

THE RECORD

OF REIGATE PARK CHURCH (UNITED REFORMED)



FEBRUARY 2010

No 864

REIGATE PARK CHURCH

(UNITED REFORMED)

Park Lane East, Reigate RH2 8BD

Registered Charity 1130103

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

Mavis Proctor (☎ 778430), Michael Ball (☎ 768348),

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

Brian Hoad (☎ 243720), Carol Nicholls (☎ 240372)



It was 1939 and approaching Christmas (as I write this letter it is still the season of Christmas), I was six years old and I had just seen Father Christmas in a department store. Now I was entering another store and here he was again. But something was wrong. When I had seen him ten minutes ago he was wearing a pointed hood and now he was wearing a round hood. At that moment a part of my childhood was lost for ever,

Some of you may have had similar experiences. We may have been momentarily disappointed, but children rapidly adapt to changed situations, especially if the presents keep coming! I suppose this really ought to be the end, but it isn't and we are only too eager to relive the story of Father Christmas with our children and our grandchildren. At any rate most of us are, for there are some who feel distinctly uneasy. 'How,' they ask, 'when children discover the truth about Father Christmas, will they respond when we tell them about Jesus?'

This may be the moment to leave old Father Christmas because at heart the question is concerned with deception. Implicit in the question, it seems to me, is the assumption that only something which is true in a literal sense can have valid meaning (incidentally a view held, from their radically different viewpoints, by religious fundamentalists and atheists alike). However I wonder if this is really the case. How many of us believe that all the stories in the Bible can be taken literally?

Even confining ourselves to the New Testament there are problems. We may readily concede that the stories told by Jesus are not to be taken literally. Their purpose, we say, is to convey an inner meaning, what the American scholar Marcus Berg calls a 'more than literal' meaning; we refer to them as parables.

But there are the stories about Jesus. Take for example the story of the loaves and fishes and the feeding of the five thousand. Personally I cannot believe that it is recording an actual event in time. Though it may well have been based on some remembered incident, I hear it as parable. For me its meaning is that if we humans were to share the earth's resources equally then there would be more than sufficient for us all, a truth that hopefully we have been gradually learning since early childhood but which, unlike Father Christmas, is not confined to our childhood.

With every good wish,

Mike Bullen

JUNIOR CHURCH

On Sunday 17th January we finally presented our Nativity Service, postponed due to the pre-Christmas bout of snow. Many thanks to everyone who took part; from the very first stage of planning the Theme Day to the final service: you were all so adaptable and cooperative throughout all the changes of plan! Special thanks go to Sharon Scotton who had the idea of producing a newspaper in this way, and also to Sue Knight for working with us to blend the interviews into the service.

We were pleased that day to welcome Kirsty Middlemist from the Southern Synod; she greatly enjoyed seeing the children in action, and then presented us with the Child-Friendly Award. Kirsty is also looking forward to being at our Easter Workshop this year.

Pat Denchfield

PRAYER CALENDAR

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

- 7th February** *St Mary the Virgin Parish Church, Buckland.*
14th February *St Mary Magdalen Church, Chart Lane, Reigate.*
21st February *The Contact Centre, at Reigate Park Church.*
28th February *Reigate and Redhill YMCA, Princes Road, Redhill.*

SHEILA MARY CHARGE

Sheila Charge died on 9th December aged 86 years, having lived at 12 Vogan Close for 60 years, and her memorial service, led by Rev. Ron Talmey, was held on 22nd December, followed by a service of committal at Surrey and Sussex Crematorium. The organist was Dr John Bertalot, Cathedral Organist Emeritus of Blackburn Cathedral, who also gave a full appreciation of his cousin. Donations were invited for SCOPE, because Sheila's young brother was a spastic. During the Second World War she served in the Women's Land Army. She was the Head Teacher at Dovers Green School for many years and a friend of Margaret Kent, who also taught there. Sheila was a good wife to Dick who predeceased her, a caring mother to her sons Peter and Nicholas, and a family person, with four grandchildren, Loma, Sebastian, Addison and Josh. Her faith in God helped her to be caring and helpful to all around her. She was a member of Reigate Park Church and was at the morning service on 6th December,

three days before she died unexpectedly.

NEWS OF THE FAMILY

We pray for all who are unwell and any others known to us.

Congratulations to Martin Skitt and Sarah Heasman who are engaged.
Congratulations to Rowena Clayton who is to remarry in April.

Jo Clarkson (Seaman) had a baby, Olivia, on 29th December. We congratulate Sue and Alan Girling on the birth of a granddaughter, Ruby, born to Elaine and Paul on 6th January. Also on 6th January, a new grandson, Jack, for Richard Proctor, a son for David and Hayley. Congratulations to all.

We have a prayer chain which is updated each week. Should you wish any names to be included, or you have friends and family that you would like mentioned, please contact the Pastoral Group who meet every Tuesday morning.

On 14th February Paul and Zoë Marshall are having Elizabeth dedicated. After the service and refreshments they are organising a 'bring and share' lunch in the hall which is open to all. Please see Zoë if you plan to come so that they can sort out the catering.

MONDAY MORNING GROUP

On January 18th we began a five-week series on some of the parables of Jesus. Denis Ward started us off with the Lost Son or the Two Brothers (Luke 15, 11 - 32) and on the 25th Michael Ball introduced the Ten Girls (Matthew 25, 1 - 13). On February 1st Angela Bolton will set us thinking about the Three Servants (Matthew 25, 14 - 50). On February 8th Ralph Bristol brings us to the Good Samaritan (Luke 10, 25 - 35). On February 15th Merle Nadal will lead us on the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22, 1 - 14).

On February 22nd we begin one of the excellent York Lent courses. You are most welcome to join us on Monday mornings in the Park Room at 10.30 a.m. beginning with tea or coffee. Even if you cannot get to all the meetings, each one is self-contained and worth coming to.

EASTER WORKSHOP, April 12 - 15

At our postponed meeting we made some significant strides. After a lively discussion and throwing around many ideas, a seed for a theme is germinating, so we hope to tighten this up at our next open meeting on Monday 8th February in the Park Room at 8 pm.

Kirsty Middlemist, who presented us with our Child Friendly Church Award, will be heading up our 'Church' sessions and is really excited at the prospect. She too has many ideas and is hoping to involve the young people there in her sessions. She is also hoping to get round the groups and definitely be very involved. As she said in her presentation, she is always on the lookout for good ideas to pinch!

I have already had some names of volunteers but as usual I will be looking for **lots** more! We need 'before and after' help as well as during the Workshop week when we will need people to work with the children and people to do 'behind the scenes' stuff, like preparing much-needed refreshments and washing up.

As well as plenty of adult volunteers, I am also keen to have young people from Year 8 upwards. The children attending always seem to form special relationships with these young people and it is very beneficial all round. Last year we had the most young people helping that we have ever had and it was really special. All volunteers have references taken and all adults are CRB checked.

Please contact me if you feel you would like to know more or would like to offer help and please do come to the next meeting on Monday February 8th at 8 pm in the Park Room. We need your help!

Angela Bolton (☎ 248430)

WORSHIP IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

At 10 a.m. on Sunday 7th February, Rev. Peter Flint will lead our service of Holy Communion, which will include the induction of Angela Bolton to the Eldership. There will be no evening service.

At 10 a.m. on Sunday 14th February, Rev John Joseph will lead our worship, which will include the dedication of Elizabeth, the daughter of Paul and Zoë Marshall. At 6.30 p.m., Peter Mercer will lead our Communion Service.

At 10 a.m. on Sunday 21st February, Rev Dr David Owen will lead our worship. There will be no evening service.

At 10 a.m. on Sunday 28th February, Dr Graham Campling will lead our worship. There will be no evening service.

WOMEN'S GUILD

Our January meeting had to be cancelled because of the snow. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 9th February, when our speaker will be Claire Page who will be telling us about her life as an opera singer. Any ladies who wish to come to our meetings will be most welcome.

Liz Bullen

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

At our next meeting on Thursday 11th February speakers from the Fire Brigade will talk to us about home safety.

BOOK GROUP

The next Book Group meeting will be on Monday, 21st February at 8 p.m. at Apartment 29 Holmesdale Manor, 89 Ladbroke Road, Redhill, the home of Michael Ball (☎ 768348). The book will be *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. Come and join us. All are welcome.

STEWARDS' ROTA

During 2010 I shall be preparing Stewards' rotas in February, May, August and November. If and when stewards know any holiday dates or when they will not be available on Sundays, could you please let me have details, in writing, by the first week of these months. This will avoid the need for alterations.

Elizabeth Shaw

ECO-COURSE

Did you know that households create over 30 per cent of greenhouse emissions in the UK? All this worry about climate change, increasing stress on natural resources, growing mountains of rubbish, worsening air and water pollution, it can be difficult to know where to begin. It's very easy to absorb information, but it's much harder to actually get around to doing something.

That's where Ecoteams comes in. This is a course I did eight years ago that first infected me with the eco-bug which has since been updated and modernised and provides the practical information we need to take positive steps in our own lives towards greener living. Working together, through a series of action-focused monthly meetings and online facilities, we will be provided with all the tools we need to make a difference.

The course starts by working out our current environmental impact. Then we'll look at how to address the impacts we uncover. We do this by discovering a variety of areas that reduce our carbon footprints and save money on our household bills whilst exploring the four themes of rubbish and shopping, energy, water and travel. On average people taking part reduce:

- Their energy and water bills by £170
- The rubbish they throw away by 20 per cent
- The water they use by 15 per cent
- The amount of carbon they emit by 17 per cent.

It doesn't matter if you have no idea or are already pretty green - there is always more information and inspiration on tap. This course is informative and a fun way to get to know one another better. A start date will be set once I have an idea of how many people would like to take part.

If you are interested in joining us (and bring a friend if you would like) then contact Sonia Christie at sonia.christie@ntlworld.com or ☎ 01737 270095.

THANKS

May I take this opportunity to thank so many of you who sent me cards of good wishes for Christmas and New Year. They were much appreciated.

Also there were cheques for UNICEF which will be invaluable for many children. Please accept my thanks and good wishes for 2010 in return.

Hazel Arscott

FROM THE CHURCH MEETING

It was a very short Church Meeting which Tina Papworth chaired on January 17th. For one thing, the main item had already been covered, so that the whole church congregation could be aware of it - the position with regard to calling a minister. We learnt then that a minister would be preaching 'with a view' on January 31st, and a number of events would be arranged over the weekend for us to meet him and his family, but details would not be available until the following Sunday. So on Sunday February 7th, at 11.30 a.m., there will be a Special Church Meeting at which we shall be able to discuss, and, if the Holy Spirit so leads us, to send a call to the pastorate.

Michael Ball reported on an interim meeting of the Synod, which was mainly deciding upon the division into 'synod areas' and two joint

Methodist/URC areas. The areas will have several meetings each year, and the whole Synod will meet yearly. The churches in Greater London will form one area, and we will join with other churches to form the Surrey and Sussex Synod Area. This will put us in closer touch with churches like Dorking, Leatherhead, Epsom and Ewell. The other major consideration was the Synod budget for 2010. From the sale of churches, and so on, the Synod had £12m five years ago, which has been gradually used up and is down to £4m. Even cutting down various things, the proposed budget deficit is £972k. Two of the cuts were for “Turn the Tide” youth workers and Strategic Ministers. The motion for the Finance Committee to reconsider these two items did not get a two thirds majority. There was however a strong feeling about this. It is not clear therefore whether our proposed Community and Youth Minister will be supported, and we may need to consider instead the possibility of funding again a skilled youth worker.

A HOLY LAND HOLIDAY

Rev. Stephen Thornton, who has several times preached at our church, is leading a holiday to the Holy Land from October 19th to 28th. They will visit Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Judean Wilderness, Jericho, Masada and the Dead Sea, before moving north to the Galilee and visiting Nazareth, Cana, Mount Tabor, Capernaum and the sites of Jesus’ ministry by the lake side. As well as walking in the footsteps of Jesus, we will explore the present situation between Israel and the Palestinians.

The cost will be £1360. This will include very comfortable hotels, all food, air fare, the air conditioned coach, the driver, the guide, all entrance fees, two cable cars, one taxi trip, so all people need to pay for are drinks and souvenirs.

Michael Ball has been on one of these trips. Everyone who has been thinks it very good value.

If you would like any extra information I either have this, or can obtain it for you.

Daphne Hamblin, ☎ 01342 892465

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday March 5th: 10.30 a.m. Reigate Park Church
 2.00 p.m. Redhill Baptist Church
 7.30 p.m. St Mark's Church, Reigate

This year's Women's World Day of Prayer service has been devised by the Christian women of Cameroon and is entitled, 'Let everything that hath breath, Praise God'.

The Republic of Cameroon is situated on the Gulf of Guinea and is bordered by Nigeria, Chad, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. Cameroon has been described as 'Africa in miniature' because it has so many diverse geographical regions. It produces and refines oil and rubber, mines bauxite, and grows cotton, timber, bananas, coffee and oilseed. Cameroon is becoming a popular tourist destination.

The Bantu speakers were the first to arrive, followed in the 15th century by the Portuguese, then in the 18th and 19th centuries by the Muslim Fulani. In 1884 the area came under German domination. After World War 1, the League of Nations granted France a mandate for 80 per cent of the land, with the British having 20 per cent. Self-government was granted in 1946 under a United Nations trusteeship. In 1972 the United Republic of Cameroon was born.

The right of tradition often discriminates against women as only male heads of households have land rights. Socially the place of women is still influenced by patriarchal tendencies, but women make great efforts at all levels.

Of great concern are malaria, poverty and malnutrition affecting more than one in five children, child trafficking, the problems of delivering education and the threat of Baka's way of life.

Do come along to one of these services, open to all, not just women - they only produce the service. We hope to see you.

Mary Warren

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THE RECORD

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at least two weeks before publication date.

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Sunday, February 7th - please note, 1 week earlier than usual!

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

Betty Ford, 6 Park Lane East, Reigate RH2 8HN

☎ ***(01737) 246438***

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FEBRUARY DIARY

- Sunday** 7th 10.00am Rev. Peter Flint. Holy Communion.
11.30am **Special Church Meeting.**
Copy due for the March *Record*.
- Monday 8th 8.00pm Easter Workshop meeting. Park Room.
- Tuesday 9th 10.30am Women's Guild. Claire Page
- Thursday 11th 12.30pm Men's Fellowship.
'Home Safety' by the Fire Brigade.
- Sunday** 14th 10.00am Rev. John Joseph.
Dedication of Elizabeth Marshall.
Traidcraft Stall.
12.30pm 'Bring and Share' lunch.
6.30pm Rev. George Watt. Holy Communion.
- Wednesday 17th 10.30am Community Coffee Stop.
- Sunday** 21st 10.00am Rev. Dr David Owen.
6.00pm Kidz Klub. 'Giant Games'.
- Monday 22nd 8.00pm Book Club at Apartment 29, Holmesdale Manor,
89 Ladbroke Road, Redhill.
- Thursday 25th 11.00am Zimbabwe Working Party at 1 Evesham Road.
- Sunday** 28th 10.00am Dr Graham Campling.
12.30pm Sunday Lunch Club

The next **Church Meeting** is on Tuesday March 16th

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.