

ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE

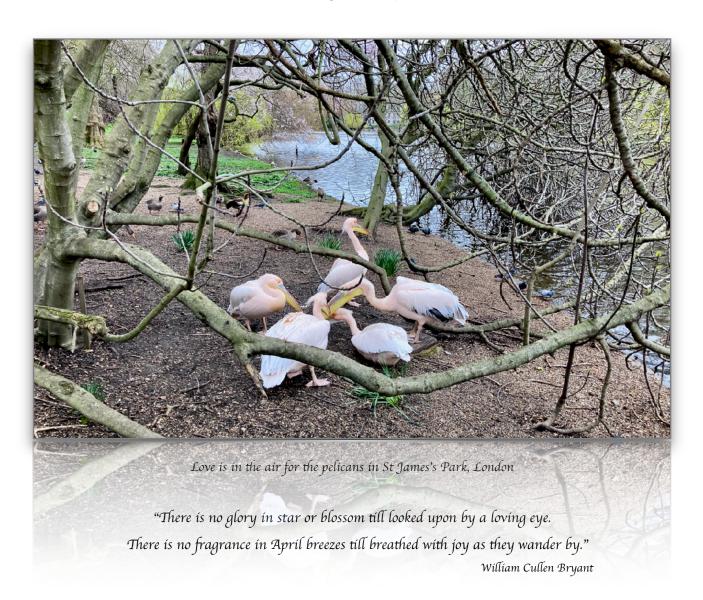


THE GRAPEVINE



APRIL 2024

Volume 3 No 4



From The Manse

April 2024



Dear friends

It always seems appropriate when Easter Day and the start of British Summer Time coincide. They do this year. As we look again at the lovely post-resurrection stories it seems so appropriate that, at the same time, we are beginning to get the longer evenings and curtains are no longer being pulled late afternoon. As I have commented many times before, there always seems to be a relaxed feel to the post-resurrection stories. The busyness is past. The long, preaching tours are over. The horror of Good Friday is over. For various people, depending on which Gospel you read, Easter Day may have begun badly, with ghastly discoveries but, as events unfolded, a very different day develops. In the weeks that follow we see Jesus and the disciples spending time together, relaxing, enjoying each other's company as Jesus prepares them for what is to happen next. The post-resurrection stories have a very different feel to them and this year we start to think about them again as the evenings lengthen here. With a bit of luck, it might even begin to warm up a bit as well.

I love being able to spend time in the garden of an evening. The day's work is done. Supper has been eaten and there is the chance to cut the grass, or do a little pruning or dead-heading, or a little weeding, or even do nothing but relax. Soon I'll be getting the patio furniture out of the shed and the gin-and-tonic bench will be back in position. It has a special place which looks down the length of the garden and catches the evening sun. That seat is also one of my most treasured possessions. Originally it was my grandmother's and I think that she must have bought it when she moved to Bristol, following the death of my grandfather, before I was born. There is a photograph of her sitting on it in her garden and with me, as a baby, in her arms. Mum and Dad gave the seat to me when I moved into my first manse in 1987 and I have had it ever since. Over the years it has had to have a few repairs and I know that they have cost more than a new one would have but that is totally irrelevant to me! It's precious. Many years ago I made two little trays which slide over the arms of the bench so that you have somewhere to stand a mug or a glass and I am looking forward to being able to sit on it again this summer, contemplating life, the universe and everything else!

The post-resurrection stories tell of important conversations being had and of Jesus and the disciples spending time together. Obviously I shall be picking up a number of the stories in the coming weeks' sermons but I am also reflecting on the message they give us about the importance of spending time with people – and of making time for that to happen. And without wishing to sound too morbid, it is important to do that whilst we can. It's not always going to be possible.

Back in 2012 I had a party to celebrate the 25th anniversary of my ordination. The other week I came across the photos. It was quite salutary as I realised that about half of the friends there have now transferred their membership from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. On a happier note, though, last summer my Australian cousin, Sara, and her eldest son, Josh, came over to celebrate my sister's significant birthday. We had a fantastic time and thankfully Mum's health was in a better phase so we didn't have any scares there. Janet, Sara, Josh and I did all sorts of things, including visits to the Tower of London, Polesden Lacey, and the Naval Museum in Portsmouth. On the day Janet and Sara went for a tour round Lords, Josh and I went for a walk along the Wey Navigation, over the Shepperton Ferry for lunch at Thames Court and we also watched the boats at both Town Lock and Shepperton Lock ascending and descending the different levels. They don't seem to have locks in Australia and Josh was highly taken with

them. It was a beautiful day and one I'll remember for a long time. I held Josh in my arms when he was a baby – and I baptised him and then walked him round the church to show him off. He's now about 12 foot tall (not quite but seems it!) and a fit, handsome young man serving in the Australian Navy. Where the years have gone I have no idea.

So, as the summer months approach and as the lighter evenings arrive let me encourage you to take a leaf from the post-resurrection stories. They don't tell us about Jesus spending time with his Mother or his brothers and sister but I'm sure he did. What they do tell us is of his spending time with those who had been part of his team – his friends with whom he was close. If physically getting together with those who are important to us is quite impossible then remember that there are various other ways these days, including Zoom and Teams and WhatsApp videos – and sorting out the tech to enable that to happen is what grandchildren are for! Make that time whilst it's still possible.

Last October I was down in Bideford and wanted to call on my Aunty Jean, who had just gone into a Care Home in Somerset. It wasn't going to be the easiest journey from Bideford but it was going to be a lot easier than doing it from Weybridge! Come the day and the weather was dreadful. God decided to replenish Exmoor's streams and rivers – quickly – and he wasn't averse to checking the heavenly wind machine either. I had been woken up that morning with the rain hammering down on Barbara's roof and there was lots of surface water. I seriously wondered about cancelling because of the weather but decided to carry on – and I am so glad that I did. Aunty Jean wasn't very well and I only stayed about 45 minutes but we had a lovely chat and shared a few reminisces over a cup of tea, the home bringing us a pot and Aunty Jean insisting that she could pour and "be mother"! A few days later I got the news that she had died peacefully in her sleep. She'd celebrated her 98th birthday a few weeks earlier. I think that I was actually the last visitor she had and I shall always be glad that I didn't postpone going to see her because of the weather. Had I done that it would have been too late.

So, that's my thought this month as we look again at the post-resurrection stories and begin to experience the long, summer evenings again. It may be a slightly left-field thought but make time to spend with those who are special and, if necessary, be creative with how that might be achieved. And do it now, whilst you can. I didn't know when I said good-bye to Aunty Jean that she'd have died a week later. And the disciples didn't know that a few weeks after they shared a BBQ breakfast on the beach that Jesus was going to have ascended to heaven!

With all good wishes,

A bit of pointless information

We all know 23rd April is St George's Day and that it is also Shakespeare's Birthday. (It was my paternal Grandfather's birthday as well!) But what do Shakespeare and Psalm 46 have in common? Well, in the Authorised Version of the Bible (King James Version), if you look at Psalm 46 you will see that the 46th word from the start is "shake" and that the 46th word from the end is "spear". How's that for a pointless bit of information!

Michael Hodgson

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

Keeping up-to-date with the younger generation

Angela Woods writes:

Further to my note in the February issue about Rachel I thought you may all be interested to know that Portsmouth University decided to ask her to represent the University and the whole of the Faculty and forwarded details of her dissertation for her Master's Degree on the Culture in Women's Football to BASES (the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences) for their Master's Dissertation of the Year award.

Rachel has just learnt that BASES have awarded her this honour, have entered her in their Hall of Fame (honestly I'm not joking you can find it on their website!!) and she has been invited to speak at the BASES annual conference which is to be held at Coventry City's ground in November.

Needless to say that we are beyond proud of her amazing achievement and Rachel is in shock!

Many congratulations from all of us to Rachel (a 'graduate' of Junior Church at Weybridge URC!) on her success in achieving this outstanding award.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO A DECADE BUSTER!





Beryl Brown celebrated her 80th birthday on 14 March. She sparkled at a wonderful party for family and friends with an impressive spread of food and dancing to old favourites, including the joyful Macarena. Beryl decided to go for bust and attended the Mayor of Runnymede's Ball at Wentworth soon afterwards, which she enormously enjoyed. Well done Beryl!

It was good to hear from **Heather Macaulay** (whose mother, Evlyn some of you may remember well). Heather has lived in Edinburgh for some years now and sent this news, together with a photo.

"I often go walking in the Pentlands and enjoy gardening. I find Edinburgh a fascinating place to live in but am always glad to hear news from the South."



Prayers

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

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.

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES APRIL 2024

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

"April was just beginning, and after the warm spring day it turned cooler, slightly frosty, and a breath of spring could be felt in the soft, cold air."

Anton Chekov

Sunday 7 April (Zoom) 10.30 am Morning Worship with Holy Communion

Tuesday 9 April 7.30 pm Elders' Meeting Hersham Room

Friday 12 April 12.30 - 2.30 pm People Who Lunch - Church Hall (see page 9)

Wednesday 10 - Sunday 14 April Walton Art Club Spring Exhibition at Riverhouse

Barn, Walton (see page 9)

Sunday 14 April 10.30 am Morning Worship followed by the AGM

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ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)
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Or ASSOCIATE EDITOR, Mollie Henham Email: 18amh65@gmail.com

Sunday 21 April (Zoom) 10.30 am Morning Worship

3.00 pm Messy Church

Sunday 28 April 10.30 am Morning Worship

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given that there will be a Church Meeting after worship on Sunday 14 April.

This will also be the Annual General Meeting and will include the election of Elders.

Do please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

A booklet of the Annual Reports is available and can be picked up from The Gateway.

"If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito."

African proverb

News from the URC



Prayer Calendar for April

- 7 Christchurch, Thame; The Beacon Church, Canford Heath
- Normandy, Guildford;
 Church of the Holy Family, Blackbird Leys, Oxford
- 21 Swanage; Havant and Emsworth
- 28 Beacon Hill, Hindhead; Twyford (Berks)



Wessex Synod invites all churches, church user groups and community groups with links to URCs and LEPs in Wessex Synod to come and enjoy a day of fellowship, fun and worship at Hollycombe.

Ticket prices are the same as in 2022 – £8 per adult, £5 per child for up to 10 rides on the attractions.

New this year are tickets for unlimited rides on the attractions: adult £10.50 and child £7.50.

Hollycombe's fabulous new café will be open this time and there will be other food and refreshment outlets.

You are welcome to bring your own picnic.

More information and Booking details are on the Synod Website: www. https://www.urcwessex.org.uk/synod-big-day-out/





No-one would know is isn't the REAL donkey poo ...

Our theme for this month's Messy Church was Eastertide. To illustrate Palm Sunday there were colouring sheets with the word Hosannah, donkeys to make with clothes pegs to stand them up and the well advertised donkey poo. This was very edible made by rolling balls of fondant icing in cocoa powder.



'Hosannah' is a great word to colour in!

Most of our other activities were also edible. Margaret helped the children make empty tomb biscuits and Carolyn used fig biscuits to make little bibles complete with book mark. Jean dyed boiled eggs which the children decorated and then were encouraged to roll. Everyone wanted a shot of the squirty cream to top the Palm Sundaes made with green jelly, crushed biscuits, and angel delight.



Painting eggs

Empty tomb biscuits

Squirty cream is FUN

Palm Sundaes fit for a King

In the celebration we sang "We have a King who rides a donkey" and "Praise ye the Lord, Hallelujah". We watched a Lego version of the Easter Story and finished with a meal with our Palm Sundaes as dessert.

Anne Fitzgerald



THE ECO PAGE

How Eco Friendly are you?

I'm aware of the problems that the world is facing and what I can do as an individual to help.

I'm aware of the problems and do a little bit to help ie recycle.

I'm aware of the problems and would like to play my part but don't know where to start.

I'm aware of the problems but it won't affect me so there's no point!

As a church, we should all want to help in our own ways to look after God's creation. Here are some Eco Tips to help you on your journey:



Reduce, Re-use, Recycle



Reduce the amount of Earth's resources that you use.

Water Consumption Use vegetable water to water plants, install a water butt to

water the garden.

Energy Usage Turn down heating by 1 degree, turn off lights when you leave a room.

Switch to an Eco Friendly Energy supplier.

Take your own lifestyle audit.

· Use of the car Walk when you can or take public transport.

Car Share scheme

Meat

Flying abroad Research alternative ways to get abroad – drive, train....

Say no to packaging When shopping, take your own bags and say no to any

unnecessary packaging.

Single Use Plastic
 Say no to single use plastic and take part in schemes such as

Plastic Free July to experience for yourself the problem areas. It causes deforestation – farmers are clearing large areas of

forest to make space for cattle. Greenhouse gases emitted

from livestock (especially beef).

Re-Use – Don't bin it, could someone else use it?

There are many ways to sell on items that you no longer need and make a bit of money:

eBay, Vinted, Facebook Marketplace.

· Charity Shops will always take your pre-loved items for others to benefit from.

Use borrow schemes rather than buying new - The Elmbridge Eco Community

Hub runs a 'Library of Things' - https://elmbridgeecohub.org.uk

Compost
 Paper
 Re-use paper as scrap and make sure that you print on both sides

Recycle – Could the items be made into something new?

· Plastic, cardboard, paper, glass can all be recycled weekly or fortnightly with your local council.

- Soft plastics can be taken to most supermarkets and recycled.
- · Use glass containers at home for food storage.
- · Boxes can be turned into craft material for children.
- · Material from clothes, duvets can be turned into other items.
- · Many places will take old mobile phones, printer cartridges, make-up to recycle
- · Stamps and batteries can be donated and recycled.

Refill should also be added to the **R's scheme** as so many companies exist now that refill existing bottles or containers. The Elmbridge Eco Hub has a refill shop where you take your empty containers and they refill them for you – Elmgrove Estate, Walton, KT12 1LH.

Elizabeth Scharinger



WALTON ART CLUB

Wednesday 10 - Sunday 14 April 2024 10am - 4pm

Admission Free No need to book

Come along and see the wealth of talent and variety of expression of Riverhouse's local art club. Many works will be for sale along with cards and prints and a chance to take part in the traditional raffle.

! DON'T FORGET PEOPLE WHO LUNCH! FRIDAY 12 APRIL 12.30 PM

Everyone is welcome at this monthly get-together on the second Friday of the month in the Church Hall.

For just £5 you can have soup (a choice of two varieties), a roll, a selection of puddings (mostly home-made), cheese and biscuits and coffee/tea.

**Advance booking*, please, if you are bringing a large party!

To book your place please contact Margaret Faultless either in church or by email margaret.faultless@blueyonder.co.uk



FLOWER POWER

Nancy Hampton says:

"I had a beautiful bouquet given to me the last time I was in Church. It was kindly delivered to me by Moira de Kok. It lasted for two weeks."

Norma was very touched to be given a selection of lovely yellow and cream flowers donated by Caroline Gardner. They really cheered her up following the sudden and unexpected loss of her cat, Poppy. Thank you!

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!



25 February - Val Cave In memory of her father



3 March - Holy Communion



10 March - Moira de Kok In memory of our families



17 March - Caroline Gardner for her father



24 March - the Communion Table decorated with palms for Palm Sunday



24 March (Palm Sunday) - Teresa Bacon

In the pipeline: The current collection of parcels lying in CAFOD's office in Harare awaiting a traveller to the UK, contain a few gems - examples below - L to R, an abstract by Dickson, an owl in agate gemstone by Jack Mafu, and a figure by the late talented Luke Saidi. I have encouraged Artpeace and their friends to 'up their game' at carving and seek out smaller top quality work in attractive stone which will ensure higher prices at the Southwark Cathedral





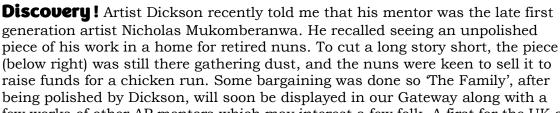


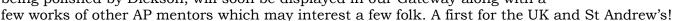


shop givng them a better return. NB. Gateway prices are well below the Cathedral Shop so should any of your friends be interested, I would be happy to show them our unique display at a time to suit. It may also offer an opportunity to see and hear what St Andrew's URC is all about.

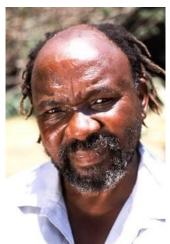


Wooden carvings of a Hoopoe bird in Mukwa and a Cheetah in Jacaranda have arrived. Fortune has contact with artist Patrick Bengoe who used to live and carve at Binga in the north, just south of Kariba lake and famous for its woodcarvings. Wood being much lighter than stone is a plus and much easier for couriers to transport.









settings. If he had not been a sculptor and had the advantage of a formal education, he surely would have been a philosopher. I have sat under a tree on his farm at Ruwa and engaged in the liveliest and most

subtle discussions on the nature of being, the soul and eternity. Also, I have walked the streets of Paris with him and discussed the same subjects. Karl Popper, perhaps the greatest philosopher of this century, would have welcomed him as a student. There are so many facets to his work. He is always original. He changes subtly his style. He produces masterpieces and yet he is not satisfied with them. In a sense, he displays Ruskin's concept of 'divine discontent'. The National Gallery has been privileged to receive his work into both its permanent and its overseas



collections. The great galleries of the world including London and New York, house examples of his brilliant craftsmanship and pervasive genius.

Johnston Simpson

THE RUSTLE OF SPRING





... There is no time like Spring,
When life's alive in everything,
Before new nestlings sing,
Before cleft swallows speed their journey back
Along the trackless track —
God guides their wing,
He spreads their table that they nothing lack, —
Before the daisy grows a common flower
Before the sun has power
To scorch the world up in his noontide hour...



Christina Rossetti, from 'Spring'





PRAYER CORNER



A Prayer for Peace

Eternal God,
As we are overshadowed once again by war,
We lift up before you
The innocent and vulnerable,
The victims of violence and cruelty,
Along with all who continue to sow the seeds of hate.

In the fog of war Where truth is the first victim, May your light, which cannot be overwhelmed, expose the truth.

Grant to world leaders and all in positions of power today Not only the wisdom But also the courage To do what is right in your sight.

Grant all who turn to you your strength and fortitude, Your inner peace, Along with a continuing faith in your sovereign power, In the face of military might.

All this we pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, Our living Lord and Saviour. Amen

> Revd Dave Herbert Former Moderator URC Northern Synod



25 YEARS ON, a pertinent time perhaps, to recap on my introduction to Artpeace. Whilst on my first trip to Zimbabwe, I decided to visit Silveira House, a NGO supported by the URC's



Commitment for Life programme in conjunction with Christian Aid. I met its director Fr Dieter Scholz crouched over a computer feverishly sending emails before the system crashed due to a terrific thunderstorm. He explained the aims of the centre and kindly showed me around. On return, assisted by a Unilever colleague based in Harare, I shipped over a tonnne of PC's, printers,

monitors, basic HIV Aids equipment, medicines, bicycles, crockery plus 1000 Walls Ice cream T shirts emblazoned with the once popular

'Just one Cornetto' slogan, and even a case of Italian wine for the Jesuits. I stayed at the centre the following year, sitting in on various meetings covering cholera outbreaks and food support etc. On leaving, I was given the gift of a sculpture titled 'Inner Feelings' made by Anthony Subuneti. This piece 'spoke' to me and the rest,



as they say, is history as a 'new life' opened up involving numerous contacts from all walks of life prepared to go the extra mile. Above: Fr Dieter (right) wearing a Cornetto shirt unloading goods.

THE FREEDOM - FIGHTER PRIEST as Fr Dieter was known, later the Bishop of Chinhoyi, became a close friend. He had fought hard for black Rhodesians during dark days of apartheid. While president of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, he was arrested under the Official Secrets Act and the Law and Order Maintenance Act and imprisoned twice, then exiled for 12 years. While in Europe, he was director of the Zimbabwe Project in London and the Jesuit Refugee Service in Rome. He, along with fellow Jesuits, Fr David Harold-Barry and Fr Konrad Landsberg, have visited St Andrew's over the years and a close bond still exists although all are now in their mid- eighties having devoted their lives to Zimbabwe with so many stories to tell.

Looking back at one of my earliest reports featured in a 2001 St Andrew's newsletter, I came across a comment by Dieter: 'John - apologies for the delay in reply but the lines are down again. The past week was very difficult and I have just come from another meeting with armed war veterans who arrived in a white Mercedes. They want more land. Fr. Fidelis, (later to become chaplain to Robert Mugabe), kept the ex- fighters' tempers under control by exploding himself at one point, telling them in a loud voice that he and others had fought for this land. The local elders were terrified. The meeting ended friendly enough but the situation is still very tense. I hope we can keep the whole process non-violent. This is my main concern at present....'.

Over the years, Artpeace have also suffered. One artist was arrested and tortured by Mugabe's thugs. The Jesuits found him a 'safe house' as he was in pain, emaciated and in shock. They asked if I could help. St Andrew's congregation's support through buying £400's of his copper bangles gave him a new lease of life and reunited him with his family. Fortune is still with us!

LITTLE HAS CHANGED with the Opposition party in disarray. A good friend recently said: 'The present crowd simply have no interest in the people and do not care that the likes of the artists live a hand to mouth existence'. A pharmacist contact said: 'People work so hard but the only wealthy people in Zim. are those in the ruling party and their beneficiaries. No middle class honest person is wealthy in Zim. I have had to start a chicken project to subsidise my income but there are far worse than me. We keep hoping by God's grace that one day things will change'.

ARTPEACE COMMENT: 'St Andrew's and friends' support is life changing giving an income and food security but life in Zimbabwe is harsh. Jobs are scarce and pretty much everyone survives from hawking. AP is better now compared to many other families whom we try to help'.

BOOST FOR MAITA: We still have an important part to play in Artpeace families' lives albeit more modestly than the earlier days of big sales. E.G. Recently, Mike Masedza said: 'John, my son Maita (15) is sitting nine 'O' levels this year. My head hurts wondering how to raise 150\$ for



exam fees due by March 25th. If I fail to pay, he will not be allowed to sit the examinations and will be forced to leave school. Please help!'. Without qualifications, Maita would have no future and land on the scrapheap like countless other Zimbabweans. However, Mike's two cheetahs had only just been put on display in the Gateway and although I told him not to build up hopes as there was a limit to sales from a largely elderly congregation, he replied: I know, but my God will not let me down'. True enough and much to my delight, the cheetahs were bought by two kind ladies whilst another stalwart gave a donation which virtually covered the fees. Two days later Mike replied: 'Just been at school and have left the money with the school bursar for safe keeping. He says they will start registration from the 15th. so will call me when they start the exercise. I am so relieved. Thank you and St

Andrew's once again John'. A video of thanks from a clearly delighted Maita was sent to the three ladies who helped. Translated, the name Maita, means Thank you!

OLD FRIEND: Mike visited 72 year old sculptor Victor Mutongwiza, whose speciality is carving elephants in Buttermilk and Verdite. Victor (in brown cap) was ill last year but is back sculpting



and thrilled to know that his work will be displayed in the Southwark Cathedral shop and in St Andrew's Gateway.





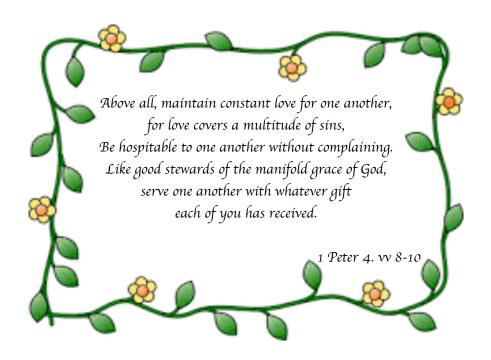


RELIEF! A lady member has generously covered the cost of two new Motorola Smart phones which will be a big improvement on our present old mobiles which are often unreliable with a poor battery life. Communications were becoming difficult as the old phones (bought 2nd hand) were gradually giving up the ghost, jeopardising the project.



IT'S POSSIBLE Artpeace may be trained in the art of bee keeping. A Harare based beekeeper friend of David Downing, Marlow URC's minister, has offered his services. There is much detail to be gone into and perhaps it's not as simple as it sounds but Artpeace are buzzing with anticipation! So, all in all, quite an eventful month and the group are in a good mood with lots more of their art in transit.

Johnston Simpson



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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!