight watchers amongst you!)*

Serves 10-12

#### **Ingredients**

1/2 lb digestive biscuits	1/2 lb plain chocolate (good quality)
1/2 lb butter	2 medium eggs
3 oz castor sugar	2 oz glacé cherries (chopped)
2 oz walnut pieces	2 tbs brandy (or rum)

Crush digestive biscuits coarsely and set aside. Melt chocolate with butter over a very low heat or *Bain Marie* (double saucepan does the trick).

Beat eggs and sugar together until they are creamy, then beat in the melted chocolate and butter. Fold in 3/4 of the glacé cherries, walnuts and brandy and the crushed biscuits. Put into a buttered cake tin (7" or 8") with a removable base.

Decorate with remaining cherries and nuts (keep a few whole cherries and half walnut pieces for decoration) and store in fridge until about half an hour before serving. Serve in small slices as it is VERY rich (and very yummy).

### **THE PARSONS' FUDGE** *(this dates back to schooldays in Glasgow at the age of 5 when I became friends with Jeanie, who was in my class - we are still in touch)*

#### **Ingredients**

2 lbs sugar	1 cup milk
1 tin sweetened condensed milk	1 tablespoonful syrup
2 ozs margarine	1/2 teaspoonful vanilla essence

Put all ingredients into pan and heat (without boiling) until sugar melts. Boil for 30 minutes. Add the vanilla essence. Beat until sugared. Pour into buttered tins.



*Pink's my most favourite colour*

We called our session The Church's Birthday and had activities to go with the theme. Despite very poor attendance those present, including the adults, had a good time.

Cake icing was popular with a strawberry to represent the Pentecost flame and a candle to remind us it was the birthday of the church.



*The best part of this is eating it...*

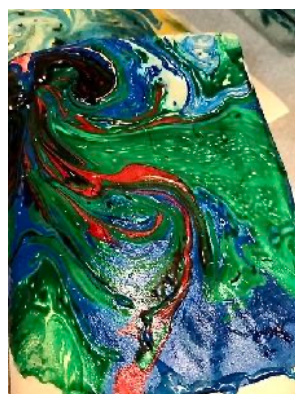
Favourite with the youngsters present was blowing up balloons and tossing them around while the adults indulged themselves with the marbling. Some lovely results were obtained both on paper and on small wooden hearts.



*I think I'm quite good at this balloon-blowing up lark*



*Jean hard at work*



*Marbling for the grown-ups*



*I can do marbling too!*



*I'm forever blowing bubbles...*

During the celebration we heard Happy Birthday sung in Welsh and Spanish and the children showed off their ability in foreign languages too.

We had a birthday cake to share - the honour of cutting it was given to the oldest child. I am not sure it was divided equally into portions but we all did get a bit!

*Anne Fitzgerald*



*Careful does it - it's a big knife!*

## THE LIGHTER SIDE



Be like the bird who, pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight, feels them give way beneath her, and yet sings, knowing she hath wings.

*Victor Hugo*

I hope you love birds too. It is economical. It saves going to heaven.

*Emily Dickinson*

The reason birds can fly and we can't is simply because they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings.

*J M Barrie*

*At Burview Hall, word has got around to the birds  
that smoking is anti-social and there is a far better  
use for the garden ashtray!*

A young clergyman, fresh out of training, thought it would help him better understand the harsh realities his future congregations faced if he first took a job as a policeman for several months. He passed the physical examination; then came three oral exams to test his ability to act quickly and wisely in an emergency. Among other questions he was asked, "What would you do to disperse a frenzied crowd?" He thought for a moment and then said, "I would pass around an offering plate." He got the job.

Mary was out driving and while stopped at a red light, the car just died. It was a busy intersection and the traffic behind her started to grow. The man in the car directly behind her started beeping his horn continuously as she struggled to get her car going again. Finally, Mary got out of her car and approached the man in the car behind her. "I can't get my car started," she said smiling. "Would you be so kind as to see if you can do it? While you try, I'll stay here in your car and beep your horn for you."

*with thanks to 'Searchlight', St Andrew's Shottery*

It was towards the end of the 19th century that Scottish Presbyterian ministers began to wear academic hoods in the pulpit. The Revd Dr Walter Ross Taylor wore a red DD hood when he acted as Moderator of the Free Church Assembly and afterwards in his own church in Glasgow. One Sunday, a woman in the congregation had a friend with her. Uncertain if it was Dr Taylor who was going to be conducting worship that Sunday, they were watching the vestry door. "Is it him?" the visitor asked in a whisper. "Aye, aye, it's himself with his jeely bag on his back."

*from 'Holy Wit' by the Revd James A Simpson*



## THE CHURCH GARDEN

The task of tidying up the church garden began several weeks ago but there is still much work to be done – weeds never stop growing! Sadly, James Zhang can no longer assist owing to a delicate



back problem but many thanks to James for his past assistance. The church garden suffered badly like most gardens last summer and over winter from a record-breaking hot spell followed by an unusually long cold freezing winter. Bedding plants were fried, and we lost quite a few shrubs to frost which need replacing. For many years, we have benefitted from numerous trays of bedding plants grown from seed and kindly donated by Michael Hopgood saving us a small fortune. Some will remember Michael who used to run our 8<sup>th</sup> Walton Scout Group. However, he has dispensed with growing bedding plants owing to climate change and has now switched to drought resistant shrubs like Salvia 'Hotlips', part of

the Sage family. He gave me a few 'Hotlips' cuttings and young plants last year, one of which can be seen coming into bloom in the large pot near the church hall entrance. These shrubs are difficult to find in local garden centres and sell quickly. I have



subsequently ordered more of the attractive 'Lips' varieties over the internet from specialist nurseries. They enjoy a long flowering season and possess a lovely blackcurrant aroma

when you crush leaves or brush past. All salvias have nectar-rich flowers which are loved by bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects.



So next month, look out for some of the following varieties when, temperature permitting, salvias with exotic names like Cherry lips, Clotted Cream, Pink lips, Amethyst and Royal Bumble should be in flower. Seemingly an infusion of the flowers and leaves can be used to treat fevers. I have a few varieties of thriving Salvia 'Lips' (above right) in my own garden coming into bud.

I am currently 'growing on' other more drought resistant plants like geraniums, crimson



antirrhinums (right) and pink, white and magenta coloured cosmos in my greenhouse and will plant these out in the church garden when the weather warms up. Cosmos grows wild and prolifically in South Africa (left) and can often be seen at the side of Artpeace maize fields in Zimbabwe.



We are fortunate in having a large church garden but sadly and perhaps surprisingly it is rarely used by the church. However, sometimes passers-by stop for a chat or smile and tell me how much it lifts their spirits each day so in a way I guess it is a form of Outreach. **Johnston Simpson**



## Prayer Corner

### A Prayer of Welcome

O God, make the door of this house  
wide enough to receive all  
who need human love and fellowship,  
and a heavenly Father's care;  
and narrow enough to shut out  
all envy, pride and hate.

Make its threshold smooth enough  
to be no stumbling block  
to children nor to straying feet,  
but rugged enough to turn back the tempter's power;  
make it a gateway to thine eternal kingdom. Amen

*Bishop Thomas Ken (1637-1711)*

*Everyone entering the ancient parish church of St John the Baptist at Yarkhill in Herefordshire is greeted by this prayer. (It is also believed to be recorded in other churches.) The original church was founded in Norman times and there is still some evidence of that period in the porch and tower but the present building is largely the result of Victorian re-design. The church is unusual in having three fonts – one Norman, one 13<sup>th</sup> century and one 17<sup>th</sup> century!*

*Thomas Ken was born in Hertfordshire in 1637. He went to school at Winchester College followed by studies at the University of Oxford. He was ordained in 1662 (a year of upheaval in the C of E with the Great Ejection) and after ministering in three parishes in Essex, the Isle of Wight and Hampshire he resigned in 1672 on appointment as Prebendary at Winchester Cathedral and Chaplain to the Bishop. He was known for his work among the poor and he continued this by working as a curate in a deprived parish in Winchester alongside his Cathedral appointment. Charles II sent him to Holland in 1679 as Chaplain to Princess Mary wife of William of Orange but he had a serious dispute with William and soon returned to England where in 1680 he was appointed as Chaplain to Charles II. When Charles and his court visited Winchester in 1683 it was suggested that Nell Gwynne (the King's official mistress) should stay in Thomas Ken's house. He took vigorous exception to this idea and she was forced to find alternative accommodation. Despite this he and the King remained on good terms and it was at Charles' insistence (and in recognition of Thomas' work in Winchester) that he was made Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1685.*

*Thomas Ken was imprisoned in the Tower of London (along with six other Bishops) on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1688 charged with 'high misdemeanour' for refusing to recognise and publish the Catholic King James II's document 'A Declaration of Indulgence' feeling that it was against the spiritual freedom of the Church. Following their trial on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June they were found Not Guilty and returned to their duties. By 1691 Thomas Ken was in trouble again and was removed from his bishopric for refusing to swear allegiance to the Protestant William of Orange now on the English throne as William III ruling jointly with his wife, Mary the daughter of James II. Thomas Ken was regarded as the most eminent of the objectors who became known as Non-Jurors. In his enforced retirement he lived at Longleat – the home of his friend from Oxford days, Thomas Thynne – the 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Weymouth, where he spent much of his time writing. Hymns he wrote in earlier years are still sung today 'Awake, my soul, and with the sun' (R&S 378) 'Glory to thee, my God, this night' (R&S 416). His doxology 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow' (R&S 21) also appears as the last verse in both these hymns. When Queen Anne tried to persuade him to return as Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1703 she failed. He declined partly for health reasons but probably also because he did not want to leave his quiet life at Longleat. Thomas Ken died in 1711 and his tomb is in St John's Church, Frome. He is also commemorated with a statue in one of the niches on the West Front of Salisbury Cathedral.*

## ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

**COSTER BALAKASI** was reasonably happy with his harvest despite the yield being 30% down on last year owing to continuous rainfall damage to the crop and leeching fertilizers from



the soil. After milling, this may last his extended family until January, but some artists have fared better. The mornings are getting colder as their winter approaches so dried cobs are useful as fuel. Coster still manages to sculpt and sent this photo of his latest carving of an abstract fish made from Fruit Springstone. Unfortunately, the piece is too heavy for a courier, but Coster said he would try and make similar smaller manageable pieces.

**Lovemore James** (left) recently attended a traditional ceremony at his mother's rural home. A beast was slaughtered as a sacrifice to give thanks to the spirits for protecting the family and the



community. Old traditions die hard! Lovemore and his wife Junior are members of the Apostolic church. Although 70% of Zimbabweans are Christians, most continue to practice elements of their traditional religions. Further, most Zimbabwean churches now incorporate worship practices that include traditional African rituals of songs, dance, non-Christian iconography and oral culture. Above right - villagers clapping their hands giving thanks to the spirits. Verity, our next traveller from CAFOD, will bring some figures from Lovemore James's late highly talented friend Luke Saidi - from his 'Demure Ladies' series.





**IT'S ALL CHANGE** at Southwark Cathedral. Dean Andrew Nunn is sadly retiring, and shop manager Jon Dollin now works in another department. Andrew has been a tremendous support over the years, and we will miss him. Jon will also be sorely missed as we had built up quite a rapport. Alfie Roche the replacement manager used to be the Retail Operations Manager at the Museum of London. Many artists sent messages to the Dean including these words from **Mike Masedza**: 'To the Dean and Jon. It is my pleasure to send you this message of thanks. Thank you very much for your help and support during your tenure at Southwark Cathedral. On behalf of Artpeace cooperative, I would like to pass my love and gratitude for the years we have worked together. You did a tremendous job in marketing our Art. God bless you for playing your part in putting food on our table including our extended families. We love you all. Mike.'



**ARTISTS' NEWS:** Godfrey William wrote: 'My church elders met at Grace's Satumwa's home for prayers (left). She is an old ill lady. I provide seed for my chickens by sowing sunflower seeds (right) in my maize field'.



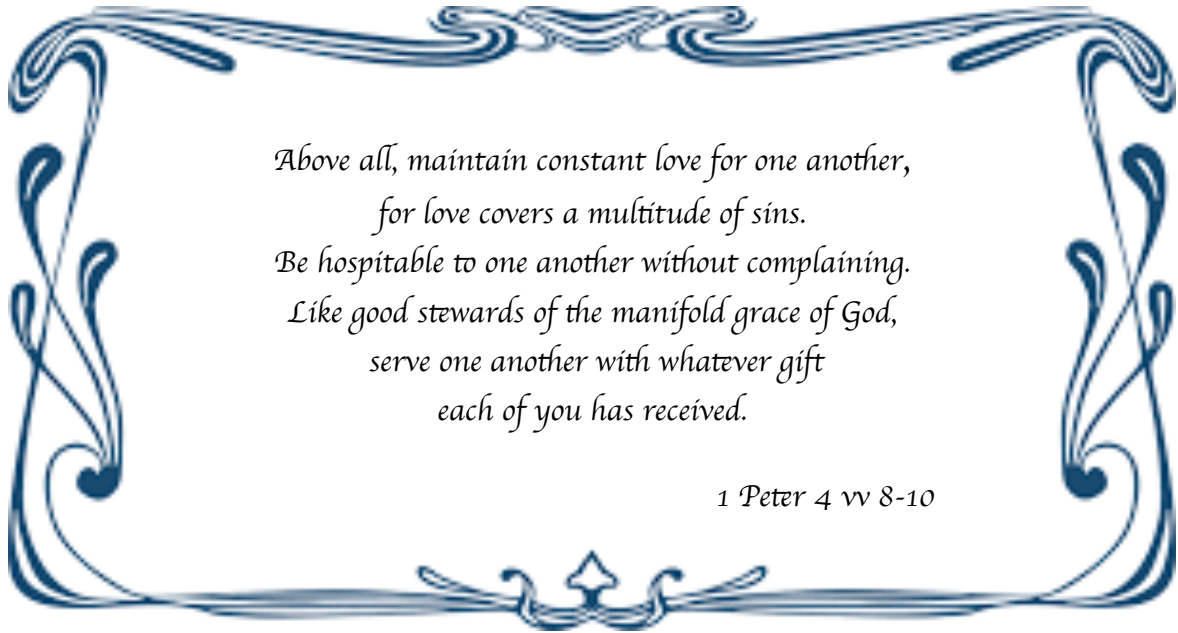
**Herbert Mhlanga** wrote: 'John, Thembinkosi aged four and Dumusani aged five live with their parents who are very poor, unemployed and need help. The children do not



attend school as there is no money for school fees, food and other survival stuff. Neither have they a proper shelter (below), water, electricity or a toilet but possess two sheep.



**A friend commented:** 'We are overwhelmed with pain and helplessness at the greed of the 'elite' who are unravelling our beautiful country. A sickening, shameful gold mafia looting every speck of gold out of our ground and rivers, poisoning the water and devastating the environment to enrich themselves only. Lithium in Bikita is being looted at the rate of 42 trucks of concentrate a day, 'they are departing daily with the loot says Farai Maguwu, director of the Centre for Natural Resources Governance. Great scars are being left exposed in hills and valleys of lithium mines everywhere'. I sometimes feel as if I am pushing water uphill with little hope whilst such corrupt people dominate and treat fellow Zimbabweans like dirt. However, please never underestimate the effect of your support *direct* to Artpeace – it's a game changer said Lovemore. You raise the spirits of many knowing that their UK friends care, and they are not forgotten. **Johnston Simpson**



#### **MINISTER**

The Reverend Michael Hodgson  
The Manse  
3 Elgin Road  
Weybridge  
KT13 8SN

Tel: 01932 841382  
Email: [michael.mah@btinternet.com](mailto:michael.mah@btinternet.com)

#### **THE SECRETARIAL TEAM**

Mrs Carol Lee  
Email: [secretary@standrewsurc.org](mailto:secretary@standrewsurc.org)

Mrs Gwenda Cochrane  
Mrs Liz Grimsey  
Mrs Shirley Morley

Hall Hire at St Andrew's URC Walton and Weybridge: [roomhire@standrewsurc.org](mailto:roomhire@standrewsurc.org)

Website: [www.standrewsurc.org](http://www.standrewsurc.org)

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!