



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE



THE GRAPEVINE



SEPTEMBER 2024

Volume 3 No 7



The Red House - Isle of Barra, Outer Hebrides

"September has come, it is hers whose vitality leaps in the autumn, whose nature prefers trees without leaves and a fire in the fireplace."

Louis MacNeice



From The Manse

September 2024

Dear friends

Over the summer I have enjoyed catching up with an old friend. The friend is neither human nor animal – it's a book, Kenneth Grahame's wonderful book, "The Wind in the Willows". I would have been about eight when I first made this friend's acquaintance. I was in primary school and there was a set in the classroom so sometimes we read it going round the class, each pupil reading a sentence or a chapter, and sometimes our teacher read a section to us. There are so many lovely bits to it such as Mole's escape from the spring cleaning at the beginning, through to the battle at the end to liberate Toad Hall. The description of Badger's kitchen, a place of warmth and safety after Mole and Ratty get caught in the snow in the Wild Wood, captured my imagination to such an extent that I can remember drawing what I thought the room looked like. Having zero artistic talent I expect I had to label it so that others knew what it was supposed to be.

First published in 1908 the book tells the story of Mole, Ratty and Badger as they try to help Mr Toad. Toad is such a lovable character but he does get into trouble after he becomes obsessed with motorcars. The book is based on the bedtime stories Grahame told his son, Alastair, who was born prematurely, was blind in one eye and was plagued by health problems throughout his life. He died at the age of 19 years. Grahame himself worked for the Bank of England and after he retired he wrote up the bedtime stories he had told Alastair into the manuscript of "The Wind in the Willows".

As an 8 year-old my experience of picnics was of tomato sandwiches, wrapped up in greaseproof paper, where the tomatoes had 'sogged' the bread. There might be a chocolate biscuit to follow. (Cue memory: If you like a lot of chocolate on your biscuit, join 'our club'.) Don't remember any bags of crisps ever making an appearance! Against that experience Ratty's picnic of "cold chicken" and

*"coldtonguecoldhamcoldbeefpickledgherkinssaladfrenchrollscresssandwiches
pottedmeatgingerbeerlemonadesodawater"*

sounded bliss (still does). Enjoying lunch at The Weir and looking out on the Thames I have been reminded of the Ducks' Ditty still, on various occasions, "All along the backwater, through the rushes tall, ducks are a-dabbling, up tails all!".

"The Wind in the Willows" also contains several independent short stories which aren't part of the main narrative. If I'm honest I am less keen on those chapters, particularly "Wayfarers all" and yet it's in one of these 'sub stories' (*The Piper at the gates of Dawn*) that Mole is suddenly overcome with awe - an awe in which there was no panic or terror, just a deep feeling of peace and happiness. Otter's son, Portly, has gone missing and everyone is concerned. Portly is not yet a good swimmer and they are concerned that he's either been drowned in the weir or else been trapped somewhere. Ratty and Mole join in the search and it's whilst they are searching that they enter this incredible glade, "a little lawn of a marvellous green, set round with Nature's own orchard-trees: crab-apple, wild cherry and sloe". The beauty of it all suddenly overcomes Mole and as he looks around him he suddenly sees the little body of Portly. He is safe and sleeping under a tree.....

....." 'Rat' (the Mole) found breath to whisper, shaking, 'Are you afraid?'
'Afraid! Of Him? O never, never! And yet, O Mole, I am afraid.'
Then the two animals, crouching to the earth, bowed their heads and did worship."

To me that puts in a nutshell the experience when you suddenly become aware of the presence of God in the beauty of what surrounds you. I think even as an 8 year-old boy I understood that passage – and, the best part of 60 years later, I am glad that I still do.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "The Lad". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a long, thin horizontal line that extends to the right.

**SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES
SEPTEMBER 2024**

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

Sunday 1 September (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Tuesday 3 September	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting in the Church itself
Sunday 8 September	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Friday 13 September	12.30 - 2.30 pm	People Who Lunch - Church Hall (<i>see page 5</i>)
Sunday 15 September (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship

COPY DATE FOR OCTOBER ISSUE : WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

*All items (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations) to the Editor or Associate Editor
(please see back page for contact details)*

Sunday 22 September	10.30 am	Morning Worship
	3.00 pm	 Messy Church
Sunday 29 September	10.30 am	Morning Worship followed by Church meeting



HARVEST FESTIVAL

A reminder that Harvest Festival will be on **13th October** at **10.30am**. This will be a family and parade service with our uniformed organisations present.
Further details will be in the October Grapevine. *Michael Hodgson*

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

BIRTH

Congratulations to Ed and Katie Snaith on the birth of their son, Benjamin Edward, on 3rd July, a brother for Esme and fourth grandchild for Rachel and Mike Snaith. Welcome to little Ben and love and good wishes to all the family.

PRAYERS

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Kate Ashfield, 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.

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

SURPRISE VISIT FROM EVELYN McCRORIE AND PAULINE ON 4 AUGUST

Bill and I left Walton in 1989 and lived and worked in London, retired to Seaford and eventually moved back to Ayr in order to take care of my mother, Agnes.

I now live in Almeria in Spain with Jennifer who sadly lost her husband Andrew two years ago. During the summer when temperatures in Spain can reach 40°C, I enjoy visiting Pauline and her husband Martin in their spacious home in West Sussex. And I am happy to catch up with grandson Elliot (now based in Glasgow) and granddaughter Melissa, who lives in south London.

So it was a great delight when Pauline suggested a trip to St Andrew's on Communion Sunday. What a welcome we received! First of all, from the coffee ladies in the kitchen and later in church from Michael, your esteemed minister, who reminded the congregation of Bill's service from 1970 to 1989. And during coffee it was moving to meet up with old friends. Pauline was especially pleased to talk to her former Brown Owl, Anne Fitzgerald and to chat to her contemporary, Lindsay [formerly Carlile].

The church is looking splendid with the addition of the new foyer displaying the fine art work. The curtains in the hall are the same ones from the 1970s but they still look good! Our visit back to St Andrew's was indeed memorable. The congregation still has the same warm feeling and the addition of Zoom is a reminder of how far-reaching you are as Michael told us how many people digitally join in worship.

So, thank you, St Andrew's and may you continue to witness to Christ for years to come!

Evelyn and Pauline



*The McCrorie family in the USA in 1980.
L-R Pauline, Bill, Evelyn and Jennifer*

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT A GLANCE

A friend is...

*a smile amid dark frowns - a gentle tone
Among rude voices, a beloved light,
A solitude, a refuge, a delight.*

Percy Bysshe Shelley

ELDERS' MEETING

Tuesday 3 September

7.30 pm - in the Church



MESSY CHURCH

Sunday 22 September

3.00 pm in the Bill Topping Room

All welcome!

(Note: No Messy Church in October)

QUARTERLY CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 29 September

after the service



PEOPLE WHO LUNCH

Friday 13 September

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 Elizabeth Scharinger by email: administrator@standrewsurc.org or Fiona Reardon on 07902 485933 / 01932 247119



PLEASE SAVE...

...those empty toilet roll holders

and give them to Jean Rigden for Elmbridge Mencap. You would be amazed at what they can make with them at Craft sessions!

*Do not wait; the time will never be just right.
Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along.*

George Herbert

ADVANCE NOTICE!



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday 13 October

10.30 am

A family and parade service with Uniformed Organisations

The harvest of old age is the recollection and abundance of blessing previously secured.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

The cover photo on the Island of Barra was taken by your Editor



News from the URC

Prayer Calendar for September

- 1 East Cliff, Bournemouth
Cornerstone, Hythe
- 8 St Columba's, Gosport
St Andrew's, Reading
- 15 Bitterne Park, Southampton
Maidenhead
- 22 Cheap Street, Sherborne
Christ Church, Henley
- 29 Broad Chalke, Salisbury
United Church, Bridport

URC General Assembly

At the General Assembly held in July the Revd Tim Meadows, Minister of Allerton and St Stephen's, Wavertree was inducted as Moderator of General Assembly for 2024-2025. In this role he is the national figurehead of the URC representing the denomination internally and in the wider world.

Catriona Wheeler, an Elder at Trinity URC in Lincoln, has been nominated to serve as Moderator of General Assembly for 2025-2026. Catriona is a lawyer and Notary Public and is a Trustee of two local charities which benefit people in Lincoln. Catriona is committed to the life of the Church having held membership in churches across three synods. She also serves the wider church as Legal Adviser to the East Midlands Synod, as a director of East Midlands Synod Trust and Chair of the United Reformed Church Trust.



Eco Church Bronze Award – Green Team

Would you be interested in joining a **Green Team** at St Andrews?

If you are interested in environmental issues, climate change or in the work we are doing to achieve an Eco Church Award, we should love you to join a Green Team to help us achieve our goal of a Bronze Award.

We envisage that the team would meet in-person or on Zoom every couple of months.

If you are interested, please email Elizabeth Scharinger - administrator@standrewsurc.org

LUNCHTIME CONCERT WITH STRATUS

Umbrellas were much in evidence on Saturday 24 August as we arrived half an hour early to enjoy a glass of Pimm's, expertly prepared by Michael, and nibbles before the Stratus concert. If we were to have such a thing, we could be thinking of Stratus as our resident Church music group. On a miserably wet day that would best be described as 'awfy dreich' in Scotland, we were transported for an hour into a musical world of peace, joy and reflection with Stratus Trio, close friends, Nathaniel Brawn on violin, Sam Grew on cello and Zacc Rodwell on piano. They say: "This concert marks an important moment in our journey as we look ahead to an exciting year, with new recordings in the pipeline."

The concert which they describe as 'a blend of the familiar and the new' consisted of well-loved themes from films and musicals as well as more contemporary music in their own, distinctive style. The first item, a delicate and expressive piece (new to me) Schwanlieder ("Swan Songs") by Fanny Mendelssohn, set the scene to help us move out of our troubled world into one of serenity and reflection. There followed The Swan from Carnival of the Animals in all its elegance and Chanson de Matin by Edward Elgar, which captured the freshness and optimism of a new day. Next, The Salley Gardens (an arrangement by Benjamin Britten of the traditional Irish song) and the emotional and spiritual Gabriel's Oboe which is familiar as the theme tune from the film The Mission. Then we had Bring Him Home from Les Miserables with its prayerful theme, the dreamy Moon River and the hauntingly beautiful main theme from Schindler's List by John Williams that spoke deeply to our emotions. Finally, Somewhere over the Rainbow, with its message of dreams of a brighter future, the melody Memory from Cats (always a hit with me as I am an unapologetic cat-lover) and, to close, You'll Never Walk Alone from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel with its "uplifting and powerful message to leave you with a sense of comfort and unity as we close our performance."

It was an hour of pure joy and escapism. Michael's vote of thanks at the end, on behalf of us all, congratulated three talented musicians on an inspiring programme. The trio had held off going on holiday in order to play for us and we showed our appreciation with an enthusiastic round of applause. While there was no charge for the concert, any donations given were welcome and will be used to further the group's projects, including a new album to follow from their Debut album in 2020, 'Say Something'.

We look forward to more concerts in the not too distant future!

Norma Reid



Tribulations of a Treasurer – Chapter 5 (Part 1)

You may recall an item that I wrote for The Grapevine last year about the joys of amending Direct Debit Mandates. Here is yet another tale related, as usual, in a rather fanciful way.

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

You will realise that the church's elders and officers are always examining ways of cutting costs, whilst trying to maintain standards. As the minister uses his mobile telephone for most business it became apparent that the landline telephone in the church office was no longer needed. As the contract with BT was due to end in May, this would surely be no problem.

However, there is the word "Kafka-esque" – this means something is strange and nightmarish or long, frustrating and bizarre. People often use this adjective for interactions that are unnecessarily bureaucratic or complicated..... The word comes from the last name of Franz Kafka, the Czech author known for his stories with surrealism and disoriented characters, who died 100 years ago this year.

At the beginning of April, I spoke to a young lady "somewhere in BT" and explained that the church wanted to renew the contract but only with the broadband and anti-virus protection elements. I wanted to get rid of the landline and stop paying the £4 that BT charge us each month to send a paper bill – you will recall that Royal Mail has raised its prices recently, but even a standard second-class letter can be sent for a mere 85p, never mind the reduced price for bulk business mailings from which BT no doubt benefits.

She kindly advised me how to deal with the latter point via the BT website and our first saving was under way. She sent me a new contract for the correct sum (a saving of about £10 per month) but the church's name was wrong. It wasn't just that it didn't show "St. Andrew's URC, Walton and Weybridge" (which it should have, given the effort necessary to change the Direct Debit Mandate last year) but also that it struggled to get anywhere near the correct version of the previous name.....

It had Alan's name at the top followed by two lines:

"St. Andrew's URC Church
St. Andrew's Reform Church"

Well, I thought, **now** would be the very opportunity to get this corrected. A flurry of e-mails later, and the name on the contract was correct. It was sent to me and I signed it electronically and sent it back. This was followed by radio silence for three days.....

Then, out of the blue, I was called by a gentleman from BT Local Business. (Investigation revealed later that BT Local Business used to be a regional organisation within BT but has been contracted out, which was why I was speaking to someone in Sunderland with a warm Wearside accent.....). He advised me that he had spoken to Alan that morning and obtained my contact details. It was evident from the information which he gave to me that he could see the old contract and he enquired how things were going. I explained that I was awaiting confirmation documents for the new contract, including the name change. Interestingly, he could see the e-mail trail showing when I had written to the young lady and when she had written back but NOT the contents of each e-mail. So, I went through the whole process again about the new cost and the need for the name to be changed. He said that he could set up the new contract at the agreed cost and that the name change could be done overnight. He would 'phone me to confirm the next day. No call came..... However, I had obtained his number and called him back after the weekend. He explained that he was not able to effect the change of name but would I like to go ahead anyway?

"Stay calm!" I instructed myself. "Remember the Three Ps of dealing with a bureaucracy: Patience, Persistence and Politeness."

I politely demurred. I asked to speak to his supervisor. (*The difficulty with the name change was very evidently a BT system failure – possibly due to the gentleman working for a contracting firm rather than directly for BT. Customer Service people are paid to deal with the system they have been given. They should not be hassled when there are people higher up who are paid more in order to deal with hassle!*)

The supervisor was similarly barred from organising the name change..... I asked, still thinking that I was speaking directly to BT, if there was a more local section which might have the authority to do so. I was given a Crawley number and I called them the next day. I spoke to three different but very polite people, who passed me around until I was connected with a charming young lady with a warm Wearside accent..... I explained the situation in detail and she took the details down, being careful to spell the words “Walton and Weybridge” out loud to ensure that she had them down correctly. At this point, she asked if I had spoken to her gentleman colleague recently.....

“Stay calm!” I instructed myself, “Remember the Three Ps!” Politeness gets you their help; Persistence lets you go round and round in circles, until someone realises that there IS a way to get you off the bureaucratic merry-go-round by speaking to the right person with the right powers and Patience brings the reward of success. *Eventually..... with a following wind.... if the Lord is smiling kindly upon you.....*

“I know who you have to speak to!” said the young lady, “I’ll get her to call you!” Ten minutes later I was speaking to another young lady, this time working directly for BT and based in Birmingham. I explained the situation AGAIN, including the correct title for the church. She gave me her contact details and promised to send me the new contract to sign that day. An hour later the contract arrived by e-mail.

The Organisation Name was listed as:

“St. Andrew’s URC, Walton and Weybridge Church” (*sigh!*)

The Install Address and the Billing Address were both listed as:

“St. Andrew’s Reform Church” (*heavier sigh!*)

(My wife had been following the saga. She advised me that if she had been doing the negotiation the recipients would, by now, have learned several interesting new words, which a lady of her refinement and decorum would not ordinarily be expected to use.....)

So, I sent back a list of the revisions needed before I would be able to sign. This included changing the e-mail address to mine, rather than leaving it as x.xxxxxxx@xxxxx.co.uk, a person who would be unlikely to volunteer to pay any of the church’s BT bills.....

The contract arrived..... but with some of the addresses untouched and the Organisation Name still with the word “Church” at the end. Another telephone call ensued. All but the Organisation Name was corrected by the helpful lady on the ‘phone and she promised to ring back to tell me when the latter would be done by those with the power to do so. Meanwhile, we went away on holiday. We were travelling home when she rang to ask if I had received the newly-worded contract. As I was driving around an unfamiliar city at the time, my wife told her that I would check the next day. I did. The church’s name had disappeared from the heading: “Organisation Name” – to be replaced with MINE..... And the anti-virus contract was in the name of a church that has never existed: “St. Andrew’s Reform Church” (*What St. Andrew’s proposed reform was, and whether it has ever been implemented, I have no idea.*)

But then..... An e-mail back to her produced an almost instantaneous response..... with the correct name in the correct places! Having checked it, I signed the contract and returned it to her, before anything else could happen.....

So, now we had succeeded! Er, no....

And, with this cliff-hanger, we come to the end of this part of our adventure – watch out for the next part soon!

Jem Ward

ECO CONGRATULATIONS TO WOKING URC !

Many of you will now know that Woking URC has achieved the Eco Church Gold Award, due in no small measure to the work and enthusiasm of our Green Team, and the encouragement and participation of many others.

This news has gone 'countrywide' and the link below will take you to the URC news release, with photographs, on the website:

[Woking URC achieves Gold Eco Church Award milestone - United Reformed Church](#)

Woking United Reformed Church (URC) has become the 51st Gold Eco Church in England and Wales. The award was given by the Christian conservation charity A Rocha UK, and reflects Woking URC's commitment to walk in step with nature and put creation care at the heart of what they do.

Woking URC is a large and lively urban church that has very strong community links. Forward thinking in their building projects include adaptations to reduce energy use and the installation of solar panels. The church also manages the land around its building to support biodiversity and offers a tranquil space for nearby residents and visitors.

Woking URC has sought to engage children and young people in the development of their outside space and continue to learn and grow as a worshipping community as they deepen their understanding of God's creation at special services and events. The assessors for the award particularly noted the church's future plans to reach Net Zero and engagement with their local MP and councillors, demonstrating their commitment to care for the environment and Christian responsibility to nurture and protect God's earth. Among other measures taken, young people installed bird boxes around the grounds of the church and a Hotel for Bees was built on the outside of one of the church walls in the shape of a cross.

Woking URC Green Team members, Chris and Mary Temple said: "Working towards the Gold Award has been an amazing team effort with plenty of fun and laughter along the way. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from Wessex Synod for a number of projects which has enabled Woking URC to install added insulation, LEDs, solar panels and batteries; also Will Forster, now Woking's MP, who made funds available from his Surrey County Council allocation to provide battery storage for the panels."

Now in its ninth year, the Eco Church award scheme brings together a national community of churches addressing the environmental crisis, using a common framework and an on-line toolkit to learn and speak up together to address climate change through the free programme.

Revd Lucy Brierley, Minister of Woking URC, added:

"I'm thrilled that Woking URC has received this award thanks to the hard work of our Green Team. More importantly, this award recognises that stewardship of the creation God has given us is part of our work and witness to the community around us. This is a wonderful recognition of our commitment to caring for our church, community and planet."

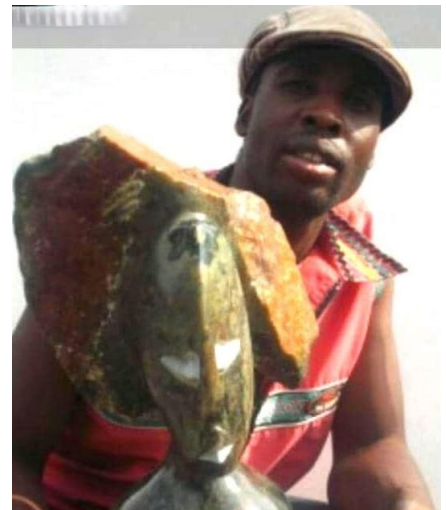
We hope that this will act as encouragement to all of us at St Andrew's Walton and Weybridge to be more proactive in working towards achieving our Bronze!

WASN'T IT GOOD to see so many people in the hall after the recent Flower Festival enjoying themselves over coffee and delicious cakes – oh that this was the norm *every* Sunday as it looks so sparse at times. There is strength in numbers - vital for a church in our situation!



THE ARTPEACE SALE was a big success raising £730 which will spread joy and relief among their families and friends so a big thank you to all who contributed! It attracted many members

of the public. I kept the artists informed of sales as they happened via WhatsApp - they love hearing their work has sold and been admired. It was great to witness the therapeutic effect albeit by text. Togara Machingiri on the right, mentioned in the main article, is having a rough time but when he received this photo of Liz Grimsey holding her elephant purchase, he was thrilled and sent a personal message of thanks to pass onto Liz who was moved. All this happened within the space of half an hour! Togara (40) was born in Masvingo and is married with three children.



After finishing school he started carving using hard stones like cobalt, buttermilk, verdite and springstone, learning from his brother. He

is a visionary artist using his imagination and emotions. Rosemary Topping felt she *must* have the figure of two heads titled 'Togetherness' by Kenneth Jere as the shape and content of this stunning piece evoked strong personal memories of her late husband Brian, who some will recall was a regular member of St Andrew's. So often, the artist's work speaks volumes to people.



OUTREACH: ArtPeace enjoyed 'Songs of Praise' which I recorded and sent 'live'. Some knew a few of the hymns from their school days. They appreciated the piano duet and flower photos, especially Anna's 'Postcard from Zimbabwe' featuring flame lilies, their national flower and a



giraffe! Our services are often shared in the most unusual of places. For example, Fortune bumped into Martin (right with beard), an old primary school friend leaving a shop in Tafara, a run down area outside Harare and shared the service on his mobile. Can you imagine this happening outside Sainsbury's in Walton or Weybridge!

Johnston Simpson

A FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS



A Postcard from Beethoven

Over the weekend of 10/11 August this year, Walton & Weybridge Flower Club in conjunction with St Andrew's Walton and Weybridge hosted a super two day Flower Festival which filled the church with gorgeous floral arrangements, as well as providing some tempting retail therapy and home-made refreshments in the Church Hall. The themed title of the Festival was '**A Postcard From.....**' and the range of places chosen was not just global but also historic. We had over two hundred visitors and many passed comments to our stewards about the quality and creativity of the work on display.

The Mayor of Elmbridge, Councillor Neil Houston and his wife, Veronica, visited on the Saturday and stayed one and a half hours looking at the arrangements and voting, after which they enjoyed coffee and cake. Our seven stewards all did a sterling job in answering questions about the arrangements and our Club in general. A big thank you goes out to all of them - they may have even have encouraged a few people to come to a meeting and to find out more.



L-R. Anna Crawford, President of the Walton & Weybridge Flower Club, the Mayor of Elmbridge and his wife Veronica

The special Sunday morning service led by Revd Michael Hodgson was a 'Songs of Praise', all the hymns having been chosen by church members in advance. Michael gave background information on some of the hymns and also the reasons for their choice. The service was attended by church members friends and visitors to the Festival and the closing voluntary, played on two pianos by Michael and Teresa Bacon of 'In an English Country Garden', brought the service to an appropriate and enjoyable end. Over the two days, Michael played the piano and organ at different times giving a delightful enhanced atmosphere to the show.



...and don't forget to VOTE!



In an English Country Garden



Music to browse by ...

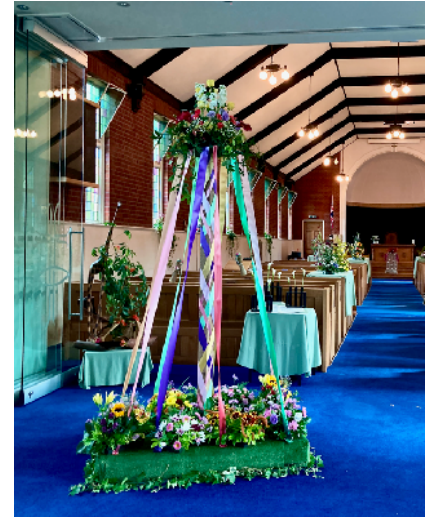
All visitors were invited to take part in the public vote to choose their favourite piece, though many people struggled to decide on just one! The third highest number of votes went to the 'Postcard from the Village Green', the fabulous maypole near the church entrance, an impressive and colourful display designed by Vanessa Bray, created by her with assistance from other Club members. Vanessa also took the second highest number of votes with an arrangement which was all her own work – 'A Postcard from Jacko Falls, in the Dominican Republic', a splendid and highly detailed arrangement which illustrated beautifully this tropical wonder. The highest number of votes were given to 'A Postcard from Vienna', created by Ann Mansfield, a very evocative piece perfectly encapsulating the romance of that city, famous for it's music (as well as cake). Ann was thrilled to be awarded a voucher to spend at Squire's and will no doubt add more beautiful plants to her already wonderful garden. Here are the winning arrangements.



A Postcard from Vienna



A Postcard from Jacko Falls



A Postcard from the Village Green

The ArtPeace carvings on display in the Gateway raised over £700 which will go straight out to support the artists and their families in Zimbabwe. The Church made over £200 on the sale of books and refreshments, a fantastic bonus to their funds and £110 of donations will go to Flower Club funds, thereby benefiting all of our members.

A huge thank to all from both Church and Flower Club who worked so hard to make it such a happy and enjoyable time. And finally ... we would like to send a special thank you to Squire's Hershams branch. We were very grateful for the loan of two planters full of colour at the front doors of the church, acting as a perfect enticement to bring people in.

Sylvie Mellersh - Communications, Walton & Weybridge Flower Club

"A very big thank you to you all for all you did to make the festival such a success. Your input, ideas, knowledge and experience were invaluable. The comments from all the visitors was 'what a lovely show!' The Mayor and Mayoress were particularly complementary and Michael was delighted with the whole event. We had approximately 200 visitors over the time. So, thank you all for everything. I could not have had a better team! Sit back, relax and enjoy what we have left of summer. "

Anna Crawford - President , Walton & Weybridge Flower Club



GETTING TO KNOW YOU - DAVID HUESTON



David shares with us his family history with the Church.

My initial connection with St Andrew's goes back to the late '50s, when I was christened by our minister at the time, Eddie Lane. As a small lad, I was regularly attending the church in the sixties, with my father, Jim, who was a Deacon, then an Elder and also Treasurer here. My younger siblings Moira and John, also attended and we all went to the busy, thriving, well-attended Sunday school each week. This was run by Mr McLeod and one of my favourite teachers was Nan Mercer who, sadly, passed away not long ago. I was also an enthusiastic 8th Walton Cub Scout at the Church, where the hugely popular Chrissie Brooman was our Akela [*Mowgli learns about the laws of the jungle from Akela, the pack leader*]. I played football for the Cubs, which was successfully run by fathers of team-mates, Messers Beswick and Beck. Whilst a Cub, many moons ago, I was honoured to be chosen to carry the Union flag on Remembrance Sunday. That made me so proud at that time.

David with the Minister at his recent ordination as an Elder

In the event, I was confirmed, with Minister Bill McCrorie at the helm. On the social side, I played badminton on most Saturday mornings under the expert, enthusiastic eye of Nick Gwilt. In the mid '80s my younger sister Moira was married at St Andrew's, and became a Bainbridge. She has mostly lived and worked abroad since then, and, with her husband Phil, regularly sees her daughters, Anna and Sophie plus one-year old grandson James (named after his grandfathers). For 20 plus years now they have all lived close to Glen Iris in Melbourne, Australia. The '90s plodded along with my mother Florence (now in a local care home) often attending church with my father. My Dad's sister, Muriel Cambrook, was a singer in the Church choir during this period. Muriel lived near Walton Bridge but sadly, we lost her 5 years ago. I was married at St. Andrew's to Rachel in the new millennium in April 2000, when minister David Netherwood presided. The year of 2009 was a sad time as Dad passed away aged 89. Ministers David Netherwood and Romilly Micklem did a fantastic job in my darkest day at the Church. My church has given me much faith, strength, pleasure and support during these 60+ years and in that time I've seen a lot of good friends and parishioners come and go. Now, it's my turn to give something back to St Andrew's. We have a terrific Minister in Michael Hodgson at the helm of a great combined St Andrew's Walton & Weybridge team, so the future's looking bright. I sincerely hope I can make a valuable contribution to the Church going forward, as St Andrew's has given me so much over these past years.

At our Communion Service on 7 July, David Hueston was ordained as an Elder. Given his family history with the church, he is delighted to be part of this important team. Ed

If you see someone falling behind, walk beside them.

If you see someone being ignored, find a way to include them.

Always remind people of their worth. One small act could mean the world to them.



MEET RENNY...

Renny is one of those lovely people who attends Elmbridge Mencap's Day Service. Renny loves watching cooking programs on TV so he is now helping to prep and cook meals for everyone that attends. You can see how much he enjoys it. 'Masterchef, here I come!'

Renny is also a great snooker player, not only potting the balls but also planning where the cue ball should be for his next shot. Don't try and put the balls back in the wrong place or you will be in trouble!



Renny is a fan of all the activities provided: hand massage; Sounds like Yoga, (quite often falls asleep during this); chilling out in the sensory room; new age curling and enjoying the sensory garden, to name but a few.

We all love Renny and he especially enjoys time with my granddaughter, Sara, who is volunteering at the Day Service. In fact, he loves being with us so much it is often hard to get him to leave the building at home time!



Right on cue...

The perfect time for a little doze

I hope you enjoy this taste of what our Day Service provides and that I can introduce more of our lovely clients to you in the future, to show off what people can achieve.

Jean Rigden



The Eric Liddell Timeline

Messy Church took place in July just as the Olympic Games were starting so we took Messy Olympics as our theme and provided various sporty activities, including ball games, hula hoops, and indoor curling borrowed from Mencap. This was very popular with everyone.

We also encouraged the children to copy a sentence in Chinese, which most did very carefully and accurately. During the celebration, we talked about Eric Liddell as it was 100 years since the Paris Olympics when he refused to run on a Sunday but went on to get a gold medal in the 400 metre event.

Anne Fitzgerald



Not as easy as it looks!



Makes our writing look boring!

PLASTIC FREE JULY

I always thought I was pretty good at being 'green' at home so I thought I'd give 'Plastic Free July' a go to see if I was right! I use refillable shampoo and conditioner from a company called Splosh, refillable surface spray and hand soap from Neat, washing detergent strips which disintegrate from a company called Dip, I take all soft plastic to the Co-op for recycling, I have a soda stream machine for soft drinks so that I don't have to buy plastic bottles, I use toothpaste tablets not tubes, I get milk delivered in glass bottles, I use natural cleaning products such as bicarb and citric acid. I also buy recycled toilet paper and kitchen roll that comes wrapped in paper and not plastic.

On 1st July, I had a fridge full of fruit and vegetables in plastic packing that I'd had delivered from Tesco the day before so I obviously had to use this up before focusing on how to buy these products without plastic next time. I did some research into how to do this. It became obvious that I'd need to find a greengrocer and a butcher or buy loose from the supermarket counters. This meant that rather than doing my convenient online shop and having it delivered, I'd have to physically go to the supermarket and not just to my local one, but a big one with meat and fish counters. The alternative was to spend a lot more from companies such as Abel & Cole who deliver organic fruit, veg and meat.

I was going camping on 13th July so I tried ordering through Abel & Cole for my meat for the BBQ. I was hoping for meat wrapped in an alternative to plastic but was left disappointed when it still came vacuum packed in plastic. This was less wrapping than Tesco would provide but it was still plastic. The meat, however, was delicious. I asked Abel & Cole to respond and they sent me this:

Abel & Cole have always tried to minimise the amount of packaging we use. That's why we deliver your food in cardboard boxes which we pick up and re-use. We only use packaging when absolutely necessary, to protect products while on its way to you or to keep it fresh. We're fully aware of the environmental impact that plastics have, and this is why we are actively looking for alternatives. We have already reduced the amount of plastics we use and are working hard to reduce this further.

You can find more information about what Abel & Cole can accept for reuse via the link below:

<https://www.abelandcole.co.uk/contentpage?folder=AboutUs&file=packaging.html>

And if you haven't already, you can also order a free plastic pick-up bag so that we can recycle soft plastics (even for non-A&C products).

<https://www.abelandcole.co.uk/plastic-pick-up-bag>

I ordered the salad items from Milk & More and the tomatoes came in cardboard but the salad leaves were in a plastic bag and the cucumber was wrapped in plastic.

For the bread rolls, I decided to go to the bakery counter at Tesco but again was left disappointed that all bread except fresh loaves were in plastic wrapping despite having been baked that day in the store. Surely a paper alternative would keep them fresh in the same way the loaves were kept fresh?

I decided to try to persuade my children that I would be baking biscuits and snacks throughout July. They weren't happy – they usually love Oreo biscuits and Cadbury's chocolate! They were prepared to give it a go and I am happy to say that for a few weeks we cut down on the amount of shop-bought snacks wrapped in plastic and we ate home-baked goods. I also tried a recipe for homemade dog biscuits but they didn't work too well.

Once the children broke up from school, I thought fruit and vegetable picking at Garson's Farm was a good idea. We had fun picking strawberries, raspberries, cucumbers, courgettes and carrots. The cherry section was closed due to high winds but they were selling their cherries in punnets from a little wooden shack. They tried to give me a plastic punnet but when I asked for an alternative they happily provided a cardboard one instead. My question is, why have the plastic ones if the cardboard ones are there anyway? I asked them and received this reply:

Garsons are making great progress towards removing various plastics from our operation. You can read more on this and our wider environmental plans here: <https://www.garsons.co.uk/about-us/sustainability>

We have two sizes of card fruit punnets, as you've seen, and our carrier bags are fully compostable. On the day of your visit the high winds meant we had to close the cherry orchard itself, but had fruit harvested that morning which was destined for the farm shop. This was then offered for sale to PYO customers to make up for the orchard being temporarily closed. These smaller 400g punnets are our final plastic packaging, and once supplies are used we hope to move to card or pulp variations. The plastic containers are recyclable, however we appreciate this isn't desirable.

In conclusion, I found it really quite hard to do 'Plastic Free July' completely and even to do in part was tricky. It needs a lot of time to go plastic free – time to shop at different places and a lot of advanced preparation. Some companies are still not fully embracing the fact that they should be reducing single use plastic and those that are doing so are taking a long time to reduce it completely.

I encourage everyone to try to reduce their use of single use plastic. One small change can make a big difference.

'We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly.' *Anne Marie Bonneau*

'Single-use plastic is the main problem. Liquid laundry detergent bottles, roll-on deodorant, dishwasher tablet sachets...they are all made from plastics that are rarely recycled, even though they say they are recyclable. Being recyclable just isn't enough anymore.' *Smol*

Side note – At Wimbledon URC, I run an Eco Living stall and would be very happy to provide St Andrew's members and adherents with items from this stall at wholesale prices. Have a look at www.ecoliving.co.uk and let me know if there is anything that you would like to try.

Elizabeth Scharinger

*"In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends."
Kakuzo Okakura*

"The gift that keeps on giving," says Claire Ward, who sent us this photograph of her magnificent standard fuchsia grown from a cutting.



THIS AND THAT

Car Park

For some time we have been aware the surface of the car park needs some attention and that there are some issues with ground sinking in a couple of places. We are exploring this issue and some possible solutions but in the short-term some additional stones have been laid to fill in and temporarily to improve the situation. Thanks to Alan and David for doing this.

Michael Hodgson

Platform Area in the Church

In consultation with the Synod we are currently looking at options to improve the safety of people using the platform at the front of church. The basic problem is that there are various steps and a number of different levels to contend with but no hand rails to help people. In the past these have caused some falls and some near misses. A growing number of people are now becoming very wary of this area and for both moral and insurance reasons doing nothing isn't a reasonable option. You may not realise, for example, that at the moment three of the Elders cannot serve at Communion because of the safety concerns and others are nervous. Going up and down steps carrying a plate or a tray of glasses with nothing to hold on to is unsafe for them. A number of us will also remember all too clearly the very near miss we had at Sheila Gardner's funeral last year.

At the moment we are looking at ways that the make least visual change but which address the problems. Please, therefore, be aware that very soon some suggestions will be brought to Church Meeting for consideration to sort this out.

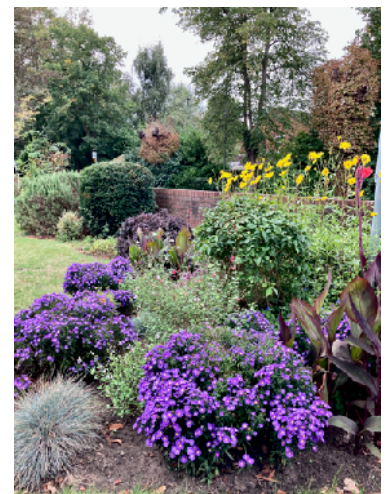
Michael Hodgson

Pop-up Coffee



The recent pop-up coffee in the church garden was really enjoyable. Michael worked hard and had the urn outside as well as coffee mugs and biscuits. We were fortunate to have a pleasant morning which we could enjoy sitting outside. It was warm enough for comfort and the chatting created a lovely, friendly atmosphere. We had a lady visitor who popped in when she saw the banner inviting guests. I think she was Portuguese and

she seemed to enjoy the company. We had quite a good turn out and we would hope that warmer weather would allow another coffee morning outside. It is such a nice way to chat to friends to enjoy fellowship. The church garden offers a wonderful opportunity to let passers-by appreciate our church as well as to meet some of its welcoming congregation.



Moira de Kok

THE LIGHTER SIDE...

HOW CHILDREN PERCEIVE THEIR GRANDPARENTS

When my grandson asked me how old I was I teasingly replied, 'I'm not sure'. 'Look in your underwear, Grandpa' he advised. 'Mine says I'm 4 to 6.' (I really like this one - it says I'm only '38'!)

My grandson was visiting one day and he said 'Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?' I mentally polished my halo and said 'No, how are we alike?' 'You're both old,' he replied.

I didn't know if my granddaughter had learned her colours yet so I would point out something and ask what colour it was. She would tell me and was always correct. It was fun for me, so I continued. At last, she headed for the door, saying, "Grandma, I really think you should try to figure out some of these colours yourself!"

*"When I am dead, I hope it may be said:
His sins were scarlet, but his books were read."*

Hilaire Belloc

The following three excerpts are from Holy Wit by Revd James A Simpson

A Glasgow lady tells how, though her grand-daughter was an enthusiastic member of the Church Brownie pack, she was also very much a child of these labour-saving times. One evening she came home after a pack meeting and cried in despair: 'I've got to wash a pair of socks to qualify for a badge and I don't know how to work the washing machine.'

Anne Evans tells of a man who called one day at the manse in Elgin and handed in a bag of sticks. Not knowing who he was, Anne inquired if anything special had prompted the gift. 'Well it's like this. Your husband recently did me a great favour. He buried my wife.'

Choirmaster to Choirboy: 'No, Carruthers, the hymn writer was *Wesley*, not Presley.'

From 'Writes of the Church' by Gary Anderson

Dear Sir

Tried with no success to access the new, exciting church so-called Facebook page today. Couldn't find it. My grandson tells me this is because I don't have an internet connection. Or a computer. Or a mobile phone. This is no excuse. The church's social media policy has failed.

Chas 'Charlie' Charkles

Dear Sir

There is a hole in the roof, letting in water directly above the rear right-hand pew. Whenever I speak to the churchwardens, they say it will be expensive to fix and we need to get three estimates. This is taking for ever. Some Sunday mornings I go home soaked. I'm seriously considering sitting in another pew.

Mandy Pandy

FLOWER POWER

Ghislaine Stevenson says:

"Many thanks for the delicate posy of flowers I received from the communion table arrangement donated by Anne Fitzgerald on 28th July. They have brightened my living room and bring a lovely touch of the natural world indoors."

And many thanks from **Norma** who has been twice blessed, first with a pastel selection of summer flowers donated by Jean Rigden and then, most recently, with beautiful cream roses and gladioli, from Margaret Faultless.

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



30 June



7 July - Anna and Alan Crawford
for their their Wedding Anniversary



14 July - Jean Rigden
for John with love



21 July - Paula Walsh for Mum's birthday



28 July - Anne Fitzgerald
Keith's birthday /wedding anniversary



4 August - Moira de Kok



18 August - Margaret Faultless
in memory of Gordon



25 August - Val Cave in memory of my husband

Prayer Corner

A Modern Prayer for Peace

Loving God, we pray

For those involved in conflicts,

The innocent,
The guilty,
The injured,
Orphaned,
Widowed,
Dead,
Politicians,
Peacemakers,
Relief workers.

For those involved in conflicts,

Bring comfort,
Compassion,
Sustenance,
Repentance,
Forgiveness,
Healing,
Tears,
Love
And a peace that can endure.

Amen

*John Birch
faithandworship.com*

A Pre-Christian Meditation on Peace

If there is to be peace in the world
there must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations
there must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities
there must be peace between neighbours.
If there is to be peace between neighbours
there must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home,
there must be peace in the heart.

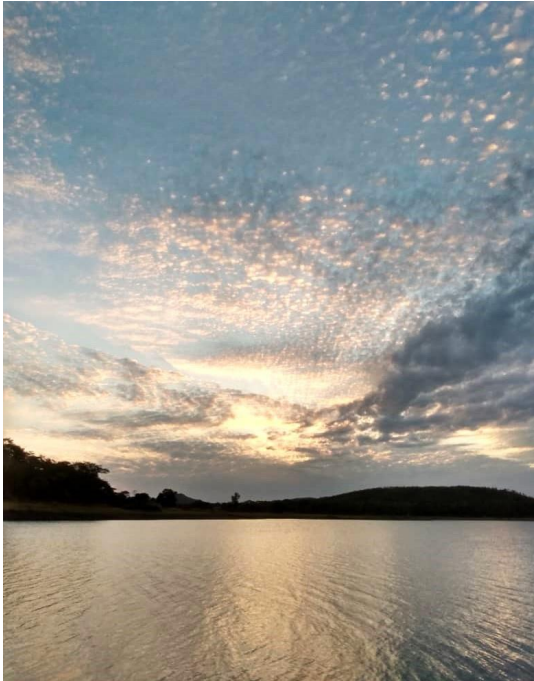
*Lao-tzu
Philosopher: 6th Century BCE*

If you have a special or favourite prayer you would like to share with the rest of us please let the Editors know.

Associate Editor

ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

AT TIMES my articles may sound a tad depressing, but I reflect ArtPeace's commentaries on life with photos. Despite the hardship, they retain a sense of humour and are a warm friendly bunch. The beauty of their country still resonates with me. Many years ago around 2am, I vividly recall a tremendous electric storm over Lake Kariba punctuated by cracks of thunder ricocheting across a vast expanse of water silhouetted against a purple sky. A few small kapenta fishing boats twinkled in the distance as hippos grunted noisily under my elevated abode - magic! The country's lifestyle exudes a feeling of togetherness and belonging helped by a slower pace of life.



Artist Peter Kananji's recent message captures their resilience: 'The weather is now suitable for fishing as winter ends so I have restarted fishing - see my photos: 1) of the sky at the dam, 2) my catch of fish and 3) wild fruits called matchwe in high demand due to hunger.'



Many search the bush to find this fruit to fill stomachs. Tonight, my family will not go hungry!

FORTUNE was delighted with his last donation and bought second hand clothes to sell outside the dilapidated shed he calls home. He was overjoyed at being able to replace his broken crutch so can walk further. He has been in agony with toothache for weeks but can now afford to visit a dentist. I hope the congregation saw his uplifting video sent along with 'The Grapevine', highlighting his practical use of donations. He is keen to find a stall at a small nearby shopping centre which would command better prices.



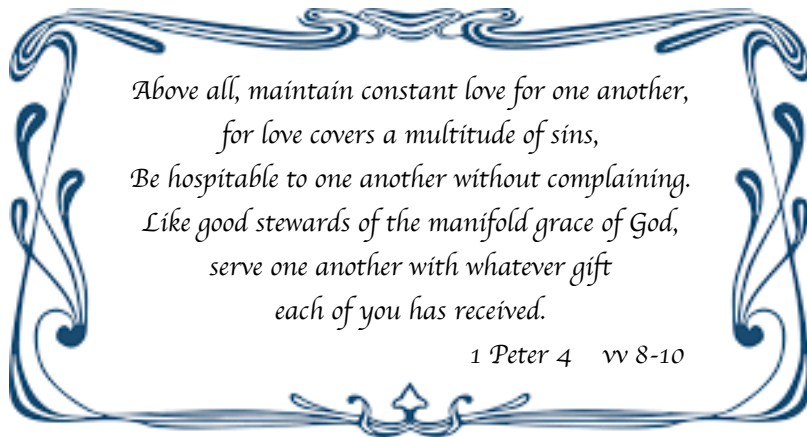
FAREWELL TO DAVID: When Marlow URC elders pondered what to give their minister, the Revd. David Downing on his new appointment as Moderator of the Southwestern Synod of the United Reformed Church, their Church Secretary Valerie Brownridge hit on the idea of an ArtPeace sculpture. Marlow have been a huge supporter of ArtPeace over many years so this would prove a happy reminder for David. Valerie, an Aberdonian, who once held a senior position at the UK Embassy in Harare, liked my photo of Godfrey's rabbit in leopard rock which the elders approved. She collected the piece a few days before the presentation and sent this email: 'David and Jo were absolutely delighted with the rabbit - as were all the congregation! They also really appreciated having the information about the artist which made it so personal and so special. Thanks again for the note you prepared. The video message from the artists was a big hit. David and Jo were very moved. Please thank the artists. So all in all it was just perfect.'



SNAP SHOTS FROM ZIMBABWE: From Godfrey – 'John, these primary school children are holding their school lessons outside on the ground due to inadequate desks, chairs and classrooms. Some end up sick because of the dust and fumes inhaled every day'. Above right - little children are constantly used to fetch water from boreholes owing to the continuing drought.

MEANWHILE, Zimbabwe's corrupt brutal government continues to cast a dark shadow over the country. 78 young people have been in prison in Harare since 16th June. The Avondale 78 as they are called, were arrested when attending a gathering to commemorate the 'Day of the African Child' at the home of opposition politician Jameson Timba. They were traumatized and beaten by the police whilst in custody. These youngsters appear to be pawns at a time of political window dressing - out of sight, out of mind, until after the SADC (South African Development Community) Summit to be held in Harare on the 17th and 18th of August. All this, when more than half of the population is going to bed hungry. Survival is due to millions of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora who send money home for family members. Likewise, our support for ArtPeace keeps heart and soul together. They usually send a group photo after donations etc. arrive but not this month as: 'We dare not risk taking a group photo due to numerous arrests at every gathering by state security agents because of their concerns about demonstrations'. Artist Togara from Mazoe said: 'If I had the opportunity to leave Zimbabwe, I would. Life is so frustrating, that's the naked truth. No food, no water and no money'.

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!