

THE RECORD

OF REIGATE PARK CHURCH (UNITED REFORMED)



DECEMBER 2008

No 850

REIGATE PARK CHURCH

(UNITED REFORMED)

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While our church is seeking a Minister please inform a member of the Pastoral Committee if you hear of cases of need

Mavis Proctor (778430), Michael Ball (244224),

Liz Bullen (248421), Pat Denchfield (761275),

Brian Hoad (243720), Carol Nicholls (240372)



Last year we visited St Mary's Church, Putney. The church has been imaginatively redesigned after a serious fire some years ago and we were there to see a small exhibition commemorating a very special event in the church's history.

In the autumn of 1647, Parliamentary troops had gained the upper hand in the Civil War and were garrisoned in Putney. Charles I was imprisoned and the Army's top brass were attempting to negotiate a sort of constitutional monarchy. Meanwhile the rank and file, as soldiers do, were planning a better life and formulating their demands. These included freedom of religious belief, freedom of speech including the press, and universal suffrage (though 'universal' did not include women!). Remarkably, Oliver Cromwell himself agreed to chair a series of debates in the church at which these demands would be presented and discussed. This he did with fairness and generosity, each day's debate beginning with a five-hour prayer meeting (our nonconformist forbears had stamina!).

After a few days the debates ended. Soon afterwards Charles I escaped from Carisbrooke Castle in the Isle of Wight and raised an army. Cromwell hardened his heart. The Putney Debates were soon forgotten but the ideals lived on in

the hearts of men and women. The cadences in the American Declaration of Independence are pure 'Putney speak'. Today if you visit St Mary's Putney, and it has a very good café, you will see boldly inscribed above the entrance to the sanctuary the words uttered during the debates by a Colonel Rainsborough:

'The poorest he that is in England has a life to live, as the greatest he'.

Throughout history human beings have longed for an open and inclusive society and this has often been resisted, not least in the name of religion. And if you think that's all in the past, think 'women priests', think 'human sexuality'. At Reigate Park we value openness and inclusiveness enough to place them at the heart of our pastorate profiles. These were, after all, precisely the values that two thousand years ago were being passionately proclaimed by an itinerant Galilean preacher, whose birthday we now prepare to celebrate. Happy Christmas!

Liz and Mike Bullen

BOOK CLUB

We are meeting again at 8 p.m. on Monday December 8th at Alison Allen's, 80 Raglan Road (☎ 224320) to discuss Barack Obama's *Dreams from my Father*.

Jane Dotzek

CHURCH FAMILY WEEKEND 8TH - 10TH MAY 2009

We have been delighted with the interest shown in next year's Church Family Weekend at Pilgrim Hall near Uckfield in Sussex. The weekend is an opportunity to relax, have fun and more time to get to know one another better and it also provides the space for personal reflection. The weekend will be led by Rev. Nigel Uden, Synod Moderator of the Southern Province and he has written an explanation of his theme for the weekend, below. Booking is officially closed but if you would like something to look forward to after Christmas we might still squeeze you in (depends on room availability). Although we no longer have a presence in the Hall please do contact us if you would like any more information about the weekend.

Richard Garlick ☎ 226476, Sonia Christie ☎ 270095,
for bookings Anne Edwards ☎ 765891

PAUL TO THE REIGATIANS

What might Paul say to Reigate Park Church if he wrote to us today?

Paul's letters are full of good things: help for Christian people about what to believe and how to live. Most of them were written to a specific group of people. Often he knew them well, which meant he could address their specific qualities, quirks and needs. He could scratch them in just the right way because he knew where they were itching.

If Paul were alive today perhaps he would have written to churches in a similar vein - only he might have e-mailed or texted. Or would it have been an interactive internet session on MSN? And Reigate Park might well have been in his Address Book. How it would spice up the notices each Sunday: 'And now here is St Paul's message for this week ...'

During our weekend away together next May I will be thinking out loud about what he might write if he knew us as well as he knew the Corinthians. I am sure it would include *support* as we search for ministers to work among you, *challenge* as we think about how to be the church most effectively in the 21st century and *encouragement* for each of us individually as we try to walk the Christian Way.

I hope it will be fascinating, faith-feeding and fun.

And I very much look forward to being with you all.

Nigel Uden

PAMELA RADFORD

18th June 1938 - 17th October 2008

Pam lived and grew up in Belvedere, Kent. In 1960 she married Roy. They had one child, Paul and eventually, a granddaughter Michaela. In 1962 Pam joined the Surrey Keep Fit Association. After training as a teacher, she produced demonstration items that were performed at Fairfield Halls, Croydon. Pam was a volunteer for Relate and had been currently working at their charity shop in Trehaven Parade, Woodhatch. After her husband died, five years ago, she became a member of Reigate Park Church.

MUSIC GROUP

The Music Group will meet at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, 17th December at the home of Carol McNeill, 31 Hanworth Road, Redhill. This is a group for listening, not for performing! Will anyone who wishes to join us please contact Michael Ball ☎ 244224.

THE MAYOR'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARDS

Brenda Vokes has been awarded a volunteer award in recognition of 'the length of service, commitment and the diversity of the work she offers Reigate Park URC and the local community'. She received the award from the Mayor on November 11th at the Town Hall and her daughter, Becca, and I had the privilege of accompanying her.

The year 2008 is Brenda's 60th year as a Junior Church leader: before coming to our church in the High Street in the early 1960s she had worked at the church in South Park. We marked this splendid achievement with a special session in JAM on 23rd November, where families were invited to join in the session and share a cake and drinks.

We will celebrate with the rest of the Junior Church leaders and helpers at our Christmas meal on Tuesday 16th December.

Pat Denchfield

I had a very enjoyable evening at the Town Hall, and I would like to thank Pat and all of Junior Church for putting my name forward. I am also very grateful to everyone in the church who has supported and helped me over the years.

Brenda Vokes

MITE NEWS - UNICEF

It seems as though children are vulnerable throughout the whole world, even the British Isles. UNICEF is present in over 150 countries and its priority is care of children in all circumstances. Unfortunately this invariably means that money is a necessity in order to buy food, clothing, shelter and transport. One of the very important provisions is to keep children happy and occupied with school and family life. Could your Christmas help some of these children? 'All contributions gratefully received'. The big jar and little tubs are in the foyer. Thank you and happy Christmas!

Hazel Arscott

PRAYER CALENDAR

This month's prayer cycle of Churches Together in Reigate and Redhill is:

7th December *St Bartholomew's Parish Church, Leigh..*

14th December *Redhill Christian Fellowship meeting at the Harlequin.*

21st December *Reigate Methodist Church.*

28th December *Reigate Christian Bookshop in the High Street.*

WORSHIP IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

At 10 a.m. on **Sunday 7th December** our service will be led by Jane and Ian Buck and FROGS. This will not be a Communion Service.

At 6.30 p.m. there will be a service of five lessons and carols, with the Band of the Surrey Yeomanry.

At 10 a.m. on **Sunday 14th December**, our Synod Moderator, Rev. Nigel Uden, will conduct our Communion Service.

At 7 p.m. there will be carols at the Belfry, Redhill.

Rev John Joseph will be leading the Christingle Service on **Tuesday 16th December** at 6.30 p.m.. All are welcome. Christingles will be provided to take home. Come and bring a friend. If anyone would like to help make the Christingles for the service on Tuesday evening, please come along and join the Christingle-making party on Monday 15th December at 10.30 a.m. in The Park Room. Refreshments, materials and friendship will be provided.

At 12.15 p.m. on **Wednesday 17th December** Jill Campbell will lead our midweek communion service. In the afternoon there will be a 'Tiny People's Christingle Service' - a fun time for infant school and pre-school children to come and make their own Christingle with their family after school from 4 p.m. in the Park Room. All equipment needed will be provided. The session will close with a carol and prayer in the light of the candles. Bearing in mind the timing, it is suggested you bring a very small snack. This is an open event so please bring a friend. For more information please contact Angela Bolton

At 10 a.m. on **Sunday 21st December** Rev Ron Talmey will be leading our Christmas Nativity Service. There will be no evening service.

Rev. Nigel Uden will lead our Christmas Eve Communion Service at 11.30 p.m. on **Wednesday December 24th**.

Rev. Dr. David Owen will lead our **Christmas Day** Family Service at 10 a.m.

At 10 a.m. on **Sunday 28th December**, Bob Wyatt of the Gideons will lead our worship. There will be no evening service.

MONDAY MORNING GROUP

We meet at 10.30 in the Park Room for lively discussions and are completing a series on the people in the Advent story. On December 1st we think about Mary and on December 8th we think particularly of Jesus himself. The sessions are all self-contained, so don't worry if you have to be away for one. All welcome!

MODERATOR'S CHRISTMAS LETTER

Dear friends

Sometimes we feel uncomfortable about the juxtaposition of Christmas festivity and the harsh realities that punctuate life. How can we sing 'Come and join the celebration' knowing that Christians in India are being murdered for their faith and young people in south London knifed, for what? How can we ponder the Magis' lavish gifts, when the person beside us in church, even ourselves, may be living in fuel poverty? How are we to understand God's Christmas love when our own family is fractured by domestic violence, infidelity or neglect? It can seem that the seasonal carolling flies in the face of unprecedented hurting.

Yet into such a world as this Jesus Christ was born. 2000 years ago things were far from idyllic: they knew international tension as we do, political oppression and all the other vicissitudes of life, too. What is more, they had nothing like the medical miracles and easy electronic communication that can transform even our darkest moments today. Jesus didn't come to paradise; he came to a world marked by wounds and incompleteness, there to offer healing and wholeness. In short, Jesus was born to be good news when and where good news was profoundly needed. It's precisely because he was light in the darkness that angels sang 'Glory to God'; precisely because he was love in the face of inhumanity that they continued, 'Peace on earth'.

Christmas comes not as a season of cruelly insensitive jollity amid our suffering, but as a reminder of 'love divine, all loves excelling . . . to earth come down' and an offer of hope. That hope is because of the difference-making with-us-ness of God, which ceaselessly reminds us of how God loves us, and urges us to treat each other with love, too. It's also a resurrection-inspired hope that God has ultimate purposes - 'God's great clean-up of an unjust and violent world', as one has put it. So our carolling is right on message. As financial recession threatens, as we grapple with grief, as too many places are politically unstable or at war, as ecological frailty alarms us and as we wonder about the future of the

church in these islands, we can, we must sing with heart and voice, 'Joy to the world, the Lord is come'.

2008 has been a year of experimentation as we have explored new ways of organising ourselves in the URC. There are green shoots of real possibility but it has not been easy. For your commitment and for your patience, I should like to say a genuine thank you. I look forward to the current review of these things enabling us to move forward purposefully during 2009. To that end, we are always seeking willing volunteers to be part of the Synod's operation. Paul reminded the people of Corinth of the different gifts and abilities given to us through the Holy Spirit. We, the body of Christ, need to be aware of these gifts so that they can be used in his work. The Synod hopes to compile a list of those who might be asked as particular rôles become vacant. If you know of people who might be willing to become involved in our work, please send names to the Synod Clerk. We'll be grateful.

The Synod's officers and staff join Bethan, Jess and me in sending warm Christmas greetings and very best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Uden

WELCARE AT CHRISTMAS

Welcare are again asking for our help this Christmas to offer support to so many families in the area who are in need. They are looking for **BRAND NEW**:

- Developmental and activity toys, books and crafts for babies, toddlers and children up to age 8.
- Gifts suitable for teenagers and parents.
- Vouchers from Early Learning Centre, Woolworths, Boots, Marks and Spencer, Sainsbury's.

If you are able to support this very worthwhile organisation, please bring your gifts **UNWRAPPED** to the morning service on Sunday 7th December. Please note, the items must be brand new.

Any further information from Angela Bolton email@ambolton.me.uk

WOMEN'S GUILD

At our November meeting we had the great pleasure of having Dorothy Ross-Tomlin to tell us about her year as Mayor of Reigate and Banstead. She told us of the well-over 300 engagements she had attended, sometimes two or three in a day, ranging from Civic Services and Awards ceremonies to showing school children round the Town Hall, and even a Royal Garden Party. We really admired her energy, stamina and enthusiasm. Thank you Dorothy for such an entertaining and enjoyable talk, which I'm sure our members will remember for a long time.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd December at 10.30 a.m. in the Hall and will be our Christmas Meeting. Please note the **change of date**.

Liz Bullen

ECOTIP

At the risk of being called Ebenezer Scrooge and having you all shouting 'Bah! Humbug!' at me whenever we meet, I have decided to risk sharing with you some 'Eco-Christmas' thoughts.

'Reduce, Reuse and Recycle' is a common eco mantra and yet to consider using it for Christmas presents somehow reeks of second hand/charity/sub-standard/ miserly and just not cool. And yet . . . for a long time now I have felt uncomfortable with the consumerist spend, spend, spend attitude of Christmas.

I have overcome this in several ways. For some years now we have had a different take on the adult Christmas presents that we share with our friends and family. My vast extended family don't buy one another traditional Christmas presents any more. Instead we each donate money to a charity of our choice on behalf of the people we would be buying for. The first Christmas we did it I admit there was a pang when Christmas morning came along and we saw our almost non-existent piles of presents, but the more I thought about it the more sense it seemed to make. For instance, unsure what to get great-grandma who is so hard to buy for as she never wants anything; I would get her some nice biscuits only to hear that my cousin and my sister had also got her some. It was just buying for the sake of it.

Often, however, I feel it's right to give a gift because I want to say thank you for support, help and friendship during the preceding year or just because I want to show I care. So, for my close family and friends I now make my own Christmas presents. This is not as hard as it sounds, and far

less stressful than traipsing around the shops for hours with three grumpy children in tow! I love cooking, and in past years gifts have included home made chocolates, flavoured oils, Christmas pickles or someone's favourite cake. The children love helping me and I wrap the gifts in paper and boxes carefully saved from the previous year's Christmas. The presents always go down well, as my family and friends know how precious a commodity time is for me. I suppose they feel nurtured and loved that I have chosen to spend my time making something especially for them - not that they would tell me if they hated my efforts after all my hard work!

This year, we are also going to have a go at making our own named Christmas crackers, filling them with homemade silly jokes and little gifts that everyone will really appreciate instead of ones that just break or get thrown away. There are lots of 'how to make your own crackers' guides on the internet and you can buy 18 cracker snaps (the bangs) from Amazon for £1.95. After all, a home only needs one tiny screwdriver or magnifying glass and we already have enough key rings! Happy Christmas!

Our next Ecoteam Meeting is in January 2009.

Sonia Christie ☎ 270095, sonia.christie@ntlworld.com

CHURCH LIBRARY

Some months ago I encouraged everyone to take a look at the Church Library before the end of the year. Well, it's fast approaching, and I wonder how many of you have risen to the challenge?! I know that the Vines group of Junior Church have done so, and some of them have borrowed a book, so why don't you? Several of the groups preparing services are also making use of the wide range of books on offer. Many of our books have been donated by RPC members, and the rest are bought with profits from the book trolley. There is now an 'eco-corner' with some beautiful new books - many thanks to Sonia Christie for organising this. How about taking your coffee into the library one Sunday and having a browse?

Pat Denchfield

SHORT MATters

The month of November was hectic with three league matches and a friendly, but unfortunately you will have to wait till the January issue for the reports, when we shall have completed half of our fixtures for the 2008/9 season.

Some members are coping reasonably well with our Electrowind machine, and some are a little wary of it. The problem is to wind the mat so that it is even, like a Swiss roll, and does not get crumpled at the edges against the side of the machine, and this is made worse if the mat has got distorted when rolled by hand. Practice makes perfect. At one session, somehow the trip switch in the plug became faulty and we were unable to lay a mat, so we could not practise and we need to.

Brian Dean ☎ 774208

CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS

Our collection - both goods and cash donations - began on Sunday 23rd November and ends on Sunday 7th December. Boxes will be in the foyer each Sunday morning for your contributions. Please help with this project by supporting generously so that Open Christmas can provide a good experience for those people for whom there is little or no room in our society. Any queries to - Jill Campbell ☎ 223831

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We regret that Dorothy Ross-Tomlin was unable to give us her talk in November. Another time perhaps. However Sheila Charge came and gave us a most interesting and entertaining talk about the three years when she was in the Women's Land Army during the war. Thank you, Sheila, thank you. Our thanks too to the ladies for an excellent meal.

Ron Cooke

CRÈCHE ROTA

This is the rota for December. Please remember you are responsible for the session allocated to you. If you are unable to cover your duty, please ensure you have swapped with someone else on the rota. Many thanks!

Sandra Reid

7th December	Claire Harris	Gretta Taylor
14th December	Karen Best	Zoë or Paul Marshall
21st December	Judy Fowler	Anne Boyd
28th December	No crèche	

ZIMBABWE PROJECT

Our friends in Zimbabwe continue to be close to our hearts as we remember and pray for them. With real joy we heard from Caleb recently and his letter is on the opposite page.

It is good to know that Caleb receives the Junior Church material and, I assume, the Bible reading notes, which we will collect as usual in January. He longs for Bibles but these can be heavy to send. However, if anyone has any fairly small, light New Testaments which I could include with his Bible reading notes, I will do my best to send them.

While we continue to make things for the children at the Mission we have not had any news of them for a long time and I wonder if the ladies I wrote to are still in charge. Articles in the October Reform made me feel I should make another effort to find out what happens there.

Meantime I am ever grateful for all the pennies you continue to donate towards the postage. Thank you.

Jean Bushby

- - -

Mutara Mission
PB662, Mutara
Zimbabwe

Dear good friends Alec and Jean

Thank you very much for writing about sending parcels. All have been received. Absence has indeed made our hearts grow fonder, since we have been physically separated from you, our good friends (though never for a moment separated in hearts!). We have longed all the more to come and see you. We know you are praying for us and also in return we praised the Lord, we have some of you praying for us. We are at home. Our children are all away. They come and visit us and share God's Kingdom together.

Most of the days Christine spends time in the garden, and I help also when she needs help. Sundays we go to Church and join the fellowship this helps us why Christ came down. It is very hard in this country, when you do not have forex [foreign exchange], to buy some of the things. If you find us not writing, it is because no forex to buy stamps. We are facing some hardships, our prayers paving the way for us that one day we shall be as other people are.

The Sunday School materials are so helpful otherwise we could not do

anything at the moment. Some people do not have anything to read. At times like this we need Jesus Christ to revive our hearts, because in other places in the countryside people have been not able to go to church because of what has been happening. We pray that the Lord of peace will come to give peace in our country.

Remember us to your family. We are looking forward to see you soon. God will provide with tickets so that we visit you and the church.

Please give our love, greetings to all who love us in the faith, they should continue to pray for us, things are not good in country, shops are empty, we pray that the Lord will hear our prayers, sometimes we need Bibles then we cannot get them.

Grace be with you all. Remember us to those around the fire of Jesus Christ, praying for us.

With love and best wishes

Christine and Caleb.

Till Then

In His Name, Lord Jesus.

TRADCRAFT UPDATE

I thought it was about time to let the folk who so regularly support the monthly Traidcraft sale know how we were getting on! Below are the figures for the year up to July 2008, so we can see what we have to beat in the coming year and also feel a small sense of achievement for what we have already achieved: £1950 this year!

Just a reminder that we have catalogues available on the stall and these show many lovely items, which we are unable to present to you ourselves through lack of space and availability. Please take a catalogue and then place an order with us, which we will pick up for you, hopefully by the next sale, when we collect stock.

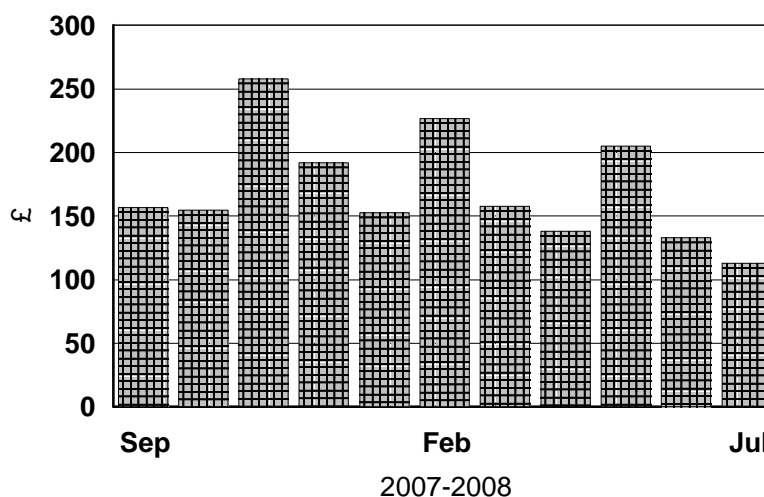
I have taken the information below from the Traidcraft website, since it shows why we should be buying items in this ethically right way and the difference it is making to the producers when we do.

What is fair trade?

Fair trade differs from standard trade in five principal ways. Traidcraft is committed to fair trade and defines this as:

1. Traidcraft only works with poor and marginalised producers, working with them to develop their skills and create a sustainable livelihood via a trading relationship.
2. Traidcraft pay fair prices that will cover the full cost of raw materials, cost of production and enough to enable a living wage. Some producers also receive an additional premium they can use to buy machinery or for building projects.
3. Traidcraft pay for a percentage of the goods in advance so the

**Reigate Park Church
Traidcraft takings 2007-2008**



producer can buy raw materials without having to borrow money from local banks or loan sharks.

4. Traidcraft encourage all producers to treat staff fairly and with respect, working conditions should be safe in the workplace and throughout the supply chain.

5. Traidcraft look to work with producers long-term, building working relationships; they would not work with them short-term, using them for commercial advantage.

Some Traidcraft producers are given additional benefits by packing the products at source, thus receiving income that might otherwise have gone to organisations in the United Kingdom. The fairly traded Mauritian sugars are packed on the island at Craft Aid, providing work for disabled people. Fruit Snacks from South Africa are packed locally providing valuable employment for the local workforce. Organic cotton from Agrocel in India is then shipped to Mauritius to be made into clothing items by the workers at Craft Aid, providing work for disabled people. Traidcraft's own brand coffee - the beans are from Fairtrade certified sources in Tanzania and then shipped to India to be processed.

Once again thanks for your support; keep on buying!

EASTER WORKSHOP

Here is an early reminder about the Easter Workshop 2009. The dates to put in your diaries, if you haven't already, are 6 - 9 April 2009 9.30 - 12.00. All primary school children welcome. In the new year I will be looking for plenty of volunteers for this event, so please think about how you can help, whether it be at the time or before or after. There will be plenty of opportunities. I will also be arranging dates for some meetings for these volunteers, so look out for them in the Record and the service leaflets and come along.

More information from Angela Bolton ☎ 248430

POLICE NOTICE - POSTAL SCAM

A card may be posted through your door from a company called PDF Parcel Delivery Service suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 09066611911. Do not call this premium rate number as it is a mail scam originating from Belize. If you call this number and start hearing a recorded message you will already have been billed £15 for the phone call.

FORGIVENESS

Many of you know me as Ron Cooke's wife - a title I hold with pride. However, I am also a Natural Health Practitioner mainly using Reflexology but bringing in Aromatherapy and Nutritional advice when necessary. I am therefore interested in anything which empowers people to help themselves, especially for myself as for twenty years I have had to manage my own health with challenges like Chronic Fatigue and the Menopause!

A few years ago I read a book called *The Journey* by Brandon Bays. In it she told of her journey of discovery in healing herself in six weeks from a large tumour in her uterus and finding God/The Source in the process. She now finds herself invited all over the world teaching 'The Journey' process to others, even in Moslem countries. The key to this process appears to be forgiveness.

When we have difficult challenges in our lives and we pray for help or others pray for us I believe help comes in many different disguises and only when we are ready for them. We are here to learn and experience many things. Although I was interested in joining Brandon Bays for a 'Journey' weekend the finances were not there - I was not ready. This year, however, I received a tax rebate and off I went.

WOW what a weekend! The meditations were powerful, bringing up stuff from the past, helping us to revisit times when we had been 'hurt' physically and/or emotionally. Bringing those antagonists around a 'campfire' to talk over what happened and hearing their side of the story and forgiving each other. Letting go of old stuff which we had suppressed over the years. It was liberating. (There were experienced people there to look after us when it became too much to bear).

People and/or circumstances can hurt us or our loved ones either physically or emotionally. We either do not forgive or pretend to ourselves that we have forgiven. We also hurt ourselves and others and cannot forgive ourselves. We suppress these feelings into every cell in our bodies. These are feelings of anger, bitterness, grief or fear. It is so very difficult to forgive and this brings me to the Lord's Prayer:

' . . . Forgive us our trespasses **as** we forgive those who trespass against us'

After that line I try to say "please help us to forgive".

After the 'Journey' weekend I looked again at those words and realised we are only asking God to forgive us to the extent that we forgive others - hence the reason I have put '**as**' in bold print. Therefore if we do not

forgive everyone and everything including ourselves all the time we are asking God not to forgive us in the same way.

Brandon's personal 'Journey' was very difficult and very draining, forgiving her parents for her traumatic childhood but finding God helped her and enabled her to forgive and to give love to the hurt child inside her and release the 'pain'.

In my training I was taught not just by one of my tutors but all of them that all diseases have an emotional base - stuff which we have suppressed rather than dealt with.

So please when you say our Lord's Prayer think about who you need to forgive and do so fully letting go of past hurts. Our Lord died for our sins so don't bottle them up - believe, forgive and let go.

Namaste beloved.

(Namaste means I acknowledge and honour the Holy One inside you)

Angela Cooke

LETTER TO *REFORM*

Michael Ball has written to *Reform* along the following lines. Let us hope his idea gets taken up.

Over many years Reigate Park Church included a report from General Assembly at Church Meeting. This was given by one of the District representatives. Sadly, this has ceased, and although the written report is available this cannot impart the flavour of the Assembly as well as a verbal report.

Even before the demise of the Districts this practice stopped as the number of District representatives fell from eight, first to six and then four. This placed too great a load on those attending to expect them to visit all the churches in the District.

I would like to suggest that the denomination commissions a DVD lasting 30 to 45 minutes which could be made available to churches for showing at Church Meeting or other occasion. This could be of a single person talking, interspersed with video pictures, or of a conversation set up to give the flavour of General Assembly.

This would help those of us who are unlikely ever to go to Assembly to have a better picture of how the denomination actually works. I am sending this letter to *Reform* so that, if published, it can open up a dissertation on the issue.

VELLORE

I have received a letter from Mrs Ann Witchalls, who is now helping Pat Wallis with the Pay for a Patient scheme (PTP) of the Christian Medical College (CMC) and hospital, Vellore. She says:

‘For many years you and your church have been such faithful supporters of this ministry to some of the poorest people in South India. On behalf of those who over the years have received healing and help through your gifts I sincerely thank you. India may be a growing economy, but there are still many millions below the poverty line who depend on the goodwill of others for their basic needs. Every month the PTP Office in Vellore receives twice as many requests for help as we have money donated, and sadly other resources have to be found to meet the need. Your interest and participation in this work are still very much needed.

‘My husband, Brian and I were missionaries of the Church Mission Society (CMS). we worked full time at CMC for a number of years, my husband as hospital engineer and I in the Public Relations Office. Now that we are “retired” we spend six months every year back at Vellore helping at the hospital. I am writing to you from Vellore now. I do not know whether you have members of the congregation with knowledge of CMC, or how you started to take an interest in CMC. If it would be of interest to you Brian and I would be pleased to come and give you news of the current work of CMC. There is also an excellent 10 minute DVD, taken last year by a professional Australian team, of the work of the hospital which we could bring.’

[WATCH THIS SPACE !- ED]

Eileen Charlton

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT AT GATTON PARK

7 pm Saturday 6th December.

This year the Gatton Trust welcomes The Redbury Singers under the direction of David Leeke.

Adults £12, children £5. Price includes mulled wine and mince pie. Cheques with SAE to ‘Gatton Trust’, Foundation Office, Gatton Park, Reigate, RH2 0TW.

Gatton Park is in the grounds of the Royal Alexandra and Albert School, off Rocky Lane, Merstham. ☎ 649068

CHURCH OFFICE

Church & Community Manager : Susan Stanley

Tuesday to Friday, 9.15 am to 1.00 pm

Administrative Assistant : Linda Cockerill

Monday to Thursday, 9.15 am to 1.00 pm

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THE RECORD

is the magazine of Reigate Park Church and is normally published on the last Sunday of each month: the next *Record* is due for collection on December 28th.

Contributions should be with the Editor:

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at least two weeks before publication date (but see note this month).

Copy for the December edition is due by

Sunday, December 7th

If you wish to receive a regular copy of *The Record*, please contact the Distributor:

Peter Mercer, 59 Poynes Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 8LS

☎ 01293 773466

DECEMBER DIARY

- Tuesday 2nd 10.30am Women's Guild (in the Hall).
- Sunday** 7th 10.00am Service led by Jane and Ian Buck and FROGS.
No Communion.
CRISIS collection ends.
6.30pm Five Lessons and Carols. Band of the Surrey
Yeomanry.
- Thursday 11th 12.30pm Men's Fellowship Christmas Lunch.
- Sunday** 14th 10.00am Rev. Nigel Uden. Holy Communion.
7.00pm Carols at the Belfry, Redhill.
- Tuesday 16th 6.30pm Christingle Service. Rev. John Joseph.
- Wednesday 17th 12.15pm Midweek Communion Service. Jill Campbell
4.00pm 'Tiny People's Christingle Service'. Park Room.
- Sunday** 21st 10.00am Nativity. Rev. Ron Talmey.
No evening service.
- Wednesday 24th 11.30pm Christmas Eve Communion. Rev. Nigel Uden.
- Thursday 25th 10.00am Christmas Day Family Service. Rev. Dr. David Owen
- Sunday** 28th 10.00am Bob Wyatt (Gideons).
No evening service.
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In addition to those mentioned above, our weekly activities normally include Junior Church and Crèche at 10.00 a.m. each Sunday, Brownies, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Busy Bees Playclub, Monday Morning Group, Choir, Conquest Art, Playgroup, Toddlers Plus Group and Short Mat Bowling.

JANUARY RECORD

To allow the team a little more flexibility for Christmas preparations, please can you give your contributions for next month's *Record* to Denis a week earlier than usual, if at all possible. As usual, if you are likely to have something which can't meet this target, speak to him in advance and he can allow space for you.