

CONCORD



Kew Gardens

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

May 2021

From our Minister

Dear friends,

May 2021

We were left alone! On a hillside looking up to the skies. Four city teenage boys, with a heavy 40lb pack on our backs and a tent. Left on the hillside in the middle of the Surrey countryside guided only by a map and compass. By night fall we were lost! The straps of the pack on my back were cutting into my thin bony shoulders. Shaun had blisters. Paul had just given up, sitting alongside an overgrown pathway in a sulk, if it was a pathway at all. A carton of natural yogurt had burst open in Ivor's pocket! Miserable and argumentative we decided to camp dangerously in car lay-by. In the morning, our spirits lifted just a little, but we realised we had failed our Bronze Expedition Section of our Duke of Edinburgh Award! How could we find our way back again? We were only a couple of hours walk from Dorking station. So how could we be lost?

What an experience? Terrible? Prince Phillip had a lot to answer for.

Yet, we could not wait to plan our next expedition and get out there again. When we did, we got lost again and camped in the same lay-by. Failed again.

I am pleased to say I did achieve Bronze and went on to receive the D of E Gold Award six years later at Buckingham Palace, completing outdoor expeditions more competently this time in Arundel and on Dartmoor. Admittedly we assessed Dartmoor as less hilly for walking. Not like the as the Peak District. How silly. Still city boys at heart. The extra miles, weights and four overnight camps in the wilderness still made it daunting and harsh. But worth it.

Of course, achieving the award was not just about a tough outdoor expedition. There was physical achievement to attain, learning and developing new skills, and community service to provide. It was all so much more than we expected.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Phillip who sadly passed away last month introduced this scheme for young people in 1956 and I enjoyed it immensely. Learning from failures, as well learning about determination and service to others was all part of this. Yet there was something more. We were entirely dependent on the leaders of the award teaching and preparing us. These leaders taught us it was more than an award. More than limiting the achievements to the precise number of hours community services or efforts to a single new skill just "to get through". We were to work in a charity shop for forty hours. We did not just tick the hours off in the award book but eventually did far more hours than this. Our physical goals were exceeded, and our new skills remained with us for a lifetime.

My thanks of course go to Prince Philip for such a wonderful scheme. But the work of our leaders who prepared us and taught us and stayed alongside us when we failed far exceeded a voluntary commitment to young people.

We were left alone. On a hillside looking up to the skies. Our friend left us and returned home. We had failed and hurt one another. We had hurt him! Betrayals and denials. Overcome with fears and hidden away. How could we ever hope to find our way back again. We had walked with him through the countryside, listened to stories, saw how he

healed and how he spoke to anyone and everyone. He did not discriminate. Was he preparing us for this moment when we were left alone again?

This was the day according to Acts of The Apostles, when after forty days with his friends, Jesus was taken from their sight on a mountain top in the countryside. They were left alone. In May we celebrate the Ascension.

The disciples had spent a couple of years with him, daring to believe the world could be different. But it seemed to end on the gallows. Their friend, a victim rather than a victor. Yet he did meet with them again. The same but different and they enjoyed strange encounters with him. Now they lost him again.

There on the hill in the countryside it was up to them now to work out what all this meant for them and their community for the future. Clearly, he trusted them to get on with the job, despite their failings and mistakes or even their joys and successes. And the church that grew from here was a movement shaped by people who knew that the world was a different place.

Reflecting on the death of recent Duke of Edinburgh and my encounter with his Award Scheme I sensed some similarities with the experience of the disciples at Ascension. Left alone, on a hillside, coping with my failure and looking to the future. Or were they? In May we also celebrate Pentecost.

We are all still part of that movement that dares to believe the world can be different. This is how the disciples were left and trusted. This is how we as followers of Jesus on our walk with God continue to be left and trusted. Going the extra mile. The DofE Scheme leaders, caring and supporting young people like me, did not leave us alone. In our expedition and walk with God we are also not alone. We have been prepared and we are loved. So even when we are lost, we have been found. Even when we are left alone, God is with us.

God bless,

Roger

Church Opening for Regular Worship

The Elders met with our Minister and agreed that services should resume once again from Pentecost, Sunday 23rd May. Of course, we must still abide by government guidelines' so this means masks must be worn, we cannot sing at the moment and we must keep a social distance. Hopefully these rules will ease eventually but meantime it will be lovely to see each other again. We are looking forward to seeing you all. The services will continue on 'phone and online for those who cannot attend. Same joining numbers as before.

The Diary for May is as follows -

Sunday 23rd May 10.30am Revd Roger Jones

Sunday 30th May 10.30am Revd Antony Ball

Sunday 6th June 10.30am Revd Roger Jones – Church Anniversary

Family Circle

In the past month we have been saddened to learn of the deaths of two members of our church family. Monica Lunn was the longest serving member of our congregation having been attending this Church since 1934.. She was a devoted member and a great friend to many people. We shall all miss Monica arriving each Sunday with her trolley and reading the lesson regularly.

We were all shocked to learn of the death of Brian Keepence recently. Brian had been in membership since 2007 but worshipped here regularly for several years before that. We extend our sympathy to his daughters, Sandra and Nicola and their families and to Brian's dear friend Margaret. We thank God for both these lives and their example.

(See Roger Fenn's tributes to both these friends later in this magazine.)

Monica's funeral service will be held on 5th May at 3pm. It is to be streamed online so that her family in USA can watch it. Anyone in the congregation who would like to watch should use the following link:-

<https://www.funeralstreaming.co.uk/viewing-room/11560/>

We remember in our prayers those who are unwell and those who are housebound – Joyce Craven, Brenda Gill, Cynthia Stock, Mary Harding and Charmaine Waterman. May they be comforted and healed by God's love.

Moira

Scottish minister Alexander Whyte was known for his uplifting prayers in the pulpit. He always found something for which to be grateful. One Sunday morning the weather was so gloomy that one church member thought to himself, "Certainly the preacher won't think of anything for which to thank the Lord on a wretched day like this". Much to his surprise, however, Whyte began by praying, "We thank thee, O God, that it is not always like this".

From "A Bundle of Laughs" J. John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books

Monica Lunn 1930 – 2021 – A tribute from Roger Fenn

It is with great sadness that we record the passing of Monica Lunn shortly after her ninety-first birthday. She had been in and out of hospital for some weeks before being transferred to a carehome where our Minister, Roger, was at last able to comfort and strengthen her.

I first remember Monica during the early war years when we were both in the Sunday School. Eventually she graduated into Stan Bessant's Senior Girl's class before becoming a teacher herself.

Monica was a member of the Church's Girl Guides group and I remember her, along with Audrey Hall, Doris and Irene Stobey, performing a noisy "stamping" dance on the platform of the old army hut at one of Mrs Matthews' [61 Raeburn] concert parties – the tune of which still lingers in my memory. She also accompanied us on our rambles from Epsom Downs to Headley where we paused for a picnic and rest before descending the Juniper Valley to catch a bus home. Those were the days of London Transport's reliable country bus services.

After the war, Sunday School outings resumed – first, to Bushey Park when we either travelled by train from Berrylands to Hampton Court, then over the bridge or hired a couple of trolleybuses which we boarded at the end of Warren Drive, unloading at the Lion Gate. Monica had her set of charges on these occasions. Eventually we graduated to Littlehampton, courtesy of Duval's coaches - "Keep away from the river – stay on the beach"!

On leaving school Monica joined the Civil Service and, like her father, worked in the Inland Revenue Department.

Monica had two musical younger brothers – Gerald and Roger who played his cello in the LSO, but all three were conscripted into the enlarged Church choir for performances of 'The Messiah' or 'The Crucifixion' at Easter.

Having nursed her elderly parents for many years. She was finally able to move into her flat in St Mark's Hill and devote more time to her Church life again.

She took great care of Hilda Jones and brought her to Morning Worship.

Monica was a member of "The Guild" and organised events and outings by coach which she herself enjoyed. She was also a loyal member of "The Circle" often sharing with photographs she had taken on her coach outings. Always she came by bus, shunning offers of transport, latterly using her trolley.

Faithfully she attended Church meetings – in the dark -on the bus – and with her trolley!

Monica was a quiet person who made a loyal contribution to the life of our Church over many years. We give thanks for her life and pray that she is now at rest in our Father's nearer presence.

Roger

George Brian Keepence 1939 – 2021 – A tribute from Roger Fenn

We also say “Goodbye” unexpectedly to Brian Keepence, after a period in hospital, and offer our sincere condolences to his family and Margaret.

Brian was a native of Eastbourne and grew up there during the war years with his family before moving to Kingston where he worked for the Hawker Aircraft Company on Hunters and Harriers, studying at evening classes to gain his Higher National qualifications. He married “Pam” they settled in Twickenham before moving to Surbiton where they reared their family – Nicola and Sandra. When Hawkers closed their Kingston factory, Brian moved to SEEBoard as an electrical engineer attending to consumers whose power supply had failed. His accounts of the 1988 storms are both vivid and frightening.

“Pam”, his wife, sadly died young and it was to the Revd Roy Bones, then Minister of our Church, that he sought help and thus began his life in our Church. Eventually Lily, his mother came to live with him and she too worshipped at our Church. Since then Brian became a regular worshipper – the chairman of the Property Committee and member of the Lunch Club for which he provided transport.

Brian was well travelled: Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand and, latterly, Europe. His last holiday with Margaret was a Rhine Cruise. Intersped with these times abroad were many trips in his caravan when he and Margaret linked up with other caravanning friends. His holidays were faithfully recorded in vision and sound and were most professionally presented.

Brian was also well supported by Nicola and Sandra and their families and by his close friend, Margaret, We give thanks for his friendliness, his life of Christian service and commitment to our Lord’s keeping in Eternal Life.

Roger

From Barbara Smith

As we enter a new phase of life I would like to thank all those who contributed to the Lent Study groups. They provided an opportunity to reflect on our faith and our own understanding of our faith.

At the same time, Heather Lodge’s Lent Reflections gave us a reason to look at life around us, from the Heron in the river to the railings which I walk past, without thought, in Surbiton.

Both of these events were a breath of fresh air, a chance to explore and discuss, to open your eyes and your mind.

From Mary Harding

Mary would like to extend her thanks to our Minister, Roger, for all his help and support over the last few months.

Roger Fenn's Puzzle for May – with many thanks to Roger

Please pair these people with their books in the bible.

Achan	Phillipians
Boaz	1 st Chronicles
Caleb	Exodus
Deborah	Hosea
Euodia	1 st Samuel
Felix	Genesis
Gomer	Judges
Hannah	Joshua
Ishmael	Acts
Jochabed	Ruth

Answers on second last page

With thanks to Brenda Kelly

Meet and chat

On Thursday 24th June, we are holding a Meet and Chat at the church. There will not be a format, just come along and meet up with friends we have not seen for nearly eighteen months. I am sure there will be plenty to talk about!

If all goes well we should be able to have coffee and cake. Depending on numbers it will be either in the vestibule or the Elgar Hall.

So please join us at 10.30 until 12.00

Looking forward to seeing you all.

Brenda.

Ladies and gentlemen who lunch.

Date. Wednesday 30th June

Time. 12.30

Place. The Toby Carvery, Worcester Park.

Please let me know as soon as possible as it is just after lockdown ends and it might be very popular.

Everyone is welcome.

Brenda 01372743968.

From Tolworth Congregational Church Magazine – May 1965

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WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T FORGET

THE FETE

IN AID OF THE NEW CHURCH HALL

GRAND AVENUE SCHOOL

2.30 p.m. SATURDAY, 8th May

TO BE OPENED BY MISS PHYLLIS AMES

May Queen's Procession leaves the Sunday School for Grand Avenue School at 2.00 p.m. prompt, led by the HOOK SCOUT BAND.

Crowning of the May Queen.

Competitions, Fancy Dress, Sports, Baby Show.

Maypole Dancing. Judo Display.

Miniature Railway, Bowling Alley and a host of other amusements for All the Family.

Refreshments: Fancy Goods: Cake Stalls, etc.

ADMISSION BY PROGRAMME

Price 6d

OUR SHEPHERD

Picture Jesus as a shepherd,
See him labour with his sheep,
How he leads them where there's water,
Not too shallow, not too deep.

Where the path is smooth and easy,
Where the grass is lush and green.
His desire is for their welfare,
Keeps them healthy, keeps them clean.

Think of Jesus as our shepherd,
We his flock, his creatures here.
All that's good he wants to give us,
Soothe our sorrows, calm our fear.

Life can't be forever peaceful,
Many pitfalls mar our way,
But our shepherd, ever loving,
Wants our safety. Hear him say:

"You are mine, I am your shepherd,
Keep me always in your sight.
I laid down my life to save you,
Bring you always to the light".

With thanks to Barbara Pearson

Answers to Roger Fenn's Quiz

Achan -	Joshua	Felix -	Acts
Boaz -	Ruth	Gomer -	Hosea
Caleb -	1 st Chronicles	Hannah -	1 st Samuel
Deborah -	Judges	Ishmael -	Genesis
Euodia -	Philippians	Jochabed -	Exodus

Thanks to those who have contributed to this edition - please keep them coming! We hope to publish a magazine for June. Please let me have all your material by 20th May. In particular, if anyone would like to say how they have been affected by, "Lockdown", or any experiences they have had over this period it could be included in the June Concord **Ian**

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Morning Worship at 10.30

(You can still join in with Roger at 10.30am on Sundays
'Phone: 03306 060403 with code 1529640# - remember the #)

Minister	Revd Roger Jones	0208 393 4270 rjones@urcsouthern.org.uk
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