

June - July 2020

ENCOUNTER



<http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/redhillmethodistchurch/>



MESSY CHURCH AT HOME

Redhill Methodist Messy Church continues to offer resources to enable us to share together in Christ-centred fellowship through creativity, hospitality and celebration at home.

New sessions appear on the Messy Church page of the church website very month on Messy Church day.

Find the session for May [here](#) (see photos, right)

A new session will be posted on Saturday 20th June



Further resources for Messy Church at Home can be found on the Messy Church website [here](#)

May God bless all our Messy Church families and volunteers until we are able to meet together again.

FROM THE MINISTER

Hello Everyone,

I've been thinking just how true the age old saying that "necessity is the mother of invention" really is.

In these 9 weeks (and counting) of lockdown there have been many such *birthings*, perhaps not exactly of 'inventions' as such but certainly new ways of doing things which have become firmly embedded into our lives.

Top of the list for most of us is Zoom. Prior to lockdown the closest to such technology I was familiar with was Skype. Now, for most of us, Zoom is the choice 'go to' means of communication enabling us to speak as well as see friends and family, conduct business meetings or even hold church services. Of course to do so you have to be connected to the internet via a smart phone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

As I write this I've just come away from a very comforting meeting with folk at the 'virtual' Arches café. What an absolute joy to see so many dear faces I haven't been able to see since lockdown began. Thank you to everyone who helped 'birth' such a fine and caring initiative.

The other invention now firmly embedded in my life is media technology. Each week I have the occasion to relive a conversation I had some 18 months ago with the sales assistant at the shop where I'd gone to buy a replacement desktop computer.

He asked what I use my computer for – and wanted to know whether I was a 'gamer'. I vividly remember the look I shot him. One which I hoped conveyed my total ignorance about 'gaming' and its associated technology and indignation that he could imagine I would spend my time on such juvenile activities. Of course the only reason for his enquiry was that if I was a 'gamer' then I would need a computer with a larger processor to speed up streaming.

Each week as I have spent more hours than I care to recount uploading and downloading my video recordings for services I remember that conversation and regret my decision to disregard going in for as large a processor as I could have afforded. Because speed is vitally important to me now. Speed of broadband, processor, mega-capacity flashdrive, editing software

programmes – these have become an integral part of my life in these days of media dependency for ministry!

And yet even as I suffer these ‘birthing’ pains I know I’m not alone in this. Many others too are suffering the steep learning curve of technology and all of it is made worthwhile for the reflection, richness and variety of online Christian services which have been such a source of comfort and guidance for many at this time. I particularly celebrate the fact that just within our circuit we have no less than 5 weekly online services, in addition to the many more from other local churches and further afield that altogether provide a real Christian presence and support so needed for these times. Admittedly that presence is slightly trickier to provide for those not on the internet and unable to access these services however within our church community we’re fortunate to have volunteers willing and able to put service sheets through people’s letterboxes or post them in the traditional way.

Indeed one of the vital reminders of this time is the recognition of our need to remain in community with each other and know we are together despite lockdown.

We have just celebrated Pentecost. Somehow I find something quite uncanny with how lockdown 2020 has coincided and run parallel with the Christian calendar at this time. The bleak period of Lent tied into the very bleak start of lockdown for which the reassuring message of Easter Resurrection acted as a real life-line. A retelling and reminder that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is truly alive and nothing can keep him locked away. As Jesus assures his followers - *‘Because I live, you also will live.’* (John 14:19).

At Pentecost we have relived the arrival of the Gift from God breaking down the fear and isolation of those first believers and giving them the ability to communicate in language that could be heard by the many people around them. The power of communication with which they would share the good news of the love of Jesus for all and reach out to the world around them added to it the gift of boldness which no amount of persecution, imprisonment or martyrdom could stifle.

I pray that as his current followers the same gift will touch our lives and produce in us similar gifts for the times we live in so that we too can share

the message far and wide in relevant ways that enables the Good News to be seen in our lives and responses and heard in what we say. Because the world needs our voices and our witness today.

Let us hold all our community in prayer particularly any who are ill or in distress. Especially let us remember those who have recently lost precious family members, as we pray for all others who mourn the loss of loved ones. Wishing everyone a happy Pentecost may the Spirit be always with you!
With love and best wishes

Felicity

A prayer from JPIT, Methodist Church UK

Loving God,

As the sins of systemic racism and police brutality rear their heads once more,
meet us in our anger, sorrow, and frustration.
Guard us from indifference, ignorance and silence.

As Black lives continue to be taken too soon,
and because all were named and loved,
we lift names to you, in remembrance and resolve:
George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Belly Mujinga, Darren Cumberbatch, Olaseni Lewis, Sean Rigg, Mike Brown, Breonna Taylor,
and so many more.

As righteous anger overflows onto the streets,
we join in with the holy cry of "how long O Lord?"
While we pray for peace, may civility not become the enemy of justice.
We lament that past protest has fallen on deaf ears,
and pray for a world transformed by your love.

We plead, for Black communities: justice, safety, equality.
For those who could choose to look away: repentance, education, solidarity.
Help us to declare in word and deed:
Black Lives Matter.

AMEN

FROM Elizabeth

First of all a big THANK YOU to Robert Collins who is stepping down as Senior Steward. Robert has served in this role quietly and efficiently in what has been a year, not without difficulties, especially these last few months. Robert's willingness to help whenever asked has been special and his commitment to visiting the church during the week outstanding. Robert has worked behind the scenes, very often unnoticed. I hope he will enjoy a well-earned rest from the responsibility of Senior Steward although he will not be off the hook just yet (!!) as he is remaining on the steward's team joining Rex Giles, Judith, Aloria, Sabat, Elaine, John and myself.

It has been a pleasure working alongside him. As the incoming Senior Steward I have a hard act to follow, but I will do my best!!

Please feel free to contact me if you need any help or even just feel you would like a chat. My contact details are in the church directory. I am always happy to listen and my shoulders are broad!!! look forward to serving God, the church and the congregation .

God Bless you all and keep well and safe.

Elizabeth

FROM THE EDITOR

Ten weeks of lockdown and slowly things are changing. I hope you have found all the varied resources being provided by churches in the circuit. Below is a reminder of just a few.

Services and songs from East Grinstead

<https://www.facebook.com/TrinityMethodistEG/>

Meanderings from the Manse in Reigate and Taketime Meditations

<https://www.facebook.com/reigate.methodist>

Other services led by Rev Felicity Al-Hassan

<https://www.facebook.com/HorleyMethodistChurch>

The new pages on the website continue to be updated each week:

A page of ideas for new ways of worshipping, meditation and prayer:



<http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/worship/worship-resources/>

A page that is updated each week with either a service sheet unique to Redhill Methodist Church or a reminder to go to the Facebook page for a 'live' service:

<http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/worship/worship-resources/a-service-to-share/>

And a page especially for the young people with a weekly letter from Rodney who, so far, has faithfully written all 10, and other ideas courtesy of ROOTS who are creating resources that we can all share:

<http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/young-people/junior-church/thought-for-the-week/>

I hope you have also found our Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/redhillmethodistchurch/?ref=br_rs

If you know of folk who might not be able to receive Encounter electronically, and who might have been missed in the distribution of paper copies for the April-May Encounter please contact the Editor.

MEETINGS TAKING PLACE VIA 'ZOOM'...

The Arches

I have started a regular online Zoom session from 10.30 on Sat mornings. Anyone is free to join for a chat between 10.30 and 11.30. Sorry coffee and cakes not supplied. We have had around 20 people for the first 2 weeks. I will email the link each week to those who have already participated. Anyone is welcome to join.



Windmill Drive Housegroup

The Windmill Drive housegroup are now meeting fortnightly on Mondays on Zoom. The meetings start at 8.00pm and will be on 8th and 22nd of June and 6th and 20th July.

Choir

We have been meeting on Friday evening at 8.00pm for 40 minutes of chat, Youtube singalongs and general chaos!

If you would like to join any of these meetings please message us via our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/redhillmethodistchurch/>

FROM THE PASTORAL TEAM

It is encouraging to know that our "In Touch " system is working pretty well during our time of Lock-Down. Thanks to all those who are emailing, phoning or finding some other way of contacting other Church folk.

If you are feeling lonely because no-one from the Church has been in touch, please let us know.

<https://www.facebook.com/redhillmethodistchurch/>

Please do not use the Redhill Methodist Church email address as this is not regularly monitored.

If your birthday is in our church birthday book we shall send you a card to wish you a happy day.

Elizabeth Gregory made lovely Pentecost cards which were sent out to some of you. This prayer was written with the greeting. The language is old-fashioned but the words ring true:-

Come, O Holy Spirit, come!
Come as holy fire and burn in us.
Come as holy wind and cleanse us
Come as holy light and lead us
Come as holy truth and teach us
Come as holy forgiveness and free us
Come as holy power and enable us
Come as holy life and dwell in us.

But remember the best form of contact is Prayer!

A REFLECTION...

We are living in very uncertain times at the moment and for some not knowing if they have work to go back to or health issues very worrying, despite all this we have so much to be thankful for. Some of us, have found out just who our friends are, for others it has bough families closer together. For some old grievances have been settled, new relationships have begun and new bonds formed. It has been a time when we have been able to evaluate what we have been doing and maybe make some changes, hopefully positive ones!

It has made me think of just how blessed I am, I have a roof over my head, which many have not, I have friends and family who keep in touch, many have not and are completely on their own. I have enough food; many do not know where their next meal is coming from. I have a garden to sit in where I can enjoy listening to the birds singing. There is a robin who comes every day and visits me he sits on the fence and has even ventured up to the conservatory door.

We live in times when technology makes it possible not only to hear friends and family but to see them as well. What more could we ask for! All these things set me thinking what a Great God we have, he created all that we have but most of all he gave his life for us all, what a sobering thought, but at the same time a positive one, he died a cruel death on a cross so that we might have eternal life.

I think too, we under estimate the power of prayer. It maybe that our prayers are not always answered in the way we expect but looking back we can see that God had been in the centre of many things we have prayed about. We are blessed with so many thought provoking worship songs, among them, *King of Kings majesty*, but also another one that has meant a lot to me and made me think and appreciate what I have, is 'Above all powers, Above all kings' it is on Youtube and if you don't know it, please listen to it, it could change your life like King if Kings did mine. I think I can confidently say that if I did not have my faith, I don't know where I would be today.

I have recently purchased a copy of THE MESSAGE Bible, if you have never read the bible, this is easy to read and once you start difficult to put down, it

brings to life some of the familiar stories that we have heard over and over again.

I will stop now but not without saying a big THANK YOU to my family and many friends who have contacted me over the past weeks and have helped with shopping.

Please take care and keep safe till we are able to meet again, whether it be in Church or in our favourite coffee shop!!

Best Wishes

EG

CREATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ENCOUNTER READERS....

In the April – May Encounter several readers offered details of the things they were doing / taking up/ learning in lockdown. This time there has been an outpouring of poems and prayers, printed as received from their creators. With thanks to all who have allowed them to be printed here.

SMILE.

A SMILE CAN SAY A THOUSAND WORDS
YOU DON'T KNOW THE OLD LADY PASSING BY BUT YOU GIVE HER A SMILE
THAT MAKES HER DAY AND THERE'S NOTHING TO PAY
THE MAGIC IN A BABY'S FIRST SMILE
THE EXERCISE OF SMILING IS A WORK OUT FOR YOUR FACE
WE CAN EXPRESS SUCH A LOT IN A SMILE
PEOPLE THINK WHAT AM I MISSING WHY IS SHE SMILING
IT'S A GREETING,IT'S A THANK YOU,IT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SITUATIONS
AND AT THIS PRESENT TIME ITS SOMETHING WE ALL NEED
YES INDEED A SMILE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS.
SO KEEP SMILING FOLKS.

PM

REFLECTIONS.

REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER AND IN THE MIRROR
REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST AND OF THE FUTURE
REFLECTIONS ON YOUR THOUGHTS AND DEEDS
REFLECTIONS ON A RAIN DROP SPARKLING ON A LEAF
SO MANY REFLECTIONS IN SO MANY WAYS

NOW THE TIME HAS COME TO REFLECT ON MY DAYS
ALONG WITH THE FRIENDSHIPS I HAVE MADE
I HAVE INDEED BEEN RICHLY BLESSED
MY QUIET REFLECTIONS ARE THE BEST.

PM

HOPE IN ISOLATION

Goodness me, how the world has changed.
I hope I don't become deranged.
I wonder how I'll fill my time.
I know, I'll try and write a rhyme.
It's not as easy as it seems
but how the furniture all gleams.
And as I polish whilst I think
Maybe it's time to have a drink.
The mending's done, the garden too
Oh how I wish that it were true.
So what can we the old folk do?
Pick up the phone, give a word of hope
To those who find it hard to cope.
More importantly we can pray
For God to help us through each day
And when at last this time has ended
Keep in touch with those we've befriended.
Help us be a kinder nation
Helping others without reservation.

MS

Jesus walked alongside me

by Sassi

The doctor came and handed me a funeral form to sign.
Thoughts of anger and confusion, husband and wife together yet feelings are not
alike.

Shocked I realised what happened, bewildered and jumbled where do I write my line.

Wondered if I should I grieve or not when the loss was so early on and did not know what grief was like.

Went to see a kind friend who expressed that I had the permission for all my surging emotions.

I wanted to return to normal but I needed time to rest and to engage with my devotions.

Lord, why me again and again, I asked.
Already too much suffering in my past.

We are all unique and created for a reason I am told.
Life is unfair and hard so I tell you bold.
I shouldn't give up but my frustration continued to grow.

Although I am not perfect, I strive to follow you the best I can.
Some say it must be my fault and long your judgement will span.

Look back to how much you have learnt from the suffering you have endured.
I feel your pain and my tears are like a flood falling for you, He assured.

I made you fearfully and wonderfully, you are beautiful, suffering is not your flaw.
Humanity has free will and have chosen to turn away from me, it is not a question of law.

Bring your feelings to me and lay them down on my pasture.
I don't want harm to touch you but to give you hope and a future.

Look at the birds in the sky, they neither sow nor reap yet I feed them and you are so much more valuable to me.

Outwardly you may suffer, inwardly you are renewed every day by my everlasting peace that stretches over the sea.

Danger or disease. Suffering or persecution.
Anxiety or depression. Abuse or loss.
Poverty or injustice. Loneliness or brokenness.
I walk alongside you; I am always there.

See more on her blog: <http://www.packasmile.co.uk/theblog/>

Dear Lord ,

I am thankful, full of gratitude,
For this time of separation,
You separated Moses for forty years to learn wisdom,
Joseph, from his family; to make him grow with purpose....

This separation,
Not Isolation when you are our companion...

Make us grow, too, be introduced to the reality of you Holy Spirit
As you comfort and teach us,

Make the Father Smile that we understand his purpose.

Amen.

I was frightened, I was alone,
I did not know what to do....
I walked through the trees, looking at the sky,
Coming in bursts through that hood.... That felt good.

But it did not heal

My anxiety... Jericho

From nowhere it, he? someone...stood.

My eyes popped.

I almost dropped.

This, it, he had a sword...

Drawn....

I took a step back,,,,,

Put my palms out towards....

What...who...

Friend? enemy? Don't kill...

He smiled...(it WAS HIM)

I knew.... then; He was in command!

The sword was unsheathed, it was ready,

To fight For Me!

That had been my worry, my anxiety....

This Friend...

I fell at his feet,

Thankful.

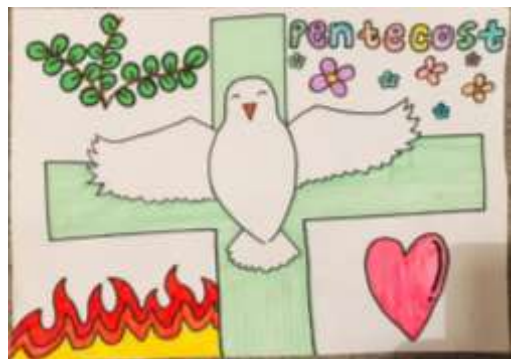
He had heard my prayer last night!

I knew we shall win, we would obey him....

the walls shall come down and we shall blow the trumpets of Victory!
Me and my family,.. yes me; Joshua. SR

DECORATING THE CHURCH?

Normally there would be special decorations in the church for Pentecost and this year 'online' church was no exception. Here are the pictures we enjoyed as part of Rev Felicity's Pentecost day service. With thanks to their creators for allowing us to print them in Encounter.



PRAYER DIARY

June 7th Trinity Sunday.

Father God, you have created all things and through Christ revealed your salvation in all the world. Give us a vision of your glory and by your Holy Spirit fill us with life and love, that we may praise and serve you

- 8th For people who have worked so hard that they are staggering
9th For journalists and interviewers, to be guided to reveal truth and point best ways forward
10th Lord, may we learn to love one another and live in love and peace --
11th -- and resist attempts to start up mere hostility
12th Give thanks for testers of infection, and help their work to bear fruit
13th For young people suffering from boredom, that they may find a surprise
14th Lord, let me recall and hold on to a spirit of trust
15th Pray for cautious common sense in all enjoying a new freedom
16th For all police, when they are called to advise or exert pressure
17th Lord, give me the peace of Christ that carries me through good and bad
18th Pray for the full protection and safety of all working in care homes, hospitals, and anywhere in constant contact with others
19th Give thanks for how people have responded to advice to stay at home --
20th --and for those with Alzheimers, who cannot see why they are isolated
21st Lord, help me recognize all that feeds the body but starves the soul
22nd For the planning and draughting of any future Church meetings --
23rd -- and for those who give their time and energy on committee work
24th Lord, let me embrace the new life of freedom from sin
25th Lord, protect the innocent from destructive tweets --
26th -- and guide the drafting of any legislation to restrict such behaviour
27th Give thanks for the very costly and ultimately conclusive help of America and Russia in the defeat of Nazism
28th Help me to not be afraid, because you, Father, recognize and value me
29th Give thanks for people who greet you in the street --
30th -- and keep your own smile ready!

July 1st

- Lord, keep me simple enough take in what you want me to notice
2nd Pray for small businesses, the self-employed and others in real trouble
3rd Pray also for towns like Derby and Crawley, whose economies suffer
4th -- and pray that our town may be enabled to get back on its feet
5th Lord, help me notice and shun gossip and superficiality
6th And to skip the unworthy bit of my paper?
7th How can simple things, like bread, sometimes be so good?
8th Lord, send your grace to lift me out of believing myself useless
9th Pray for all working to research Covid 19 and develop ad test a vaccine
10th Give thanks for the silence that has helped us to hear so much birdsong --

- 11th -- and the dose of cleaner air
- 12th Remember how, in the parable, some seeds sown bore unexpectedly well
- 13th Pray for people more exposed than before to domestic violence --
- 14th -- and for local authorities and a Government trying to protect them and the homeless
- 15th Remember that we are adopted into a *new* life, which is bound to differ --
- 16th -- so, what have *you* never done before?
- 17th Give thanks for rediscovery of our local streets--
- 18th -- and the return of birds, animals and insects, who have their own timetables
- 19th Lord, help me first to listen, and *then* to retain what I have learned
- 20th Lord, during this lock-down, please guide my viewing and my reading --
- 21st -- and help me face up to the tasks I have been avoiding
- 22nd Lord, help us embrace your grace and let it free us from our failings--
- 23rd -- and help me to be less critical of the failings of others
- 24th Give thanks for the signs you have seen of spring and summer
- 25th Pray for all countries whose leaders have been trying to seize total authority
- 26th Lord, may I never decline into an unobservant rut
- 27th For measures to protect Africa and Latin America from Covid 19 infection --
- 28th -- and for more integrated action in USA
- 29th Pray for all Jewish people, in the hostility they encounter, the widespread sectarianism within their faith, the role played by their armed forces, and the problems, some self-inflicted, in Israel and Palestine
- 30th Take time to remember, perhaps with photos, places you have enjoyed
- 31st What might you do to find a genuinely restful change?
- August 1st**
- 2nd Consider how close Judas was to Jesus, and yet how he got it wrong: why?

SOMETHING TO TAKE WITH YOU

The burden of a benefit

In recent years there has been a great demand to enjoy the benefits of freedom, but this has not been matched by a willingness to shoulder the burdens of the responsible and often anxious exercise of freedom. We have heard a great deal about 'rights' of one kind or another, but very little about the demands that are correlative with every right, and have to be met if the rights are to be maintained.

The insights of founders

... the founders of the great religions, Jesus Christ, Buddha and others. Their insights have been developed by disciples, and these few human beings have had an incalculable influence in forming the consciences of millions others. These have been the moral pioneers of the race, and their creativity remains unexhausted. p.138

The weight of demands, and how it is met

In the face of the demands of conscience and the obligations of commitment, human beings are often weak and unable to do what they recognise as their duty. What we call 'grace' is the experience of a gift that gives the strength to fulfil the demand. We experience something like grace in our ordinary human relationships - there is no mystery about it, beyond the mystery in all personal life. When a friend forgives, when a spouse encourages, when a child trusts - these are occasions of grace for the person so forgiven, encouraged or trusted. He or she receives something precious, and this in turn is something strengthening which enables the person concerned to give out something in return. p153

From John Macquarrie, *In Search of Humanity*, SCM Press, 1982

A blessing prayer

God of wonder and awe
God of time and torrent
God of surprise and surge,
pour into our lives
the power of your blessing
that we might be
caressed and carried
in the swirling strength
of your grace.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From *Pray Now 2009*, St Andrew Press, Edinburgh

Heavenly Father, when days are dark and full of pain,
give us the strength to live through what we don't understand,
the courage to face it, and your comfort and peace in our hearts,
for we are held safe in your loving arms. Amen.

Jennie Bonner, local preacher, Teignbridge Circuit

p. 4 *Prayer Handbook, 2019-2020*

©2019 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

Comfort us, Lord,
with the awareness of your presence in the beginnings of new opportunities;
with the awareness of your presence in the heights of mountainous experiences;
with the awareness of your presence in the middle of the crisis;
with the awareness of your presence in the bleakness of the darkest night;
with the awareness of your presence, in the ordinariness of the everyday.
Comfort us Lord. Amen

Frances Ballantyne, presbyter, South Holland Circuit

p. 4 Prayer Handbook, 2019-2020

©2019 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes



and



Did you know that Redhill now has two foodbanks?

We have supported St. Matthew's food bank for a long time but they have seen an enormous rise in the numbers of food parcels (up to 100+) they are delivering each week. Each week they update the list of items needed urgently: <https://www.redhillfoodbank.org.uk/shopping-list>

You can also support them financially here:

<https://www.redhillfoodbank.org.uk/how-can-i-help>

They also have a Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/foodbankatstmatthewsredhill/>

Renewed Hope Trust have been forced to close the day centre at this time and have diversified into providing lunch parcels and food parcels. Details of all their efforts and their 'shopping lists' can be found here: <https://rhthes.org/>

LIVE AT HOME

I have raised £154.18 from the sale of plants. Thank you to those who contributed so generously.

The staff are working from home. They have recently arranged the

distribution by volunteers, of care packages to all the members. They are keeping in touch with members and offering support where needed. It must be particularly hard for the members who are feeling isolated and relied on the scheme for social contact. It will be a long time before they can meet again.

EP

FUNDRAISING FOR 'ALL WE CAN' (OUR CHARITY MAY 2020 - 21)

A few thoughts as it is going to be much harder to raise funds this year.

While we are unable to run film nights, those who normally attend could still make a donation. When we have surplus garden produce we will leave it in the front garden with a donation box and hope to raise some funds. I will be making jams as fruit is available. How about an online quiz ? I could run it via Zoom. Would anyone like to draw up a quiz? I know this has been used by other groups.

We are still hoping to be able to invite people to the garden later in the year, maybe not so many at a time.

EP

COMPETITION TIME...

In the **August/September** Encounter magazine we will have the results of the '**Lockdown photo**' competition. (The Junior Church have already got started!) This could show something you see when walking for your daily exercise, your home school/work set-up (if working remotely) or anything else (an empty M25 would have been interesting). If you have problems sending your photo, perhaps due to the size being too large for a mail server you can use the **wetransfer.com** website to send your pictures to trailblazers.rmc@gmail.com

Please send your photos to us by Sunday 19th July to allow the judges time to admire all your pictures. (Maximum of 3 per person, categories to include best picture from an Under 18, best picture from an adult and best overall. As many as can be squeezed into Encounter will appear in the next edition!

THIS MONTH'S WORDSEARCH: BIRDS



N	Z	B	L	A	C	K	B	I	R	D	P
O	S	G	F	W	J	L	U	E	X	K	L
E	M	T	R	H	U	H	K	R	C	Z	W
G	I	E	A	E	E	C	N	O	H	T	O
I	N	P	T	R	E	R	N	B	A	I	R
P	B	I	G	P	L	N	O	I	F	L	A
D	T	K	D	A	U	I	F	N	F	L	A
O	I	O	P	D	M	S	N	I	I	A	P
O	O	H	S	U	R	H	T	G	N	O	S
W	A	G	T	A	I	L	E	Y	C	C	J
E	B	U	L	L	F	I	N	C	H	A	H
S	W	A	N	G	B	C	M	C	Y	P	T



blackbird, chaffinch, greenfinch,
magpie, starling, woodpecker,
blue tit, coal tit, heron, robin,
swan, wood pigeon, bullfinch,
dunnock, jay, sparrow, wagtail,
wren, owl, song thrush

AND FINALLY...

Regular walkers beside the Watercolour lakes nature reserve in Merstham will have shared my disappointments over the past few years when a pair of swans have made nests but failed to hatch any eggs. Then on Friday, May 29th, I was thrilled to see five cygnets swimming on the lake with their parents. The swans started building their nest, a platform of twigs and leaves at the edge of the lake, behind the fence next to the path, before the lockdown began. Richard and I have been walking past the nest once a week, hoping each time that it wouldn't have been abandoned as has happened in previous years. Every week, there was always a swan sitting there, seemingly undisturbed by spectators on the path. By last Tuesday, May 26th, I was wondering how long it takes for swan eggs to hatch. Do big eggs take longer than little ones? Were there still eggs under the swan? Were they viable? The weather was perfect for an early walk on Friday and this time we were rewarded by the sight of the new family on the water, three months on!

JL



Church Office Hours The church office is **currently closed**. Please check the website to find out when we are allowed to reopen. Usual hours are Monday to Friday, 9.00am-4.00pm, Saturdays 10.00am-1.30pm. (01737 771323)

Church website: www.redhillmethodist.org.uk

Encounter content. Virtually all items submitted are included in full as presented by their writer. The opinions expressed in any individual item are those of its contributor, and not necessarily those of the Minister, the Editor, or other representatives.