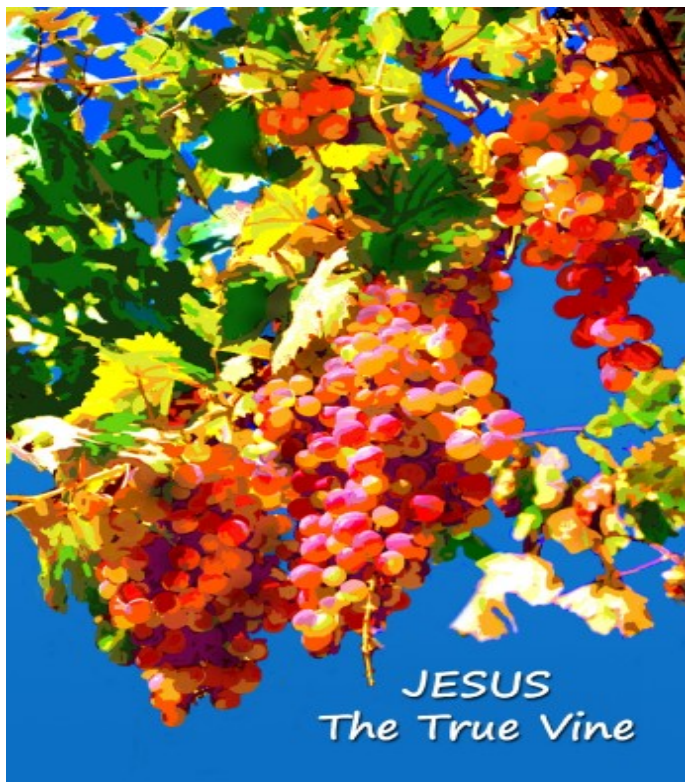


the Link

**The United Pastorate of
Leatherhead
Cobham
Effingham**

June 2020



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

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

The **Methodist** Church



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Rev Bridget Banks has been appointed to the post of Moderator of the Southern Synod of the United Reformed Church and will take up her position on 1st September. She is currently Minister of Crawley URC.

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All copy for the July/August issue to the editor by June 23rd



The Ministers Write...

From Rev Jan Hofmeyr

Dear Friends,

We hear much discussion on the subject of what a post-Covid19 world will look like (assuming there will indeed be a world where Covid19 is only a thing of the past.) For us in the Church there is much discussion, too, on what a post-Covid19 Church will look like. None of us can be entirely sure, since we don't yet know if there will be any long-term changes that will have to be made in the way we operate as churches.

As I see it, there are certain essentials for a healthy church, no matter the outward circumstance of our lives and of the world. Almost every book written about church life and growth highlights about five essential elements of a healthy congregation. These, with slight variations here and there, include: Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Service/Mission and Evangelism. As we read about the life of the first church at the end of Acts 2, we see all these in evidence. Those first followers of Jesus 'met together in the Temple day by day' (Worship), 'they had meals together in their homes' (Fellowship), 'spent their time learning from the Apostles' (Discipleship), 'and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved' (Evangelism). There is also evidence of Service/Mission, for example when later they appoint deacons to attend to people's needs (Service/Mission).

These same elements remain vital for a healthy, growing church today. Any way in which the Church may be different after this pandemic, it must not veer away from these essentials. What may well be different is the way in which these are expressed and lived out. In the area of worship, for example, we should build on things that we have discovered during this time, such as the possibility of including in our services of worship those who cannot physically attend church services, through on-line services or written copies of the service. Also, our inability to meet together for our worship has reminded us of the gift that this is. Notwithstanding the benefit that has come through the provision of material for worship in our homes, we have been reminded of the importance of worshipping as a body and that we should 'not give up the habit of meeting together.' (Heb 10:25)

In the area of fellowship, we have learnt the benefit of 'every member ministry' as many people, not just the normal pastoral visitors, have been in touch with other members, providing support and encouragement. Fellowship can also be extended to those not able to leave their homes through on-line meetings like 'Zoom'.

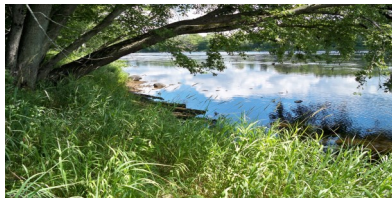
This pandemic has highlighted the discrepancies within our society and the inadequate remuneration for some key workers. Maybe we as the Church have been reminded of our role in uplifting the downtrodden and seeking justice for those who are exploited? Such things are part of our calling to service and mission.

These days have seen an increase in interest in spiritual matters and in the number of people praying in our society. This serves to remind us that, essentially, we are spiritual beings and that we should not be reluctant to talk to people of our faith when opportunities present themselves. Surveys suggest that around 20% of non-believers would be happy to engage in a personal discussion about faith in Christ.

The challenges of this time may well have shone a light on our own spiritual condition. We may have been surprised at the strength of spirit we have been able to display, or we may have been made aware of a lack of spiritual resources with which to cope with the challenges. Are we building our house on a firm foundation of discipleship, so that when such storms come, we can withstand them?

We trust that the Lord will continue to 'work for good with those who love Him', both as individuals and as churches during these days.

May the Lord bless and keep you,
Jan



Shield me

O may God shield me, and may God fill,
O may God watch me, and may God hold;
O may God bring me where peace is still,
To the King's land, eternity's fold.
Praise to the Father, praise to the Son,
Praise to the Spirit, the Three in One.

*From "The Creed Prayer", poems of the Western Highlanders
(Parish Pump)*

From Rev Kim Plumpton

Dear Friends,

How wonderful it was to discover some blue tits nesting in a plant pot not far from the greenhouse. We found them by sheer chance when the need came for an extra pot to plant some sunflowers. Finding numerous eggs, the pot was placed quickly back on its shelf from where it had come from. Over the next few days we heard the gentle whispers of chirping chicks, and witnessed 'mum' tending to them, flying backwards and forwards with food in her beak. Over time we had hoped to witness the fledglings leave the nest, to begin a different journey, one that would see them fly from the confines of the clay pot. In fact the household was getting quite excited about the prospect of witnessing this great event, should we be so fortunate.

One morning on my way to the greenhouse the normally noisy pot was silent and I wondered whether they had indeed left the nest. A little later still nothing could be heard so I gently peered through the tiny gap between the wooden plank and the pot. I was saddened to discover that 5 of our chicks lay dead, with evidence that a struggle had taken place. It was for us a sad moment and everyone looked so downhearted when I told them the news. Somehow, amongst all the uncertainty that surrounds us in these times, we had looked upon the sight of freedom and flight with great excitement. It couldn't have been more than half an hour later that Mel beckoned me to the tree by the greenhouse. There before us, flitting around with exuberant energy was one very small blue tit, shielded not too far away by another much larger blue tit. In that very moment we realised that all had not been lost, indeed at least one had made it and was enjoying their freedom amongst the trees. We found ourselves jumping for joy. It seems to me that in this world of uncertainty we desire even more so to hold onto those things which can offer us hope and freedom.

The offer of Pentecost is so much more than simply the offer of hope. Having watched their beloved friend rise and then ascend into heaven, the disciples are left in that moment wondering what is to come. I'm sure some felt a sense of excitement and anticipation, some may have felt a little disorientated and confused. Yet by the time we move on just a little, the disciples are empowered by a force that is uncontainable, uncontrollable, a force that pushes through, indwelling, renewing and empowering. Hope brings with it an optimism and a confidence, the Holy Spirit brings not only the offer of such things but with it the presence and power of God. Offering God's wisdom and God's insights. About living in the certainty of God's promises. Impressing upon us the heart of God for people and his mission into the world.

As we come towards Pentecost we begin to understand the role of the Holy Spirit in propelling us and the church forwards. I am always aware at this time for the need to ask God that he fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit and continue to do so. Without the Holy Spirit, I can do nothing. Without the Holy Spirit we can do nothing. *"Now the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is **freedom**."*

Every blessing Kim



Listening Service

The listening service to which we can all contribute, run by Churches Together, continues. If you feel someone you know would benefit from this service the number to call is:

Cobham 01932 910184
Effingham 01483 385120

The service is intended to offer our unique gift of listening and praying for others. Guidance is given to all who offer to volunteer and each person operates from 9-5pm for one day only. If you would like to help and have not volunteered phone Kim on 01932 586988 or drop me an email kimp_822@hotmail.com

Afternoon tea anyone?



Virtual afternoon tea via Zoom

Effingham: 2:30pm
5th June & 19th June

Cobham: 2:30pm
12th June & 26th June

Information regarding
Zoom details will be sent
nearer the time

Lockdown in the Pastorate

Pause for Thought and Prayer: Trinity School

Uppermost in my thoughts and prayers are schools seeking to reopen safely from June 1st, and our own Leatherhead Trinity School, one of many now preparing for the return of some classes. As others have said, closing a school is one thing, opening in a phased manner is quite another. As everyone will realise from the enormous amount of media coverage, how to proceed safely with a phased unlock is complex. Schools have been bombarded from all sides with advice, guidance and recommendations. Virtual meetings have taken place to consider the process and options available for social distancing of children, with unions also giving their views on behalf of their members.

As a governor, I have attended at least 4 webinars from Surrey, Diocesan and Methodist education sources concerning Return and Recovery, focusing on Mental Health and Wellbeing from a child's perspective as well as staff concerns, considering all the implications on how "unlock" might work safely in a phased manner with Health and Safety as well as Safeguarding in mind.

The complexity is second to none, from health and safety to the extra cleaning required to keep everyone safe, as well as welcoming back and establishing what catch-up learning will be needed for each and every child. How about the staff? Will they be willing to come back to work, with consideration too for their own children and families, and given that they may be shielding one or more vulnerable members of their own families? The complexity is compounded as the virtual school at home will need to continue for those at home as well as classes for key workers' children and vulnerable children, while those returning will need to be taught in smaller classes and groups. How diverse and challenging!

As Barbara Easton, Head of Service at the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust said in her recent letter to schools, referring to Wesley's words: "Watch over one another in love" and "An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge". There never were truer words. Please keep schools, staff and families in your prayers for the next many weeks, and Leatherhead Trinity especially. God bless them all in this amazing challenge and keep them safe.

Gill Walker

Covid-19 Lockdown 2020

Writing down words to ... process the change and fathom the times we are in
Lockdown is real ... questions and faith are both in our face as we swim
And as we watch, the media give daily stats of fear
The global virus tragedy is clear
And we hear the government and stay at home.

Watching the heartbreak ... families torn, unable to share at the end
Distress on the frontline ... the grit and resolve so clear in these women and men
And as we wait, the media can't quash the well of love
So many workers, key, we're in awe of
And we clap each week with gratitude from home.

Altered perspective ... priorities changing, quarantine feels we're enclosed
Soaking in sunshine ... on once a day walks concerned for those living alone
And as we queue, two metres from each other, mask or not
No flour anywhere in any shop
And we learn to make the most with what's at home.

Reaching out further ... our influence sphere expanding online every day
Technology working ... shrinking the world, connecting us all in new ways
And as we hope, the lockdown rhythm tries to find its pace
The balance of how to work and educate
And we value now the quality of home.

Roads are so empty ... the hum has gone quiet, nature is finding its voice
Birds are now singing ... the air is so clean so clearly we do have a choice
And as we grow, the conscience of the world must show its face
We need help from above, we need His grace
And we glimpse the way the world can start to heal.

Kath Dawkins (April 2020)

Aren't people being nice to each other these days! (Part 1)



Last Saturday I sustained a puncture from a sticking-out kerbstone. I drove very gently, but eventually had to pull onto the pavement opposite St Mary's church in West Horsley. There was absolutely no-one about. I got out of the car and demanded help from above (yes demanded - this was an emergency).

Before I had finished demanding, I noticed a young man running along the pavement towards me. He offered to change my tyre - a slight problem, when modern cars no longer come equipped with a spare tyre and a jack! So he ended up organising a breakdown recovery vehicle to take my car to the service centre, as well as walking me back to his house for tea and biscuits and a chat with his wife while waiting 90 minutes for the recovery vehicle to come from Hassocks. (Social distancing - forget it - this was an emergency).

Another slight problem when we established that there was no way my short fat legs could convey me into the cab of the breakdown vehicle, so my knight in shining armour drove me back home. (Two metres - forget it - this was an emergency).

My question is this: Did my demand for help elicit his kindness? Well no, actually, he was already running to help me before I'd even started praying for it. In response to my question "So where did you suddenly spring from?" he replied that he lived in the house next to the church, heard my gloppida-gloppida squelching tyre from afar and came running across the road to help.

But you would have sent someone if this kind man hadn't materialised, Lord, wouldn't you?

Rachel Reed

[Or perhaps it shows that God knows our needs and acts on them before we even put in our demands. - *Ed*]

Part 2 to follow next month

Cobham 'Bake Off' (23rd May)

During Saturday afternoon we held our Cobham 'Bake Off'.

'We had three categories: Junior Bakers; Have-a-Go bakers; Frequent cake bakers.

Theme: Lockdown



The afternoon was buzzing with warm smiles, creative energy and a touch of competitive spirit. With piping bags at the ready and layers of rolled icing, our attendees gave it their best. For those of us watching we marvelled at everyone's skill and ingenuity. It was wonderful to see the sheer joy of those taking part.

The 'Junior cake bakers' were astonishing, the standard remarkable. Each person was deserving of an award. Face-masks, Mr Happy and star wars offered the judges some real challenges in making a decision.

Junior Baker winner:

Marcus Sankey

Marcus made a 'Toilet roll cake' with the words 'I'll give you my last toilet roll.'





The 'Have-a-Go bakers' offered an extraordinary standard of cake decorating. Ideas ranged from tending to the garden, birthdays in lockdown, NHS rainbow, what it is to eat healthily and our encounters in nature.

Have-a-Go Baker winners: Matthew and Tony Pattison. The cake represents home schooling and even has an apple for the teacher on the top.

The 'Frequent Cake Bakers' were very inventive and we were not disappointed by their skill and creativity.

Frequent Cake Baker winner: Carl Dixon .

The cake is the 'forget me not group' represented by the telephone and surrounded by the virus.



Big thank you and well done to all who attended and made the afternoon so enjoyable. Big thanks also to Rosemary Manners and Liz McGibbon for their wisdom as judges.



Celebrations at Cobham

It is just 2 years since we came together as Cobham United Church and we were not going to let lockdown spoil our celebrations. It's surprising what you can do at a distance. After the Bake-Off on the Saturday, we met (via our computers) for celebration worship on Sunday 24th. After singing "Come on and Celebrate" we were led in prayer by Pastora

Marife of The Great Commission Ministry (who in normal circumstances meet in our church on Sunday afternoons), and their members all greeted us from their own homes. Various Cobham and Effingham members read the bible and led the prayers, and our preacher was our Methodist Superintendent Minister, Rev Gavin Hancocks, with some inspiring words arising from the parable of the Good Samaritan. A truly celebratory weekend.

DC

The Gillott household are keeping busy in the lockdown.

Alison is sewing for the NHS. She is one of 1000 sewers in the area of Epsom & St Helier Hospitals that are providing PPE equipment for local NHS and care home staff. She started with ear mask protectors and laundry bags but has now graduated to hats, isolation gowns and scrubs! In the last six weeks the group has delivered nearly 10,000 pieces of PPE to the local hospitals and care homes.

Meanwhile Nigel has been busy as a trustee of the Community Foundation for Surrey which raises money for Surrey charities. In addition to its normal grants to Surrey charities, the Foundation has raised over £1.2 million since the Coronavirus lockdown. In the six weeks since 1 April the Community Foundation for Surrey has given over £1 million to help Surrey charities provide much-needed services in these testing times and plans to continue to make further substantial sums available as the charities recover from the financial problems caused by the virus. If you would like to contribute to this cause, please visit <https://www.cfsurrey.org.uk>.

Anne Cairns

The Valley of Dry Bones and Covid-19

'Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones. Now hear the word of the Lord!'

At this time of global pandemic, we live with stark reality of death and life. Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek 37:1-14) was given when God's people were in exile in Babylon. They felt dead, being separated from home and God! The vision answers God's question: *'Can these bones live?'*

We can also feel cut off from God, facing the loss of job, business, home or health, with churches unable to gather together on Sundays. This vision assures us that God has power over death and can breathe new life into what is hopeless.

When Ezekiel is told to *'prophesy to the bones,'* God brings them back to life: the bones come together and are covered with muscles and skin. He then prophesies to the wind, from the four corners of the earth, to bring the bodies alive. The physical bodies are then filled with God's breath to bring new life. The miracle of this story is that God not only makes these bones live, but also brings the life of His Spirit.

The Covid-19 virus robs people of their life by suffocation, so that they can't breathe. Our hope beyond the pandemic is that the gift of God's Spirit will bring new life to our lives, churches and world. Life will certainly look very different in the future, but we can be assured that God is with us and that we are safe in His hands.

'I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord. (vs14)

Rev Paul Hardingham—Parish Pump





Editor(s) for the Link
Does your picture fit in here?

I am planning to move to Lincolnshire in September.

If by that time a new editor has not been found then the September issue of the Link will be the last. It doesn't have to continue as now. One suggestion is that it could come out every two months, and/or two people—or a small team—could share the job.

If you want the Link to continue, somebody must take it on.

David Cappitt



Cobham United Church

Life in our church

It seems certain that “Lock Down” will continue for at least a good part of June, so the Bereavement Café, Messy Church, Oasis, Church Walks, Men’s Fellowship, House Fellowship, Mustard Seed, and Cobham Soup are postponed until further notice.

However, those are face-to-face groups and our need to either self-isolate or self-distance means that we must continue to explore new and creative ways of being the community of faith.

So what is still happening?

June 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, July 5th

Sunday morning worship

continues and can now be found on our website where you will find a link, or on facebook:

Cobham website: <https://cobham-united-church.org.uk>

Cobham facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/unitedchurchcobham>

[I’m afraid you will have to provide your own coffee and biscuits after the service!]

Daily Reflections can be found on the website, Monday–Friday.





Afternoon Tea
There will be virtual afternoon tea on Fridays 12th and 26th June at 2.30pm, using Zoom.
Let's give it a go!!
(see p7)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9607157823>
Meeting ID: 960 715 7823

Other Dates

Tues 2nd June	2.00pm	Trustees Meeting by Zoom
Wed 10th June	2.00pm	Fundraising C'ttee by Zoom

Prayer Chain

For Prayer Chain requests/suggestions contact Anita Latham on 07969 830083 or email anitalatham1949@hotmail.com

Foodbank

Cobham Foodbank continues to operate from CUC, though they have had to change the way they relate to those in need.

Don't forget that there is still a need—greater than ever at this difficult time. So if you used to bring a donation of food to church on a Sunday, you will need to find another way of donating (e.g. in the supermarket).

Prescriptions

Cobham Churches Together continues to operate a prescription collection service. If you are able to help with this please let Kim know.



Effingham Methodist Church

Effingham Diary: June 2020

Sunday services continue on our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/effinghammethodistchurch/>
and on the website
<http://effinghammethodistchurch.com/>

Dates to celebrate this month ?



Happy Birthday to **Mary Verrinder** on the 27th

Remember we need your help to keep our records of nirthdays and important anniversaries up to date.

Find some Messy Fun down- loadable sessions

[https://www.messychurch.org.uk/
resource/messy-church-home-april-june-
downloadable-sessions](https://www.messychurch.org.uk/resource/messy-church-home-april-june-downloadable-sessions)



**EMC's stewards continue to have monthly meet-
ings with Kim, our minister, via ZOOM.**

If you would like to raise any issues for discussion
please contact Gill Walker, Church Secretary.



Report from Effingham



For two months now we have been sharing electronic worship on a Sunday morning, via facebook, with Kim and our friends at Cobham United Church. For details of how to find the services please go to our website: effinghammethodistchurch.com and then click on **facebook** in the toolbar and up will come the latest service. Then press the start arrow to begin. If you would like to take part in the services just let Kim know and she'll be delighted ! Whilst on the website you will also find Kim's daily meditations. For those without a PC or Smart phone, paper versions of the services are being provided. DVDs of each service, which plays on a home dvd player, are also available, so please let Dave know if you would like one.

Despite the 'lockdown' Effingham Church folk joined in the **VE Day** celebrations with a Zoom tea-party which was enjoyed by all. Our Chapel's fence was festooned with flags (see photo above) to remind the village of the significance of the occasion and many people celebrated in their streets or gardens.

I am sure that life for each of the churches has gone on in a similar way to Effingham during the last few weeks, with trustees or stewards meetings, District and Circuit meetings and social gatherings over the Zoom platform and regular phone-calls, all to encourage us and ensure that no one is forgotten during this difficult period and that life goes on. We're even being encouraged to think about a new "normal" now that the lockdown is easing !

Dave and Ange Putland



Following the fire in the village post office and general store, a new Community Store has been opened in what was the recently reopened and closed coffee shop, with Rev Mandy and Pat Bleasby as volunteers selling a good range of goods for local folk who so miss the Village Market and Bevans the Butchers. This local initiative has support from Guildford Borough Council and the Parish Council.
Gill Walker



Don't forget:
Afternoon Tea on Zoom
on 5th and 19th June



Methodist Homes Sun- day on 14th June

MHA was founded in 1943 by a group of Methodists who wanted to improve the quality of life for older people before the creation of Welfare State.

MHA Sunday is a special service on which people are encouraged to reflect on the lives touched by MHA and support the valuable work being done now and into the future. (our nearest home is in Working)

"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay.

Your people will be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16)

Inspired by the book of Ruth, and the care given by our thousands of volunteers and staff, our theme for MHA Sunday 2020 is 'kindness'. Ruth shows kindness to her older mother-in-law, Naomi, and in turn Ruth and Naomi are blessed. The text used in our order of service is Ruth 2 v 1-13.

To help you mark MHA Sunday there is a full service, sermon and a video downloadable from the website telling the story of our very own 'Ruth' and 'Naomi'. The video tells the story of Erika who started volunteering with MHA having experienced her own loneliness and who feels truly blessed by giving to others, and Ruth, one of our residents who feels so blessed from the care she has received.

MHA have created a selection of downloadable resources to help us plan our MHA Sunday events, from fundraising tips to event information posters. They have suggested MHA Sunday as 6th September, (although you are welcome to host your event any Sunday).

However Methodist UK website diary has 14th June as MHA Sunday

<https://www.mha.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/mha-sunday/>



This Refugee Week is 15 – 21 June 2020, and we’re being invited to explore the theme of ‘Imagine’. Because when things feel stuck; when the old ways of doing things are no longer working, that’s what we need to do.

In the era of Covid-19, the call to imagine feels more important than ever. ‘To imagine’ means to picture something you can’t currently see. To step beyond the current moment, and perceive something different. Rather than being a flight away from reality, imagination is sometimes the best response to it – the only way to get us somewhere new. Maybe you’ll imagine a future where we’ve found new ways to care for our planet, transcend borders or protect human life. Or perhaps you’ll imagine what it’s like to have to leave your family behind, or what your hometown might look like to someone walking its streets for the first time.

You can get involved by holding or taking part in a Digital Refugee Week event or activity, or doing one of our Refugee Week 2020 Simple Acts (see website).

However you respond, we hope you’ll join us in an act of collective imagining and help make Refugee Week 2020 the biggest, loudest and most creative Refugee Week yet. Refugee Week events & resources at www.refugeeweek.org.uk
There are **worship resources** including hymn suggestions at www.singingthefaitplus.org.uk



A Psalm of lament and praise in a time of coronavirus

How shall we praise you, Lord, our God?
When we are locked down,
how shall we praise you?
When the doors to your house are barred,
and your people cannot assemble?
When those desperately in need of money and work
cannot even wait in the market-place?
When we have to circle round people in the street,
and to queue for shops maintaining safe distance?
When we can only communicate
by hearing on the phone,
or seeing on the screen;
or digitally messaging,
or even just waving through a window?
When we cannot meet our parents and children,
grandparents and grandchildren,
or other family members and friends?
When we cannot touch them in their flesh and blood,
to know they are really alive?
How shall we praise you?
How, like Thomas, shall we not see yet believe
that your son is raised among us?
How shall we praise you?

How can I praise you, Lord?
Are you plaguing us with this virus
to punish us because we have all done wrong,
or thought wrongly,
or felt wrongly,
or just been wrong?
If so, why do only some die,
and those, apparently, the ones who are the least worst or most caring
amongst us?

continued

Or are you trying to teach us a lesson?
If so, why is it so hard to learn?
And how are we to find the answer
when we do not even know the question?
Or are you still the same loving God,
coming to us in our sufferings
and opening up the way to new life in Jesus?

Lord, I will try to praise you.
Through gritted teeth,
I will try to praise you.
I will try to remember that you have created all things,
and this virus is part of your creation.
I will try not to hate it
but seek to mitigate its harm.
I will try to keep myself and others safe.
I will work to pray for them
and seek to help in whatever way I can.

Lord, when I cannot pray or worship
help me be aware of all your people
and your saints and angels
hovering around me,
lifting me up.
When I feel alone,
let me feel you near me,
even if only for a moment that enables me to go on.
Let me hear you say
“Peace be with you”.

Lord, I will praise you.
Let all the peoples praise you.

The Revd Kenneth Howcroft

Methodist.org.uk



Light in the darkness from *All We Can's* blog

April 24, 2020: Full disclosure: I don't have a clue about art. I know what I like when I see it, but ask me to describe the artistic reasons behind that feeling – I soon struggle. When you know you know, am I right? With that being said, a few months back I had one of those moments when I bought a painting from a friend of mine. With the painting came these prophetic words:

'I had a picture of some dark woods, but with light at the end of the path. This painting carries a prayer to keep going. I feel the words of Jesus, 'do not fear', as I look at the painting. The trees are silver birch, also known as Pioneer Trees. To pioneer we need to take paths we simply haven't walked before.'

Every day since lockdown began, I go into my office and I think about these words. They seem to resonate somewhat more in these times. Lockdown, for many, feels like that dark wood. That feeling of darkness may come in the form of loneliness and worry. Maybe it comes in another way. Some of you, in a small way, may actually be relishing lockdown, and the opportunity it brings to tackle those to-do lists you never had time for before. Or maybe you're somewhere in between? Wherever you are, reading this, I hope you hear these words loud and clear:

Do not fear.

There is a light at the end of the darkness. The light at the end of this picture is a promise of what is to come. How that will look I can't say right now. The amazing thing is that amidst the darkness there is also new life and opportunities. There are paths that no one has walked before. I have seen this in our society as we gather together to clap at 8pm to praise our frontline staff. I have seen it in how the church is filling the cyber-space with content that is designed to inspire and encourage people. I have seen it in how All We Can is living out its value of solidarity with its partners and supporters, by joining together every day on social media at 1:17pm.

These are just a few examples of new paths that have not been walked before. What new 'pioneer trees' you have seen, during this period?

All We Can wants to be a part of that light in the darkness, for some of the poorest communities affected by this global pandemic. All We Can and the Methodist Church's Emergency Coronavirus Appeal is just one of those silver birches, rising up to encourage each one of us: to pray, give, and save lives. The impact this will have is significant to vulnerable communities and will be a tangible way of communicating this powerful message of the gospel: **'Do not fear.'**

The artwork in the blog is 'Unknown Path' by Chris Duffett.

You can find out more about Chris and his art on his website.



About the Author
Matthew Forsyth is All We Can's Churches and Volunteers Officer for London and the South East





Sadly **Heritage Open Days** will probably go online this year because of the pandemic, or be postponed till Spring. The organisers of this national event, which was due to take place across the UK in mid-September, are monitoring the situation but intend to hold an online event even if Lockdown eases, as it seems unlikely that any venues will be able to cope with visitors if social-distancing is still advised !



Meanwhile this year's theme of *Hidden Nature* may be eclipsed by tributes to our NHS heroes, because 2020 is the **Year of the Nurse and Midwife**, but also the 200th anniversary of the birth of the first Nightingale Nurse – Florence Nightingale, who helped set the bar for creating a professional nursing service.

Locally people recovering from Covid-19 will be treated at Headley Court Hospital, which has been renamed the **NHS Seacole Centre** in honour of the pioneering nurse Mary Seacole. I'm sure there are stories of local nurses and first aiders to find in our records!



It's also the 400th Anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers voyage on the Mayflower on 16th September with events planned throughout the UK, and this fascinating website invites us to explore some **Virtual Voyages** around 14 key sites in England, Holland and USA !
<https://www.mayflower400uk.org/>

Dorking museum has organised a series of walks and an exhibition. So, although all walks are off in Dorking at the moment it is hoped that those planned for later in the Summer and Autumn will go ahead
<https://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/>

Mayflower 400 Walk – Dorking in the time of William Mullins

There's also a book available from the lockdown shop on the website ~ *The Weaver, The Shoemaker and the Mother of a Nation*: The story of Dorking's Mayflower Pilgrims and the town they left behind.

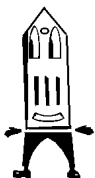


Tax Justice Sunday is on 14th June 2020

Worship resource pack available on website <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/>



WORSHIP RESOURCES
FOR CHURCHES
WITH SMALL GROUP STUDIES



Leatherhead

Methodist Church

Life at LMC during “Lockdown”

We are becoming accustomed now to the new ways of worshipping together as a Church, as well as socialising at a distance! We’ve had some really thought-provoking and encouraging online services. We started with the first “click-through” service on 22nd March and these have continued since.

On 26th April, as David Cappitt was due to preach at LMC on the circuit plan, he agreed to record our online Sunday service for us and his theme was “The appearance of Jesus on the Road to Emmaus”. The service was inspiring, so thank you David for our service that week.

In last month’s Link, David mentioned that the Methodist Church had reaffirmed the decision of the 2018 Conference to ban “Virtual Communion”. Jan and the stewards were mindful that many people were missing being able to share together at the Lord’s table. As a result, a “Spiritual Communion” service was adapted for the online service on 17th May. In the service sheet for that Sunday, Jan explained: *“Our Roman Catholic friends as well as other Christians have a tradition of “Spiritual Communion” as a means of grace for those times when they are not able physically to receive this sacrament. In the unprecedented circumstances in which we find ourselves today, it may be that this is a tradition in which Methodists too may experience God’s grace. Spiritual Communion is a practice where we entrust ourselves to God in prayer, pledging ourselves to God once more as disciples and praying that God might give us spiritually the same grace we share when we physically receive Holy Communion.”* Many from both LMC and Christ Church really appreciated the service. A typical comment was : *Today’s service was very peaceful and I really did feel connected with you all. Thanks to all who made it”*. It was also good to see Mike Essex reading the gospel passage.

So, what is to come? We will be having Sunday Morning worship online on :

7th, 14th, 21st, 29th June and 5th July.

A reminder that you can pick up the service from the LMC website **www.leatherheadmethodist.org** and click on the "Online" logo in the top right corner.

In some cases, the visiting preacher scheduled on the circuit plan may take the service. John Bees will be leading the service on 24th May. 31st May is Pentecost, but I have no news of that service as I write.

Also, we will be continuing with our online "after service tea and biscuits" using Zoom. Each housegroup arranges a Zoom session at 11.45am each Sunday and they are proving very popular. Some folk not in housegroups are joining in as well.

An email is sent out every Thursday, with printed copies being posted to those without email. The email contains the latest LMC news, a letter from Carol with office and wider news and any other relevant information for that week. In addition, Norma sends out the weekly Church Bulletin.

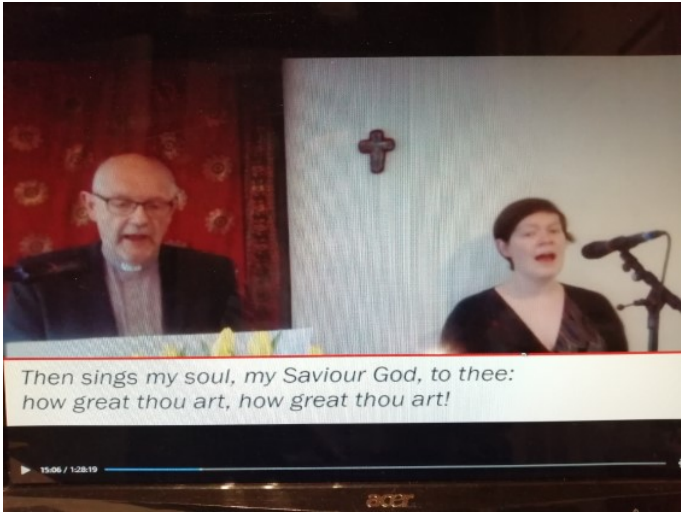
Carol often mentions church services on radio, TV and online. Recently the Methodist Virtual Choir singing "10,000 Reasons" was highlighted. The choir included three from LMC - Jan, Andrew Foster and Jane Smith. It was not that easy to spot them among many other faces on the screen! You can find it on YouTube - National Methodist Choir of Great Britain - 10,000 reasons.

I know that some follow the Birmingham District online service led by Rev. Ian Howarth as a live feed from the Birmingham District Manse. Ian's daughter Rosie sings some of the hymns/songs with Ian. On 17th May, the service included the "10,000 Reasons" video, so it just shows how the Methodist Connexion works with Jan, Andrew and Jane singing with the National Methodist Choir included in the Birmingham District online service!

If you'd like to write an article for the next Link, then please can you send your copy to me by mid-June. With grateful thanks,

Les Prescott

lziwffl 2



Live stream service from Birmingham with Ian and Rosie Howarth.



LMC online service led by Jan and with contributions from across LMC and Christ Church. Our thanks to David Stoves and team who put the recorded services together.

Great Plague of 1665-1666

How did London respond to it?

This was the worst outbreak of plague in England since the black death of 1348. London lost roughly 15% of its population. While 68,596 deaths were recorded in the city, the true number was probably over 100,000. Other parts of the country also suffered.

The earliest cases of disease occurred in the spring of 1665 in a parish outside the city walls called St Giles-in-the-Fields. The death rate began to rise during the hot summer months and peaked in September when 7,165 Londoners died in one week.

Rats carried the fleas that caused the plague. They were attracted by city streets filled with rubbish and waste, especially in the poorest areas.

Those who could, including most doctors, lawyers and merchants, fled the city. Charles II and his courtiers left in July for Hampton Court and then Oxford. Parliament was postponed and had to sit in October at Oxford, the increase of the plague being so dreadful. Court cases were also moved from Westminster to Oxford.

The Lord Mayor and aldermen (town councillors) remained to enforce the King's orders to try and stop the spread of the disease. The poorest people remained in London with the rats and those people who had the plague. Watchmen locked and kept guard over infected houses. Parish officials provided food. Searchers looked for dead bodies and took them at night to plague pits for burial.

All trade with London and other plague towns was stopped. The Council of Scotland declared that the border with England would be closed. There were to be no fairs or trade with other countries. This meant many people lost their jobs – from servants to shoemakers to those who worked on the River Thames. How did Londoners react to this plague that devastated their lives?

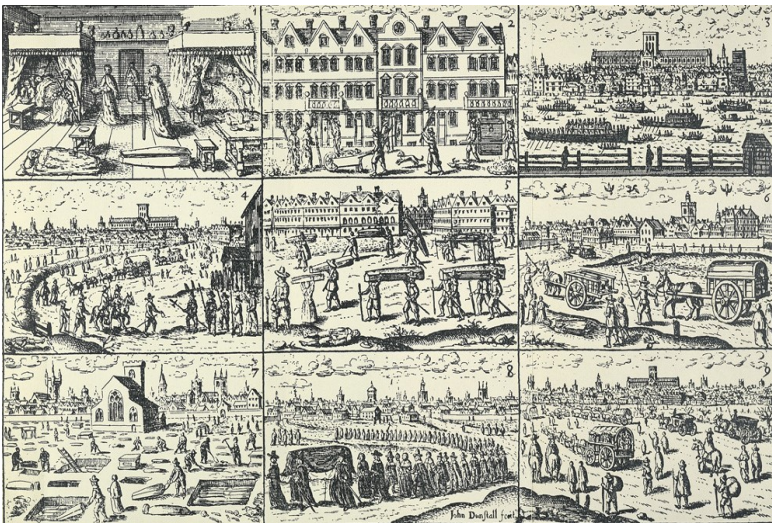
Background:

There are three types of plague. Most of the sick in 1665-1666 had bubonic plague. This created swellings (buboes) in the lymph nodes found in the armpits, groin and neck. Plague sufferers experienced headaches, vomiting and fever.

They had a 30% chance of dying within two weeks. This type of plague spread from a bite caused by a black rat flea that carried the *Yersinia pestis* bacteria.

Worse still was pneumonic plague, which attacked the lungs and spread to other people through coughing and sneezing, and septicaemic plague, which occurred when the bacteria entered the blood. In these cases, there was little hope of survival.

Treatments and prevention at the time did not help. Sometimes, patients were bled with leeches. People thought impure air caused the disease and could be cleansed by smoke and heat. Children were encouraged to smoke to ward off bad air. Sniffing a sponge soaked in vinegar was also an option.



As the colder weather set in, the number of plague victims started to fall. This was not due to any remedies used. Nor was it due to the fire of London that had destroyed many of the houses within the walls of the city and by the River Thames. (Many plague deaths had occurred in the poorest parishes outside the city walls.)

Some scientists suggest that the black rat had started to develop a greater resistance to the disease. If the rats did not die, their fleas would not need to find a human host and fewer people would be infected. Probably, people started to develop a stronger immunity to the disease. Also, in plague scares after 1666, more effective quarantine methods were used for ships coming into the country. There was never an outbreak of plague in Britain on this scale again.

Our thanks to Bob Greenfield for contributing this article which contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

(See www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/).

Benevolent Fund

LMC has opened a fund to help our church members and people in our wider church family who find themselves in financial difficulty as a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic. Jan, our Minister, will administer the fund.

If you know of anyone who is struggling financially owing to loss of pay, loss of a job, rent arrears and similar difficulties resulting from the current crisis, you are encouraged to let Jan know and we will try to arrange for food vouchers, groceries, or other appropriate help to be provided. We will ensure complete confidentiality.

Donations are needed to allow us to help people in this way. In these exceptional times, you might wish to think about re-allocating money that you would have spent in normal circumstances, but cannot now spend because of the pandemic - eating out, theatre, bus trips, Costa coffees and so on.

If you would like to make a donation then please arrange for a bank transfer to the LMC account (HSBC Sort Code 40-27-07, Account No. 01545833) and ensure you quote as a reference "Benevolent Fund".

A Little Appendix Article from Angela Hofmeyr

How to be surrounded by caring, wonderful people during lockdown and meet NHS heroes in the flesh!!!... Don't try this at home!!!... although I did! I spent the weekend of 9th May in hospital with acute appendicitis and had my appendix removed the old fashioned way (no key hole surgery during Covid because of aerosol generating procedures and 'surgical smoke').

Real and human angels watched over me – family and friends who supported and prayed. God is good! I honour the amazing doctors, nurses, catering and cleaning staff and porters (there were long corridors I was pushed down to midnight scan). These lovely people were from Nigeria, Algeria, Somalia, Belgium, Croatia, Serbia, India, Pakistan, local too of course, and the dear Filipino nurses in Astor ward. (I learned how to ask them in Filipino how they were - "Kamusta ka"). God bless the wonderful, dedicated team in NHS.

Maybe it was also a ploy to get more ice cream for my throat. What on earth do they put there during surgery? A drainpipe?! :-). Anyway, it meant that they gave me two extra helpings of ice cream! I suggest we begin a new zoom craze, called 'Zoom meetings with ice cream' and watch each other eat ice cream and have a jolly good chat.

Jan reckons I did all this as my extrovert personality needed more company other than my introvert Hubbie during this lockdown time!

I am humbled by all the love and care over a tiny thing called an appendix during a major world pandemic. THANK YOU LORD and so many wonderful people – including all of you who prayed for me when you heard I was "man down".

Lots of love and virtual hugs and I hope to see you soon for ice cream!

Angela Hofmeyr

"How Firm a Foundation you Saints of the Lord"

411 in "Worship & Rejoice" hymn book (USA)

1. How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he has said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?
2. Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed;
for I am your God, and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.
3. When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
and sanctify to you your deepest distress.
4. When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply;
the flame shall not hurt you; I only design
your dross to consume and your gold to refine.
5. E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
my sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
and when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.
6. The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

Bob Greenfield suggested we print this hymn, suggesting that it is has very encouraging words. It is originally from "Rippon's Selection of Hymns", 1787.

Leatherhead's 12.30 Lunchtime Concerts



Music on Thursdays at LMC • Wednesdays at Christ Church musicinsurrey.co.uk

Over the last few weeks we have been enjoying online concerts.

Each concert morning, people on our email list receive a link to the day's concert webpage.

The webpage has

We've had

concerts

for St

George &

Shakespeare,

May Day, and,

of course, VE Day 75.

These, and more, are still available on:

- musicinsurrey.co.uk •

Don't miss the fun!

To join the email list please contact:

musiconthursdays@gmail.com

Leatherhead Concert & Arts Society • Regd Charity 1166764

WE'RE NOW ONLINE

video links to the music for that day's concert and explanations (or a bit of chat) to go with the musical item.



Christ Church

(United Reformed) Leatherhead



Christ Church Diary



All services and other activities are suspended for the time being

In the absence of our usual services and activities, you are invited to join in on-line worship each Sunday via the church's web site.

If you have any concerns or needs, please contact one of the elders or the Minister. Jan plans to carry on with pastoral visiting, but only if the persons concerned are happy to have him do so, and they are not showing any symptoms of the virus.

Although worship together is an important part of our spiritual life and growth, it is not the only one. We encourage you to spend time on your own in prayer and reading, and trust that, despite the lack of church services, we may nonetheless grow in our walk with Christ in these challenging days. We will keep in touch with you over the coming weeks.

With love to you all,

Jan Hofmeyr



Christ Church Family News



We are very sad to announce the death on 4th May of Mark Amos, husband of Gayle and father to three daughters, and son in law of Jacqui and Michael Ball. We send all the family our deepest sympathy in their loss and assure them of our prayers and support in the days ahead. (Jacqui Ball writes below).

We are very sorry to report that Dean Tapley is seriously ill on a ventilator in ICU in East Surrey Hospital. We send our good wishes and prayers for his recovery and for the comfort of the family at this distressing time.

As always, and especially in our present situation of lockdown and major concern about the future, we pray for our members and their families and friends, and in particular those with health problems and those living alone. We must all keep in touch.

Thanks again to all providing wonderful virtual worship: Jan and the LMC team, URC on-line services and URC daily devotions. We pray that we shall be able to meet again in church in the no-too-distant future.

Anne Cairns

A Message of Thanks from the Ball and Amos Families

As many in the Christ Church family know, we recently lost our Son-in-Law, Mark Amos, to cancer. This had only recently been diagnosed, 4 weeks to be precise, and he fought extremely hard to remain with us.

Despite the extremely strenuous efforts of all the staff at St. Heliers Hospital ICU, he sadly died on Monday, 4th May. Gayle and Mark's mum, Carol, were able to be with him and so were able to give him the love and support to let go and to be at peace and free from pain. Many thanks to all nurses and doctors every where.

Our whole family have been greatly supported by all the love and support, by prayers and correspondence from each and every one of our church family, many of whom have seen Gayle grow up in the church, and many of you saw their joyful wedding celebrations in 2005.

Once again, thank you everyone for your love and prayers.

Jacqui Ball

Richard Baxter, English Puritan church leader, remembered on the 14th June

If Richard Baxter were alive today, he would probably be contributing to the Thought for the Day on Radio 4, because he had a gift for the sound-bite. Try these memorable quotes:

Preaching a man a sermon with a broken head, and telling him to be right with God is equal to telling a man with a broken leg to get up and run a race.

If God be not enough for you, you will never have enough. Turn to Him more, and know Him better, if you would have a satisfied mind.

When I compare my slow and unprofitable life with the frequent and wonderful mercies received, it shames me, it silences me, and leaves me inexcusable.

I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.

As it was, Richard Baxter lived from 1615 to 1691, and so instead of broadcasting, became a well-known English Puritan church leader, poet, hymnodist (Ye holy angels bright), theologian and controversialist.

His 19-year ministry at St Mary and All Saints Kidderminster was very influential – he was an impossible preacher to ignore!

As a matter of fact, the BBC would have loved him because he was so outspoken that after the Restoration, his non-separatist Presbyterian approach made him one of the most influential leaders of the Nonconformists, and he spent some time in prison for various religious ‘offences’. He irritated both the Catholics and the Calvinists over various theological views and practices. Yet he was well respected - Dean Stanley called him ‘the chief of English Protestant Schoolmen.’

After the Restoration in 1660, Baxter, who had helped to bring it about, settled in London, and the power of his preaching and his skill as leader was well respected. He had been made a king’s chaplain, and was offered the bishopric of Hereford, but as a moderate dissenter to the C of E, he refused. He was then barred from preaching, but turned to writing, and in all produced some 168 works. He died peacefully in London in 1691.

Parish Pump

St Sofa's

We worship at St Sofa's now
Since Covid came to stay
We don't dress up or do our hair
But still we come to pray!

Our Minister's a clever chap
A Zoom with his IT
And so we sit down ev'ry week
And meet up virtually!

Our much-loved church stands empty
With praise she does not ring;
But still her people gather round
To pray, and praise, and sing!

The virus is a nasty thing
Yet it has helped us see
The church is NOT a building
But folk like you and me!

*By Nigel and Carol Beeton
(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: Administrator -
Carol Stoves 01372 377125; Office 362145

Christ Church (United Reformed):

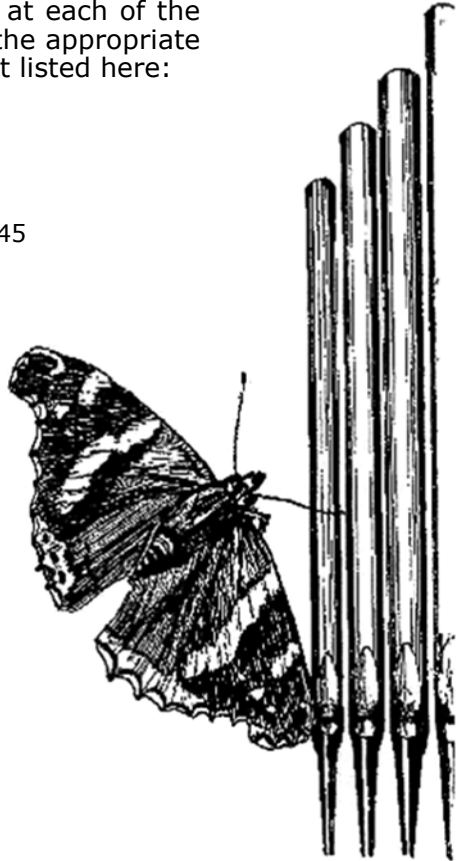
Epsom Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8ST
www.chch.org.uk
Contact: Church Secretary -
Mike Essex 01372 273472

Effingham Methodist Church:

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

Cobham United Church:

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



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