



ST ANDREW'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE



## THE GRAPEVINE



FEBRUARY 2025

Volume 4 No 1



© Lisa Pattenden

*Northern Lights, Abisko, Sweden*

*The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of His hands.*

*Psalm 19:1*



Dear friends

*From The Manse*

*February 2025*

At the start of December we began a new year in the church's liturgical year and our Bible readings are now coming mainly from Luke's Gospel. In the February 2023 Grapevine I wrote a short introduction to Matthew's Gospel in preparing for that year's readings. Last year I did the same for Mark and so this year let me write something about Luke's Gospel.

Luke is one of the three "Synoptic Gospels", along with Matthew and Mark. They are so called because they include many of the same stories, often in a similar sequence and in similar or sometimes identical wording, whereas John can be very different. Tradition has it that Luke was a doctor although it does have to be said that supporting evidence for this assertion is a bit on the thin side.

As for when it was written, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army in AD70 and Luke's Gospel probably dates to about that time, either a little pre or a little post. It is part 1 of a "two volume" book written as an apologetic work, apparently to a Roman civil servant called Theophilus to give him the facts about Jesus and his followers, from the birth of Jesus to the establishment and early days of the church. Luke 1 vv 3 & 4 imply that Luke writes to set certain records straight and to clear up misunderstandings. Luke, therefore, writes as something of an historian but I always think that when reading his work it's worth asking why it is Luke might have thought that such a story or event was important enough for Theophilus to know and how that might have influenced the way he tells it. Why does Luke think that Theophilus needs to know certain things?

Original copies of Luke have not been preserved; the texts that do survive are probably third-generation copies and no two are completely identical. This leads some scholars to suggest that Luke's Gospel continued to be revised over the decades.

Thinking about the characteristics of Luke's Gospel, there is a strong note of joy running through, from the angels' song at the birth of Jesus to the post-ascension story when the disciples returned to Jerusalem, "with great joy." There is great emphasis, too, on the place of women and upon the poor and downcast. Put bluntly, the religious expectation of the day was that God should be in the centre of the Temple, in the holy of holies, protected from people by walls and guards, accessible only to the High Priest and with women and gentiles kept as far away as possible. So what do we get? Right at the beginning of Luke's Gospel, God pops up in the arms of a woman, in a stable some six miles away from Jerusalem! What's more, the first visitors to see him are the shepherds rather than the nobility. This is not what was expected at all. It's not what should have happened according to religious understandings of the day but Luke is also very careful to show that Jesus was brought up firmly within the faith and that he received his faith customs right from the start, with his circumcision and his presentation in the Temple.

Scholars believe that when writing, Luke appears to have had three sources upon which to draw- (i) Mark's Gospel; (ii) a collection of sayings and stories to which Matthew also had access and which is commonly referred to as "Q"; plus (iii) some material unique to him, often referred to as "Special L" (not to be confused with a certain breakfast cereal!). You may remember that about a year ago we thought a bit about "Q" in a service one Sunday morning. In this context it has nothing to do with James Bond.

There was a time when some thought that Luke was the first Gospel to be written ("The Priority of Luke" to give it its proper term) but I don't know that many would hold to that thinking these days although that thinking has only changed relatively recently. In theological college I was taught that Mark was the first Gospel to be written (the common understanding today) but I know my college had been teaching the "Priority of Luke" when a friend had trained there 15 years earlier.


So, there's a little bit of background to Luke's Gospel which I hope might be helpful as we focus on it during the coming year.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "The Manse". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

## SERVICES AND OTHER KEY DATES FEBRUARY 2025

*There will be a service on Zoom on the third Sunday of the month*

Sunday 2 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Anna Crawford
Tuesday 4 February	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting Hersham Room
Sunday 9 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Friday 14 February	12.30 - 2.30 pm	People Who Lunch - Church Hall - only £5 ! To book your place please contact Elizabeth Scharinger by email <a href="mailto:administrator@standrewsurc.org">administrator@standrewsurc.org</a> or Fiona Reardon on 07902 485933/01932 247119
Sunday 16 February (Zoom)	10.30 am	Morning Worship
	3.00 pm	 Messy Church

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***ALL ITEMS TO THE EDITOR (provided they do not contravene copyright regulations)***  
**NORMA REID, 3 GWALIOR ROAD, LONDON SW15 1NP**

**Email: [aristocats.2000@gmail.com](mailto:aristocats.2000@gmail.com)**

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

Sunday 23 February	10.30 am	Morning Worship
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### ADVANCE NOTICE

Friday 5 March	10.00 am	Women's World Day of Prayer (Cook Islands) Walton Methodist Church Terrace Road, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2SR followed by refreshments
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### LENT COURSE

Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, is on 5 March this year and our Lent Course will be a series of reflections on the "Seven Last Words from the Cross". Compiled from the four Gospels, these are seven phrases that are biblically attributed to Jesus during his crucifixion. They cover the themes of Forgiveness; Salvation; Relationship; Abandonment; Distress, Triumph and Reunion.

The course booklets, available in the middle of February, can also be sent as an email attachment if you prefer.

I hope that you will find it of use and of interest as we prepare ourselves during Lent for the joy of Easter.

*Michael Hodgson*

# *News of the Church Family*

## **In Memoriam**

### **John Turner**

### **Barbara Fielding**

We were much saddened to hear of the death of John Turner on 11 October and of Barbara Fielding on 11 November. We send our condolences, love and thoughts to John's family and that of Shirley McGrath and hers; as well as to Barbara's daughter Denise Scorer and Barbara's extended family and friends. An appreciation of the life of John is on page 14 and that of Barbara on page 15.

## **Thank you**

Janet and I should like to thank you for the kindness and care you have shown us following the death of our mother in November. Although she was 98, and had become quite frail, her death still came as a shock, being the result of a bad fall. Despite our sadness we are thanking God for a long life and a mercifully quick release at the end. The words of an old prayer are so appropriate here, *"Give unto thy servant that peace which the world cannot give."* That's what God gave Mum and I am also reflecting on the comfort that being part of the church family brings at these times.

As you know, Mum died 10 days before the start of the various additional Christmas services. I didn't feel comfortable about pulling out of them and so I kept going in order to take them all. Speaking with the Synod Moderator, I have been given a couple of weeks' Compassionate Leave starting after church on 26<sup>th</sup> January, to return to work on 9 February. I shall, therefore, not be 'on duty' in that period and although I don't know how to put this tactfully I'd really appreciate it if you didn't contact me then. I love you all dearly – but I do need a little time to myself after all that has happened. In an emergency, please contact your Elder or a member of the Secretarial Team.  
*Michael Hodgson*

**Jennifer Bush**, who was transferred from St George's Hospital in Tooting to St Peter's on 18 January, would like to thank everyone for their concern, text messages and cards and especially for visits. It has all gone to help her feel much more positive in her recovery.

**Maira de Kok** says that she is doing very well after a fairly invasive operation and with crutches she is able to walk for short distances. She thanks all those who have prayed for her.

## **Prayers**

Please remember these friends in your prayers – Kate Ashfield, Roy Bones, Jennifer Bush, Val Cave, Margaret Drennan, the Fielding family, Alex Henham, John Langdon, the McGrath and Turner families, Lilian Smith and Michael Stevens. Remember, too, all those who are unwell in hospital or at home, those living in care homes and those for whom daily life is proving difficult.

*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.*

## STRATUS HITS THE HIGH SPOTS!



What an incredible few weeks it's been for Stratus! If you tuned into *Gavin & Stacey: The Finale* on Christmas Day, you might have spotted - or rather, heard - our instrumental version of *Somewhere Only We Know* during Sonia and Smithy's wedding scene. Being part of such an iconic show was a dream come true for us and watching the finale with our music featured was both surreal and unforgettable. The secrecy surrounding it made it all the more special. While we knew there was a chance we might be featured, we weren't told any details, so we were both nervous and amazed to see it used in such a key moment of the show. And, if you caught *A Fond Farewell* on New Year's Day, hearing the behind-the-scenes rehearsal clip with our music playing for the cast was another highlight we'll never forget.

The Gavin & Stacey feature has definitely reignited our excitement for what's ahead. We're thrilled to share that we've set a date to record our new album, and we can't wait to bring you even more music in 2025. Thank you for all the kind words and well wishes - it's been so encouraging to know so many of you tuned in. The jokes about signing autographs have kept us smiling. While we're definitely still a long way from being famous, maybe we'll sign a few at our next concert!

Speaking of which, we're excited to be playing at St Andrew's around Easter. This church has always held a special place in our hearts; it feels like home to us. From our first performance there, back in 2019, the warmth and support we've received from this community has been incredible and we can't wait to share more music with you in such a special setting.

We're starting to get booked up again and would love your help spreading the word. Whether it's recommending us to friends, listening on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Music](#), or just mentioning us in passing, it all makes a difference. Thank you for being part of this journey with us - we're so excited to share what's next!

Zacc, Nat & Sam  
Stratus

Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything.

It is the essence of order and leads to all that is good and just and beautiful.

*Plato*

## News from the URC



### Prayer Calendar for February

- 2 Parkstone  
Hope and Radipole, Weymouth  
(signing their Covenant with the Methodists)
- 9 Caversham Park, Reading  
Mere  
Elstead
- 16 Cornerstone, Hythe  
Maidenhead
- 23 Bournemouth: Immanuel, Southbourne  
Meeting of Synod on 27th

### Le Weekend 2 - 4 May Luneray

A weekend away in Luneray, France with friends from the Wessex Synod and the United Protestant Church of France.

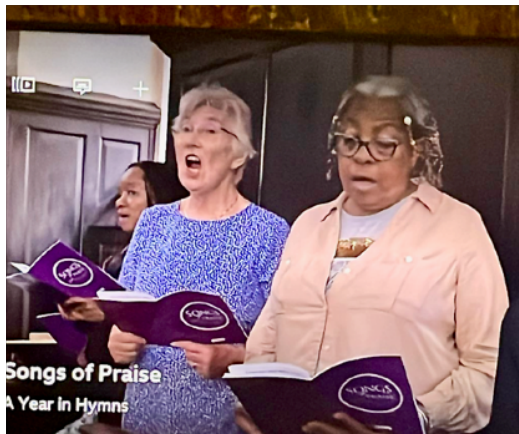
**Theme:** The Word

Prayer, Food, Sharing, Friendship

No French speaking needed!

Please email Helen Everard on [helen.everard158@gmail.com](mailto:helen.everard158@gmail.com) to register by **28 February**.

### MUSIC WILL SAVE THE WORLD!



Keith and I for several years attended the recordings of the 'Big Sing' in the Royal Albert Hall which we enjoyed so, when I saw that there was to be a recording at St Martin in the Fields, I applied for a ticket. Outside companies are now recording hymn singing apparently, not actual programmes, but nevertheless it was an interesting and happy experience. I was quite shocked, however, to catch a glimpse of myself singing lustily while watching a programme on catch up! Shirley McGrath also noticed it and got in touch. My daughter captured this picture.  
*Anne Fitzgerald*



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

## Wessex Synod

120 Alma Road, Southampton, SO14 6UW

Synod Moderator: The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins

Moderator's PA: Mrs Deborah Walker

### New Year message 2025

Dear Friends,

First, let me express my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your dedication and hard work over the Christmas season. Whether through community events, activities, or leading worship - often including special and extra services - you have gone above and beyond. In doing so, you have not only shared the story of Jesus but also made Christ visible in the world today. There is no greater calling, and your commitment is deeply appreciated.

As we step into a new year, I wish you a Happy New Year. For many, 2024 brought its share of challenges and a mix of sadness and joy. While some achieved much, for others, simply making it through was an accomplishment in itself. As we look to 2025, our hopes are renewed.

2025 also marks a significant milestone: the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, a defining moment in the formation of our faith. At our Synod meeting on 11 October, we will be privileged to welcome the Revd Dr Susan Durber, President of the World Council of Churches and a familiar figure to many in Wessex. She will guide us in reflecting on this important anniversary. Such moments remind us that our hope is not in the turning of the calendar but in Christ, who makes all things new.

You may have noticed the popular refrain of "New Year, New You." Yet this idea, rooted in both self-criticism and consumerism, can feel harsh. We are not disposable objects to be replaced annually, nor should we discard ourselves like outdated electronic devices. Instead, I encourage you to reclaim the "old you." Refine, evolve, and improve if you can, but move toward your true self, not away from it. Be kind to yourself and your mind.

This brings me to an alternative approach for the start of the year: **Gentle January**. In a season where many feel the weight of exhaustion rather than refreshment, let's embrace gentleness:

- Gentle with ourselves,
- Gentle with each other,
- Gentle with our to-do lists and plans,
- Gentle with our creation,
- Gentle tones of voice to accompany gentle footsteps and gentle thoughts, all of which can be gently brought into our pauses and prayers.

Gentle January sounds inviting to me: a soothing, restorative alternative to the hurried resolutions and relentless pace of the world. May it bring you peace, renewal, and grace as we journey together into this new year.

With every blessing for 2025,

*Michael Hopkins*  
New Year, 2025

**TALENTED LAD:** Last year, James Zhang’s wife Annie visited their grandson Leo, his parents and other relations in Shanghai and sent the following photos. James said that Leo is a good pupil and is very musical. He has played the piano for several years and recently joined a Rock musical group as a base guitar player and singer. Leo, (James’s son Richard is a great admirer of Leonardo Da Vinci) is also a keen rower taking part in races. He can be seen on the left in photo of his Rock group. Somehow, I think we will hear lots more about Leo. **JS**



**WIND DAMAGE:** During the intense gales towards end of last year, the sphere on top of St. Andrew’s tower was dislodged but I doubt many of the congregation noticed. Alan spotted damaged roof tiles on the ground at The Chesnuts’ side of the building. The sphere (see photo) consisted of a large heavy round ball of wood covered in lead. You can see the base has rotted away. Luckily no one was walking down that side of the building at the time. Any volunteers to replace the sphere - you can replace the tiles whilst at it – just see Alan 😊. **JS**





### Where do I start?

There is so much information about the climate and the effect that climate change is having on the World, that it's very easy to feel overwhelmed and bombarded with too much information. It even has a name - 'Eco Paralysis'.

Conflicting information - 'Make sure you recycle' vs 'Recycling is costly' or 'Recycling takes energy', should I be 'Eco Friendly' or 'Sustainable' or are they the same thing...?

In this first Eco Church article for The Grapevine, the Green Team which consists of Elizabeth Scharinger, Teresa Bacon and Paula Walsh, has decided to start with the basics and give you some easy wins for starting your Eco journey.

If you want any more information at any time, please do reach out to the Green Team and they will be very happy to help.



*The road to being Eco-friendly*

**"While individual actions along may not solve climate change, they are an essential part of the broader solution."**

*(Cup of Toast Lifestyle blog)*

### Easy Eco Wins

**We challenge you to do at least one before the next edition.**

1. Drive less - think about car sharing when you go to Church or the shops. Maybe take public transport more.
2. Make one swap in your home from a chemical-based cleaning product to a non-toxic version.
3. Buy loose fruit and vegetables.
4. Use left-over water from your kettle or when boiling vegetables or water your house plants (once it has cooled down).
5. Use Eco mode on your dishwasher or washing machine.

Let Elizabeth in the office know what you have done and how easy or difficult it was to do: [administrator@standrewsurc.org](mailto:administrator@standrewsurc.org)

By getting your feedback, we can gain points for the Lifestyle section of the Eco Church Survey.  
*Elizabeth Scharinger*

**Isaiah 55:12**  
A vivid picture of Earth rejoicing giving us inspiration to care for the planet.

**Genesis 1:28**  
God grants humans 'stewardship' of the earth.

**Psalms 104: 24-25**  
'In wisdom you made them all.' Reveals the intentional design and careful planning that went into all aspects of creating nature.

# CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

## GIFT SERVICE AND CHURCH PARADE



The Gift Service was held on the second Sunday in Advent and we were definitely looking forward to Christmas! The church trees by the lectern and in the Gateway had been set up and decorated, with candles placed in pew ends in anticipation of the Carol Service later in the month. All we needed was a well-organised service to go smoothly.

After the Colours had been brought in, a large number of gifts of toys were brought up to the front to be given out as gifts by local social services.

This was a momentous occasion, as it was the last service that Sally Rogers would attend as the leader of 4<sup>th</sup> Weybridge Scouts, having held the post for 20 years. She was therefore called forward to light the Advent candles.



*Sally and Michael*

A well-rehearsed group representing Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Rainbows and Guides were there to do their part. Explanations and prayers came across very clearly. It is a pleasure to be served by young people who are confident in their use of a microphone and clear in their speech.



Then, it was time for the Nativity Tableau. The Three Wise Wardrobe Mistresses made a splendid job of outfitting the participants, including the use of some new outfits. Mary got a baby to hold, the straw-filled manger was brought forth and the three sheep put in place. Then, to the singing of "While shepherds watched", the junior shepherds came down the aisle from the back of the church, accompanied by the senior shepherd (Sally again) and the angelic chorus of Rainbows. The latter took their place, twinkling, on the steps. *Modesty forbids us making too much of the fact that three female generations of our family were represented in the Heavenly Host.....*

The Wise Men followed on, accompanied, for the first time and probably more historically accurately than on previous occasions, by a camel handler (another Scouting leader, because there was a spare costume!)

All in all, this was an excellent service, with hard work paying off in its planning, improvisation, willingness to participate and technical and musical input. Thank you very much to all of those who took part, both “on stage” and “behind the scenes”!

*Claire and Jem Ward*

It's a big 'thank you' from our contact in the NE Surrey Children & Families Team. The members of the team were delighted to receive the many gifts of toys, games and toiletries donated at our Church Parade and Gift Service in December which they distributed before Christmas to families in need. They also want to thank us on behalf of all their families for the Sainsbury's vouchers for which we donated money. The vouchers make a big difference when families are in a crisis situation and the team members know they have the means to be able to respond quickly. Their leader added “Your generosity and kindness are very much appreciated.”

*Gwenda Cochrane*

## SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

December is the time of year when decorative efforts with lights pay off handsomely in the church – perhaps doubly so this Christmastide, when there seemed to be so much cloud around. Having not one but two Christmas trees; with candles in the windows and on pew ends plus the Advent ring, made for a slightly ethereal atmosphere emphasising the special nature of the occasion.

The service took its traditional pattern of lessons and popular carols. Some of the former were read by people who had been primed beforehand, whereas others should be congratulated for taking on readings at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

The choir members were aided by the excellent musicianship of Teresa and Zacc and the cunning plan of the minister to have a slide displayed on the screen behind them, with a very light background, to allow them to read their music in the twilight! They ended the service bearing their lanterns down the aisle, singing “Away in a Manger”.

It was pleasing to see so many people attending, given that 20 folk had already attended the reflective communion service in The Gateway that morning. There were also several visitors, including some who had attended the Chitty's Memorial Service at the beginning of December.

All in all, a lovely service which set the scene for Christmas.

*Claire and Jem Ward*

**Footnote:** Chitty's annual Memorial Service for those loved and lost in the past year, always moving, was led by our Minister, Michael. The donkeys and shetland pony (*right*) were a hit with the children and perhaps also a welcome distraction.



## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE - CHRISTMAS EVE

This service, in the afternoon of Christmas Eve, is always fun – as well as being a little more relaxed/chaotic than the normal services. Quite a few families attended with children and grandchildren, some associated with the church and others not, which was pleasing to see.

The ArtPeace Nativity set had its stable in pride of place on the Communion Table. The figurines were hidden around the church for the children to discover and then bring back for explanation as to which one they had found and where they should be placed in the tableau.



There was some confusion at one point as to whether all three Wise Men were present – you may remember that one of them was detained in a Customs and Excise warehouse somewhere last year – so Michael improvised. This explains the positioning of “The Elf on the Shelf”, abasing itself in the accompanying photo, as a back-up Wise Man/Elf. However, we are pleased to confirm to the ArtPeace group that their full set of figurines **WAS** on display, demonstrating the level of artistic and creative talent that some of us can only dream of achieving. Our thanks go to them for providing the central focus of this service.

A dedicated team of volunteers had turned up in the Hershams Room the day before to prepare the various sections of the Christingles and rapidly proved how efficient a production line can become with a small amount of thought, plus lots of enthusiasm and teamwork.

The completed bags were handed out as people entered, with all the components to assemble their Christingle. Some children already knew how to do this, whilst others were supported in doing so by their families. When all had completed them, their candles were lit from the Peace Candle on the Communion Table and the lights turned off, giving a memorable glow around the church.

Add to this the lessons in geography given by the monitoring of the Santa Tracker (for which we are grateful to the family running the technology), the enthusiasm of the children, and the lusty singing of appropriate carols by the congregation and you have a service to enthuse (and tire out!) those who realise that there is only ‘one sleep’ until Christmas!

There was, of course, also a simple and enjoyable family service on Christmas Day.

*Claire and Jem Ward*



### Church Christmas Post Box

It was good to see that once again you made good use of the Church Christmas Post Box. It has now been part of our Christmas scene for three years and there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of cards sent between friends in the congregation. It is lovely to see all the cards laid out on the tables in The Gateway on the ‘distribution day’ and to know that they will bring great pleasure to so many people. A special ‘thank you’ to those of you who very kindly delivered the cards to people who were unable to be in church to collect them personally. *MH*

## SOME OF OUR PETS OVER CHRISTMAS



*Benji de Kok thinks it's all too exhausting!*



*Frank is a legal immigrant from Jordan and spent a few days with Norma where he was spoiled rotten (albeit she can't speak Arabic)*



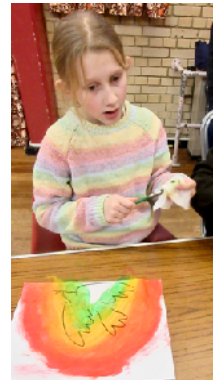
*L-R : Gus, Kona and Scout in the Swanson household, Houston, Texas, are determined to prove that they are the Best of Friends*



*Cutting out a peace dove*

The activities we provided were all connected with the theme 'Peace'. Using Picasso's peace dove we suggested the children and Mums to paint a rainbow round it. We had small doves to cut out, make a hole to thread through ribbon to hang it up with their peace prayer written on it. We had three experiments to illustrate conflict, two with oil and water not mixing and one where, when milk was added to an exploding mixture of bicarbonate and vinegar, the reaction ceased.

*Can you see the peace dove in my rainbow?*



The children remembered this when we were discussing peace in the Celebration and compared it to someone intervening in an argument. We gave out zips as used by Michael in the Nativity Communion and they quickly got the idea of a coming together was needed to make peace. As always we concluded with a meal.

*Anne Fitzgerald*



*Rainbows are definitely my thing*



*Icing cake is a skilled job!*



*My Peace Prayer*



## FRIENDS REMEMBERED

### JOHN EDGAR TURNER



The news of the death of John was a great shock to us all. John started coming to St Andrew's after he met Shirley and quickly became part of the family. He came into membership formally in 2020 just after Covid – a lovely occasion.

John was an immensely kind man with a great sense of humour and fun. He was a 'rock' when Shirley suffered a stroke and he became an adored 'Grandad' to Jake. His own son, Guy, was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour a few years ago but John was delighted when Guy decided that if he didn't have much longer to live then he was going to get everything out of that time that he could. He was going to tick things off his bucket list in style – and John was pleased by this positive attitude.

John was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in August. He took the news in typical, practical style and he started to receive medication but sadly his PSI level began to rise. Unrelated to that, however, he was taken ill whilst visiting Shirley and although he received medical attention he died there before he could be taken to hospital.

Jem Ward was able to attend John's funeral and writes, *"Even though I only met him for the first time a couple of years ago, it was a pleasure to know John Turner. He was an unfailingly polite and pleasant chap, keen to help out however he could."*

I went to his cremation at Woking, where the building was filled with his family and friends and various people who knew him through his extensive engineering career and his long service as a Mason. The celebrant, Paul Winder, led the service very well – I was pleased to hear him reading at our Chitty's Service the following Sunday – and family members spoke movingly on behalf of them all, explaining John's background, life and long marriage to Doreen which ended at her death in 2015.

The two elements of the service which I found most touching were when Shirley and Jake went up to place flowers on the coffin before it disappeared behind the curtain and then Jake's gift when the service had finished. As you are probably aware, at the crematorium all the flowers are removed and placed outside on what is called the Flower Terrace. As we made our way there after the service we were met by Jake with a basket of small white bags and he gave one bag to each person. Inside were three sweets. On the bag was written: *"Grandad John gave me a Werther's Original every day after school. Please enjoy these in memory of him. Jake xx"* (I have done, Jake – thank you!)

Rest in Peace, John – *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."*

Our thoughts are with John's family, with Shirley and her family and particularly with Jake. John is a man whose friendship and company we shall miss. He was a man who quietly made a difference to people's lives, doing what he could to care and encourage.

*Michael Hodgson*





## BARBARA FIELDING



Barbara and her daughter, Denise are members of Kingston URC – however, they started worshipping with us after they moved to Walton. Barbara used to come in her buggy and appreciated the space towards the front of the church, where she could tuck in her buggy and enjoy the service.

Sadly, her health has not been good in recent years and, following a fall, she spent a considerable time in St George's Hospital undergoing major surgery and intensive care before coming back to Walton Hospital. Although she made a remarkable recovery Barbara was never able to come back to services at church but we appreciated being kept up-to-date by Denise.

In the summer of 2024 Barbara moved into a Care Home in Woking where she was well looked after and where she died peacefully on 11<sup>th</sup> December at the age of 91. Her cremation took place on 7<sup>th</sup> January. However, there is to be a service of thanksgiving for her life on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February at Kingston URC and there is a warm welcome to friends from St Andrew's Walton and Weybridge to come to the service.

Barbara was quite a character and she was fiercely independent. She certainly knew her mind and could express her thoughts very clearly! She was also an extremely caring person and had a great sense of humour. There were no flies on our Barbara! For all sorts of reasons life was never dull when Barbara was around and I am absolutely certain that she thoroughly enjoyed being outrageous on occasion.

Recent years have been difficult and frustrating for Barbara but after a long life she has found *"that peace which the world cannot give"*. She will be missed and our thoughts are with Denise and with all the family at this time. Barbara will be remembered though with love and with laughter.

*Michael Hodgson*

*"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember;  
and there is pansies, that's for thoughts..."*

*William Shakespeare (Hamlet (Ophelia))*

## FLOWER POWER

“Stretching his hand up to reach the stars too often man forgets the flowers at his feet.”

Jeremy Bentham

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***



1 December



8 December - Irene Pearson in memory of her husband, Jeff



15 December



29 December - Beryl Brown in memory of Frank and Rosemary Topping in memory of Brian



5 January



12 January



19 January



## PRAYER CORNER

### *A Prayer for Winter*

There is a winter in all of our lives,  
a chill and darkness that makes us yearn  
for days that have gone  
or put our hope in days yet to be.

Father God, you created seasons for a purpose.

Spring is full of expectation,  
buds breaking,  
frosts abating and an awakening  
of creation before the first days of Summer.

Now the sun gives warmth  
and comfort to our lives  
reviving aching joints,  
bringing colour, new life  
and crops to fruiting.

Autumn gives nature space  
to lean back, relax and enjoy the fruits of its labour,  
mellow colours in sky and landscape,  
as the earth prepares to rest.

Then Winter, cold and bare as nature takes stock,  
rests, unwinds, sleeps until the time is right.

An endless cycle  
and yet a perfect model.

We need a winter in our lives,  
a time of rest, a time to stand still,  
a time to re-acquaint ourselves  
with the faith in which we live.

It is only then that we can draw strength  
from the one in whom we are rooted,  
take time to grow and rise through the darkness  
into the warm glow of your springtime,  
to blossom and flourish,  
bring colour and vitality into this world  
your garden.

Thank you Father  
for the seasons of our lives.

Amen

*John Birch (2016): Prayers for the Seasons*  
faithandworship.com

# ARTPEACE AND FRIENDS

**CHRISTMAS CHEER:** Our friends were grateful for donations sent in December which enabled them to have a far better Christmas than envisaged. As usual, Christmas gifts to their children consisted of new clothes. **Panashe** sent this photo of his two youngsters, Kupakwashe (meaning God-given) and Ruvarashe (meaning God's flower).



**JANUARY PROVED A HECTIC TIME** for the artists as they rushed around trying to raise cash to cover school fees. Lovemore said: 'It's a stressful time. Some of our children are changing grades so more books are required plus a change of uniforms as some move from Primary to Secondary school'. School fees average around \$40 a month, \$120 a term and they have to buy text and exercise books. **Mike Masedza** said: 'Yes, this is true. In my son's case he cannot get his 'O' level results because of outstanding school fees'. Panashe, Peter, Godfrey and Shingi's children have similar problems.

**WHILST WE COMPLAIN** of cold gloomy days, the opposite holds true with ArtPeace. January and February are wet months in Zimbabwe but a welcome relief after the long drought. Lovemore James said: 'I am stuck inside my home looking through the window but it's nice to see green maize, pumpkin and beans plants enjoying the rains'. **LEFT: Mike's** maize field at the end of

December and now! He is hopeful of a bumper harvest in April/May. **BELOW:** A delighted **Godwin** is dwarfed by his crop.



**AN UPHILL BATTLE:** Michael Mukolosi (**Muk**) is still struggling from depression after losing



his wife. **Godfrey** is very concerned and said Muk is now suffering from badly swollen legs.

**FAR LEFT:** **Godfrey** wearing spectacles (3 for £3 from Poundland Walton!) with **Muk**. **LEFT:** Muk with his blind mother in pink dress whom he looks after.

**PANASHE** is worried about **Fortune**: 'He is not well, stays alone sleeping often without food. His wooden cabin with no toilet/power is loaned by a friend'. **LEFT:** Fortune wearing a Celtic leather cross I sent and far right - in his home. **CENTRE:** Fortune with Panashe in his vegetable plot.

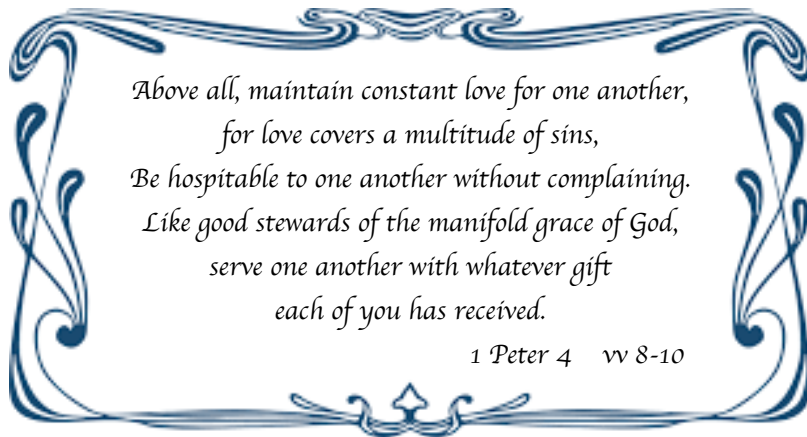


**CARING:** ArtPeace look after each other but all have problems with no State support. However, their Finance Minister has found millions of dollars to cover more MP's cars/fuel allowances + extra for domestic and foreign allowances and MP's offices. He has now allocated an additional US\$120 million for MP's salaries – such is the level of greed.

**INITIATIVE:** It's not all doom and gloom. **Panashe** said: 'John, look at what I am trying to do, coz to rely on art now is difficult. I am growing indigenous Musasa trees from seed and hope to sell them when they are 6 months old and 20 to 30cms tall at \$1.50 to \$3 per plant. It's a good project and eventually I want to get into Cycads, palm trees, and other trees like Red Flamboyant so good for the environment but hard to find in the neighbourhood unless you buy the pots with larger costly trees. I also want to grow flowers as there are some that you can sell within some weeks rather than wait for 6 months like small trees. I have to look at all sides'. Other artists are striving in other directions which may surprise readers and have used sales money and donations from



earlier years wisely but more on this next article. Onwards and upwards! **Johnston Simpson**



### **MINISTER**

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

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

### **EDITOR**

Miss Norma Reid  
Email: [aristocats.2000@gmail.com](mailto:aristocats.2000@gmail.com)

### **CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR**

Mrs Elizabeth Scharinger  
Email: [administrator@standrewsurc.org](mailto:administrator@standrewsurc.org)

Website: [www.standrewsurc.org](http://www.standrewsurc.org) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/standrewsurcww>

Instagram: Insta: [standrewsurcww](https://www.instagram.com/standrewsurcww)

### **THE SECRETARIAL TEAM**

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

Mrs Gwenda Cochrane  
Mrs Liz Grimsey  
Mrs Shirley Morley

### **ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Mrs Mollie Henham  
Email: [18amh65@gmail.com](mailto:18amh65@gmail.com)

### **HALL HIRE**

Email: [roomhire@standrewsurc.org](mailto:roomhire@standrewsurc.org)

Services start at 10.30 am.  
Services are currently accessible on Zoom on the 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!