



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE



THE GRAPEVINE



MARCH 2024

Volume 3 No 2



Crocuses to gladden the heart in Cannizaro Park, Wimbledon Common

*Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth her song begin ;
Let the round world keep triumph, and all that is therein;
Invisible and visible, their notes let all things blend,
For Christ the Lord is risen
Our joy that hath no end.*

- St John of Damascus



Dear friends

From The Manse

March 2024

A hymn that dates back to the 10th century focuses on God's creation praising God, and upon the ways in which that praise which creation gives can be appreciated by us. (The strain upraise of joy and praise (CP 796/RCH14). In it, for example, the hymn's author states:

*The planets, glitter on their heavenly way,
The shining constellations join and say, "Alleluia!"*

I was reminded of that hymn a few weeks ago as I was unexpectedly given the most incredible opportunity.

The theme for the evening was "space" and the Cubs' "activity" was making space ships and rockets out of recycled materials. Much fun was had by all - NASA would have been proud of the care and ingenuity that went into the production of those space-craft. However, it was what was going on outside, in the garden, that was the real joy for me. Someone knowledgeable about the planets had come to show the children the night sky and to point all sorts of things out to them. He brought with him three good quality telescopes so that we could see things clearly, and some things that were not visible to the naked eye. That evening, the moon would be nearly full and Jupiter should be visible - if you knew where to look. With luck one or two of Jupiter's moons could even be visible too.

Everything was on our side. It was really, cold outside - a crisp, clear, frosty night, but that just made it all perfect. We were in for a treat. Firstly, the moon. The visitor set up one of his telescopes and focused it on the moon and we could see it clearly and see the cratered surface too. (Think I spotted Wallace looking for Wensleydale but Gromit was out of the telescope's vision!) It was so incredibly beautiful, and as I looked I realised that the last time I'd done this was when I was about the same age of the Cubs and Mum had borrowed a telescope from another teacher at the school she was at. It was amazing to look at and yet the best was yet to come.

The next telescope was focused on Jupiter and I've never seen Jupiter so clearly (no prizes for guessing the tune going through my head). What's more, through the telescope we could see all four larger of Jupiter moons, which we were told are called, Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto. Since the weather conditions were so perfect, we were able to see everything incredibly clearly and I will admit that, when the cubs went in for the close of their meeting and to lower the flag, I snuck back outside to see the moon and Jupiter and its moons all over again.

In the Benedicite (R&S 737) we are told:

*Glorify the Lord, all the universe,
Planets and stars and galaxies in space.*

On my own, in the quiet of the church garden, with the Cublets all safely in the hall it was a very calming and a very spiritual feeling - and a moment that stretched the mind to comprehend something of the wider universe. I've a feeling that I shall long remember it and yet it all came upon me unawares. As you probably realise, I regularly go to the end of Cubs and to the start of Scouts to see everyone, to show support to them and to retain a contact. I'd gone along to the hall that evening not knowing what they were doing and yet ended up having learned lots of new things and having a holy moment - a spiritual experience and a chance to gasp in wonder.

Now from all men be out-poured, Alleluia to the Lord.



(CP- Congregational Praise: RCH - Revised Church Hymnary: R&S - Rejoice and Sing)

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'John Cad', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES MARCH 2024

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

Sunday 3 March (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Friday 8 March	12.30 - 2.30 pm	People Who Lunch - Church Hall (<i>see page 5</i>)
Sunday 10 March	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 12 March	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
 Sunday 17 March (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship
	3.00 pm	 Messy Church

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ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)
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Sunday 24 March
(Palm Sunday)

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Thursday 28 March
(Maundy Thursday)

7.00 pm

Service in The Gateway

Friday 29 March
(Good Friday)

10.30 am

Service of Reflection in the church



DON'T FORGET ... THE CLOCKS SPRING FORWARD AT 01.00 ON SUNDAY 31 MARCH!



Sunday 31 March
(Easter Day)

10.30 am

Morning Worship with Holy Communion
(and bring a flower)

CHURCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF ELDERS

Notice is given that the AGM, together with the Election of Elders will take place in church, after worship on **Sunday 14 April, 2024.**

Stepping down from the Eldership this time is Sue Groves. Sue has been a serving Elder for a number of years, faithfully caring for a pastoral list centred on Sunbury and Shepperton. Having been one of those who oversaw the transition from St Andrew's to the new church, Sue agreed to stand last year for one further year to give further stability. I am sure that we are all grateful to her for that, particularly since the year has also seen Ray's health fail and then his death in January. So, thank you Sue for the dedicated, caring service you have given to the church whilst on the Eldership. Always someone we could rely on, it can certainly be said of you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

We appreciate all that you have done.

Michael Hodgson

HOLY WEEK



Our Holy Week journey begins on Palm Sunday (24th March) as we walk with Jesus from the top of the Mount of Olives down to Jerusalem. Our service will include the customary distribution of palm crosses.

Maundy Thursday (28th March), at 7.00pm, we meet in The Gateway to recall the events that took place in the Upper Room, culminating in our making our way to the Garden of Gethsemane. This year the clocks will not have altered by then, allowing us to conclude the service in a different, and I hope, thought provoking way.

Our journey continues on Good Friday (29th March) at 10.30 as we gather at the foot of the cross to reflect again on the events that took place as Jesus “hung and suffered there”. Our service will build on

EASTER DAY



On Easter Day (31st March) we gather in the church garden (weather permitting) to hear again the story of the joyous discover made the first Easter Day, before making our way (singing) into church to celebrate this wonderful news and to share Communion).

“The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

NB Please bring a flower with you to the service on Easter Day. It can be a “posh bought” one - or one from your garden - or even a wild flower if you wish. Just bring a flower with you to the service, possibly with the stem wrapped in a wet tissue to stop it wilting in transit! We shall then be using them during the service to make something beautiful. *Michael Hodgson*

Happy Easter to you, my friend!
This day's light shall have no end
For Christ did rise
In the golden morn
And by His life are we reborn.

Happy Easter to one and all!
The night is over, the sun is tall.
The day did break with a tiny beam
And flooded life with Light supreme.

*from Holly Pond Hill: A Child's Book of Easter by Paul F Kortepeter
(with thanks to goodreads.com)*

News of the Church Family

Sadly a number of our members have recently had falls, including **Pam Russell, Alex Henham, Patricia Coaker** and **David Cheeseman**. The seriousness of the consequences varies and David is currently in St Peters but we send our good wishes to them all.

Malcolm Bryant and **Barbara Fielding** are also currently in St Peter's. **Denise Scorer** has also not been well and so we send them our love and good wishes

Our two Grapevine Editors have also been rather "challenged" recently. Our thoughts are with **Mollie** who has been quite unwell with an infection and with **Norma** who is recovering from an eye op which, though still at early stages, appears to have been successful.

Val Cave has been having heart problems since before Christmas but we hope that she might be getting sorted now and will soon pick up again.

It been a great joy to have a young family worshipping with us recently – great to see the children engaged with various activities in The Gateway and it's also been lovely to see **Shirley, John** and **Jake** in church as well. Jake has joined the Beavers and was enrolled a few weeks ago.

Anne Fitzgerald says:

*"I visited **Eva Ramage** in Worplesdon recently. She was delighted to see me and in good spirits. She sends her best wishes to everyone."*

Norma called to see **Christine Carlile** on 18 February with some of the church flowers. Christine was having lunch at the time so it wasn't the best moment for much of a chat, but she was happily surprised by the visit and especially that she was being thought of by her friends at church.

Prayers

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Brian and Kate Ashfield, David Cheeseman, John Langdon, Lilian Smith and Michael Stevens. Remember, too, all those who are unwell.

*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

I've recently heard from my contact at N/E Surrey Children and Families that a mother and her children arrived in distress and needing help on a Friday afternoon, having been given emergency housing in a local motel with no cooking facilities and no food. She had a referral for the Food Bank which wouldn't be open till the following Monday and so was given Sainsbury coupons from our donations before Christmas. It made a tremendous difference to the family and also to the staff who were able to respond in a positive way. Grateful thanks from all concerned.

Gwenda Cochrane

AND DON'T FORGET PEOPLE WHO LUNCH ... THIS MONTH ON FRIDAY 8 MARCH

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

A DAY OUT IN FARNBOROUGH



On Saturday 27 January, Paula and I joined about 1,000 people on a march from Farnborough town centre to Farnborough Airport. There is a lot of local concern in Farnborough and the surrounding area about the plan to expand the airport by 40% and the impact this will have on CO₂ emissions, air quality, noise, and the natural environment. (The planned increase will take the cap on the number of flights per year from 50,000 to 70,000). Extinction Rebellion (XR) organised the march and a rally outside the main gates to the airport for speeches.



The march was family-friendly, colourful, and well organised and there were plenty of interesting people to talk to on the way. Other groups taking part included Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, XR Scientists, XR Families, the Quakers, the Farnborough



Noise Group, and Alton Climate Action Network, in addition to local councillors and residents.

Greta Thunberg led the column of marchers and later joined XR Drummers playing samba-fusion music outside the main gate of the airport. In a brief interview, she criticised the “extreme lifestyles” of users of Farnborough Airport and said, “The fact that using private jets is both legally and socially allowed today in an escalating climate emergency is completely detached from reality.”



We met friends including Helen Everard, minister at Fleet URC, and her husband, Alex, who kindly took this photo (left).

Farnborough Airport is used solely for private jet flights, the most polluting form of transport. The UK operates more private jet flights than any other European country. There has been an alarming growth in the number of these flights in recent years, despite the fact that climate science tells us that a dramatic reduction in global CO₂ emissions is needed in order to avert a climate catastrophe.

A ban on private jets would be a good starting point, or at the very least, private jet flights should be heavily taxed with the proceeds used to fund sustainable transport. The government’s Climate Change Committee 2023 Progress Report to Parliament states that “There has been continued airport expansion in recent years, counter to our assessment that there should be no net airport expansion across the UK.” The latest news from Farnborough is that the planning application is to be delayed until after the local elections. The Airport has been asked to provide clarification and further information on the environmental impact assessment.

In its 2022 Environmental Policy, the URC recognises that we are living through a climate emergency and acknowledges that human activity is responsible for the degradation of the earth that is harming the balance of nature, and imposing most heavily upon the poorest people in the world. Private jets, used by a very small number of the wealthy in society, impacts large numbers of the least well-off. Because of this, we will continue to look for opportunities to take meaningful action and join with others to make our voices heard. As members of the URC, we feel we have a responsibility to live out this policy and to make sure that we are informed about the facts of climate change. We would love to start discussions with you, our church family, so please do come and have a chat with us.

Teresa Bacon and Paula Walsh



News from the URC - Wessex Synod

Prayer Calendar for March

- 3 The Spire Church, Farnham;
Christ Church, Marlow
- 10 Trinity, Charminster;
London Street, Basingstoke;
St Peter's Shared Church, Guildford
- 17 Trinity United Church, Ringwood;
St John's, Jersey. The URC in Jersey
- 24 St Mark's Shared Church, Bordon;
St Columba's, Oxford;
- 31 Three Legged Cross;
Ryde, Isle of Wight;
St Andrew's, Walton and Weybridge

Induction of Synod Moderator

If you would like to attend the Induction of the Revd Dr Michael Hopkins as Moderator of the Wessex Synod (and have not already applied) on Saturday, 23 March at 3pm at London Street URC, Basingstoke please contact Deborah Walker at office@urcwessex.org.uk by Monday 11 March at the latest.

Basingstoke URC is in the pedestrianised part of London Road so there is no vehicular access but parking is available in the nearby shoppers' car parks. Alternatively it's an easy 10 minute walk (mainly under cover through the shopping mall) from the railway station if you don't want to play with the M25 and the M3!

Everyone is welcome at the service and light refreshments will be served after the service. Michael, of course, is well known here because he was the Interim Moderator for St Andrew's Walton and Weybridge during the last vacancy.

Moderator's Photos/Drawing Request

Our incoming Moderator, Michael Hopkins, would like to have a small range of notelets/greetings cards printed with images reflecting Wessex. Everyone in the Synod is invited to send in photos or artwork that they think is suitable and as many as possible will be used. Michael is not particularly looking for photos or drawings of church buildings but anything that conveys an idea of Wessex.

Some parameters:

You can interpret Wessex however that speaks to you.

Everything submitted must be original and by submitting you grant permission to the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church to use any material submitted for stationery and/or publicity in perpetuity.

No photos of identifiable people, please, to avoid safeguarding or data privacy difficulties. Unidentifiable people in the background are fine.

Everything must be electronic so, if you draw, paint etc, please scan it and send in an electronic file.

Please use wetransfer.com or equivalent for large file sizes.

Send to office@urcwessex.org.uk

Deadline: Monday 13 May



ST ANDREW'S FACEBOOK PAGE managed by Elizabeth our Administrator, has been up and running for several months. So far, entries have attracted 8 or 9 'likes' at best, although the number of 'friends' is encouraging so a word of thanks to those who have 'liked' the page and to those who regularly 'like' and share posts. Our Minister estimates that 50% of the congregation have access to **FB** so we have some way to go to maximise the effect of this very useful **Outreach** tool, as the next two years – whilst we have a full time minister – could prove critical to the future of our Church.

St Andrew's, or at least the sanctuary, tends to be used for two hours a week and attendances can fluctuate dramatically - not everyone comes into the hall for a coffee afterwards which is a pity. We are fortunate in having **The Grapevine**, our excellent Newsletter, which is superior to most, but only monthly. This leaves a big communication gap which Facebook could fill admirably most days, keeping those of the congregation albeit on **FB**, informed and indeed, importantly, able to comment. **FB** users also know they can invite friends – hence the **Outreach** connection, so vital to our survival.

I am sure Elizabeth would welcome items from the congregation, not necessarily Church related but she could elaborate on this much better than I. It's a painless quick way of keeping folk aware of news etc. on a daily basis, showing that there is still life left in St Andrew's whether you are able to attend Church or not. Hopefully I am sure our Elders will have other **Outreach** ideas in the pipeline but meanwhile, active use of **FB** cannot but help our situation.

For my part, at the risk of possibly boring some, I can add to the ArtPeace story as I receive material, especially photos, from our extended family in Zimbabwe most days. This includes the occasional video.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? Contact Elizabeth at: administrator@standrewsurc.org.uk or follow our social media accounts:

<https://www.facebook.com/StAndrewsURCWW>

Insta: standrewsurcww

JS

LIVING LIFE BETTER

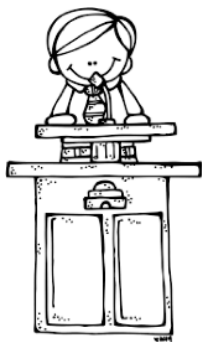
Susan and I recently watched an interesting Zoom presentation organised by **Elmbridge u3a**. The speaker is Sir Muir Gray CBE FRCPSGlas FCLIP, a British physician. Sir Muir is an internationally renowned authority on healthcare systems and has advised governments of several countries outside the UK. He has held senior positions in screening, public health management and value in healthcare. He is also the Chief Wellbeing Officer for Learning with Experts, a health related online learning company working with the NHS. We found it well worth watching with a common sense approach and quite uplifting. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2Fh4GuoxIM>

JS



READING IN CHURCH



The Elders are aware that the steps leading up to the lectern cause some people some issues and that some members are anxious about going up there. We are also aware that the lectern is also quite tall and some find that when they do get there they feel a bit like the old cartoon character, Chad! (Alan tells me that the lectern was originally taller and has been reduced in height!) The whole subject of access to the lectern, pulpit and Communion Table area is something we are currently taking some advice about. However, if you are struggling to get up there, physically can't, or are frightened of falling - or if you find the lectern simply too tall - then there is a simple alternative. Use mine! Just let someone know beforehand and we can put a fixed microphone there (I use a radio mic so that I can walk round) and read from my lectern. There are no steps to negotiate and it is lower. Whilst we sort out the bigger issue this is the simple solution. Use the main lectern if your wish, or use mine if that's easier or safer.

Michael Hodgson

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME



At the last Elders' meeting we discussed how we can welcome families with young children into church. As many of you know, we have been thinking about how to encourage families and now we want to make sure that any children visiting church have a positive experience.

The Elders decided to ask for volunteers to help with a junior worship rota. Obviously everyone on the rota will need to go through the DBS vetting process which is a simple and straight forward process.

Flexibility will be a necessary ingredient of our plan as we recognise we may not have any children in church. However we feel it's better to be prepared.

The Elders

WATCH OUT FOR THE NEXT ARTPEACE SALES!



GETTING CLOSER : After their 7000 miles journey, the latest batches of ArtPeace work has landed in various parts of the UK thanks to a CAFOD contact and a University student. There should be enough to mount a small sale in The Gateway next month and perhaps open this up to the public and friends of the congregation on a Saturday morning – an opportunity for **Outreach**. In future, I plan to select more quality pieces like the figure on the left by Luke Saidi (right) who tragically died young. Luke was influenced by his grandfather Saidi Sabiti, one of the First Generation Zimbabwean sculptors whose

work is held in important collections around the world. Lovemore of ArtPeace, is a good friend of the family who are holding some of Luke's few remaining unfinished pieces. Lovemore has offered to polish and finish this quality work so when available I will arrange to bring them over. **JS**





FRIENDS REMEMBERED

Ray Groves



For a dear Dad, Grandad and Husband, remembered by his daughter Alison.

Ray was a true British Gentleman of his generation. He had a wonderful, quiet wit, and a great sense of humour. I'm sure in the 1930s and '40s his sensitive young ears were filled to the brim with the hopefully now outdated concept that 'big boys don't cry'. He wasn't someone who felt very comfortable telling his loved ones what they meant to him. But he did show us in so many ways that he wanted the very best for us, for us to be happy and fulfilled, and he also really wanted this world to be a fairer and more peaceful place too.

He worked so hard at his career in London, often being away from home for eleven or twelve hours a day, with a gruelling train commute. I didn't know much about his work, but I found an old letter from his former boss amongst his papers. A sentence that really jumped out at me was this..." *the attorneys working with Ray have found him knowledgeable, responsive, helpful, and a pleasure to deal with*". It was a lovely letter to read.

But despite his hard work schedule, he would still find the time and energy in the evenings to carefully put together lovely packed lunches for me and my sister for school the next day, even when we were perfectly old enough to do it for ourselves. And when we were ill, he would arrive home with special treats - kiwi fruits, seedless grapes and big bottles of Lucozade in the orange bottles made with bobby glass.

One Christmas, I desperately wanted a 'Rainbow Sprite'. I'm sure not many people would even know now what one of those is! This was the early '80s, and apparently they were 'toy of the year' and had sold out everywhere. But dear Dad scoured the London toy shops and managed to find the exact one I wanted.

He also made sure that we always had great family holidays. He has passed on to me his love of travel and of Greece in particular. He was always browsing holiday brochures in search of his next trip to somewhere warm and sunny, despite his very fair skin and therefore his need for copious amounts of factor 50 and a variety of dubious sunhats!

The last two months of Dad's life on earth were really very difficult for him. It was so hard to see him so vulnerable in hospital and heartbreaking to not be able to immediately grant him his wish to come home. But we were able to show him that we cared deeply for him during our many hospital visits, and in his last two weeks, when he got his wish to return to the home that had been his since he and Mum moved in when it was a new-build in 1970.

It was a blessing that after all those years when he had selflessly and quietly worked away in the background for us, that we were able to return some of that love to him.

He will be missed greatly by all of us.



The theme for this month's session was Lent. We had lots of activities to do to help us think about Jesus in the desert. We made cactus plants from playdough with spaghetti spines, fondant snakes with brown sugar for sand, and painted stones.



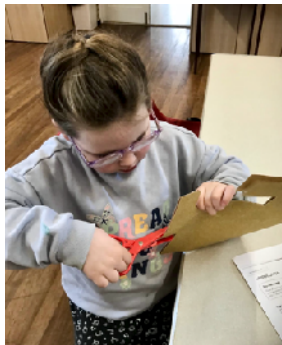
My first fondant snake!



Seems snakes need sand to sit in ...



Painting stones



Cutting crosses from sandpaper

Jesus was tempted to turn the stones into bread. Cutting crosses from sandpaper, the rough texture to remind us that Jesus had a hard time in the desert.

We used sackcloth to make bags which we decorated in purple, the colour used in some churches for Lent.



I'm really proud of my sackcloth bag!

We provided stickers and flowers for the children to make either Easter or Mother's Day cards. I told the children the story behind Pretzels* and we provided some to taste. The children were very involved in all on offer and worked really well, going home with some lovely examples. *Anne Fitzgerald*



Two heads are better than one



To Mum with love



Icing the cakes is a MUST!

*Stories vary as to the origin of the Pretzel, but this one is probably recounted the most. In the seventh century, a young Italian monk was preparing unleavened bread for Lent, the Christian period of fasting and penitence before Easter. Christians of the day prayed with their arms folded across their chests, each hand on the opposite shoulder. It occurred to him that he could twist the leftover dough from the bread into this shape and use it as a treat for the children to recite their prayers. He named his creation "pretiola", Latin for "little reward." The three holes represented the Holy Trinity. *Ed*

FLOWER POWER

“The smallest flower is a thought, a life answering to some feature of the Great Whole, of whom they have a persistent intuition.”

- Honoré de Balzac

A message from **Liz Grimsey**

"I was enormously touched when Caroline delivered to me some beautiful flowers from the communion table, originally provided by Moira. I was feeling rather low, but the flowers cheered me enormously. They look lovely, and even one of the paramedics who came to help me the next day commented on the delightful scent. I am very grateful."

Here is a selection of the lovely floral tributes that we have enjoyed over the past two months.

***If you feel you can help with distribution, please speak to Claire, Irene or Moira.
Your offer would be most welcome!***



28 January - Anne Fitzgerald



4 February - Shirley Morley in memory of her brother

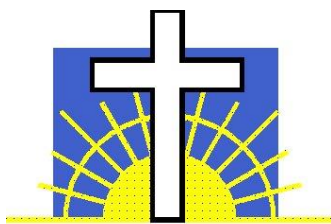


11 February - Moira de Kok



18 February Norma Reid - for her parents, with love

PRAYER CORNER



A Traditional Hymn for Easter

Christ the Lord is risen to-day,
Sons of men and angels say.
Raise your joys and triumphs high;
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply.

Charles Wesley
(1707-1788)

A Contemporary Prayer for Easter

Easter reminds us
that each time
we deny you, Lord,
another nail is sharpened;
and each time
we defy you, Lord,
into your hand it's hammered.
When faith is weak,
temptation strong
and courage fails,
forgive us, Lord
and once again
become that risen presence
within our hearts.

Amen

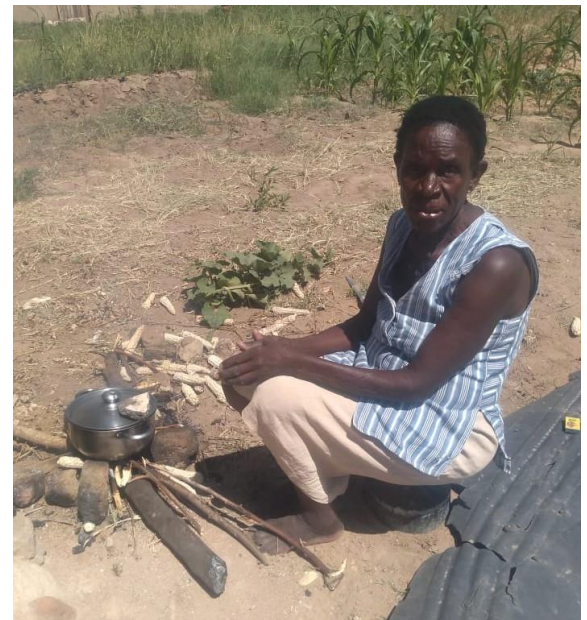
John Birch
faithandworship.com

(Printed with permission.)

These two writers are linked through the Methodist Church – one a Minister who with his brother was the founder of the Methodist movement in the 1700s; the other a current Local (Lay) Methodist Preacher.

ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

THE GOOD SAMARITANS – ArtPeace frequently send details of people worse off than themselves. Tourists to Zimbabwe, like many other Third World countries I guess, rarely meet these desperately poor people living off the beaten track. Funds permitting, we try to help them and the artists feel good about giving a few dollars to tide them over. **Coster** highlighted the living conditions of his neighbour, 85 year old widowed Gogo (Grandmother) Kanyera who survives through the occasional small donation from her Church. He said: *‘She has a small field which I help her harvest providing maize (below left). She suffers from high blood pressure and a*



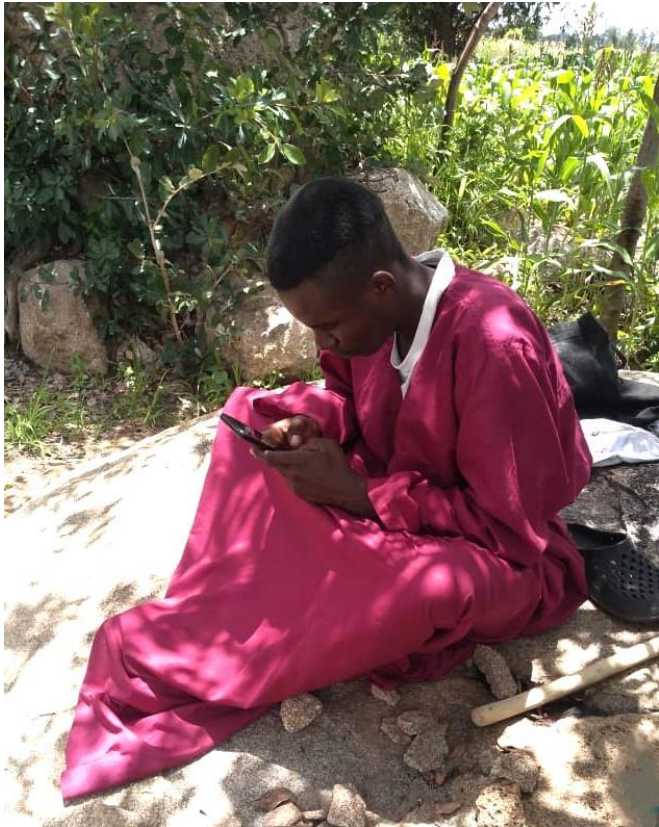
swollen hip after a recent fall. Last year, I helped to build her little home which does not have a proper toilet, water or electricity. She cooks using scraps of wood and plastic bags as fuel. Emma my wife, helps by fetching water and weeding her field but she needs support to buy medicines’.

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL SCULPTURE SALES last month were poor due to inclement weather. However, Kettering URC’s donation plus support from a handful of marvellous friends who regularly donate, has saved the day, ensuring support for AP and others mentioned here.

EDUCATION: Whilst the artists' top priorities are to cover rents and children's school fees, others are not so fortunate. Artist Dickson took this photo of 'a school' 25 kms from Tafara, and said: 'John this is so touching - these are children of resettled people from a former British farm.



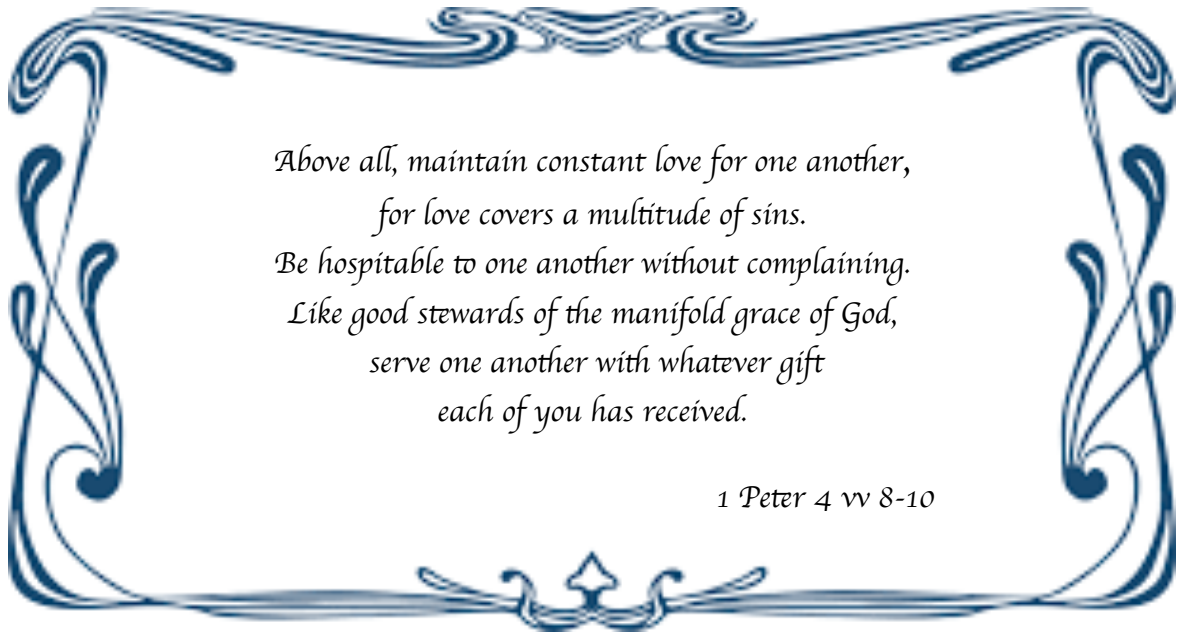
There are no roads, no running water, no sewage and no government schools. They have created a school of sorts so at least children may learn to read and write. Their parents are unemployed and have created a cheaper learning strategy. They have no uniforms, no furniture and work in a small space. Equipment is sparse as you can see! They have just returned after heavy rains as their classroom - a shed, has no proper roof or floor. The teacher is a volunteer and teaches a mixed class of grades 1 to 7. After his work at another school he goes to them voluntarily. When absent, brighter students in top grades teach the lower grades so when the teacher comes he will have more time for them'. Many Zimbabwean teachers are on a rolling go-slow as their salaries are pathetic and not enough to even get to work, let alone pay rent, buy food and medicine. And we think our education system is crumbling!



SHINGI sent this photo (right) of his 18 year old son Emmanuel, fresh from a service at his Church using his father's mobile. He wanted to quote: 'Hear more of the 'The word of God' from St Andrew's service recorded on WhatsApp'. Many artists' families have become *our* extended family but half have no working mobiles and the remaining old phones bought via eBay auctions have seen

better days. *Once these phones die, all communication will cease!*

A HAPPY ARTIST GODWIN (above) reports: 'Here in Harare, thanks to heavy rains, we expect yet another bumper crop thanks to URC inputs. Sadly there is a drought in rural areas'. Many artists have relations in rural areas so will share their harvest and visit their folks carrying heavy bags of mealie meal by bus. Our support, therefore, reaches many other poor people which is an added bonus. **Johnston Simpson**



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THE SECRETARIAL TEAM

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Mrs Gwenda Cochrane
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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!