



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE



THE GRAPEVINE



JUNE 2024

Volume 3 No 5



Wild flower meadow - Chelsea Physic Garden, London

*"And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten..."*

James Russell Lowell (1819-1891)

From The Manse

June 2024



Dear friends

I don't know about you but for me it's that time of the year where I don't normally pull the curtains except for those in my bedroom. It's light when I get up and it's just getting dark when I go to bed so why bother with curtains? Do any of you remember a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson, called, *Bed in Summer*?

*In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.*

The child is unimpressed!

*And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?*

As I child I never wanted to go to bed, and never got off to sleep quickly either, but I have to say that these days I usually find that most nights I am ready for my bed – an indication of age.

I am reminded of the little prayers learnt in childhood.

*Lord, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;
May angels guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.*

and

*Jesus, tender shepherd, hear me,
bless Thy little lamb tonight.
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Watch my sleep till morning light.*

and, of course,

*Hands together, softly so,
Little eyes shut tight,
Father, just before we go,
Hear our prayers tonight.*

and

*Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,
bless the bed that I lie on.*

Gentle prayers from happier times – or were they? Like some nursery rhymes, there is actually a sad reminder in some of them that they weren't always, *The Good Old Days*. One prayer concludes *If I die before I wake then my soul to heaven take*, reminding us of the much higher infant mortality rates which used to be so common. A version of *Matthew, Mark Luke and John* includes the lines

*Four corners to my bed,
Four angels there aspread,
Two to foot and two to head,
And four to carry me when I'm dead.*

What a sad thing for a child to pray. The hymn, *There's a friend for little children* similarly was written partly to help children come to terms with the death of a brother or a sister.

*There's a home,
there's a place,
there's a robe,
there's a crown,
there's a song for little children,
(all) above the bright blue sky.*

I think that Congregational Praise (1951) was one of the first major hymnbooks published in this country that didn't have hymns specifically for children's funerals, possibly in response to the falling infant mortality rate by the time of its publication. Gradually hymnbooks have dropped this section although Church Hymnary 4 has one hymn for a child's funeral, written following the shootings at Dunblane Primary School in 1996.

Thankfully Bishop Ken's evening prayer *Glory to thee my God, this night* has only one reference to death – and that in a rather more positive way – and is one I rather like. The prayer asks for peace in the mind so that when you go to bed you don't keep going over things in your brain. It asks for a good, refreshing night's sleep – and even covers those times when you go to bed exhausted and yet as soon as your head hits the pillow you are suddenly wide awake and simply cannot get to sleep.

*When in the night I sleepless lie,
My mind with heavenly thoughts supply.*

Oh, and it even asks God to spare us from nightmares and those silly dreams which are so vivid at the time but which are so stupid in the cold light of day –

*Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,
No powers of darkness me molest.*

I have still got my "Bunny Mug". When I was little Mummy used to give me my hot milk in my bunny mug before I went to bed. It's got Peter Rabbit on the front and there are a few 'milk teeth nibbles' from the rim. I still have hot milk when I go to bed but in a bigger mug now and my bunny mug has retired! Like Christopher Robin, I still say my prayers although kneeling at the foot of my bed these days wouldn't be a good idea when I wanted to get up again. In any case, *Drops on his little hands, little grey and balding head* doesn't have quite the same ring to it, does it? But I still use some of those prayers that I learnt as a child.

*Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

And there's that lovely prayer from Cardinal Newman which says:

*O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shades lengthen,
and the evening cometh,
and the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over and our work done.
Then, Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging,
a holy rest,
and peace at the last,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

With all good wishes,

SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES JUNE 2024

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

Please note that as from this month of June, Elders' meetings will be on the first Tuesday evening of the month (as advised in the May issue)

*"There are two seasons in Scotland: June and Winter"
Billy Connolly*

Sunday 2 June (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Tuesday 4 June	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
Sunday 9 June	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by Mrs Anna Crawford

FRIDAY 14 - SUNDAY 23 JUNE

WEYBRIDGE FESTIVAL - Events throughout the town
(see page 16 for details)

Friday 14 June	12.30 - 2.30 pm	People Who Lunch - Church Hall (see page 9)
Sunday 16 June (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship taken by The Revd David Netherwood
	3.00 pm	 Messy Church

COPY DATE FOR JULY/AUGUST ISSUE WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE

***ALL ITEMS (Provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)
to the Editor or Associate Editor***

(please see back page for contact details)

Sunday 23 June	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Sunday 30 June	10.30 am	Morning Worship

CHURCH MEETING

A reminder that Church Meeting will be held after Morning Worship on **Sunday 30 June**.
Anyone wishing to add anything to the agenda should contact a member of the Secretarial Team in advance.
AOB is not taken on the day unless it has been previously notified.

Michael Hodgson



Streetview from the Hersham Road

A great time was had by all who popped into the coffee morning, held for Christian Aid on 17 May. We couldn't have wished for better weather, and we enjoyed our tea/coffee and delicious cakes in the glorious sunshine.



We were joined by Anitha Santharaj (*seen right, with Beryl*), who covers the areas of Surrey and Hampshire for Christian Aid and is new in post. Anitha very much enjoyed this opportunity to get to know St Andrew's members and we hope to see her again in the future as she lives quite close by. We were also joined by some of our Friday morning Hall Hirers and it was lovely to welcome ladies from the Yoga group and the Singing Mammams (plus their little ones!). We were delighted that several passers-by also stopped for a cuppa and a chat. All in all, a very happy occasion.

Special thanks to Michael who first floated the idea and to Teresa, who masterminded the event, as well as to all her helpers.

Paula Walsh



NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

In Memoriam

It was with great sadness we heard that **Brian Ashfield** died on 4 May and **David Cheeseman** on 12 May.

Brian grew up in Weybridge URC having been a member of Junior Church from an early age. He was received into membership in May 1961 and was to serve the church in so many different ways throughout his life. He was elected an Elder in January 1973 and (apart from the compulsory stand-down periods required by the Weybridge rules) he served until 2022 covering the time of the union of Weybridge URC and St Andrew's. In September 2015 (following the resignation of the then Church Secretary) Brian was one of four people (known as the Secretariat) appointed to take his place.

Please remember Brian's wife, Kate, and the children and their families at this time of great change in their lives.

David and his wife, Joan, came to Weybridge URC following the closure of Trinity URC, Hersham and were received into membership in October 2006. Both of them served the church with great dedication. David became an Elder in January 2009 serving until December 2015 but declining health meant he has not been able to attend services and events in recent years.

Please remember David's sons, Stephen and Paul, and their families at this sad time.

Tributes to Brian and David will appear in the July/August issue of The Grapevine.

Prayers

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Kate Ashfield and her family, the Cheeseman family, John Langdon, Lilian Smith and Michael Stevens. Remember, too, all those who are unwell in hospital or at home and those for whom daily life is proving difficult.

Old Friends visit from Canada

It was lovely to welcome **Heather** (formerly Topping) and **David Graeme** to the church service recently. They go back a long way at St Andrew's and much reminiscing was done over coffee. Heather writes:

"I joined the FOY [Fellowship of Youth] in 1967. Barbara Rodgers took me under her wing, along with Beryl Brown and Alan Crawford. They were the mainstays of the group. There were about twenty of us then and the age range was over 15 years, but we were all good friends.

The Youth Fellowship was very active and we did a lot of community work as well as attending conferences and social activities. I was confirmed at the church by Eddie Lane who was a great supporter of the youth programmes at the church. At the same time, my mother and I joined the Badminton club. Along with Maurice and Nick Gwilt and Barbara, we played in many inter-church competitions.

I started helping with 8th Walton Cub Scouts with Chrissie Brooman. This started me on a 35-year journey as a leader in Scouting, in several countries. Later David and Ross Niven and Hugh Brooman, all FOY members, joined our Leadership team.

I left most of the activities at the church when I started my training as a radiographer at Westminster Hospital, but I still kept in touch with everyone at St Andrew's, as by then both my parents were very involved as well as my brother, Brian, who was to marry Rosemary. My brother Ian was married at the church and 50 years ago, on March 2, David and I were married there by Bill McCrorie. Both our sons were christened at the church, even though we were living overseas. We were transferred to Canada in 1987 and after our four-year posting, we decided to stay. David's job with British Airways took us all over the world for many years but we

were often in the UK to help at the Caledonian market at the annual Christmas Fair and we attended the carol services at Christmas. My mother and father were dedicated members of the church and my architect father, Bill Topping, designed the addition to the hall and the meeting rooms upstairs (Leslie Noble and Bill Topping rooms).

As you can see St Andrew's played a big role in my life and it still feels like coming home to visit the church, although so many familiar faces are gone."

Jean Rigden, another good friend, met Heather through Rosemary Topping when Jean returned to the church after her husband, John, died in 1976. Rosemary had been John's favourite cousin! Jean remembers the Topping family as having been a big part of St Andrews and having entertained many times at their home on the river.

More memories from **Beryl Brown** who says:

"It was lovely to meet up again with Heather and David Graeme during their visit from Canada and it brought back memories of Heather and me being in the FOY in the 1960s and early '70s. The FOY was a national organisation in the Presbyterian Church for 17-30 year olds, and we were lucky to have a thriving group at St Andrew's covering the whole age range. We met after evening service with guest speakers, or more light hearted evenings eg a member showing slides of a foreign holiday, plus 'Parson's Pleasure' once a month with our minister Eddie Lane, over the road in the Manse. There was also a good social life, often going to other churches in the London South Presbytery, eg Wallington (where I got to know Johnston and Sue Simpson), Wimbledon. Cheam and even as far as Tunbridge Wells for a Saturday night Dance. We also held the occasional dances well attended by other FOY groups. Heather's family had a lovely house on the Thames at Shepperton and we were lucky to be able to hold one or two social occasions there. I remember one Guy Fawkes night with the colours of our fireworks reflected in the river.

It was our regular attendance as a family from childhood, membership of the FOY, plus Eddie Lane's influence, which resulted in my brother, Leslie, becoming a non-stipendiary minister. He studied partly for this with Cecil Macaulay, who became minister at Weybridge."

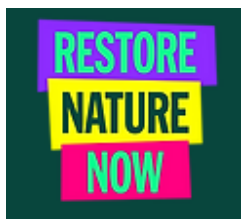
It is lovely to know of such long and enduring friendships that began at and were nurtured in St Andrew's! Ed



*L-R. David, Heather, Jean and Rosemary
outside the Church Hall*



*FOY buddies
L-R Heather, Alan and Beryl*



Join a walk on the wild side in London

Saturday 22 June

Many people in the UK love our wildlife. This summer, everyone who shares that passion is being asked to come together on the streets of London on Saturday 22 June to demand that our politicians Restore Nature Now.

Dozens of environmental groups including the RSPB, The Wildlife Trust, National Trust, WWF-UK and the Woodland Trust are joining with Greenpeace and Extinction Rebellion in a legal, peaceful and family-friendly march to Parliament from Park Lane. This aims to be the **biggest ever UK gathering for nature and climate** with tens of thousands of people marching for our natural world.

We will be celebrating nature, with a spectacle of all that is brilliant about our wild isles, from a “walking wood” to giant bat puppets, and celebrity guests including Chris Packham and Dr Amir Khan. Street artists and entertainers will make it an event to remember for nature enthusiasts of all ages and from all communities. But the march will have a serious side and an important message for all politicians.

The natural world is in trouble and we need to take action. Our rivers and seas are being poisoned by pollution, wildlife numbers continue on a downward spiral with 1 in 6 British species facing extinction. Floods and droughts are becoming worse as the pace of climate change increases. Yet our Government’s own advisers say we are not on track to meet legal targets to restore nature and reduce climate emissions.

It's time for our politicians to show strong domestic and global nature and climate leadership by:

1. Giving a pay-rise for nature (increased funding for protecting and restoring nature and biodiversity e.g. our woodlands, peat bogs, lakes, rivers and seas)
2. Making polluters pay
3. Delivering more space for nature
4. Putting a right to a healthy environment in law
5. Ensuring fair and effective climate action

The next generation deserves a world where nature is thriving, one that is free from the threat of climate breakdown. The coming General Election could be a turning point for our natural world and so together we want to send the strongest possible signal to politicians of all parties that they must act now for people, nature and climate. Please join us in speaking up for nature on Saturday 22 June and giving nature a voice. Tell your family and friends about this and encourage them to take part too.

For more information, visit: www.restorenaturenow.com. Will you join me?



Saturday 22 June



Meet at midday, march from 1 pm, rally at 2.15 pm



Park Lane to Parliament Square

Teresa Bacon

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT A GLANCE

To achieve great things two things are needed; a plan and not quite enough time.

Leonard Bernstein



PEOPLE WHO LUNCH **Friday 14 June** **12.30 - 2.30 pm** **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.

Puddings a speciality!



**Advance booking recommended
and necessary if you are coming
in a group!**

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

ELDERS' MEETING

(Note new schedule, now on **first** - not second -
Tuesday of the month)

Tuesday 4 June

7.30 pm - Hersham Room

MESSY CHURCH

Sunday 16 June


3.00 pm in the Church Hall

All welcome!

ADVANCE NOTICE ! SAVE THE DATE !

Saturday 6 July - 7.30 pm

Treble Clef Choir
St James' Parish Church,
Weybridge



Invites you to

A Grand Night of Singing - our 35th Anniversary Concert of light music

Featuring special guests
The Weybridge Male Voice Choir

Musical Director: Emily Leather
Accompanist: Hannah Stanley

Saturday 6th July 2024 7.30pm
St. James' Parish Church
Weybridge KT13 8DN

Tickets £15 available from
www.ticketsource.co.uk/trebleclef
and at the door
(children accompanied under 12 free)

Bar available

There will be a retiring collection for Friends of St Peter's Hospital

A Grand Night of Singing
featuring special guests
The Weybridge Male Voice Choir

Our cover photograph, taken by your Editor, shows a magical flower meadow in the Chelsea Physic Garden, tucked away between the river and the King's Road and a stone's throw from the Royal Hospital, Chelsea (well worth a visit and featured in 'The Grapevine' of March 2023).

NEWS FROM URC WESSEX SYNOD



Prayer Calendar for June

2	St Francis, Valley Park, Chandler's Ford Fleet
9	Collinwood Road, Oxford Richmond Hill St Andrew's, Bournemouth Warsash, Southampton
16	Elstead Christ Church, Windsor Avenue St Andrew's, Southampton
23	Radipole, Weymouth Church on the Heath, Elvetham Heath Marston, Oxford
30	Parkstone, Poole Trinity, Totton, Southampton Christ Church, Chineham



Wessex Synod Big Day Out Saturday, 4 May 2024

Hollycombe Steam in the Country

After months of some rain each day (at least that's what it felt like) we were blessed with a Spring day with some sunny periods. A total of eight members of three generations of our family arrived at Hollycombe Steam in the Country for a get-together with another 700 folks from various churches across the Synod.

The collection of steam-driven entertainments included two separate railways, some carousels, swinging chair rides, two steam rollers (one static and one giving rides) and various children's rides. There was a Haunted Cottage, a café and a gift shop. There was also a steam organ with an eclectic mixture of tunes blasting out: one sequence featured the Luftwaffe theme from the film "The Battle of Britain", Jona Lewie's 1980 Christmas hit "Stop the Cavalry" and the theme from "The Muppet Show"!



Amazing carpets of English bluebells

Having been guided in, via a long road, by members of the local Army Cadet unit, we parked in a field full of molehills (in preparation for the ups and downs of the rides?) and we first visited the edge of the neighbouring field with its friendly donkeys. Then we made our way down past the URC-organised events. The main tent was holding a concert by the local brass band, followed by a short worship session. Meanwhile, our grandchildren enjoyed themselves in the Crafting tent with some colouring and sticking – as they have done at Messy Church here! When they had finished these activities they were given lightweight bags (bearing the URC logo) to take home as mementos. Various food vendors had set up stalls around the grounds.



My next pet will be a donkey !



Colouring needs a lot of concentration

This was the first day of the season for the machinery and thus much effort was still being put in such as cleaning and greasing and firing up of boilers. This meant that the swinging boats attraction did not get into action, despite the valiant work of its engineers. We ate lunch from the mobile Crêpe Kitchen, which was near the Steam Farm. By the time we had finished eating, the couple running the Steam Farm had got the boiler fired up and the machinery working. This was efficiently laid out – the single boiler used its power to drive a crankshaft mounted on the back wall of a long shed, which, in turn, drove a dozen machines for cutting, chopping or pulping wood or straw or vegetables.



I think we may be about to take off ...

During the day we managed to ride the smaller train twice, with its excellent views of the garden and the amazing carpets of English bluebells. On the second occasion, because there were only a limited number of two-person “carriages”, the eight of us and Michael managed to take over just about the whole train! Various family members rode the swinging chairs and the carousels with great delight and we ended the day riding the steam roller in its ponderous loop round the café and tents, followed by a journey on the larger train which gave some stunning views over the nearby countryside.

All in all, a very pleasant day out for all ages and we, like Michael, managed to go on just about all the rides. *Claire and Jem Ward*



A Very Useful (and smart!) Bag



On 19 May, we had lots of activities to celebrate Pentecost. Sadly, only a few children came. They enjoyed experimenting with the bubble toys I brought along, managing to construct huge bubbles with one and making lots with another.

We made headdresses with tongues of fire, (not popular with the boys!) and had two different paint activities - one blowing the paint through a straw and the other using forks to create flame pictures. Jean struggled to make windmills that worked (I think I prepared them with paper that was too thick). Mums enjoyed quiet colouring and constructing peace doves with wings.



Well, I like it - I might even wear it to church!



In the celebration we used balloons, candles and gifts from a modern birthday celebration to illustrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples at Pentecost, with the rushing winds and tongues of fire. As usual, we returned to the hall, cleared by Jean, to a meal prepared by Carolyn and Susan. Many, many thanks to all of the volunteers and a warm welcome to our newest member, Jennie, who very quickly got involved using her teaching skills.

Anne Fitzgerald



I'm forever blowing bubbles...



Bonding over quiet colouring



LOAF

Local, Organic, Animal Friendly, Fairly Traded

Have you heard of the acronym LOAF?

Locally produced
Organically grown
Animal Friendly
Fairly Traded

The Green Christian website has written the article below about how we as Christians should be adhering to LOAF – www.greenchristian.org.uk

"We believe that God created the Earth and its seasons. There is a time and a season for everything and there are moral choices in what we eat."

We live with an amazing amount of choice and variety in our supermarkets. However, the transport of food from around the world is a leading contributor to climate change. Our local farmers are struggling to compete in a global market, and overseas farmers are under pressure to produce food for export leaving little land and water for their own crops. Rainforests have been cleared to grow food for export, devastating the environment.

By choosing food that is grown locally, we can provide a good livelihood to local producers, and cut down on fossil fuel emissions. We will also discover the joy of seasonal eating: strawberries and apricots are a summer treat, pears in the autumn and Brussel sprouts are a winter speciality.

We can remember God's amazing goodness as we think more carefully about where our food has come from."

As we move forward as a church and think about our eco status and try to achieve a Bronze Eco Church award, we shall be asking the congregation about their own personal lifestyle choices when it comes to eco living. For example: Do you adhere to LOAF? Do you recycle? Do you try to walk or use public transport rather than drive? If not, why not? Is it cost, convenience, habit?

Tips to help

Sign up to a local veggie box scheme.

For seasonal food choices visit eattheseasons.co.uk

Visit the Eco Hub – see last month's Grapevine for the details.

Summer time – enjoy a nice sunny afternoon 'picking your own' at Garson Farm.

Food for thought

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

Anne Frank, German diarist

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

Robert Swan, historian, explorer and activist

"We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly."

Anne Marie Bonneau, author

Elizabeth Scharinger

FLOWER POWER

“If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden.”

- Frances Hodgson Burnett

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 April - Anne Fitzgerald
(Happy Birthday!)*



5 May - Flower Fund



12 May - Flower Fund



19 May - Flower Fund



THE LIGHTER SIDE

WHEN ENTERTAINING ...

"You should never leave polishing, dusting or Hoovering for the day. Just concentrate on the table and cooking in the morning and leave the afternoon free to have a rest, a bath and plenty of time to dress and look relaxed, because if you don't do it that way you will feel and look like a wet rag and that can and does spoil your whole evening, because you are too tired to be a good hostess! I know what I'm talking about because I have done it all."

Words of Wisdom from my late mother (who was a great hostess!). Ed

Below are translated extracts from **'The Wonderful World of Grandfather Rabbit'**
(found on my computer - author unknown to me but most probably Spanish. Ed)

On Dreaming

"... Enjoy your dreams, even if they are nightmares, because they are a part of your very being, of your body, of your mind, of your life itself. They are both magical and lifelike at the same time and even if you cannot remember them once you are awake, they may teach you things about yourself, which perhaps you would not have been capable of understanding had you had your eyes open. You can just accept them for what they are, as they seem to you to be clear or cloudy, like a story, with a beginning and an end, or like something standing alone without any apparent connection, or you can even try to work out what they mean, to understand what it is they want to say to you, what it is that they are showing you. Do not be pressurised into making a hurried decision - dreams are so very fragile and vanish away when you try to catch them - that is why it is better to let the dreams guide you in whatever it is that you must do, with a light touch, through their own imagination and wisdom. Allow them to fly free, like the birds and, as you would the birds, never keep them in a cage..."

On Travelling

"In an aeroplane look after your delicate ears. It is best to tie them down over your head, that way you will avoid their flapping about or that they hurt on take off and landing, or that the crazy passenger sitting next to you will try to use them as soft pillows. When you have fastened your safety belt you should ask, with your best and sweetest of smiles, a little drink which will help you to forget that you are afraid, and will lift your spirits so that you experience an agreeable sensation of floating. ... Now you are nearing your destination and soon you will be landing. I cannot deny that sometimes, but not always, this can bring about a horrible feeling of emptiness in the stomach and you want with all your heart to be once more paws firmly planted on the ground. Do something to take your mind off it and to banish those bad thoughts, which I can assure you are responsible for the most accidents in life for my dear ones; concentrate again on securing your seat belt, tie back your ears and don't forget your hand baggage full of fresh carrots...."

I can relate to most of the above, even though it is advice given by a rabbit ! Ed

'Can our Society Survive?' was the subject of the sermon. After listening to the gloomy preacher drone on for 45 minutes, one worshipped nudged his neighbour and whispered, 'No' is the word he is groping for.

Doubtful compliments

I don't care what other people say, I like your sermons.
If I had known you were going to be good today, I would have brought a friend.
It's not that you preach longer than others. It just seems longer.

from 'Holy Wit' by The Revd James A Simpson

WEYBRIDGE FESTIVAL

14 – 23 June

Events Throughout the Town

From D'Oyly Carte Island to Monument Green, the High Street, Baker Street, Churchfields Park, Church Street to the Quadrant and Bridge Road plus some parts of Oatlands and Princes Road you will find venues hosting events as part of the Weybridge Festival.

From **14 - 23 June** the Festival in the words of its organisers (the Weybridge Society in co-operation with McLaren Fine Foods), *"will be celebrating everything the town has to offer in 10 days of events showcasing its wealth of local talent including actors, artists, sculptors, photographers, singers, musicians, poets, writers, and dancers."* D'Oyly Carte Island, places of worship, sports clubs, restaurants, cafés, bars and shops are all hosting events. On the afternoon and evening of the middle day (**Saturday 15 June**) of Doyly Carte's three-day programme of events you can book concert tickets for the Island or just listen to the music from the banks of the River Thames.

On **Friday 21 June from 6.00pm - 8.00pm** the Midsummer Street Party takes place. There will be drinks and a band on Monument Green and the shops will be staying open late – some providing open-house events with the Princess Alice Hospice shop giving a Bridal fashion show.

The Community Fair takes place on **Saturday 22 June** in Churchfields Park from **12 noon - 6.00pm** when there will be approximately 100 stalls (including Weybridge Farmers' Market), 20 performances on two stages, a dog show, inter-active sports, fairground rides, cream teas and a beer tent.

These are just a few of the events from the whole programme. For full details of everything that is happening go to the Weybridge Society website www.weybridgesociety.org.uk/festival-2024

"For the wise man every day is a festival"

Plutarch



Elmbridge Mencap's Day Service is going from strength to strength with 35 clients now attending. The joy and happy shared times is amazing to see! Clients preparing and cooking their meals and so many activities to enjoy. Our sensory garden has just been planted out for the summer. The middle photo below shows youth club member, Dennis, planting the raised beds along with his Dad.

Jean Rigden



Prayer Corner

A 17th Century Nun's Prayer

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking
that I need to say something on
every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from the craving to straighten out
everybody's affairs.

With my vast store of wisdom
it seems a pity not to use it all
but you know, Lord, that
I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from
the recital of endless detail;
give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains.
They are increasing and love of
rehearsing them is becoming sweeter
as the years go by.

I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy
the tales of others' pains but help me
to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory
but for a growing humility
when my memory seems to clash
with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that
occasionally I may be mistaken.
Keep me reasonably sweet:
I do not want to be a saint,
some of them are so hard to live with,
but a sour old person is one of
the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things
in unexpected places and talents
in unexpected people.
And give me, O Lord,
The grace to tell them so.

Amen

ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

OVER THE YEARS, some readers must have wondered whether supporting ArtPeace is like pouring money into a bottomless pit as their hardship continues. The artists would reply that we have managed to keep their families alive through covering seed, fertilisers, rents, medical and school fees and hope! Many live in poor rented homes which creates a big problem each month as they live on a knife edge trying to avoid



eviction through rent arrears. However, thanks to our big UK exhibitions in 2010, two artists managed to put money aside and buy a stand –



a piece of rough land but it took **Coster Balakasi** over 10 years of scrimping to buy building materials. He makes his own bricks from mud and fires them (photo above). All this, whilst trying to support an extended family through sculpting, growing his own maize plus any odd job earning a pittance. Photo: Coster, third from left with his partly built home in background said: 'It has taken years of graft to get to this stage and I am so grateful for St Andrew's and other URC churches' support. This kindness helps support my extended family and my old mother in law living in a rural home in Mtoko.

MIKE MASEDZA (55) who read the lesson last week, is in a similar position but is now desperate. After struggling for many years to build a home (with earthen floor), he has reached roof level but



the bare timbers have been exposed to the elements for a year. There is no tap water or sewerage at this location. He said: 'I am having sleepless nights and praying constantly. I don't want to reach the next rainy season in June without a roof otherwise the timbers will rot. I need 900US\$ (£800) and am at the point of no return.' Mike lives in two rented rooms costing 70\$ a month – pushing him to the limit. His new home would accommodate seven with wife, son and four orphans, currently being cared for by his sister in a rural area, but she can no longer cope as her husband deserted her. Mike wants to help. He is a decent man who has helped so many others despite his own problems and is the

glue and peacemaker who has kept ArtPeace together for years. He so deserves a break! Should anyone like to view a video of his unfinished building and plea for support please contact me.

13 YEAR OLD HEAD OF FAMILY: Story from artist **Godwin Nasho:** 'These two children are named Talent (13 years) and Munashe (11 years) who stay at Eastview in Harare. They face a harsh reality as they live alone. Their father suddenly left for Namibia in 2020 chasing a better life but he has never communicated.



Sadly, their mother - their pillar - passed away unexpectedly in 2021 and life has become even tougher. Talent took on the responsibility for their survival but had no money for food, clothing or school fees with no one willing to help them. So Talent had the idea of looking for old mattresses abandoned in the undergrowth to



repair and sell to raise money to survive in Zimbabwe's hard economy. He walks miles looking for these old mattresses. Note their bathing area (below left) but the toilet doesn't have a flushing system so they either have to use their neighbour's or visit a nearby bush. When Talent is out looking for old mattresses, Munashe will be at home cooking whilst doing his homework. Below

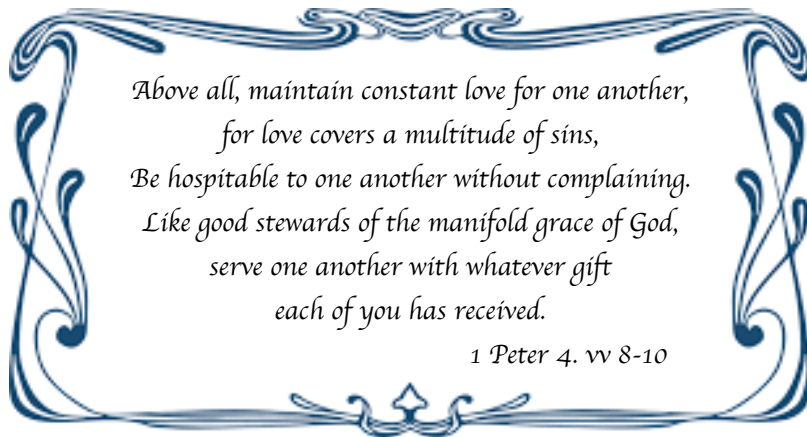


middle photo shows Munashe cooking a meal of rice only as they cannot afford to buy tomatoes. They eat just enough to survive, sometimes only Sadza with peanuts – not enough for growing kids'. **Godwin** (above with Talent), like many of our artists, tries to help poor children like these.

POVERTY: At least 63% percent of all households in Zimbabwe now live in poverty, according to the US Agency for International Development, and 16% live in extreme poverty.

SALE OF NEW ARRIVALS! This cute hippo in cobalt by Phillip Musonza (one of many talented new artists offering work via ArtPeace), will be for sale in **The Gateway on Sunday 26th May**, along with a rather large splendid rabbit and other stunning pieces thanks to a 17 kgs load kindly taken over by Verity of CAFOD. Remember, first come first served! **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!