

NEWS

From



United Reformed Churches

of



Romsey



Braishfield

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

JULY / AUGUST 2022

Abbey United Reformed Church

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

Minister	Revd Mike Perrott MA e-mail: revd.mike13@gmail.com	01794 512163 Day off: Monday
Secretary	Andy Bevan	07483 319618
Assistant Secretary	Carole Cox	01794 518184
Finance	Peter Walsh Reg Powell	01794 502109 01794 512238
Gift Aid	Carole Cox	01794 518184
Serving Elders	Sylvia Anderson-Lewis Gill Coates Derek Hiscocks	Sarah Beaman Howard Coulson Shirley Smith Andy Bevan Carole Cox
Magazine Team	contact at: abbeyurcnews@gmail.com	
Church Caretaker	Angela Wolfe 1 Abbey Water, Romsey	01794 517746

Services

Sunday Family Worship	10.30am
Mid-week Communion 3 rd Thursday in Abbey Hall Lounge	10.30am
Monthly Bible Study first Sunday evening On Zoom (ID: 864 1780 6994 Password: learning)	6.30pm

Weekday Meetings – any updates will be on our worship sheet

Monday (2 nd)	BALM (Bereavement) Group	10.30am
Wednesday (1 st 3 rd)	Table Tennis with ROMDAG	2.30pm
Wednesday(4 th)	Church Table Tennis	2.30pm
Thursday (3 rd)	Short Communion Service	10.30am

For baptisms, weddings or funerals please contact the Minister

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

July 2022

Dear friends in Christ

Recently, thinking about our mission and outreach, so central to our 'putting our faith into action', I found my thoughts wandering to Matthew 10:16-20, where Jesus sends his disciples, then and now, out into the world 'like sheep amongst wolves' - this was a well-known saying in Jesus' time, the wolves symbolising the gentile population, and the sheep the people of God - the Jewish people.

So it was then (and now) that, when having their old way of life threatened by the Good News, the 'wolf' is going to react with aggression towards the 'sheep' that brings the challenging, transforming, enlightening, Good News.

Yes, the 'wolf' was used as a symbol of the fierce opposition, aggression, and danger the apostles could face as they fulfilled Jesus' commission to "go into all the world", preaching and baptising.

Then I reflected further on the latter verses (19 - 20), as Jesus tells his followers not to worry about what to say when confronted by the opposition and aggression when speaking and living-out our faith. He says, "what you are to say will be given to you ... for it is not you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."

The 'sheep' (Jesus' followers) are not alone in their/our mission in and to the world, but can rely upon the shepherd, Jesus, for their encouragement and inspiration – to continue to follow his teaching and example in their words and actions. In this way, God's Holy Spirit can work through them as channels of his peace, challenge and comfort.

God, in Christ Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit, does provide for our needs as we live our faith in the world. We're not alone. We may be as weak and vulnerable as 'sheep', and open to danger, as we bring the challenge of the Good News to the aggressive 'wolf'; the need to change to God's ways of peace, Christian love, and justice. We can draw upon a wisdom and power beyond us, yet within us, not of our making, provided by the Holy Spirit. God provides protection for his sheep in entirely unexpected ways.

Some summers ago, Marie and I spent part of a day at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden at Wisley. We were lucky enough to be in time to see the stunning beauty of the butterflies, flying free all around us, housed in a special part of the tropical plant house. What spectacular combination of colours, amazing shapes, and incredible fragility they displayed! Yet how, I remember asking myself, do they escape predators in their natural habitat, being so bright in colour?

Recently I happened across an article that approaches this question, and it speaks volumes about the abundant protection that God provides for us as we act as his sheep in the midst of wolves! I have included this article below to think on, alongside our calling by Jesus to fulfil our commission to continue the work Jesus began, and countless Christians have continued to our own day.

Marie and I wish you all a wonderful, relaxing, above-all recuperative holiday season. God bless you all.

In Christian love, **Mike**

GOD CARES FOR HIS CREATURES **The 'Morpho' butterfly**

Some of the most brilliant butterflies in tropical America are the butterflies of the genus *Morpho*. Many species are brilliant metallic blue. A few of the females are metallic red.

These butterflies have a mirror-like quality to the upper surface of their wings. They can be seen from several miles away if they are flying over the tops of the trees in the jungle, the sun reflecting off their brilliant wings.



So, how does God (through God's ongoing creative design in evolution) provide protection for these beautiful creatures? Apparently, the birds like to eat them. But, if they are so easy to see, how do they survive? In fact, the brilliant reflective surface of the wings actually protects them!

If a bird sees the Morpho and starts to chase it, the butterfly will fly down into the dense shadows under the jungle canopy. Here, where it is dark, the upper surface of the wings looks almost black and the bird will have

trouble seeing the butterfly. If the bird is still able to track the butterfly and gets close to it, the butterfly will find a shaft of sunlight coming down through the trees. It will then fly through it, causing a flash of light to shine in the eyes of the bird. The butterfly can then get away.

Once the butterfly gets away, it will land on a tree. The bottom of the wings have great camouflage and because of this, the butterfly can land and safely hide.

Many years ago, I was trying to catch one of these butterflies. I saw one flying toward me. I was sure that I was going to be able to capture it. However, just before it got to me, it landed on the trunk of a tree. Even though it was only a few feet away from me when it landed, I could not see it again until it flew. I walked over to the trunk of the tree and looked carefully at all the shrubbery around the tree, but I could not see it.

God is very good at taking care of the Morpho butterfly. Although very easy to see, it is very hard for any predator to catch. God is very good at taking care of us too.

Source: Ron McCluskey, Editor (Adapted)
<https://www.articlesfactory.com/articles/religion/tracking-god-news-god-cares-for-his-creatures-morpho-butterflies.html#>

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MORNING PRAYER



Below are the Psalm and Gospel readings that would usually be used during morning services in July and August; take the opportunity to reflect upon God's word and to pray for the needs of the world and the church in your own time at home during the week.

July	3	Psalm 66:1-9	Luke 10:1-11; 16-20
	10	Psalm 25:1-10	Luke 10:25-37
	17	Psalm 22:15	Luke 10:38-42
	24	Psalm 138	Luke 11:1-13
	31	Psalm 49:1-12	Luke 12:13-21
August	7	Psalm 33:12-22	Luke 12:32-40
	14	Psalm 82	Luke 12:49-56
	21	Psalm 103:1-8	Luke 13:10-17
	28	Psalm 112	Luke 14:1 and 7-14

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THURSDAY MORNING COMMUNION

We hold a monthly Thursday morning Communion. This will next take place at 10.30am on 21 July and 18 August in the Abbey Hall Lounge. Anyone from our churches – and wider communities – are invited to join us and take communion. We look forward to welcoming you!



BALM



It's lovely to be meeting again; we now have 11 members. Two of our founder members made it to a meeting for the first time since our return. Pam, ever resourceful, came in a wheel chair and Marion, our treasurer, with the help of a mobility walker made it as well - such determination! We welcomed Angela to our group at our last meeting.

If you have lost someone and feel the need for some support, we'd love to see you. We're a welcoming bunch, so please pop along to the Abbey Hall lounge on the second Monday of each month at 10.30am and join us for a cup of tea and chat.

Christine T

HENRY'S SOUTH KOREA 2023 JAMBOREE ADVENTURE



Tickets are available from Henry or Wai for the Bingo Night with Bring and Share tea which will be held at 5pm on Saturday, 16 July in aid of Henry's trip to South Korea. Tea, coffee and squash will be provided. Tickets: £5 per person; £2 for children.

BIBLE STUDY

Our monthly Bible study and discussion group will take place on Sunday, 3 July and Sunday, 7 August. These will be held at 6.30pm on Zoom (ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning). At these sessions we look more deeply at the Gospel verses that were used that day at our morning service at Abbey URC. All welcome!

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Material for September 2022 to be submitted
by Sunday, 21 August 2022

Please email to abbeyurcnews@gmail.com
Alternatively, you could call Carole C or pop it in her letter box,
or leave in the pigeon hole at the back of the church. Thank you.

PRAYER FOR JULY AND AUGUST



Recently, just out of interest, my older sister in Finland took part in 'my heritage' research. The results came back saying that she is over 95% of West country Finnish and Scandinavian origin. No surprises there. I assume that for my siblings and for myself the result would be very similar. My parents, grandparents and great grandparents were farmers and owned their land which provided their livelihoods. Obviously, there was no need to travel much further than the next village or county. For my children and grandchildren, the situation is already different and more international.

Over the centuries people have travelled and migrated. Sometimes by choice wanting to explore other lands, sometimes for personal reasons. Political and economic circumstances may have forced people to move and leave familiar places behind. At the moment because of war and hardship and human rights abuse there are more and more displaced people and it is impossible to close our eyes from this reality in the media and in the tv screens.

Whatever our personal choices and circumstances as people of faith we are pilgrims, only passing through this world. We know where we are going. Even if we have a long life, our earthly life is short compared with the eternal life and home with God. I have often taken comfort from Apostle Paul's words to the church in Philippi, "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." (Philippians 3.20)

As followers of Christ, we have the privileges and responsibilities of our dual citizenship. May we use wisely the time given to us, especially now when after a somewhat difficult couple of years we have more freedom to gather and be together and travel without restrictions which were part of our everyday lives for so long.

Loving God,

We remember the nations of the world and especially those who are not at peace at this time.

We pray for the time when the kingdoms of this world may become the Kingdom of Christ the Lord.

Lord, help your church be an instrument of peace and healing in the world.

We ask your blessing upon our homes and all who are dear to us.

We pray for the community in which we live.

We remember all who are refugees, all who have been made homeless and have nowhere to go.

We rejoice that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, that through him life is eternal.

Amen

Leena Knowles



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ELDERS AND CHURCH GROUPS

At our first elders' meeting after the AGM in May we were pleased to welcome new members to the eldership. We are grateful to Howard Coulson, Gill Coates and Sylvia Anderson-Lewis for agreeing to resume the responsibilities of eldership; and to Carole Cox, Sarah Beaman and Derek Hiscocks as they continue in this role.



We looked at the ways in which the elders are assisted by members and friends from the church in overseeing the church and ensuring all its responsibilities are met.

The life of the church can be divided into six main areas; fabric, finance, outreach, pastoral, worship and youth, with each group's areas of responsibility clearly defined. It has been our custom that each group discusses in more detail these aspects of our church life for which they are responsible, bringing suggestions and recommendations to the elders. This has the benefit of elders gaining a broader view of its members' thinking, whilst freeing up more time at elders' meetings for other essential matters.

However, over the years, the reason for these groups and who can serve on them appears to have become confused. Elders agreed that all meetings of the groups are open to all who share in the life of the church. We also agreed that there are three posts which need to be covered for each group, a representative from the eldership, a chairperson/convenor and a note-taker. But these three alone cannot operate effectively to oversee the area of church life for which it is responsible – to be fully effective it needs people who can contribute ideas and perhaps a little time.

Groups meet quarterly or bi-monthly and all their meeting dates are printed in the magazine and weekly service sheet. Do you have a specific area of church life in which you would wish to contribute your ideas? Or do you have ideas you would like to offer to a group?

If you are interested in finding out more about any of the groups, please do speak to me.

Andy B

OUR NEWS

Sending our love to Ian and Margaret, as they take the next step on their adventure. You will be in our prayers, wishing you happiness and wonderful time with your families “down under” – keep in touch!

Our best wishes are with Geoff whilst he recuperates over the summer. He assures us that work mornings will be back in September!

Welcome home to David, after his stay in hospital.

Wishing the couples, who will be married in our church during August, a long, happy marriage. May God bless you; our prayers are with you.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone for all your thoughts and prayers, David is home at last. Kind regards, Ruth

Thank you to the members of the congregation who have volunteered to take on some of the vital jobs that Margaret and Ian previously undertook. We are very grateful for your support.

FIT FOR A QUEEN!

Dear Team, thank you for a beautiful June magazine. The decorations on its pages are really cheering and all the adverts for the hall, concerts, sales etc are so attractive.

The church looked splendid yesterday morning for the Songs of Praise service, and drew much admiration. Even the order of service will be a keepsake. Who climbed all the ladders and swung on the lights? Forget Chelsea – those flower arrangements are so elegant...someone has been hiding their light behind a pillar,

Visitors from Chandlers Ford were surprised by it all; and although high-class refreshments are not the norm, it all seemed most appropriate for such a special day. Look out Perth...

With love and thanks to all the magazine team.

Jen and Geoff Prestage

ROYALS IN ROMSEY PHOTO DISPLAY

We heard about your photo exhibition as part of the Romsey Platinum Jubilee celebrations as we were preparing to go away for a few days, but just had time to pop in to Romsey to see it before we left.

We were so glad we did - we really enjoyed it and were thrilled to see a picture of the Queen's visit in June 2007 which included our son, Matthew, in the crowd! He was the little one with blonde, curly hair and red dungarees, perched on the barrier clutching flowers from our garden. Just after this photo was taken, the Queen stopped to accept his posy! We remembered the date the day before his 2nd birthday - a wonderful moment and a fantastic birthday treat.

We didn't manage to get a photo of Matthew with the Queen on the day so we were overjoyed the photographer was willing to share the image with us. Please pass our thanks on to the people who organised and manned the exhibition and to the photographer concerned.

With our thanks and very best wishes,
Alison, Neil and Matthew



HENRY'S SOUTH KOREA 2023 JAMBOREE ADVENTURE

Following our last camp, my unit made social media group chats; recently myself and a few other friends from within the unit met up in Winchester. All of us travelled from various places around Hampshire, such as Ringwood and Basingstoke. We are also planning many future meet-ups, some of which include beach meet-ups and summer camps.



On the 16 of July from 5pm-7pm there will be a bingo night in Abbey Hall. I am selling tickets at church; however if you are not there, or do not go to church, and you would like tickets we will find a way to get some tickets to you. Tickets are £5 per adult and £2 per children. All proceeds go towards my journey to South Korea. Thank you for all your support, it means so much!

Henry

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING HYMNS?

I would like to form a singing group who could meet weekly to practise the hymns for Sunday and lead any new ones. We could also, occasionally, sing one on our own as part of worship, much as the choir did with anthems.



If you are interested in joining a group, please get in touch with either me or Revd Mike so we could discuss a time and place to meet.



Eireen

HAVING TROUBLE GETTING TO CHURCH?

Could you do with a lift to get to and from church or church events? Would it make it easier to attend, but you're not sure who to ask? Maybe you're unsure who "goes your way" or don't want to bother anyone?

There are many in the congregation who would be happy to help, so please talk to Carole and she will try and find someone who drives your way, who would enjoy your company on the way to church or events.



MINISTER'S ANNUAL LEAVE

Please note our Minister will be on holiday from 23 July to 14 August 2022. During this time all enquiries should be made to:

Romsey: Andy Bevan (Mrs) tel. 07483 319618
email andybevan1@btinternet.com

Braishfield: Shirley Smith (Mrs) tel. 01794 368447

We wish Mike and Marie an enjoyable and relaxing holiday.

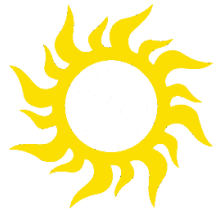


CHRISTIAN AID

Thank you to all who contributed to the Christian Aid week collections. A total of £1,971.00 was collected from all Romsey churches' activities and our stall in the Market Place. This has now been sent to Christian Aid to help in the amazing work they undertake for those less fortunate than ourselves.

BEGGARS FAIR

Once again, the Beggars Fair is back in town! Romsey will be bustling with musical events on Saturday 9 July, including continuous performances from 11am-5pm in both our church and the Abbey Hall. Acts range from an accordion band to solo guitarists, the Hyde Pipers to the Michelmersh Silver Band. Full details, including times and venues, can be found on the Beggars Fair web site <http://www.beggarsfair.org.uk/line-up/>



If you can help with stewarding the church for a few hours during the day please let Andy Bevan know.

ARE YOU A CARER, DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS?

Carers Together are holding a training session entitled Carers' Rights, on Tuesday, 19 July from 2-4pm at the Carers Together Centre in Love Lane, Romsey. For further details and to book your place please telephone them on 01794 519495 or email them carerstogether@admin.org.uk. Details of all their activities and ways they offer support to carers can be found on their website www.carerstogether.org.uk

BEST OF BRITISH CONCERT

Kirsty presented her audience with an evening of many musical delights using her abundant talents. She got us all singing along with the old favourites, the sixties renderings reaching the highest volume! Her voice blended beautifully with Anne's during the duets. Audience participation reached its height with enthusiastic flag waving to "Land of hope and glory". Kathleen was a great support throughout the evening, especially when she surprised us all by disclosing colourful decorations concealed on the pulpit.

The church was well filled with Romsey residents and church friends. The interval refreshments were enjoyed by all, especially Val's "royalty" cupcakes. The sum of £550 was raised during the evening for Church funds.

Thanks to Kirsty, Anne Turner, the Cornerstone URC friends Margaret and David Yapp who provided the IT support and everyone else who helped to make a most memorable evening as a contribution to Romsey's Jubilee celebrations.

Chris and Stella



CALENDAR

Date	Time	Event
July		
3	10.30am	Morning Worship, including Holy Communion, led by Revd Mike
3	12noon	Mayor's Picnic in Romsey Memorial Park
3	6.30pm	Bible Study on Zoom ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning
6	2.30pm	Table Tennis with RomDAG in Abbey Hall
6	7.30pm	Pioneers Leaders Meeting
6	8.15pm	Youth Forum
8-11		URC General Assembly meets at Swanwick
9	all day	Beggars Fair - acts across town, including within our church and the Abbey Hall
10	10.30am	Morning worship led by Revd Mike
11	10.30am	BALM in Abbey Hall Lounge
13	7.30pm	Worship Group
13	7.30pm	Romsey Christian Aid Committee
16	5pm	Bingo plus Bring and Share meal raising funds for Henry's Scout trip to South Korea in 2023.
17	10.30am	Morning worship led by Derek Hiscocks
19	7.30pm	Finance Group
20	7.30pm	Outreach Group
20	2.30pm	Table Tennis with RomDAG in Abbey Hall
21	10.30am	Midweek Communion in Abbey Hall Lounge
23 - 14	July August	Revd Mike on Annual Leave
24	10.30am	Morning worship led by Averil Bamber
27	2.30pm	Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
31	10.30am	Morning worship led by Peter White
August		
7	10.30am	Morning Worship, including Holy Communion, led by Revd Wendy White
7	6.30pm	Bible Study on Zoom ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning
12	7.30pm	Fabric Group

August (continued)		
14	10.30am	Morning worship led by the Nick Tustian
16	7.30pm	Elders in Abbey Hall Lounge
18	10.30am	Midweek Communion in Abbey Hall Lounge
19-29		Art Exhibition in Abbey Hall
20	2pm	Wedding of Daniel Hannam and Emma Woolls
21	10.30am	Morning worship led by Pam Humphreys
24	2.30pm	Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
27	2pm	Wedding of Carrick Cox and Vicky Effamy
28	10.30am	Morning worship led by Revd Mike
September		
2	9am	Working Party
3	12.30pm	Wedding of Scott Wheeler and Christina Randles
4	10.30am	Morning Worship, including Holy Communion led by Revd Mike
4	6.30pm	Bible Study on Zoom ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning



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Braishfield United Reformed Church

Minister: The Reverend Mike Perrott, MA, Abbey Manse,
The Abbey, Romsey 01794 512163
Secretary: Mrs Shirley Smith 01794 368447
Treasurer: Sharon Whitfield 01794 521937

July

3	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by the Minister
10	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Sharon Whitfield
16/17	10.00 am - 6.00 pm	Flower Festival Weekend The church is open on both days to visitors
17	10.00 am	Flower Festival Service led by the Minister
24	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Daniel Symes
31	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Pam Humphreys

August

7	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by Derek Hiscocks
14	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Peter White
21	10.00 am	Family Worship led by the Minister
28	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Chris Noyce

September

4	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by the Minister
18		Harvest Festival

News from Braishfield

It was a fitting farewell service for Paddy on 31st May at All Saints Parish Church. The service was conducted by the Reverend Tom Benson and the Reverend Mike Perrott, with a "Tribute to our Granddad" read by Rachael, supported by Paddy's other grandchildren.

The church, as suspected, was full with family and friends, each with their own memories of Paddy. Our sympathies go to all of the family.



Thank you to everyone who decorated our church inside and outside as we celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend and to the visitors who gave donations to our 2022 charity, Mercy Ships.

On 12th June we had another Favourite Hymns service with all ten hymns being chosen by our congregation. The service was led by Daniel Symes who managed to get the hymns, readings etc, all in within the hour.

We send our sympathies to Margery, who has had two of her brothers pass away recently, and also to Sharon, whose brother-in-law died suddenly followed by his daughter taken into hospital the same day.

Best wishes go to Margaret who celebrated her 80th birthday on 29th May. Also, best wishes go to Hazel and Peter who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 20th June.

We send our love to Bill who, at the time of writing, is in Southampton General Hospital. We also send our love to David who had his second cataract operation on 21st June. We send best wishes to others in our congregation who have also been unwell recently.

Our Flower Festival is on 16th and 17th July. Please put an arrangement of flowers in the church if you can on Friday, 15th July so that the church will be ready to be open to visitors on the 16th and 17th July. If you need any other information, please contact Maggie on 01794 368125 or me on 01794 368447. Let us fill the church with flowers – thank you in advance!

Best wishes go to Margaret and Ian as they move to their new life and home in Australia on 5th July. We will all miss you – do keep in touch!

Shirley Smith



PADDY GLISTER

Prepared and read by Rev Tom Benson, Vicar of All Saints, Braishfield

Paddy was a real local man. Born and raised here, spending his life in Braishfield, apart from when serving on national service. It struck me that here was a man who is really rooted in a place, and in its people.

His story started here on the 4 July 1941 in Crook Cottages, born to Walter and Annie. There was a large family with Jim, Ted, Tom, Richard, Kathleen, Ena and Maggie all growing up together. He went to school here in Braishfield, then later at Romsey School, which was affectionately known as the cow shed. It would be fair to say that for Paddy, school was perhaps something to be endured rather than enjoyed, but he got through and as a boy really enjoyed the outdoors life playing in the woods and being out and about with his friends. Perhaps even finding time for a bit of scrumping!

After his school days were finished, he worked as a butcher for a time before he joined the Army where he served for 6 years in the REME; largely in Germany and he was quite rightly proud of that.

After his service was over, he returned to the area and courted Joan and they were married in The United Reformed church here in the village in 1968. They set up home in Romsey first of all and lived at a number of places around the area, but always keeping his connection with Braishfield and its people. He remained that very well known and loved local character.

He liked a flutter on the horses even winning on the very odd occasion. He played darts and was in the team. He was a trustee at the social club and was a very good bingo caller. He was a very sociable man. He loved to follow sport on the TV. He was a really hard-working fellow, and in his retirement still drove for Romsey's Good Neighbours. He liked his garden and did well with it. He was well known and well loved by people, and it would be fair to say that he will not be easily forgotten.

He was a good man who lived a full life but his real love was his family: Joan, Mandy, Sean and his beloved grandchildren and great grandchildren. As a family, one of his favourite things was to plan road trips together – the last one that they took together was only in April. They stopped in Bed & Breakfasts, caravans and cottages. They also enjoyed travelling abroad together at least 9 times. He would no sooner get back

home from one trip than he started to plan the next. He was a good husband, father, granddad and great granddad. He served as the unofficial taxi driver for the family and was always there for them – often the first port of call at the end of the phone. He was at the centre of family life and will inevitably leave a void behind him.

For those of us left behind today let's think about this: the only way that we can be protected from pain and loss and grief is by never having loved. How empty your lives would be, what a mountain of shared moments we would have missed, if you had not known Paddy. In many ways he was a real character; his depth of knowledge, his smile, his sense of humour, his ability to make and maintain friendships, taught us all something about how to live. So, as you look around you, give thanks that you are all part of his legacy here on earth. What was good about his life lives on in you.

Today we are called to trust in the way that God is alongside us even at our most difficult times, so that we are sustained through this life in the good times and the bad times. We are sustained in sickness and health. We are sustained until we too, like Paddy, are finally set free to be with Christ in heaven. Amen



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Friday, 5th August
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SONGS OF PRAISE CELEBRATIONS AND OUR FARE-WELL TO IAN AND MARGARET



For those of you who could not make the Songs of Praise Service, we have to say that it was really well attended, with over 70 people present to enjoy the choice of hymns, glorious singing and of course the start of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Photo Exhibition. An altogether, superb atmosphere, enjoyed by all ... and graced by our Town and Borough dignitaries.

Sadly, our MP, Caroline Noakes could not attend as she had tested positive with Covid. Our new Test Valley Mayor was also incapacitated, having recently sustained a broken ankle.

A further surprise for those who attended, was a presentation to Margaret and Ian who are about to emigrate to Western Australia, to be nearer their family who all live in Perth. The Minister presented them with a Rex Trayhorne print of our church to take to their, soon to be, Australian home.

In true Margaret style, everyone was invited to stay for home-made cake and a glass of bubbly after the service.



Ian said a few words, we give a brief resume below.

“It is not easy for us to leave Romsey URC after 45 years of worship, plus all the duties and positions we have held here in this church.

Margaret and I began our married life in Paisley and became members of St Luke's Church of Scotland. It will be no surprise to learn that

Margaret was a Sunday School teacher, had printing duties and was Secretary of the Young Wives; I was Church Elder and member of the Board of Management - all formative experiences for the years ahead!



After 8 years we moved to Romsey. We came as a small family on Cup Final Day - 21 May 1977. Gwen Clarkson, for many years a Junior Church leader and stalwart member of this church, was holding a coffee morning and we happened upon the Abbey Hall, where we enjoyed coffee and bought the inevitable raffle tickets.

We moved to Romsey permanently on our son Mark's 5th Birthday. That was a Thursday, and by Sunday we were settled into our new home in time to come to church. Amy Roberts met us at the door and showed us where the crèche was. Our daughter, Elaine was only ten months old. Margaret, Mark and I sat in the pew we always choose in churches - centre left near the front. The minister of the day, Alan Jones was not present and Wilf Wall, a retired well-known minister, took the service.

At the end of the service, we discovered other Ashley Meadows residents, Ian & Mavis, Nigel & Margaret together with fellow Scots, Bill and Alice who lived in North Baddesley.

For those of you who were around then, Mrs Dorothy Wilkins was President of the Guild and together with Evelyn Derbyshire, who trained at the Glasgow School of Domestic Science, they were very good teachers of catering and hostess skills - Margaret certainly learned a lot from both of them.

Margaret was approached by the minister to deliver flowers at a time when she did not drive. He knew it was a great way for this soft-spoken lady from Scotland to get to know people in the church, how right he was.

Time precludes me from covering every year of our time here, but safe to say, we never got bored or ran out of things to occupy us from parts in the Roger Jones musicals "Saints Alive", secretary of The Young Wives, Royal occasions and summer markets including cakes for every occasion! Our daughter, Elaine was married here in June 2001. Then on to Duty Elder, Church collection steward, magazine Editor and distributor and, of course, lots and lots of printing!!

The most enjoyable of all, was just to be here as people you can come to!! Church Friend and contact person, always ready to give lifts to church and swap duties last-minute! We know where things are, what people to approach and give help, when needed.

45 pretty good years. Great friends, great occasions and lasting memories.

So, we have come full circle. Margaret and I came from Scotland to England, leaving parents and relatives behind, at a time when driving was arduous with no end-to-end motorways. Now, 45 years later, we are about to pack up our home, ship it to Australia and take a luxury flight via Doha to Perth WA, in less than 24 hours.

We constantly reflect that all our journeys have been blessed, through prayers from the Sisters at Abbey House and Marie Louise and also through prayers from all of you at Abbey URC.

So, once more, Margaret and I say a big thanks to all of you, for being our close friends, for helping us to laugh along the journey, for comforting us in our times of need, for accepting us as missionaries.

May I close with a short prayer I learned when I was in the Boys Brigade

“May the Lord walk between thee and me, while we are absent one from another. In all our ways acknowledge him and he shall direct our paths.”

Ian and Margaret



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JUBILEE BRING AND SHARE LUNCH

In celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee the church held a Bring & Share lunch after the morning service on 5 June. The service included welcoming Val Lloyd into membership and the induction of Elders. Such a special service and the toys in the Rainbow Room kept my two young grandchildren very occupied until their tummies rumbled.



It was a joy to attend the lunch with them, and they were most impressed with their medals, thank you Chris and Stella. They loved being able to go up and choose their food; it was all scrummy with the bonus of social chat. Thank you to all the organisers.

Chris L

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URC CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH WORK TEAM

In July 2023, the United Reformed Church Children's and Youth Work team launch URC Children – the umbrella that encompasses all children and children's groups and activities associated with the United Reformed Church.

They invite you to pray for them throughout the month of July, especially on 9 July when they hope to take a group of children to General Assembly for the launch.



REFUGEES

(our 3rd quarter outreach theme)



The primary purpose at UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency) is to safeguard the rights and well-being of people who have been forced to flee. With partners, they work to ensure that everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge. For over half a century, UNHCR has helped millions of people to restart their lives. They include refugees, returnees, stateless people, the internally displaced and asylum-seekers. Our protection, shelter, health and education has been crucial, healing broken pasts and building brighter futures. We have heard about the plight of the Ukrainian refugees over recent months but there are many other refugees and asylum seekers fleeing their country of residence for a host of reasons. One such group are those who left Afghanistan for its neighbouring countries of Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Official details released by the UNHCR show that 3,700 Afghans were hosted by the Iranian authorities at border locations since 1 January 2021, although most have returned. According to Government of Uzbekistan sources, some 13,020 Afghan citizens arrived in their country since January 2021. The majority arrived before August 15 with valid visas issued by the Uzbek consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif. This group is currently unwilling and unable to return and UNHCR considers that they may be in need of international protection. However, the majority of Afghan refugees (currently about 62%) head for Pakistan. Unfortunately, there is no Pakistani legislation to determine how the asylum applications from these refugees are processed but UNHCR does work with the government. It has 332 staff working in Pakistan with one main office and two sub offices.

Pakistan has also provided protection for refugees from Iran, Myanmar, Yemen, Somalia and Sudan and has acquired a reputation over the past 40 years for providing protection to refugees and asylum-seekers. It currently provides refuge to 1.3m people who have been forced to flee their country. To fully fund its work in Pakistan the UNHCR requires a budget of \$US129 m. To date it has been granted only \$US 90m, leaving 30% of its planned work unfunded at this present time. More details about the work of UNHCR can be found on its website www.unhcr.org. All details obtained from the UNHCR website.

Andy B

HUNDREDS IN THE HUNDRED

It was the 2 of June, the Thursday of the 4-day weekend to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. My friend and I had decided we would join with the 'Hundreds in the Hundred'. We got there just after 2pm and the road was already filled with tables, chairs, banners and bunting.

There was a wonderfully friendly atmosphere and everyone seemed really happy to be there. To the sounds of music, conversation and laughter, my friend and I found just enough room to set up our 2 chairs. We shared some wine and snacks and were offered ice cream by a family near to us who had 2 to spare, an offer we readily accepted. The day was warm and sunny and that was reflected on the faces of all around us.



The Old Cadet Band, dressed as pirates, played their way down one pavement and back up the other, followed not long afterwards by Neil Gwynne, the Mayor and John Rae, Chairman of Romsey Carnival Committee which had organised the event. We only stayed for 2 hours but I was really glad to have been able to participate in this historic event.

Abbey URC Roving Reporter



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LEPROSY MISSION LETTER OF THANKS



The following letter of thanks was received from The Leprosy Mission on receipt of stamps recently donated in The Leprosy Mission stamp box at the back of church.

“You are amazing! Thank you so much for donating your used stamps and collectables. You are transforming lives.

When Hasan was diagnosed with leprosy, his community turned against him and his family. They were forced out of their village, with nowhere to go. But, because of your caring heart, leprosy trained health workers spent time talking to members of the community, dispelling the myths and information which surrounds this feared disease and allowed them to be welcomed back into their community. Because of the support from a self-help group, Hasan’s mother has been able to raise enough money to build their own home.

Without supporters like you, who share your heart for people affected by leprosy, none of this would have been possible. The money raised from the sale of stamps and other collectables, will cure people of this debilitating disease and restore hope and livelihoods, now and for future generations.

Thank you for your kindness and compassion.

Florrie Harris, Supporter Relations Advisor

PS Thank you for your used stamps and collectibles. Did you know we can receive donations of stamps, postcards, coins, bank notes and medals?”

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Our June meeting coincided with World Refugee Week. In previous years we've had a stall in the Market Place or a display in the library to publicise the problems refugees face, but with the current Rwanda controversy that would have been difficult. Instead, we looked at the biggest movement of refugees in Europe currently, that of the millions of displaced Ukrainians.

A local woman from Awbridge, who is hosting a small Ukrainian family, joined our meeting to share her experience. Since April she has had a mother and her teenage daughter staying with her; they had an incredible amount of bureaucracy before they arrived and it continues, with doctor and dentist registration, bank accounts, finding work... Everything is made more difficult because the daughter can get by in English, but the mother speaks none. She told us that there are many local support groups, mainly in Southampton, that have been essential with advice and encouragement.

We wanted to know what we could do, particularly as we're not all able to host. She suggested we could give our time, possibly by offering a trip out to the town, beach, supermarket, etc. There are many Ukrainians in and around Romsey; if anyone wants any more details, please contact me: johnhorton@ntlworld.com.


John H


URC Children's and Youth Work Committee invite you to

Let's Celebrate

An online fringe event for everyone following General Assembly.
Join us for an evening of celebration as we share what has been happening and what is coming next in the world of URC Children's and Youth Work.

Monday 18 July 2022 7.30-8.45pm on Zoom.
Sign up at bit.ly/CYWfringe by 15 July.

 The United Reformed Church Children

 The United Reformed Church Youth

COME ON IN, WE'RE OPEN!



We hope you like the new feather banner which is placed outside the church when our building is open. It has been encouraging visitors to pop in and look around during the Jubilee celebrations and on Saturday mornings, when the church is open for quiet prayer.

So, if the flag is outside – pop in to say hello! There is always a warm welcome and a friendly face to welcome you.

URC 2023 BUILDINGS CALENDAR

Photographs of URC church buildings are invited for the 2023 Calendar - the theme is 'Inside our churches'. Interior close-ups of architectural features or parts of the building such as crosses, altars, banners, organ pipes, stained glass or memorial plaques. Pictures of people are also welcome but please ensure you have everyone's permission before sending in the image. Please send landscape photos for preference (JPG or PNG) by mid-July 2022. Include the name and location of the church and name of the photographer. No bigger than 3600 pixels wide, about 3Mb. email them to andy.jackson@urc.org.uk. If photos are submitted, the photographer is granting the URC permission to use the photographs in print and digitally.



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FARRIER FUN IN THE SUN

Hi all, hope you are all keeping well! I've done a couple more competitions since the last time I wrote, this time the Royal Bath and West Show and the South of England Show. Both went really well and I'm starting to be recognised by other farriers and apprentices that go to these events.

I have to say that the South of England Show was the best show yet as I came fourth in the apprentice round and I competed in the open shoe making round where any farrier can enter - this meant the shoes were much more complicated and I'd never made them before. I still went for it though and tried my best as well as earning some respect from the qualified farriers around me!

It was great having some familiar family faces cheering me on. Only Romsey show left in the calendar for competitions this year.

I will be heading off on my sixth college block on 4 July for three weeks, it's looking to be a good block - if a bit more stressful than normal as after this block there will only be two blocks remaining until the end of the course! Looking forward to telling you about it.

Kathleen xx



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