

CONCORD



Goldfinch at Pagham Harbour

The Monthly Magazine of
London Road, Ewell and
Tolworth United Reformed Churches

July and August 2026

From our Minister

Dear Friends

July 2026

Well, the final of the Football World Cup is on 19th JULY. The battle for the world cup is almost over. You guessed, didn't you? You knew I would mention football in at least one of my letters this year! My favourite sport. A supporter and player, walking, but still a player. I know how you have all been avidly watching every game of the world cup on television these past few weeks.

So here is a thought on football and the Christian life!

I have been telling this story wrong for years! Apparently in 1990 George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi had one major passion in common. They were both Arsenal fans. Their first ecumenical gathering was held at the old Highbury Stadium, in a box in a game between Arsenal and Manchester United. Before the game the two religious figures were taken out onto the turf and the public address system announced their presence at the match. ***“whichever way you played the theological wager,”*** thought the Chief Rabbi, ***“Arsenal had friends in high places.”***

That night Arsenal lost 6-2, their worst home defeat in sixty years. The newspapers the following day reported the story. They commented that if the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi can't bring a win for Arsenal does this not finally prove that God does **not** exist?

The Chief Rabbi responded, ***“On the contrary. It proves that God does exist. It is just that he supports Manchester United!”***

(I had always thought this story was about Archbishop Derek Worlock and the former England cricket captain David Sheppard who became Bishops in Liverpool).

But, who does God support? Who would God's preference be to lift the world cup 2026? You may not be surprised to know that whenever I play for Fulham and we are playing an important game, my teammates invariably ask me to say a prayer. Or, our opponents, when finding out about my “employment” tell us we have God on our side. (Despite a number of players I play with attending church anyway!) I would also add that when a player in our team scores or make a great pass, they are complemented on their skill and ability. When I do it, I am told it was because God was with me. I never get the credit!

So, who does God support? Not only in football perhaps, but in our usual day to day lives when we are up against it! When we face disagreement or dispute. Do we call on God to take our side? Does football have many similarities to the Christian life?. It has been called a national religion. There are chants and singing. A coming together of fans. We merge our identity with something larger than ourselves. There are moments of euphoric elation when our team wins. Many folk have unequalled and almost unconditional loyalty which has lasted years, when sometimes loyalty to family and friends has been exhausted or failed.

It also produces many contemporary parables about belonging and believing, hope & uncertainty. It tests faith to the limit. Football is often about facing insurmountable hurdles and still daring to believe. It's the taking part which brings diverse people together.

The apostle Paul of course, whilst not specifically mentioning football to the church in Corinth, makes analogies between faith and sport which is aligned with my favourite game. He urged discipline and purpose. The Apostle Paul frequently used the metaphor of a runner in a stadium to describe the Christian life. He encouraged believers to run with purpose, lay aside distractions, and focus on the ultimate heavenly prize rather than running aimlessly. (1 Corinthians 9; 24).

We can see all this pleasure and support, this building of character and skill in our football sessions with children on a Saturday morning, as well as the variety of games and sports at Pilots on a Monday.

With all that said, I still cannot get away from the fact that football, friendly or tournament, is a competition. Inevitably, whilst some are exhilarated, their win will be at the expense of others who lost! Our Christian family, our walk of faith encourages inclusivity and care, not to win at all costs to the detriment of others. Whilst losing may help with coping with disappointment and failure, as a supporter, it can sometimes feel there is glory in another's defeat! Hardly Christian.

Yet, recently I found the original Latin of the word "competition". Whilst more recent Latin roots suggest it means "rivalry", the true Latin provenance of the word "competition" derives from "**com**" which is "together" and "with." And "**petere**" meaning to "strive", "seek" "ask". So opposing teams and opponents are together striving to be better and improve. Of course competition does generate some animosity. But, I have seen this striving together in opposition teams and rival runners. When footballers show care and concern for opponents in distress. When a rival runner stops to help a fellow runner get across the line. In all sport such "competition" and mutual growth, this striving together is seen as the real, true goal.

I missed who said this, but one comment during these world cup commentaries was, "there are no winners or losers. You win or you learn." That captures some of the nature of competition.

Who does God support? If God is favouring anyone, can I suggest God has sympathy for those who are on the losing side. Who would God's preference be to lift the world cup 2026? Some have said this world cup tournament has been about the less strong sides, Cabo Verde or Curacao who have been dazzling. Could they win?

Whose side God is on I cannot tell you. But here is some encouragement for all teams and for all of us in our walk of faith. Where God is concerned there is no such thing as a lost cause.

God bless

Roger

Tolworth Family Circle

Mary Wardle is still very weak and has little appetite but says she is slowly improving. We hope she will be back among us soon. Edward Hutchins had a fall recently and acquired several cuts and bruises but we were delighted to see him back in Church next day. Brenda Kelly is very low at the moment and has more breathing problems. The hot weather does not help her. Eloise has brought forward Idia's baptism as she(Eloise) has to have further treatment. Please remember these friends and any others who are suffering with the heat. I hope by the time we print this magazine that it will be cooler

Moir

Church Anniversary

Our service was a good family occasion and was followed by a lunch in the Elgar Hall which was enjoyed by about 30 people. The display of food was wonderful and thanks goes to everyone who contributed to it. Special thanks to Gillian, Heather and Eloise for all their help setting up and to everyone who helped with the clearing up afterwards.

Moira

June Family News from London Road, Ewell

It has been a pleasure to share our monthly church lunch at Superfish with members of the Veterans Association, who meet in our church hall each month. They also sometimes join us for our Friendship Hour.

Our administrator, Sophie Trayers, is working with church members to organise a Fun Day to share with the local community on 8th August. We hope friends from Tolworth will join us for what promises to be an enjoyable day.

We were delighted to welcome Valerie Wood, who was previously an Elder at Epsom URC, onto our Eldership on 7th June.

Barbara

July and August 2026 Diary for Tolworth

Wednesday	1 st	10.00am	Playtime
Sunday	5th	10.30.am	Morning worship led by Revd Carol Clack
Monday	6 th	5.30pm	Pilots
Wednesday	8 th	10.00am	Playtime
Sunday	12th	10.30am 12.00pm	Morning Communion led by our Minister Elder's meeting
Monday	13 th	5.30pm	Pilots
Wednesday	15 th	10.00am	Playtime
Thursday	16 th	3.30pm	Messy Church
Sunday	19th	10.30am 6.30pm	To be announced Evergreen service
Tuesday	21 st	2.30pm	Management meeting

Sunday	26th	10.30am	Morning worship led by our Minister
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August 2026

Sunday	2nd	10.30.am	Morning worship led by Ms Heather Lodge
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Sunday	9th	10.30.am	Morning communion led by our Minister
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Sunday	16th	10.30.am	Morning worship led by our Minister
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Sunday	23rd	10.30.am	To be announced
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Sunday	30th	10.30.am	Morning worship led by Revd David Skitt
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September 2026

Sunday	6th	10.30.am	Morning worship led by Ms Heather Lodge
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An early Irish confession (as used at the Sunday service on Spirit of Discovery)

Forgive the sins that I can remember; and also those that I have forgotten. Forgive the wrong actions I have committed and the right actions I have omitted.

Forgive the times I have been weak in the face of temptation, and the times I have been stubborn in the face of correction.

Forgive the times I have been proud of my own achievements and those when I have failed to boast of your works.

Forgive the harsh judgements I have made of others, and the leniency I have shown to myself.

Forgive the lies I have told to others, and the truths I have avoided.

Forgive me the pain I have caused others, and the indulgence I have shown to myself. Jesus have pity on me, and make me whole. Amen.

Here is good news for all who put their trust in Christ. Jesus says: "Your sins are forgiven". Amen. Thanks be to God.

July and August diary for London Road, Ewell URC

Sunday 5 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Barbara Pearson, to include Holy Communion
Sunday 12 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Barbara Pearson
Monday 13 th	12.30 for 1	Bible Study led by Revd Barbara Pearson – new members welcome
Tuesday 14 th	12.30	Church lunch at Superfish, names to Dennis Sexton – all welcome
Sunday 19 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship, led by Revd Roger Jones
Thursday 23 rd	2 – 3 pm	Friendship Hour – everyone welcome, please just turn up
Sunday 26 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd David Skitt
Monday 27 th	12.30 for 1	Bible Study led by Revd Barbara Pearson – new members welcome

August

Sunday 2 nd	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Roger Jones, to include Holy Communion
Saturday 8 th	11am – 3 pm	Family Fun Day, all welcome
Sunday 9 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Ms. Sue Shaw
Monday 10 th	12.30 for 1	Bible Study led by Revd Barbara Pearson – new members welcome
Tuesday 11 th	12.30	Church lunch at Superfish, names to Dennis Sexton – all welcome
Sunday 16 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Barbara Pearson
Sunday 23 rd	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Bill Thomas
Monday 24 th	12.30 for 1	Bible Study led by Revd Barbara Pearson – new members welcome

Thursday 27th 2 -I 3 pm

Friendship Hour – everyone welcome,
please just turn up

Sunday 30th 10.30 am

Morning Worship, led by Revd Roger Jones

From Heather Lodge

Tolworth URC: celebrating 93 years and counting.

Celebrating an anniversary is always a good excuse for food. So when Church Meeting was asked how it wished to mark Tolworth's 93rd anniversary, there was no hesitation in agreeing on a bring-and-share lunch following the service on 14 June 2026.

Bring-and-share lunches can be a nerve-wracking method of catering. You set up the tables, lay out the cutlery, plates and serviettes on Saturday evening. By 10am on Sunday morning you are waiting in the kitchen with fingers crossed and a prayer that not only do people come but they bring the dish that they had signed up to bring. And yet, somehow, it always works. Good food and good company are enjoyed by all. The only downside was the absence of some of our friends through ill-health or holiday.



The photos show the transformation from an empty hall into a buzzing dining space as around thirty friends came together for lunch. It seems an appropriate process for a Church anniversary. Starting the Church in Tolworth in 1933 was an act of faith that it was the right place and the right time to build a Congregational Church (as it was then). Ninety-three years later, we give thanks, not just for the founding and all those who have built the community over the years, but the faith that led to the decision in the first place.



Anniversaries are also an opportunity to look forward and this year we realised we have almost outgrown the Elgar Hall. Maybe 2027 will be the year we return to holding our celebration lunches in the larger Raeburn Hall. The process of transformation continues.

In the meantime, many thanks to Gillian for master-minding our 2026 anniversary lunch and to everyone who contributed food, help and conversation.

Heather

From Revd Roger

The Psalm 8:2 Dialogues

Out of the mouths of babes and infants... we know there were plenty of children around Jesus when he walked the earth. Jesus sat with them, picked them up, blessed them, healed. Did he play? joke with them? learn from them...? of course he did. Like everyone else encountering children.

I Wonder what a child's dialogue about these encounters with Jesus may have been. How would a child have made sense of the stories, the healing, the teaching? Did they misunderstand. Misinterpret the signs. Think of themselves. Enjoy the moments. Learn something new. Of course they did. Like everyone else encountering Jesus.

Over the next few months in CONCORD, you will find possible dialogues by children who possibly encountered Jesus and put their own child-like spin on the special moments. Enjoy.

Don't be surprised if you hear some of these again on a Sunday morning...

Just a penny Luke 21; 1-4

My granny takes me out. All sorts of places. I didn't know grandad. He had died when I was very young. But she tells me about him. How loving and caring he was. How important it is to look after widows and strangers. How he used to say it was important to give to God. And to give to others.

I don't know if he meant me, but when she takes me out she gives me a coin or two for myself. It's nice but it's hardly worth anything. I have to save the money up for a pomegranate.

She doesn't have very much so I show her how really, really grateful I am.

Like when we go to the temple. Not my choice but I will always go and tell her it was good fun, or exciting or interesting.

Last time it was!

I saw her coming, out among all the others, mostly men dropping in pots of money into the treasury at the temple. They didn't notice her of course. She just slipped between them and reached out to the pot.

They didn't see her, but I did. And so did this man. He was sitting with his friends. They had gathered a few steps away from me whilst I was waiting for granny. He looked over at her and pointed.

I thought, "you don't know what she's got. She's only a widow you know...she don't get much..."

But then he said, loudly enough for everyone to hear, "I tell you this poor widow has given more than all of these..."

It all went quiet for a moment. Granny looked embarrassed and sidled over to me and took my hand.

She glanced at the man and nodded. He nodded back and gave a little clap.

As we turned to leave, I asked, "Who was that? He seemed to know you..."

"I've seen him around," she said.

I stopped and looked at the few coins in my hand that Granny had given to me this morning..."now what shall I do with these", I thought.

I glanced at the man as we were leaving. He winked. I think he knew. Like he sensed my dilemma.

Roger

From Peter Sparrow

Today is extremely hot and sparrows and other birds feel the heat, especially when it reaches 40deg.

We have sweat glands and can pant like dogs. Fluffing our feathers help, but the best solution is sitting in a lovely bird bath. The pigeons don't seem to bother as, at the moment, they seem to spend most of their time stuttering around trying to impress each other. Plus they keep knocking our feeder down which means they pick up all the seeds from the ground and push us smaller birds out of the way. The bluetits are very quiet at the moment, if they have any sense they will be hiding in the cool of the trees. We certainly hope it rains soon when we can all cool down. I believe God controls the weather and trust he will make it cool down and send a few showers of rain

Love

Peter Sparrow

From Heather Lodge

Tales from our campground: doors

We take doors for granted, don't we? Usually, for example, we close the church door on a Sunday morning once the service begins. On cold days that makes a lot of sense, but we only keep it open when the temperature climbs into the thirties. Is that just habit? What are we shutting in? Or shutting out?

We spend a lot of energy on our tent doors at camp. They become ridiculously important and are often the source of much stress if - when - anything goes wrong with them. In dry weather, the tent door gives the illusion of protection from marauding wildlife at night. Mostly that's just a mouse or tree rat but at 2am they sound like the proverbial horde of wildebeest trampling the grass. In chilly or wet weather there is no small sense of security in zipping up the fly sheet and then the inner tent to hide from the elements.



But tent doors absorb our attention because they are never exactly right. Our summer tents have mesh doors. These are excellent for keeping out biting insects and to date no mouse has chewed through them. The problem is that camping in the British summer is a bit hit-or-miss. In hot weather there's not quite enough airflow even with a mesh door. In chilly temperatures, there is far too much airflow. We have needed hot-water bottles more than once on a "mid-summer" camp.

Unlike our Church door, tent doors behave differently according to the weather. In the sun, the material tautens and the zip refuses to undo because it's under too much tension. This means adjusting guy lines and pegging out points - by the time you have sorted these and finally unzipped the door, you have forgotten what it was you wanted from the tent in the first place.

Tent door zips also don't like to be rushed. In the middle of a downpour, they have a habit of turning into a major obstacle. And wielding pliers to fix a recalcitrant tent zip that has split yet again is not easily done by torchlight and is definitely not a wet-weather activity.

We take doors for granted.....

Heather Lodge

Roger Fenn's July Quiz

It is thought that the final chapter of John's gospel was added later to satisfy those who questioned Peter's leadership role in the church after his triple denial of Jesus at a crucial time in his life.

- 1 Where did the new meeting take place?
2. Why did Jesus choose this location?
- 3 Why were the fish important?
4. What was the significance of the charcoal fire?
5. Although there were no direct recriminations, how did Jesus challenge Peter?
- 6.. Why did Jesus repeat it three times?
7. Assured of Peter's loyalty, how did Jesus respond?
8. Peter was obviously hurt by Jesus' challenge. How did he reply?

An Afternoon in Summer

What better way to spend the day
Than sitting in the sun?
A garden chair, a cup of tea,
A biscuit or a bun?

Or maybe take the train to town,
To Oxford Street be bound,
and mingle with the thronging crowd,
and spend a modest pound (*or two*)

The seaside always lifts the heart,
A deckchair by the band.
Excited children jump the waves,
Build castles in the sand.

And always there's the countryside,
The meadows wide and calm,
The sheltering trees, the wooded hills,
The gentle breeze, like balm.

No matter how we spend these days
Let's lift our hearts in song,
And save these sweetest memories
For when the summer's gone.

Barbara Pearson

Roger's July Quiz – Answers

1. Sea of Galilee. v 1
2. The place where he had first called them.
3. Four of them were fishermen.
4. It reminded Peter of the place where he had denied Jesus.
5. "Simon, son of John, do you love me" v 15
6. To remind Peter of his triple denial.
7. Feed my lambs – feed my sheep.
8. "Lord you know that I love you".

Sunday Worship at London Road URC, Ewell

Morning Worship at 10.30

Minister	Revd Roger Jones	020 8393 4270
Secretary	Mrs Pamela Galliers	
Treasurer		
Serving Elders	Mrs. P Galliers, Miss R Holmes.	

Officers, Leaders and Representatives

Church Administrator	Mrs. Sophie Trayers
Housekeeping	
Flower rota	Mrs. P. Galliers
Lettings	Mr R Hamilton
Organist	Vacant
Safeguarding	Mr. D. Mugridge
Deputy safeguarding	Nobuko Tsuyuki
Commitment for Life	Revd B Pearson
Pulpit Supply	Revd B Pearson
Friendship Hour	Revd B Pearson & Mr. D. Sexton
Lunch Club	Mr. D. Sexton
Bible Study	Revd B Pearson
Finance & Property	Mr. D. Mugridge & Mr. M. Westbrook
Synod Rep.	Miss Rosemary Holmes

Sunday Worship at Tolworth

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 #)

Computer link <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/rjones853>

3rd Sunday of month - Evergreen Worship at 6.30pm

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

Secretary	Mrs M Fleming
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Treasurer	Mr G Stock
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Serving Elders	Mr D Bennett, Mr A. Chan, Mrs M Fleming, Mrs G.Jones, Ms H.Lodge , Mr G.Stock, Mrs K Woolard, Mrs Barbara Smith
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Management Committee	Mr D Bennett, Mrs M Fleming, Mr S Heath, Mr D Knight, Mr B Llewellyn, Mr G Stock
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Other Officers, Leaders and Representatives

Caretaker	Mrs J. Marsh	8399 3926
Flower Secretary	Mrs Mary Wardle	
Halls Letting Officer	Mr S. Heath	
Junior Church	Mrs G.Jones	
Magazine Editor	Mr I Fleming	
Magazine Secretary	Mrs M Fleming	
Organist	--	
Pilots	Mrs G Jones	
Playtime	Mrs M Fleming	
Youth Worker	Miss Carys Kelly	
Rainbows	Ms Kirsten Cook	
Brownies	Ms Michelle Nicholls	
Guides	Mrs J Pelham	