

CONCORD



Easter Blessings

**The Monthly Magazine of
Tolworth United Reformed Church**

April 2020

From our Minister

Dear friends,

Jesus called together the first Christian community from the cross.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 *When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."*

27 *Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. (John 19)*

Although John's gospel, would have us read this as a tragic but intimate moment between family and friend, we can easily see how it is speaking to us all. Jesus, here calling us together, to meet and to care for one another. All are our mother and son, brother and sister.

For his friends, over the next few days and weeks, bereft and bereaved at the loss of a friend, after that first daybreak of the resurrection the disciples met with Jesus in upper rooms and on roads. Here again early followers continued to meet together in communion and in response to the events of Easter week.

Then as the early Christian Church began to grow the authorities tried to prevent these gatherings. The experience of those who knew Jesus and beginning to discover the meaning of Easter brought life to a community and wanted to meet together. So followers of Jesus were forced to meet in secret behind closed doors and in catacombs. Isolated but together.

In England, there are records of Christian activity from before the second century. But within three hundred years the Roman authorities were still seeking to stop Christian acts of worship. Hiding a Christian priest in his house, a Roman named Alban (later Saint Alban) was executed by the authorities. This persecution did not stop followers of Jesus meeting together.

Since Christianity was granted freedom of worship, gatherings and groups of Jesus followers have been able to meet together without hindrance. Protestants continued to worship in 1400s after the Reformation when much of Europe broke from the Roman church. In 1500s from our own tradition of independence and non-conformity, excluded from society and discriminated against, our fore bears found ways to meet together. Even during the relatively recent World Wars the church community continued. God's people enjoyed acts of Eucharist, communal singing, prayers and bible reading side by side in adoration of their creator and in thankfulness for the life given. From that first Easter and for the next 1700 years the people remember God giving Gods very self in Jesus Christ and his words from the cross calling the community together to care for mother and son, brother and sister. This has continued to be supported in acts communal worship without interruption.

Strange times indeed. For today, for the first time since the days when the authorities in the first century tried to stop Christian gatherings, the special places, built and prepared for these gatherings of people lay empty. Are closed. No more public gatherings of worship. Are we to forget Jesus words from the cross? Here is your son. Here is your mother...

I can remember a church secretary many years ago saying to me how if he missed a church service on a Sunday morning, Sundays and the remainder of that week never felt the same. I can relate to this feeling. After so many years of meeting with brothers and sisters in Christ, and in such a long history of church worship I too sense a gap in my day to day living if I miss church on Sunday. So, when we (Gillian

and I) are on holiday we seek out a church for a communal act of worship. Of course, when we are abroad that service may not be English speaking. Sometimes we could make out the words of Lord's prayer. But usually we would sit in silence, or stand, kneel or walk to the alter just a fraction of a moment after everyone else! We just did not know what was going to happen. But the faith community and being together in public act was important. It is a gift of God. Even more than this, to experience a different tradition and ways of doing things and being alongside brothers and sisters in Christ was more significant than understanding or even enjoying what was going on. It is a further reminder, or better, an experience of Gods diversity. Another gift of God. Language was not so important.

So, we can do the same in our own acts of worship when we sing in another's languages and share in another's custom as everyone becomes our Mother and son, brother and sister.

Well we could do the same in our acts of worship, but not this Easter.

Is this the first interruption in 1700 years of Christian public gatherings? Gatherings that loss, fear, persecution, uncertainty and discrimination has not been able to touch. This Easter we cannot meet together to remind ourselves that we are a people, followers of Jesus who share in Gods diversity.

No, this Easter we have a similar but different gift. A reminder that we are a church, a faith community as people, Gods people alongside many other people. Meeting in the pews or not, are a people rather than a building or a place.

From the cross this Easter, may we hear the words of Jesus to one another, physically together or not, "Here is your son". "Here is your mother". "Here is your brother, here is your sister..."

God's blessings for Easter,

Roger

Family Circle

So many of our congregation are confined to their homes at present; please pray for those who live alone and keep in touch with other members. The phone is the best means of communication as not all members have internet access. A telephone call can do a lot to help loneliness and isolation. Pray especially for Roger Fenn, Eunice Crowl, Joyce & Paul Craven, Brenda Gill, Charmaine Waterman, Mary Harding and anyone else who is in need of support.

During this time of confinement, try to keep in touch with one another and remember that although we cannot worship together, God is always with us and hears our prayers. Stay safe – with Love,

Moir

Diary – April 2020

Regrettably, no diary this month as everything is cancelled!

Concord

We have published this edition of Concord but may not be able to continue until things are back to normal as printing and distribution is difficult. We have sent this edition by email to those who have that facility. If anyone else has an email address, please send it to:- iandm@earlblue.com

But – if you have any articles etc for inclusion please continue to let me have them. Thank You.

Thanks

Cynthia very kindly brought me a nice bunch of flowers from the Church. It was a surprise, especially as I had a bad week. Thank you.

Leslie Menneer

Thank you for all the cards and flowers which I received from Church members for my 90th birthday. I was pleased to get them especially as my party had to be cancelled.

Monica Lunn

Angels are Everywhere

Sometimes we feel that we are all alone, as life brings us challenges to overcome and hardships to bear. But when we least expect it, help can appear. It may be a kind word from a stranger or a 'phone call at just the right time, and we are suddenly surrounded with the loving Grace of God. Miracles happen every day because angels are everywhere.

With thanks to Mary Harding

Monica's 90th Birthday

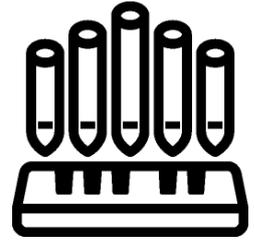
Unfortunately, Monica's birthday celebrations were unable to take place because of the restrictions for Corona Virus. Her niece was not able to travel from America and the party arranged at Parish Court was cancelled as no visitors were allowed. We hope, that nevertheless, she had a good day and many people sent her cards and good wishes.

Getting to know me

My name is	Carys Kelly
The place where I was born	Kingston Hospital
My favourite colour is	Green
My first job was	School
The best advice my parents gave me	Don't worry
My favourite food is	Pasta
The food which I dislike most	Meat
The best holiday I ever had	Spain
My favourite film or TV programme	K-12
My choice of music would be	Pop
My favourite season of the year is	Summer
The bravest thing I have ever done	Dance shows
If I could pass a law it would be	Don't litter
My greatest weakness is	Worrying

Tolworth URC Organist

Music is very important in worship. I am pleased to say that we enjoy and welcome a variety of musical opportunities from piano and organ to guitar and acapella singing. We have even tried singing to drumming. We must do more of this. But we have an opportunity to "employ" a regular organist here at Tolworth United Reformed Church.



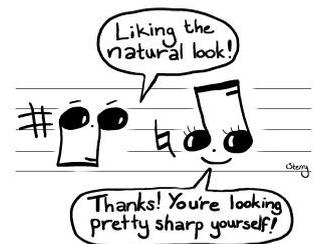
The Presbyterian Church of Korea would like to identify a church community for a student (of music) to gain experience in United Kingdom and of an English church culture. She/he would be proficient in musical ability and would largely be self-funding in UK. She/he would offer her time and we would provide a small remuneration.

This arrangement is already being enjoyed in several South London Churches. The potential organist at Tolworth would require accommodation and the person concerned along with the Presbyterian church of Korea would seek to provide this before any such arrangement can occur. **However, if you have or are aware any rooms spare that you would be willing to provide for a student this would be welcome and of course be more likely that we would be offered this opportunity.**

In return our church would have a regular organist, and this would provide some consistency to our music at Tolworth United Reformed Church. It may mean that we would not benefit from visiting musicians as often as we do. But there would still be occasions for our friends who have been helping us with music over the years to visit and play for us again. And of course, we would not cease the music variety we currently enjoy. Let us roll out those drums again!

If anyone would like to assist with accommodation or you have any questions about this opportunity, please speak with Roger.

Keep singing!



Financial needs of our Church during this uncertain period

For each and all of us, our personal giving to our local church is an expression of our discipleship and this income is vital to our Church locally and across our three nations, and to all the work that we do together in Christ's name.

What shall I do about my collection?

The most important thing to do is to put your usual amount in your freewill offering envelope, seal it and put it to one side. If you don't have an envelope just put your collection to one side, week by week.

When we can go to Church again, please bring it along. This will enable the Church to collect the maximum amount of Gift Aid refund.

Many thanks.

Geof Stock

Pilots' log 24 February 2020: pancakes, pancakes, pancakes

Set sail as trainee crew with the Pilots to go on a jam (or possibly pancake)-packed journey covering Mardi Gras celebrations, pancake-making, pancake races and some pancake puzzles.

First problem: Fix the red and green pilot lights in the right place. Is starboard right or left? Do you show the green light to port or the red? Hasty internet checks establish that port is indeed the ship's left side and shows a green light.

Second problem: Attach the Pilots' flag to the flagpole. Having failed to learn this as a Cub Scout Leader, the intervening years have not improved this skill. After a number (uncounted) of failed efforts and some panic that the slip knot was never going to slip, the flag was made ready. Pleased to report that it was eventually raised and unfurled without incident. The flagpole even remained standing.

Suitably energetic games were retrieved from Cub Scout days and introduced to the Pilots. Note to self: remember that the louder the game, the more fun it is.

Delicious pancakes were whisked up, cooked and eaten (in much shorter order than is ever achieved at home!) with lemon and sugar being the most popular choice of topping. Highly decorated and colourful masks were created in honour of Mardi Gras. Photographic proof is submitted here as evidence that the Pilots are impressively creative.

Pancake races were held with very colourful (paper) pancakes – technically designed to test balance and dexterity but in practice merely presenting a challenge on how far the rules could be bent. Note to self: check the definition of cheating....

After such mass exertion, spent the final leg of the journey sitting down to tackle a variety of word puzzles on a pancake theme.

The Pilots ship returned to shore with its company happy and its crew happily exhausted.

Gillian and Roger and all the helpers have done a brilliant job getting this company underway so here's to the continuing success of the Pilots! And if you have a chance to sail with them, please give it a go and experience the fun for yourself.

Heather



AWAKENINGS

The gardens are awakening,
They've slowly, slowly roused,
An end to winter slumbering,
To greet the lengthening hours.

And people are awakening,
To cast off winter's gloom.
The first kind blessings of the sun,
The crocuses in bloom.

Our souls they are awakening,
To welcome Lenten days,
To ponder on the mystery
Of Christ's redeeming ways.

We wonder at the love that brought
Christ Jesus to that tree,
And lift our hearts in thankfulness –
He rose to set us free.

With thanks to Barbara Pearson

An "honest" Minister???

A minister with a large family of seven children moved to a new city. He and his wife didn't want to buy a house immediately. They wanted to rent a townhouse until they could get a feel for the area and choose a home where the kids would be in good schools and they could be conveniently located.

They found plenty of rental townhouses that were large enough, but the landlords always always objected to having a family of nine occupy the place.

In frustration, one day the father asked the mother to take the four youngest children and go to visit the local cemetery. She was puzzled by his request, but went along. He and the other three children headed off to investigate another townhouse they had found.

The place was perfect and the father told the landlord he would take it. Then came the usual question, "I see you have children How many are there in the family?"

The minister gave out a deep sigh, then said, "seven..... but four are with their mother in the cemetery."

He got the townhouse.

From, "A bundle of laughs" by J John & Mark Stibbe

We hope to be able to publish a magazine for May. Please let me have any material by 23rd April. I look forward to being overwhelmed!

Ian

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Regretably, all services are cancelled for the present

Minister	Revd Roger Jones	0208 393 4270 rjones@urcsouthern.org.uk
Secretary	Mrs M Fleming	
Treasurer	Mr G Stock	
Serving Elders	Mr D Bennett, Mrs M Fleming, Mrs B Kelly, Ms H Lodge Mrs L Menneer, Mrs B Smith, Mr G Stock, Mrs K Woolard,	
Management Committee	Mr D Bennett, Mrs M Fleming, Mr S Heath, Mr B Keepence, Mr B Llewellyn, Mr G Stock	

Other Officers, Leaders and Representatives

Caretaker	Mrs J. Marsh	8399 3926
Christian Aid Secretary	Mr G Stock	
Circle	Mr R Fenn	
Flower Secretary	Mrs C Stock	
Halls Letting Officer	Mr S. Heath	
Junior Church	Mrs B Kelly	
Magazine Editor		
Magazine Secretary	Mrs M Fleming	8337 8581
Organist		
Pilots	Mrs G Jones	
Playtime	Mrs M Fleming	
Property Steward	Mr D Bennett	
Pulpit supply	Mrs M Fleming	
Women's Evening Fellowship	Mrs M Fleming	
Secretary		
Synod Area Rep	Mrs M Fleming	
Rainbows	Mrs Shirley Ling	
Brownies	Ms Michelle Nicholls	
Guides	Mrs J Pelham	