

the Link

The United Pastorate of
Leatherhead
Cobham
Effingham

December 2014 & January 2015



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Linking:
Christ Church (United Reformed) Leatherhead
Cobham Methodist Church
Cobham United Reformed Church
Effingham Methodist Church
Leatherhead Methodist Church

The Methodist Church



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To all readers and contributors ...

*All good wishes for a very happy Christmas
and a peaceful, fulfilling and happy New
Year.*

*Thank you to those who have supported The
Link for the past twelve months.*

Editor

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All copy for the February issue to the editor by 15th January



The Ministers Write...

From Rev. Lynda Russell

Dear friends,

Here at LMC we are half way through our 'Season of Invitation'. We have been inviting friends, family, and neighbours to come to church with us, to see and experience why we love our church, and to know that God loves them. We don't judge success by how many come along, but by giving out the invitation. Nevertheless, we have been pleased to welcome some visitors, and hope they will come again! The idea is also to learn to be an 'inviting Church' so that we can keep inviting people along long after the 'Season' has finished.

Some people are disillusioned with 'religion' and Church in general, but many people are just waiting to be invited along, and it's these people we have been asking the Holy Spirit to lead us to. In Christ Church we are also planning our own 'Season of Invitation'. We recommend it to other churches.

Our last two services in the series are Advent and Christmas. The waiting which we are faced with in Advent is a time when we prepare ourselves. Before we can be part of the Christmas story we must share in Advent; the time which allows us to reflect on what it means to be part of "the greatest story ever told": the Jesus story. We hope to be able to share this with our visitors.

Advent is the season where we need more than ever to create a space where we can all be encouraged to sit still, a space to ask questions, a space to wonder, a space where - in the darkness of winter - we wait for the coming of the light, the coming of Christ.

"A voice cries out, 'Prepare in the wilderness a road for God'."
Isaiah 40:3

In our society today the Christmas story has often been robbed of its power; our challenge is to allow God to breathe new life into it for those who have become disillusioned, or over-familiar with the story. Or to present it anew in all its power for those visitors who only know parts of it.

continued on the next page

So I wish you all God's blessings for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. May you and all whom you love know God's peace and love.

With Every Blessing,

Lynda

From Rev. Kim Plumpton

Dear friends,

Colin and I were given a rare opportunity at the beginning of November. Dad had asked if the boys would like to spend some time with their grandfather, so after dropping them off and seeing family for a short while, Col and I set off for Scotland for four days. It was a dream come true for me as it felt as though it had been such a long time since I had cast my eyes across the majesty of the mountains. Of course autumn colours cascading down the mountains could only add to the glory of such beautiful scenery and we were certainly not disappointed.

On our way up, I asked to visit Rosslyn Chapel just a few miles south of Edinburgh. Built in the 15th century this extraordinary chapel inspired some of Scotland's greatest painters and poets, even Sir Walter Scott penned a poem in 1805. Some have suggested that the architecture of Rosslyn Chapel could be compared to St Peter's Basilica in Rome. My memories of St Peter's are far too hazy to offer any comment but I can say that Rosslyn Chapel is known as one of the most ornate chapels in Europe. The architecture is influenced by its founder William St Clair, the carvings are exceptional, the stone masons were truly extraordinary in replicating exhibits brought back to them from foreign lands.

Rosslyn is of course known by many because it boasts a connection with the DaVinci Code as the final resting place of the Holy Grail. The Knights Templar, the freemasons and the many pagan symbols around the chapel are also part of its historical architecture; a place where the gospel and mystery are entwined. It is a fascinating place, its founder trying to share the Gospel, its magnificent carvings revealing a love and reverence for God but where knowledge and fantasy often overlap. It is a place of intrigue and mystery.

We love a good mystery don't we, so it is not an unfamiliar concept to us. We will of course never explain 'The mystery of God' which tends to encompass the many things we cannot understand about God, but if we could explain everything about an infinite God then we would not be human. Indeed we would be God.

"Christmas introduces us to the paradoxes with which the Gospel is strewn from beginning to end: the infinite God is there in a little child; the Almighty God is present in the weakness of a new-born infant; the Word becomes crying."

God is so much bigger than human comprehension, beyond human logic and beyond our imaginings but it is precisely this mystery that surrounds us at Christmas and even more so at the cross, that draws us closer to understanding what faith truly is. It is precisely our inability to have all the answers that makes us faithful and trusting that there is something beyond human capability, where real hope is offered.

I marvel at God's creative ability to catch us 'on the back foot', unprepared and always surprised by his grace. But in doing so, we often take the next step not in our own strength but in God's.

In a world that likes certainties, may we revel in the mystery that is God made known to us in a small infant child this Christmas and in doing so offer others the marvel of God's love.

Merry Christmas to you all and may God bless you in 2015.

Love Kim, Col and all the family.





Cobham

Methodist Church

Cobham Methodist Diary



December

Tues	2nd	12.30pm	Lunch and Bible Study at Cobham URC
		7.30pm	(for 8.00pm) Preachers' Meeting at Dorking
Wed	3rd	7.30pm	House Fellowship at the Manse
Sun	7th	10.30am	Angie Choat
Tues	9th	12.30pm	Lunch and Bible Study at Cobham URC
Sat	13th	10.00am	Time 4 You (until 12 noon)
		10.30am	Messy Christmas Morning at URC (to 12.30pm)
Sun	14th	10.30am	Beth Little
Wed	17th	2.00pm to 5.00pm and 7.00pm to 9.00pm:	
		Open House at the Manse - all welcome	
Sun	21st	10.30am	Rev. Kim Plumpton - Holy Communion
		6.30pm	United Carol Service at Cobham URC
Wed	24th	4.00pm	Crib Service at Cobham URC
		6.00pm	Communion Service at Cobham URC
		11.30pm	Christmas Eve Service at Cobham URC
Christmas Day:			
Thurs	25th	10.30am	United Christmas Day Service at CMC
Sun	28th	10.30am	United Songs of Praise at Cobham URC



January

Sun 4th 10.30am *see Circuit Plan*

Sat 10th 10.00am Time 4 You (*until 12 noon*)
2.30pm Platinum Service
7.00pm Social Evening: Bring & Share

Sun 11th 10.30am *see Circuit Plan*

Sun 18th 10.30am **Rev. Kim Plumptre - Covenant Service**

Thurs 22nd 3.45pm Messy Church at the URC (*to 5.45pm*)

Sun 25th 10.30am *see Circuit Plan*

February

Sun 1st 10.30am *see Circuit Plan*



Next "Time 4 You"

Saturday 13th December,
and Saturday 10th January

10.00am - 12 noon

Cobham Methodist Church



Cobham Page

Information, news, events and happenings in and around Cobham
including joint URC/Methodist events

Next Messy Church for Cobham, Oxshott and Stoke D'Abernon



**Saturday 13th December,
10.30am - 12.30pm**

and

**Thursday 22nd January
3:45pm - 5:45pm**

Venue: **Cobham URC,
38 Stoke Road,
KT11 3BD**

All are welcome

"Expecting Christ..."

Bible Study with lunch continues...

... on 2nd and 9th December.

We will eat together so it begins at 12:30pm

in the Harding Rooms at Cobham URC

All are welcome

Prayers at the Cobham URC Manse

at 9.30am on

Wednesdays:

3rd, 10th and 17th December;

7th, 14th, 21st and 28th January



Cobham

United Reformed Church

Cobham URC Worship Diary



December

Sun	7th	9.00am	Early Bird Service
		10.30am	Thelma Roberts
Sun	14th	10.30am	Rev. Kim Plumpton with Holy Communion
Sun	21st	10.30am	Andrew Gibb
		6.30pm	United Carol Service
Wed	24th	4.00pm	Crib Service
		6.00pm	Communion Service
		11.30pm	Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Day:

Thurs	25th	10.30am	United Christmas Day Service at Cobham Methodist Church
Sun	28th	10.30am	United Songs of Praise - Worship Group

January

Sun	4th	10.30am	Thelma Roberts
Sun	11th	10.30am	Rev. Kim Plumpton with Holy Communion
Sun	18th	10.30am	Sydney Shore
Sun	25th	10.30am	Rev. Kim Plumpton Church Meeting follows Morning Service

February

Sun	1st	10.30am	Rev. Bruce Stuart
Sun	8th	10.30am	Rev. Kim Plumpton with Holy Communion

Cobham URC Events

December

Tues	2nd	9.45am	Church Walk
		12.30pm	Lunch and Bible Study
		8.00pm	Elders' Meeting
Thurs	4th	12.30pm	Men's Fellowship at the Fairmile, Portsmouth Road, Cobham, KT11 1BW
Fri	5th	7.00pm	Churchgate House celebration thanks for Messy Church Volunteers
Sun	7th	3.00pm	Play and Chat (<i>to 6.00pm</i>)
Tues	9th	12.30pm	Lunch and Bible Study
Sat	13th	10.30am	Messy Church Morning (<i>to 12.30pm</i>)
Wed	17th	2.00pm to 5.00pm and 7.00pm to 9.00pm: Open House at the Manse - all welcome	
Tues	23rd	11.00am	Coffee for Carers

January

Sun	4th	3.00pm	Play and Chat (<i>to 6.00pm</i>)
Tues	6th	9.45am	Church Walk
		8.00pm	Elders' Meeting
Thurs	8th	12.30pm	Men's Fellowship at the Fairmile, Portsmouth Road, Cobham, KT11 1BW
Thurs	22nd	3.45pm	Messy Church (<i>to 5.45pm</i>)
Fri	23rd	3.00pm	T@3 at Church
Tues	27th	11.00am	Coffee for Carers

February

Sun	1st	3.00pm	Play and Chat (<i>to 6.00pm</i>)
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URC Southern Synod Together

For notes on the Southern Synod Together meeting held on 8th November, please see Christ Church section, pages 44 and 45.



Tea at Three:

No **T@3** in December - next one:

Friday 23rd January



Effingham

Methodist Church

Dates to celebrate:



We wish a very Happy Birthday to -

December:

Joan Dawson on 20th and our minister, Kim on 29th.

January:

Philip Bearden on 4th and Charles Dawson on 29th.

Please let us know about birthdays or BIG anniversaries!!

Dates for your Diaries

Our next Church Council will be on Tuesday 27th January from 10.00 to 12 noon. Items for the agenda to Gill Walker asap.

Prayer Meetings...

...are held at the home of Freddie Jenkins every Friday at 9.15am.

Saturday Morning Live -

Café Church. Come and sample Coffee and croissants, and some food for thought at our alternative worship at St. Lawrence's Hall on **Saturday 6th December** from 10.00am to 11.00am when **Rev. John Hellyer**, Chair of the South East Methodist District, will be discussing 'What Christmas Means to Us'.



Our Next SML meeting will be on **Saturday 7th February**.

Tuesday Teas

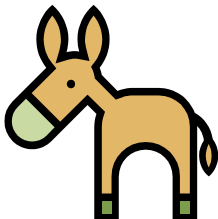
In October, we were entertained by "The Frivolous Recorder Group" conducted by Charles Dawson and accompanied on piano by his wife Joan. The name of the group reflects the fact that they do not perform the staple recorder repertoire of Bach, Telemann and Vivaldi, but play instead comparatively modern easy-listening tunes.

They began their performance with the lively "Liberty Bell" followed by all our favourites - "Light of the Silvery Moon", 'Tea for Two', etc. and ended the afternoon with 'Edelweiss' from "The Sound of Music". Half way through their recital, Bernard Barton, a regular member of St. Nicholas Church in Great Bookham and a very experienced pianist told us about the various sizes of recorders which added to the pleasure of the programme.

At our following meeting, "The Phoenix Entertainment Group" made their annual visit. On our arrival, we were greeted with an amazing array of beautiful hats, some belonging to the group and some purchased from charity shops. They had been expertly decorated and were assembled in the "Claudine Milleur de Paris". The cast were the staff and their customers and the songs represented a few hours on one busy day prior to Ascot. As you can imagine, one of their songs was from "My Fair Lady".

Both these performances were greatly enjoyed by our members, and we and the performers sat down to a delightful tea with delicious cakes which are always supplied by the Tuesday Teas team.

Mary Brooks



Mary, Joseph and Dan the Donkey

will be taking part in Advent Assemblies at several local schools. YOU could have them for a night too -

Ring Ange: 01372 454850

They will be at **St. Lawrence Church** for the **Christmas Eve Crib service** at 5pm



Churches Together Carol Singing

Please bring a brolly, warm coats and join us on Tuesday 17th December at 7.00pm for our annual Churches Together Carol Singing around Effingham village in aid of CRISIS, the homeless charity. We meet at the Methodist Church and finish around 9.00pm with mince-pies in our hall

Diamond Wedding

Thank you for all the lovely cards, and to everyone who came to our "At Home" day to celebrate our 60 years of marriage. You made our day so very special and memorable. It's great to have friends who share in the good times as well as the sad.

With love, Pat & John McElhill

Effingham Methodist Church

The Chapel will be open from
12 - 1:30pm

'I'm Here to Listen'
on Friday 12th December
and Friday 9th January

Rev. Kim Plumpton

Effingham Methodist Diary



December

Sat 6th 10.00am Café Church at St Lawrence's Hall (to 11.00am)

Sun 7th 10.00am Rev. Kim Plumptre - Holy Communion

Tues 9th 2.30pm Tuesday Tea in the Catholic Church Hall

Wed 10th 3.30pm Messy Church at St. Lawrence Hall (to 5.30pm)
8.00pm Christian Meditation in the Church

Fri 12th 12 noon Chapel open for Kim's "I'm Here to Listen"
(to 1.30pm)

Sun 14th 10.00am John Oborn

Tues 16th 12.30pm Christmas Lunch for Tuesday Tea regulars
7.00pm Carol singing for CRISIS - meet at EMC hall

Wed 17th 12 noon Carol singing at Effingham shops

Sun 21st 10.00am Robert Pitt
4.00pm Carol Service followed by Tea at 5.00pm

Tues 23rd 2.30pm Tuesday Tea in the Catholic Church Hall

Wed 24th 5.00pm Crib Service at St. L's with our Posada

Thurs 25th 9.00am **Christmas Day** with Rev. Kim Plumptre

Sun 28th 10.00am Waseem Haq





January

Sun 4th 10.00am see Circuit Plan

Tues 6th 2.30pm Tuesday Tea in the Catholic Church Hall

Wed 7th 8.00pm Christian Meditation in the Church

Fri 9th 12 noon Chapel open for Kim's "I'm Here to Listen"
(to 1.30pm)

Sun 11th 10.00am see Circuit Plan

Wed 14th 3.30pm Messy Church at St. Lawrence Hall (to 5.30pm)

Sun 18th 10.00am see Circuit Plan

Tues 20th 2.30pm Tuesday Tea in the Catholic Church Hall

Wed 21st 8.00pm Christian Meditation in the Church

Thurs 22nd 12.30pm Oasis Bible Group lunch (to 3.00pm)

Sat 24th 10.30am MWiB Coffee Morning for Dalit Solidarity
(to 12.30pm) (see page 17)

Sun 25th 10.00am see Circuit Plan

Tues 27th 10.00am Church Council meeting in the Chapel
(to 12 noon)

February

Sun 1st 10.00am Rev. Kim Plumpton - Covenant Service

Sat 7th 10.00am Café Church at St Lawrence's Hall (to 11.00am)

Reclaiming "A Christmas Carol"



It's my favourite book to re-read during Advent, but somewhere amid the red-nosed reindeer and the talking snowmen of the Christmas season, Charles Dickens' beloved classic has been hi-jacked as just another uplifting but essentially secular tale. It is well known that Dickens wrote his "Ghostly little book" in response to the condition of the working class, particularly a report about child labour in mines and factories, his own experience in a shoe-blackening factory while his father was in a debtor's prison, still stark in his

mind. However, thanks to an annotated version in a local charity shop, I've found that the story is littered with clues to the author's Christian beliefs. Throughout the novel, Dickens embedded scriptural references and biblical allusions that are often missed today, but would have been better understood in 1843. These days the "seasonal" cheery music churned out in our high streets are all "carols", but to Victorians a carol was a song or ballad of joy celebrating the birth of Jesus. Dickens extends the carol idea by calling each chapter a "stave", like the stanzas of a song.

Few people realise that the book's anti-hero, Ebenezer Scrooge has a biblical link, as Ebenezer means "Stone of Help" in Hebrew, (*1 Samuel 7:12*). The old English word for a manger, or crèche, was "cratch", from which gave us Bob Cratchit and his family. Tiny Tim, the symbol of the consequences of the Scrooge's choices, says "he hoped people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to remember upon Christmas Day who made lame beggars walk and blind men see". However he's most famous for saying "God bless us, everyone", which Dickens uses at the end of the story as a blessing on all his readers.

So this year, rather than a pantomime, we'll be at Yvonne Arnaud's Mill Studio during Christmas week for **SCROOGE**, when actor Clive Francis will bring this covetous old sinner to life.

Angela Putland

MWiB "Dalit" Coffee Morning



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There will be a coffee morning in aid of **Methodist Women in Britain's Dalit Project** at **Effingham Chapel** from **10.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday 24th January**. We'd love contributions to our cake stall and if you're having a Spring clean please save bric-a-brac for the Bring & Buy stall.

Come and find out more about this project which is part of MWiB's five-year focus (2011-2016) on caste discrimination and the treatment of millions of Dalit people around the world. Perhaps more familiar as "untouchables" within the Indian caste system, discrimination has been outlawed, but still widely practised.

Most Christians in India are Dalits (up to 85-90% of the Church of North India). Dalit Christians (and Muslims) face double discrimination as quota schemes to provide opportunities for Dalits are only available to Dalits of the Hindu, Buddhist or Sikh faiths. Communities are denied education, and make up 70% of prostitutes in India. So called "honour killings", murder, rape, kidnap and abductions are common.

But resistance to all these situations is rising. MWiB aim to raise awareness of this worldwide problem and help local partners in India and other Asian countries to stop this cycle of hatred and abuse.





A New Year Resolution? Do something positive in 2015

The Retune campaign is challenging voices of religious hatred, to break this brutal cycle for good. Here's how you can help...

go to www.csw.org.uk/operation18 to add your name to the retune.

The website explains "We believe that the church can, and must, play a lead role in tackling the issue of hate speech – by challenging and retuning the voices of hate, by reaching out in love across communities, and by encouraging more open and positive dialogue. We are grateful that Archbishop Welby and Pope Francis have already spoken out about the issue, but we need them to keep doing so on behalf of the worldwide Church, especially when they meet with other church and political leaders.

This will add weight to the advocacy work we will be doing at the individual country level."

A very successful Circuit 170!



Thank you to everyone who helped to make this coffee morning such a special occasion.

This was an opportunity to celebrate all the effort and all the people who have helped to build this Circuit over 170 years. A chance to realise how hard our Methodist ancestors worked to keep their dream alive and to see from maps that it wasn't always easy!

Even a meeting house opened by John Wesley had dwindled to nothing by the 1830s but was re-invigorated by a new preacher, and this story appeared again and again. Perhaps something to think about when feeling slightly despondent about letters in the Methodist Recorder bemoaning our imminent demise! We've been asked to organise a smaller display to visit each church during January/February, ending at St. Andrew's (Horsham) re-dedication service.

Angela Putland - Circuit Archivist

Leatherhead Pages

Information, news, events and happenings in and around
Leatherhead including news of joint Christ Church/LMC events



A NEW SPECIALITY COFFEE SHOP AND SANDWICH COMPANY

Open Mon-Sat, 8am-3pm

NOW OPEN TO ALL

*the very best coffee +
the very best sandwiches =
the very best support
for young people*

All Saints, Kingston Road, Leatherhead, KT22 7BT



Men's Breakfasts

Leatherhead Men's Breakfasts will be at 8.00am on the
following Saturdays:-

No meeting in December

24th Jan	LMC - "Leatherhead Foodbank", Jonathan Lees
28th Feb	Christ Church - <i>speaker tba</i>
28th Mar	Parish Church - "Bell Ringing", Peter Ford

All men of any denomination or none are welcome.
A suggested donation of £4 would be appreciated to cover
costs; any surplus is donated to the speaker's preferred
charity.

**MUSIC
on
THURSDAYS
at LMC**



**WEDNESDAYS
at
CHRIST CHURCH**

musiconthursdays.org

Another successful season of lunchtime concerts at LMC and Christ Church.

By the time you read this we'll have had our closing concert of two accordion players, one from Poland, one from Russia, both studying at the Royal Academy of Music. A lot of our players are RAM students, some are former students, and some of the more experienced professionals - Jacqueline Phillips (cello), Lynda Chang and Peter Bailey (both piano) for example - studied at RAM as well.

We enjoy our concerts in LMC. The Church is the right shape and size for our style of "chamber music" concert. The combination of the comfy chairs and soft carpeting is offset by the harder surfaces of the walls and windows, and then there is the excellent roof structure. The result is a pleasing room with excellent acoustics for both performer and listener.

It has been a year of so many musical highlights that it is difficult to pick out a favourite concert. Although, finding my 60th birthday fell on a Thursday, I did cheekily ask for mezzo-soprano Georgia Knower and guitarist Fabricio Mattos to perform that day. There was birthday cake too!

In August we heard a lute, and that player brought an archlute (it has bass strings beside the others), and we also had a visit from a theorbo player - as tall as a double bass, with even lower bass strings than the archlute. Our audience members are now lute family experts!

We have also heard singers, piano, harpsichord, harp, guitars, violins, violas, cellos, viola da gamba, clarinets, bassoons, flutes, piccolos, recorders, we even risked a French horn one week, and of course, those accordions. At Christ Church we have heard the organ from its softest, most restrained registration, to pulling out (almost) all the stops; and we have heard the instrument accompanying flautist Emily Andrews, and cellist Anna Tam.

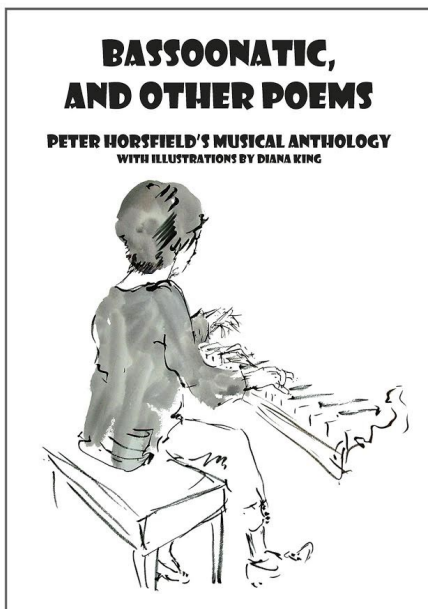
Occasionally we have a player for whom the cross on the wall, the fact that they are about to play in an active Church, have a real significance. So it was for a South Korean violinist who brought her Mother, brother and a couple of friends along. It turned out that the Chinese pianist accompanying her was a member of a central London church too.

Each week a few members of Leatherhead Art Club come along and sketch as the musicians perform. Capturing movement when you can't shout out "could you just do that again" turns out to be very difficult. Then there is Peter Horsfield who often sends in a poem inspired by a concert. We put these two together recently and have produced an anthology of Peter's poems called *Bassoonatic, and Other Poems*, with illustrations by Diana King. Les Prescott has copies for sale, as does Barton's Bookshop.

Now we are looking forward to next year and to using the new piano. We hope to bring it into the Church during January, so Music on Thursdays might not be its first users. We will be able to add piano concerts into the programme for 2015, knowing we have an instrument that will be a pleasure for our visitors to play. In fact, when we told our wonderful donor about the international music students who would be playing it she thought her late husband would have been absolutely delighted.

On behalf of all the musicians and music-lovers performing, organising, and attending the lunchtime concerts in LMC and Christ Church, I'd like to offer a big vote of thanks for your support and encouragement. We start again on April 23rd, St George's Day. Now, what can we think of to celebrate that...

Peter Steadman



Now Available from Barton's Bookshop

Time for Tea



COME for TEA and COMPANY

from **2.00pm** to 4.30pm on

Friday 5th December

including singing by a choir from
Trinity School



No Time for Tea in January

and from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on

Friday 6th February

with Hedley Kay



...and every first Friday in the month at

LEATHERHEAD METHODIST CHURCH

EVERYONE WELCOME

If you need transport please contact:

Margaret Meynen on 372930 or Gill Harris on 458518

Attendance Free - Donations Gratefully Received

Leatherhead Pages continue on page 27

Dorking and Horsham Circuit NEWSLETTER

**December
January and
February 2015**

Dear Friends,

I have recently cancelled my subscription to a magazine called "History Revealed". I've enjoyed browsing through the contents, but at such a slow rate that the initial subscription offer has been enough to give me reading material for a long while yet.

What is it that people find interesting about history? There's the academic approach: the pleasure of discovering new facts about the past. For example, I already knew that Hannibal journeyed across the Alps with elephants. I now know that amongst his army of thousands there were only 37 battle elephants, and all but one died on the journey.

There's the celebratory approach: any excuse for a party, sometimes with little relationship to historical events. I'm writing this on 5th November and I suspect that people setting off fireworks in the distance are more interested in pretty explosions than in an historical terrorist attack on Parliament.

There's the pragmatic approach: learning useful lessons from the past that will inspire and guide us in our lives today. There are some wonderful role models for us scattered throughout history.

And there's the personal relationship approach: getting to know people better by understanding how they used to live. Well-written historical fiction can be good at this. Reading Azincourt (by Bernard Cornwell) gave me a real sense of what it would have been like to be an archer in battle. But even better is a face to face conversation. A few years ago I had a fascinating chat with my mother about her life as a typist in the telegram business.

Christianity is an historical faith, based on certain key events two thousand years ago. We will soon be marking the birth of a baby called Jesus. This is the moment God himself entered history. So what will our approach be?

We might focus on the facts, of which there are relatively few. Much of the traditional nativity story is based on later embellishments to the gospel accounts, but learning to distinguish the two could be instructive. We might focus on enjoying the celebration. Food, drink, family, decorations, parties, presents, more food, more drink – what's not to like? We might look for meaning in the story which we can apply to our lives today. The nativity story raises issues about homelessness, devotion, trust, humility, commitment, vulnerability, divine guidance and many other important topics. *(continued on the back page)*

The **Methodist** Church



EFFINGHAM

Any of you who attended the Circuit Meeting in September will be aware that our Chapel needs re-roofing, and that we have building issues associated with the heavy rainfall earlier in the year, and that we asked for help with a very large bill. The generous response from the Meeting was humbling and brought us close to tears. Our Church Council sends grateful thanks to everyone who voted to give us £10,000 towards the work.

We'd also like to thank everyone for making the **Circuit 170 Coffee Morning at London Road, Horsham on 1st November** such a great success. Lots of early history was on display, with fascinating old photos, artifacts and stories celebrating the founding of Dorking & Horsham circuit in 1844. It was wonderful to share your memories of the past, what is going on at the moment, and what is planned for the future. Don't forget to save stuff for the archives at Woking.

Meanwhile the organizing committee will be in touch soon about the possibility of the main display boards visiting each of our churches after Christmas, finishing at St. Andrew's as part of their re-opening celebrations in February.

Locally, Advent and Christmas events are being planned with other churches in our village.

Messy Church has nearly 30 children attending now, and they'll each receive a Traidcraft Advent calendar. Our Posada figures of Joseph and a very pregnant Mary on her donkey will be in local schools and homes to remind everyone about the real meaning of Christmas. We'll be going to see the **Wintershall Nativity** play, and there's carol-singing around the village in aid of *CRISIS* as usual.

We're also hoping to join a *Christmas starts with Christ* campaign which is inviting Churches to host a **Silent Night Carols event**, to remember the remarkable Christmas of 1914, when fighting ceased in the WWI trenches and soldiers from both sides sang 'Silent Night' across No Man's Land.

Angela & David Putland

PARTRIDGE GREEN

Here in Partridge Green we have hosted 5 successful "Messy Church" mornings this year. We are sad to be saying farewell to Chris Currie who has been instrumental in getting Messy Church established within the village, and also for taking an active role with our regular Toddler Services. He has also liaised with many young families in the village, through these activities or at the monthly Village Café (held on second Tuesday afternoon of each month).

We, as a church, will endeavour to keep these links open and aim to continue to provide these positive opportunities for the young families who regularly attend and enjoy this time of worship with their children.

During Advent we will be holding a Toddler Service on December 4 at 10.30 am, and our Family Carol Service on Saturday December 20 at 3.00 pm. Our Christmas Day Service will be at 10.00 am led by Revd Paul Cockburn. Everyone is most welcome to come and join the celebrations!

Alison James

Deadline for the next issue:
Wednesday February 4
j.oborn671@btinternet.com

CIRCUIT 170

The Circuit celebrated 170 years of mission and worship with a comprehensive and fascinating exhibition of photos, memories, maps and historical artefacts. The eight churches of the Circuit each provided a display and they were all placed round the walls of London Road church. The informative and attractive displays provoked great interest and discussion among the many visitors. It was a good opportunity for Circuit members to get to know each other, as well as to learn about the history of all the churches.

Sue Checkland

st martin's DORKING

Over the autumn four house groups, mostly members of St. Martin's congregation, have been following the Beatitudes book which is part of the Pilgrim course. This has given much food for thought as each reflection asks some searching questions of Christian life. The Live Nativity will be held on Dorking's Gala Night on Thursday 4 December at 6.30 pm, complete with a donkey in Church. This usually attracts lots of children. Thankfully the Christmas Day lunch is taking place in the Centre after a search for a chef, although we still need a host for the event. Please contact the Centre Managers (01306 886830) if you are interested in coming or helping. The Nine Lessons and Carols service is on Sunday 21 December at 6.00 pm, the first with our new Director of Music, Matthew Beetschen, fresh from Dunblane Cathedral. In January, to brighten up the winter we have a "Sing for your Supper" social in the evening of Saturday 10 January with, inevitably, a hot supper and community singing and entertainment. All are welcome. We observe our Church Anniversary on Sunday 25 January when our guest is Revd Barrie Tabraham, now retired in Merrow.

Sue Jamieson

SOUTHWATER

After the busyness of summer with trips to New Wine and to Soul Survivor, and inspired by what God has been saying to us in recent months, we have decided to restructure ourselves with a smaller core Leadership Team, supported by 7 mission & ministry teams. We had been given a sense from God to work with those willing to step up to our agreed mission, and to try to ensure that the in-house stuff (the housework) did not become so all-consuming that we forget the whole purpose of us being church is the outward focus, aka our mission (the fieldwork). It is early days but we can already see this beginning to work out as more people step into a greater ownership of our shared vision.

We had a great Harvest, sharing a fantastic lunch together and raising £430 for Tearfund's anti-trafficking campaign: No Child Taken. Halloween saw us standing firm against the darkness, and rather than avoiding what the world likes to get up to, we decided to reclaim it as All Hallows Eve by throwing a Light party, dressing up as people of light, and then visiting local residents to wish them a Happy All Hallows Eve, blessing them with a "treat" consisting of a chocolate, a candle, and a card proclaiming Jesus as the Light of the World. The children's enthusiasm for this was inspiring and we were received positively at every door. We also raised money that evening for World Vision's anti-trafficking campaign. So as we step forward to try to reclaim Christmas for Jesus, as best we can, please pray for us!

SCMC's Leadership Team: Angie, Kath, Juliet & Tina

(continued from front page)

But my suggestion for you this Christmas is to try the personal approach. We have a friend and Saviour. His name is Jesus. He is not a historical figure but a living presence in our world. The stories of his birth give us some insights into the kind of person he is – and those insights can only be a good thing when it comes to getting to know him better.

If we talk to someone about their childhood long ago, it deepens and changes our relationship with them. It should be the same when we talk to Jesus about his birth. Reflecting on the nativity story in the company of the one who was at the centre of it is a way to grow in our love for Jesus and better appreciate his love for us. *Paul*

LONDON ROAD, HORSHAM

Although Remembrance Sunday will have come and gone it has been so encouraging to see the work and commitment JC@LR have done to remember our war heroes – visiting the War Memorial in The Carfax, and making poppy streamers to hang in the church. They have also been making a mosaic which will be dedicated and then fixed to the wall outside the church for all to see.

Chris Currie, our Family Worker, has decided that it is time to move on. He has contributed so much to church family life, and his dedication has been much appreciated. He will be greatly missed.

Lorna Manwaring



ST ANDREW'S

Our redevelopment project continues with a hoped for completion date just before Christmas, when we will hold a community carol service and give people the chance to come and have a look round. Not everything will be finished, so work will most likely be ongoing, and the fundraising continues as we are about £40,000 short of the final total needed (c £530,000!). We are so grateful to all who have given, and to all the different trusts and funds who have granted us money, and are thrilled that as a congregation we have raised more than the 10% we had set as our own personal target. With the help of a second Gift Day, to date the congregation has raised a total of £75,370, some of which has come as interest free loans. So we press on!

The most joyous and affirming moment came in September when the builders uncovered the original foundation stone from 1877, which had been hidden behind the previous front vestibule since 1972. The vision behind the redevelopment was God's call to us to rediscover His original purpose for us as a mission and community focused church, standing in the wonderful evangelistic heritage of Primitive Methodism, so to see the words "Primitive Methodist Connexion" emerge from behind the plasterwork was deeply moving. We continue to look forward to what God will do in and among us!

St Andrews Leadership Team

Coffee and mince pies



There will be an open house at 38 West Farm Avenue, Ashted, KT21 2LG, on Monday 15th December, from 10.30am onwards.

Do pop in even if you only have half an hour to spare - the more, the merrier!

This will be another good opportunity for the members of both churches to get to know each other better.

I look forward to seeing you.

Margaret Dodds-Ely

Tel: 01372 277415



Christmas Day Service - 10.00am

This year's joint Christ Church and LMC Christmas Morning Service will be held at **Christ Church** at **10.00am**

Leatherhead Messy Church

Leatherhead's Messy Church is exploring "Ways to Pray" with the aim of "normalising" prayer and encouraging families to make talking with God part of their regular routine.

Sessions on "Praying to Say Thank You" and "Praying to Say Sorry" were both very successful. We were particularly impressed by the thoughtful "Sorry" prayers which a number of the children shared during our Celebration in October. November's session on "Praying to Say Please" will be taking place as this article goes to press.

In December, everyone is very welcome to come along to see how we celebrate a "Messy Christmas". Glitter is guaranteed! You can also explore our new Peace Tent (AKA the vestry as you've never seen it before!) In January, we move on to the very vital topic of "Praying to Say Help!".

Jane Smith



Next Messy Church dates for Leatherhead:

Thursdays 18th December
and 15th January
3.30pm to 5.30pm at:



Update from the LMC & Christ Church Working Groups

The Mission Group

This is the group which is looking at our Mission Statement, and the most important of all things – why are we (as a church) here? Why has God placed us here? What does God require of us?

This is the most basic of questions, and one which we must answer before we do anything else. When we are able to articulate what we believe our mission is, and the most important elements of who we are and what we do, then we will be able to move forward with prayerful confidence, guided by the Holy Spirit in every step.

Over the summer the LMC Leadership Team and Christ Church Elders spent a Saturday morning working with Martin Hayward, the URC Southern Synod Mission Enabler. He went through some of these things with us, asking us again some searching questions, including 'why are we choosing to come together as one church?'

We looked at some reasons why churches decline, and how and why others might grow. You have already seen at least one small result from this with the 'Welcome Card' that Carol designed and we have had printed for visitors to LMC. Of course the "Season of Invitation" is another one, although we were already thinking about that. We need to ensure that this 'culture of inviting' continues long after the 'Season' finishes.

The Mission Group is now working very hard on a specific Mission Statement. This will be followed by what we might call Mission 'criteria'; in other words - how we believe we are called to fulfil the mission we have been given. This will probably then be more specifically short term, medium term, long term. What do we think God's Church in this place might look like... and how will we get there? Who should we work alongside, who should we partner with? Of course all this planning is and must be founded and rooted in prayer. We read in Psalm 127:1:

Unless the LORD builds the house,
the builders labour in vain.

Unless the LORD watches over the city,
the guards stand watch in vain.

continued on the next page

When this work has been completed we will set up a meeting for everyone from both churches to come together to discuss our mission. We hope this will be at the beginning of March.

We should then be in a position to move forward, with our Mission Plan determining the location and type of building we need for the future.

[The Mission Plan is also vital in order to allow us to contact our respective organisations (URC Finance dept.; Methodist TMCP) with a view to finding a definitive answer to what % of property sales they would retain / allow us to invest in our forward mission.]

This is a very exciting time for us all. We have given this part of the process the time it deserves. We can move forward in faith that our God goes before us.

Churches Uniting

This group is about to organise another meeting, and will report back in the next copy of The Link. It has been agreed that the current pattern of monthly united worship will be continued.

It is hoped that some social events can be organised in the spring, particularly some which are more family-friendly.

Finance and CPL Report Group

This group has finished its work for the moment, and awaits the Mission Plan to be able to contact the URC and Methodist Church central organisations.

Lynda Russell

Pastoral Visitors' & Elders' Prayer Meetings

Pastoral Visitors' & Elders' Prayer Meetings will continue in the New Year on the **fourth Tuesday** in the month, from 2.30pm at LMC. The first meeting will be on 27th January.

Freda Walker

Leatherhead Choral Society

*Leatherhead Choral Society
invites you to a*

Family Christmas Concert

*Join us for an afternoon of seasonal music
followed by refreshments*

Saturday 20th December 2014

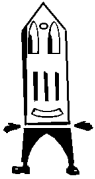
4pm

**Christ Church (URC), Epsom Road,
Leatherhead, KT22 8ST**

Tickets: Adults £6, Under 16s £3

Available on the door

Tickets@leatherhead-choral.net



Leatherhead

Methodist Church

LMC

Diary



December

- Mon 1st 8.00pm Monday Evening House Group
- Fri 5th **2.00pm** Time for Tea – including singing by a choir from Trinity School (*to 4.30pm*)
- Sun 7th 10.30am Toy Service – Rev Lynda Russell**
(Please bring unwrapped gifts for B@titude for local children)
4.00pm Christingle Service at the Parish Church
- Tues 9th 10.00am West Hill School Café at LMC all welcome
2.30pm Pastoral Visitors' & Elders' Prayer Meeting
- Fri 12th 1.30pm Friday Afternoon House Group
- Sun 14th 10.30am David Cappitt**
6.30pm Rev. Lynda Russell with Holy Communion
- Wed 17th 1.45pm Trinity School service at LMC (KS2)
- Thurs 18th 1.45pm Trinity School service at Christ Church (KS1)
3.30pm Messy Church (*to 5.30pm*)
- Sun 21st 10.30am Rev. Lynda Russell – Family Christmas Service**
6.30pm Carol Service at the Parish Church
- Christmas Day:**
- Thurs 25th **10.00am** Joint Christmas Day Service at Christ Church
- Sun 28th 10.30am Joint Service at LMC – Rhys Frost**

Toy Service - Sunday 7th December

Please can you bring along unwrapped gifts to the Toy Service which will be taken to B@titude for distribution to local children.

January

Sun 4th 10.30am Joint Covenant Service - Rev Lynda Russell

Mon 5th 8.00pm Monday Evening House Group

Tues 6th 10.00am West Hill School Café - all welcome *(to 12 noon)*

Fri 9th 1.30pm Friday Afternoon House Group

Sun 11th 10.30am see Circuit Plan

6.30pm Rev. Lynda Russell with Holy Communion

Tues 13th 10.00am West Hill School Café - all welcome *(to 12 noon)*

Thurs 15th 3.30pm Messy Church *(to 5.30pm)*

Fri 16th 10.30am Friday House Group

Sun 18th 9.00am Bring & Share Breakfast and 9.15am Prayers

10.30am Rev. Lynda Russell

Tues 20th 10.00am West Hill School Café - all welcome *(to 12 noon)*

Fri 23rd 1.30pm Friday Afternoon House Group

Sat 24th 8.00am Men's Breakfast at LMC *(see page 19)*

Sun 25th 10.30am see Circuit Plan

6.30pm New Fire

Tues 27th 10.00am West Hill School Café - all welcome *(to 12 noon)*

2.30pm Pastoral Visitors' & Elders' Prayer Meeting

Wed 28th 7.30pm Joint Leaders/Elders Meeting at Christ Church

February

Sun 1st 10.30am see Circuit Plan

Tues 3rd 10.00am West Hill School Café - all welcome *(to 12 noon)*

Fri 6th 2.30pm Time for Tea with Hedley Kay

LMC Family News

Best wishes for a speedy recovery...

...to our Minister, Lynda, following recent surgery.



MORNING PRAYERS - NEW ARRANGEMENT

For the time being, the Churches Together Morning Prayers involving a short time of prayer, psalms, bible readings and communion, will now be once a week on every Friday morning at 9.00am at the Parish Church. Everyone is welcome.

LMC Church Council

The Church Council met on 6th November. The following matters were raised. Please see the church notice board to read a full copy of the minutes.

Matters Arising:

Trinity School Governors.
Our Communion Stewards.

Minister's Report:

Our Calling, Season of Invitation, New Fire, New House Group, the Prayer Breakfast, Prayer Triplets, Heart for Romania, Time for Tea, Services at The Beeches, 'Holiday at home' in August, Social Networking, ECG (the follow-on from Easter People).

Finance:

Treasurer's Report: Offerings, Our Circuit assessment, Connexional Funds, giving to LYP, Reserves Policy, standing orders, budget for the coming year.
Gift-Aid.
Money from the Christmas stockings.

Children's work at LMC:

Messy Church funds, Discoverers,
Nativity for the Family Christmas Service, Urban Saints, JMA,
Advent calendars.
Children and Families' Worker.

Pastoral:

Pastoral visitors and Elders prayer meetings, a Community Roll, the Pastoral Visitors.

Safeguarding

Property:

Toilets, corridors and lower hall, hand dryers, a screen and laptop for the lower hall, the gas pipe.

Circuit: The 170th Anniversary celebration, St Andrew's Church Horsham.

Ecumenical:

Covenant Review Group, Daily prayer meetings, chairman of Churches Together in Leatherhead.

LMC/Christ Church: Our monthly joint services, The Mission Group.

Any Other Business: The offer of a piano, Bridge Drive.

Date of next Church Council - Thursday 26th February 7.30pm.

LMC Leadership Team

Principal points made at the Leadership Team meeting held on 30th November.

Pastoral Update: The pastoral leaders prayer meeting is changing to the fourth Tuesday afternoon at 2.30pm in the New Year. We are going to develop a community roll to keep contact with people who come to church activities but are not members.

Finance: Our overall income has reduced by £2500 in collections and our Circuit assessment is going up by £3000 in this next year. We also owe HMRC £1600 due to claiming gift-aid for donations via CAF which we shouldn't have done. However HMRC have agreed to take this off our gift-aid next year. We will be donating £3000 to LYP as usual for the coming year. Lynda has suggested a challenge where people are offered £10 from the church and try and make it into much more using their talents. Any profit will go to Heart for Romania, our church charity.

Property: We are still looking for a new property steward. The Gas work is now complete and the heating is back. We are going to get the wall in the tower porch treated for damp and repainted as it is looking a mess. The issue of re-decorating the downstairs hall, corridors and toilets was raised as it is all now looking a bit shabby. The Manse had its Quinquennial - nothing major needs doing.

Season of Invitation: This is going well. We have two services still to invite people to. Our Advent service on 7th December and our Family Christmas service on 21st December.

LMC/Christ Church: Lynda talked about getting involved in the new Leatherhead town centre regeneration project.

Ecumenical: New Fire is going well with increased interest. The Covenant review has not yet begun and is hopefully going to start in the New Year.

Social Events: Suggestions were made for a treasure hunt, beetle drive, BBQ. Any more suggestions please to Lynda by January.

AOB: Services at The Beeches will be on the third Tuesday of the month at 2.30pm. If you would like to help please speak to Lynda.

Participate! Update

The young people taking part in the "Participate!" programme have now drawn up a list of jobs they are interested in getting involved in:

- IT Technician (making PowerPoints etc. for worship)
- Operating PowerPoint/sound desk during services
- Organising a social/fundraising event
- Preparing/serving refreshments at services
- Playing music/introducing new songs
- Visiting people who are housebound
- Door stewards
- Taking and counting the collection
- Shadowing/helping our Minister
- Reading lessons
- Mission work overseas

During December, we will be focussing on creating a performance which will be part of the Family Carol Service on 21st December. This will be the main thing we work on between now and Christmas.

In January, we plan to invite a number of current post-holders to come along to Discoverers one Sunday morning and chat to the young people about what they do. So if you hold one of the jobs listed above, watch this space!

Jane Smith

LMC Housegroups

The **Friday House Group** meets on the third Friday each month. Please contact Norma Shaw for further details.

The **Monday House Group** meets on alternate Mondays. Contact Carol Stoves - 01372 377125 - for details.



The new Friday Afternoon House Group - is led by John Russell and meets from 1.30pm to 3.15pm on the second and fourth Friday in the month. Contact Sue Friend - 01372 813464 - for details.

7th - 12th April 2015 - ECG!

Let's go on holiday together!

John and I have been going to 'ECG' for the last six years since it began. ECG is a kind of successor to 'Easter People' (or something like 'Spring Harvest') albeit on a much smaller scale. It's led by NXT Ministries, based at Stoke on Trent Burslem Methodist Church, and it takes place during the week after Easter.

Many people ask what ECG means; of course they mainly associate it with a heart rate test. Well that was where the idea came from:

ECG – A Heart for the Nations: Equipping, Calling, Going

- **Equipping** today's generations to bring in God's Kingdom.
- **Calling** Christians to discover and renew God's unique vision and purpose for their lives.
- **Going** to serve, love and lead into discipleship those who don't yet know Jesus Christ.

ECG is an event which sets out to equip local churches for their mission in the world and their local context, through teaching and worship (and fun), and also through their Children and Youth programmes (which are excellent). Many people go along for the week, and come back to their home churches refreshed and renewed, but also with new ideas and even skills to put into practice. The worship is uplifting, and would feel familiar, and the Bible teaching is outstanding.

Of course you can go to as many or as few of the sessions as you want – and there's always the seaside at Scarborough, and the surrounding area to enjoy for those who aren't so keen to join in the event, for which there is absolutely no pressure!

You can stay in whatever accommodation suits your budget and your taste: – from a 'Kibbutz' (like indoor camping – in a local church. Bring your own camp beds and sleeping bags: £20/per person for the whole week!) – to self catering; to a local hotel (of which there are many of different qualities and prices).

The price for adults is currently £90 for the whole week (Tuesday to Sunday), but this will go up nearer the time. There may be some help available if anyone wants to go but finds the prices difficult.

continued on the next page

ECG continued

We've already booked in – we would love a big group to come with us...but no time to waste!

Go to **<http://www.ecgevent.org.uk/scarborough>** to make a booking or to check it out.

Or speak to me. We're looking forward to a great time getting to know each other...

Lynda Russell

JMA Update

For many years, the children and young people at LMC have collected money for JMA. And many of the adults have enjoyed contributing month by month and seeing them collect their "medals" every year.

According to the Methodist Church website, JMA was created "so that children would not be excluded from supporting and learning about the mission of the Church". This is an aim that we wholeheartedly support. But the reality is that the JMA collection box system is something we have struggled with for some time. The children and young people are reticent about asking for money and there are many pressures on families during the limited time after the service. We are also short of someone to act as JMA secretary, since Mary Pittam stood down.

With all this in mind, Church Council agreed in November that we could take a break from the JMA scheme. But this does not mean that we are taking a break from supporting world mission! We will be working with the children and young people to get them actively involved in fundraising for Heart for Romania - LMC's current mission project overseas.

As you will see from the article about "Participate!", our young people have already expressed interest in organising a fundraising event themselves, which will involve people of all generations. So look out for their ideas and please support them in this new way of contributing to world mission.

Jane Smith



Advent

We keep our fragile hold
As the earth keeps spinning
Through its cycles and seasons, purpose and place.
We drift on tides of passing fashion.
Our constant is God.
Each Advent, a time of impatience, perceptiveness.
The flickering flames from circles of candles
Reflect the warmth of the coming of the Christ-child.
As Christmas dawns, we anticipate the unfolding of a purpose -
A promise of hope -
A hope that all new birth will enter a peaceful world;
That the lonely will be visited and feel wanted;
That the wise will influence people of power and authority;
That the poor will not be made poorer by being ignored;
That the elderly and sick will be relieved of this weariness;
That in our waiting we all receive a deeper fulfilment.
And God will enclose the souls of all.
Life is a time to cherish.
When, at the end, we step across the threshold
Into Heaven,
To meet God face to face, and relish time everlasting.

Jean Plant

Prayer for Christmas Presence

Generous Father,

At this busy time of year, help us to remember the important things. In all the rush of sending cards and giving presents may we make time to be still, to acknowledge your sending and giving of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. Thank you that he didn't stay in the stable in Bethlehem, but lived and died and became the Saviour of all who put their trust in him. May we receive afresh the gift of your presence with us in Jesus, now and for ever, with great thankfulness. In his name, we pray. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Parish Pump

Christ Church

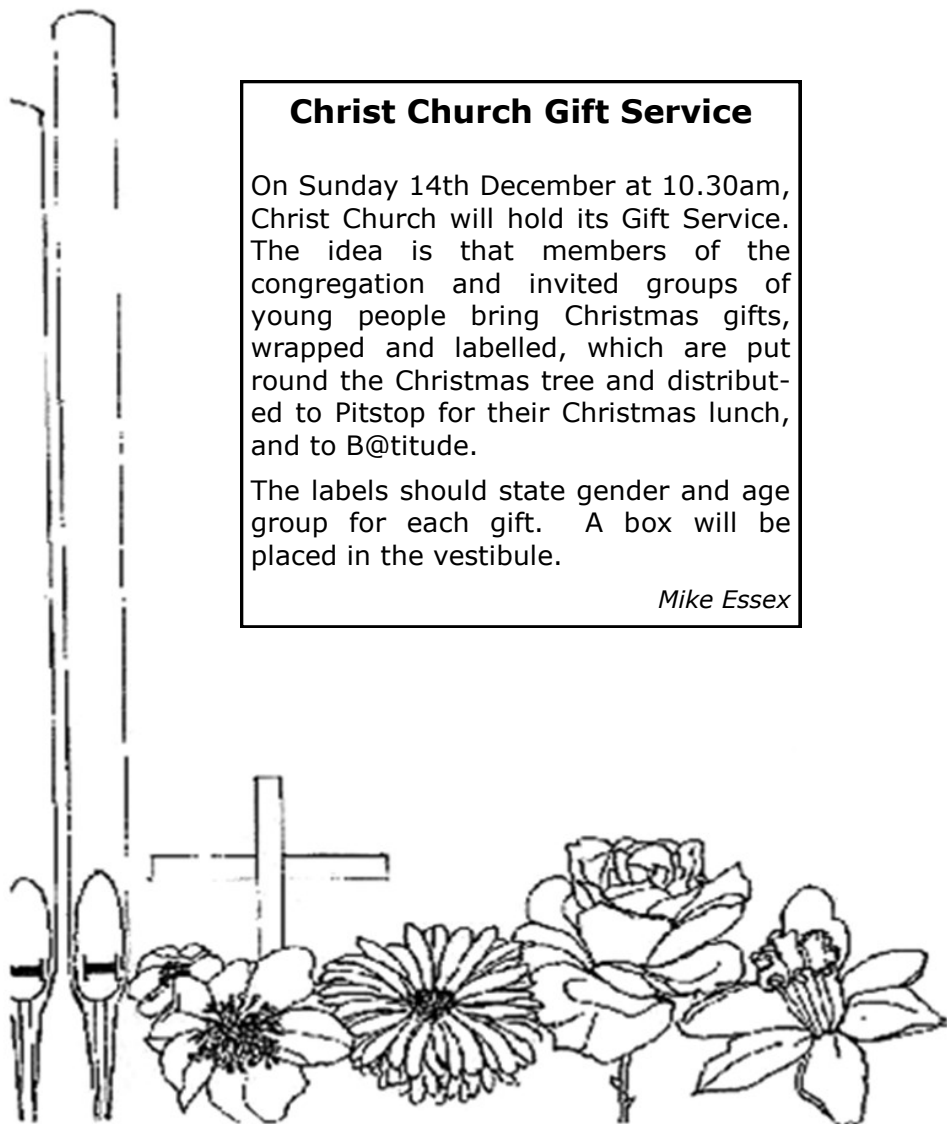
(United Reformed) Leatherhead

Christ Church Gift Service

On Sunday 14th December at 10.30am, Christ Church will hold its Gift Service. The idea is that members of the congregation and invited groups of young people bring Christmas gifts, wrapped and labelled, which are put round the Christmas tree and distributed to Pitstop for their Christmas lunch, and to B@titude.

The labels should state gender and age group for each gift. A box will be placed in the vestibule.

Mike Essex



Money for Nothing at Christ Church (*but not by Dire Straits!*)

Reclaimed Gift Aid is an important part of our annual Church income.

How it works: The church claims back from the Inland Revenue the basic rate tax paid by the donor. So providing you are a taxpayer, for every £1 you give, the Inland Revenue gives us 25p. All you have to do is fill in a Gift Aid form obtainable from Michael Chamberlain. It's easy, you don't have to commit to a long period of giving, and you can leave the scheme at any time.

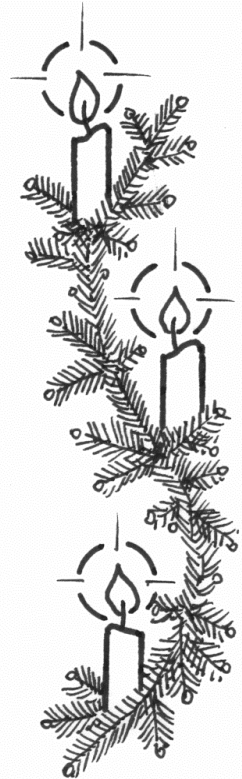
Annual Giving

Joining the Christ Church envelope scheme helps to remind you that the work of the church goes on even when you are on holiday, and filling an envelope for each week helps the church maintain a steady cash flow. Envelopes for 2015 are now obtainable from Michael Chamberlain.

Reviewing your Gift

If you haven't changed the amount you give for several years, please consider that goods bought for £1 in 2010 would cost you £1.17 today.

*Michael Chamberlain
Gift Aid Steward*



URC Southern Synod Together 8th November 2014 at Caterham School

Southern Synod Moderator, Revd Nicola Furley-Smith led the opening worship on the theme of 'Growing Disciples', after which Kingston URC were presented with a Child Friendly Church Award. Nick White, Children's and Youth Development Officer was bade farewell.

The morning's business included:

Synod Council Report included agreement to:

- Hold 2 full day Synod meetings per year from 2015, 14th March and 10th October;
- Focus priorities as a Synod on assisting congregations in Growing Disciples.

Ministries Committee reported on:

Team Ministry, Workloads and training for Interim Moderators.

Introduced material for use on Vocations Sunday entitled 'Spice of Life'.

Finance:

The Treasurer presented the accounts, which showed a surplus due to the sale of property, along with the budget for 2015, which was accepted. The manse fund is healthy at present. Thanks were given to churches for their M&M contributions; however General Assembly has asked that churches increase their giving to M&M by 1%.

Changes to the Synod Manse Policy following a recent review were proposed by the Property Committee and agreed upon.

Synod Clerk's Items included:

- General Assembly asks congregations for their views on same sex marriage in URC Churches. Facilitators from the Synod are available to churches.
- It was agreed that a Children's and Youth Development Officer would be sought to replace Nick White.
- Churches are asked to offer nominations for Moderators of General Assembly 2016 –2018.
- CCLI – churches should be careful about copyright.

Notices:

Women's World Day of Prayer on 6th March 2015 is written by women on the Islands of Bahamas.

Guide and Scout Fellowship – workshop to help churches build relationships on 6th December, 10.30am at East Croydon URC.

Children and Youth Work:

Commitment for Life/Christian Aid Intern, Thomas Hackett is available to come and speak to churches.

Earthyear 2015 – Various events are arranged. For more see: urc@brighthelm.org.uk

In the celebration of Jubilee Ministers Revd Robert Blows was presented with a certificate in recognition of 50 years as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. (We are very grateful that Robert continues to lead worship in a number of churches in the area including Christ Church).

In the afternoon John Ellis Lay Moderator of General Assembly challenged the meeting on the Theme of Growing Disciples. His text was Matthew 28 verses 18 – 20: '...go and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptising them** in the name of the father, Son and of the Holy Spirit and **teaching them** to obey everything that I have commanded you.' Highlighting visits that he has made on behalf of the URC, he made the following points:

- Discipleship leads to Mission, which includes Evangelism – many of our churches find this difficult.
- Keeping the show on the road is all absorbing so it is easier not to think about Evangelism.
- URC is spreading its ministers too thinly.
- Advocated the scalability of pastorates – expansion or contraction as necessary.
- The whole church life should not depend on the minister.
- In the future lay people should lead the congregation and a minister would be a bonus.

John led the closing worship leaving us with much food for thought.

Jeanette Chamberlain

Christ Church Diary



December

Fri	5th	2.00pm	Time for Tea at LMC, including singing by a choir from Trinity School <i>(to 4.30pm)</i>
Sun	7th	10.30am	Rev. Robert Blows - Holy Communion <i>Robert is a retired URC Minister and is a member of our congregation</i>
Tues	9th	2.30pm	Pastoral Visitors & Elders Prayer Meeting at LMC
Sun	14th	10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Lynda Russell - Gift Service <i>(see page 41)</i> Rev. Lynda Russell - Communion at LMC
Wed	17th	1.45pm	Trinity School Service at LMC (KS2)
Thurs	18th	1.45pm 3.30pm	Trinity School Service at Christ Church (KS1) Messy Church at LMC <i>(to 5.30pm)</i>
Sun	21st	10.30am 6.30pm	Rev. Barbara Pearson - Carols & Readings <i>Barbara is a retired URC Minister and member at Ewell URC</i> Joint Service of Carols at the Parish Church
Christmas Day:			
Thurs	25th	10.00am	Joint Christmas Day Service at Christ Church
Sun	28th	10.30am	Rhys Frost (Methodist LP) - Joint Service at LMC <i>Rhys has been a Methodist Lay Preacher since 2002 and is based at Cobham Methodist Church</i>



January

Sun 4th	10.30am	Joint Covenant Service at LMC - Rev. Lynda Russell
Sun 11th	10.30am	Rev. Lynda Russell - Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Rev. Lynda Russell - Communion at LMC
Wed 14th	7.00pm	Elders' Meeting
Thurs 15th	3.30pm	Messy Church at LMC (to 5.30pm)
Sun 18th	10.30am	Mrs Eileen Lawlor <i>URC Lay Preacher from New Malden</i>
Sat 24th	8.00am	Men's Breakfast at LMC (see page 19)
Sun 25th	10.30am	Rev. Lynda Russell
	12 noon	Church Meeting
	6.30pm	New Fire at LMC
Tues 27th	2.30pm	Pastoral Visitors & Elders Prayer Meeting at LMC
Wed 28th	7.30pm	Joint Elders/Leaders Meeting at Christ Church

February

Sun 1st	10.30am	Rev. Robert Blows
Fri 6th	2.30pm	Time for Tea at LMC with Hedley Kay (to 4.30pm)

Christ Church Family News



We are sorry to report that **John Rayner** has suffered a stroke and is making slow progress. He is being cared for in Britten Ward in Epsom Hospital. We send him and all his family our very best wishes and assure them of our prayers and support at this time.

We send our very best wishes for a speedy recovery to our Minister **Lynda** after her recent surgery.

Lindsay and Richard Trim have moved to Corbridge, Northumberland, near three of their children. We wish them well and hope that they will soon settle into their new surroundings.

We remember in our prayers these friends and all those who are unable to worship with us and those who need our support at this time.

Anne Cairns



From Revd Robert Blows...

I would like to thank all who came to the Service at Christ Church on 5th October to celebrate the 50th anniversary of my ordination and for the kind words that were said. I was sorry that I had to dash off to the lunch kindly arranged by my former Church in Thames Ditton and not be able to eat the delicious cake with you. The lunch was very enjoyable as was the cake which I have been consuming since.

Thank you too for the very generous book token you gave me. I had a fruitful trip to Foyle's where I was able to buy the latest book by Karen Armstrong on Religion and Violence, Diarmaid Maculloch's A Christian History of Silence, and a New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

A Revised Standard Version, now somewhat battered, was presented to me at my Ordination but I did not possess the new version. I hope that congregations I preach to will in time also benefit from these works.

I am also being presented with a certificate to mark the anniversary at Synod. I hope over those 50 years I have lived up to the words of Tate and Brady's setting of Psalm 34 (Rejoice and Sing 685) - 'Make you his service your delight.'

With thanks and blessings,

Robert

Jeanette writes: I felt very proud to be present at Synod Together when Robert was presented with his Certificate by our Moderator Revd Nicola Furley Smith. Robert was the only 'Golden' Minister to receive a certificate on that day.

End of Christ Church pages

CAROLLING IN FROSTY AIR

Christmas and carols go together. You can't have one without the other. It would require a high degree of ingenuity for anyone to get through the Christmas season without hearing a carol - and probably singing one, too. They're on the speakers in the supermarket, they're on the radio, carol singers come round the streets singing them, the brass band plays them in the market place - and, of course, there's the church carol service, the crib service and the midnight communion. Most of us could name lots of them: Hark the Herald, Good King Wenceslas, In the Bleak Midwinter, Away in a Manger, Once in Royal David's City . . . and so on.

Some of those carols are very old, some relatively modern. They're perhaps the only Christian songs we actually know the words of - but familiarity can breed if not contempt, then at least inattention. Occasionally in those familiar lines we sing absolute nonsense: 'In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron' - in *Bethlehem*? 'Little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes' - so the baby Jesus wasn't human after all? 'And io, io, io by priest and people sungen'? No, not a bad case of the stutters, but a medieval carol-writer's mischievous description of the mumbo-jumbo of incomprehensible Latin in church.

We've been spared other bafflement by the work of editors. Charles Wesley's first line was originally 'Hark how all the welkin rings' - no 'herald angels'. 'Welkin' comes from an Old English word meaning 'heaven' and has absolutely nothing to do with shell-fish. But enough of problems. On the whole carols are wonderfully clear in their message and profoundly moving in a simple and touching way. The last verse of 'Once in Royal David's City' always moves me:

*Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, we shall see him;
but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high.* Trust Mrs Alexander to get it exactly right. And Christina Rossetti's last verse asks a question so searching that her meteorological musings fade into thin air:

*What shall I give him, poor as I am? if I were a shepherd, I would bring a
lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him -
give my heart.*

Canon David Winter

Parish Pump

Pastorate Details

Details of the Services and Activities at each of the Pastorate Churches can be found on the appropriate website, or by telephoning the contact listed here:

Leatherhead Methodist Church:

Church Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8AY
www.leatherheadmethodist.org
Contact: Senior Steward -
Carol Stoves 01372 377125

Christ Church (United Reformed):

Epsom Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8ST
www.chch.org.uk
Contact: Local Church Leader -
Mike Essex 01372 273472

Effingham Methodist Church:

Chapel Hill, Effingham, KT24 5NB
www.effinghammethodistchurch.co.uk
Contact: Senior Steward -
Dave Putland 01372 454850

Cobham United Reformed Church:

38 Stoke Road, Cobham, KT11 3BD
www.cobhamurc.org.uk
Contact: Church Secretary -
Mary Langtry 01483 282421

Cobham Methodist Church:

Cedar Road, Cobham, KT11 2AA
www.cobhammethodistchurch.com
Contact: Senior Steward -
Rhonda Frost 01932 423100



United Pastorate Ministers

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