

August – September 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.

A new session will be posted on Saturday 15th August – Jesus (and Peter) walking on the water...



Messy Church at Home

More resources 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 am thankful that during these strange times week after week the news I have had from the majority of you has been good and positive reporting your safety and well-being. I give thanks for that indeed.

We have now entered a time when the strict restrictions of previous months are easing, indeed we're being actively encouraged to step out and re-enter the world. That also presents its own set of challenges.

A friend was sharing how strange it felt to get behind the steering wheel of her car after months of it stood in the driveway. She had worried she would have forgotten 'what went where' thankfully she was soon reassured of that but the feeling of strangeness persisted throughout her initial drive.

As a church we have now received 'green light' to re-open our buildings but we still have to adhere to the many guidelines for our safety and wellbeing. These currently include socially distanced seating, a one-way entry and exit flow and a limit on the length of services (30-40 minutes is the recommendation). Singing as a congregation remains forbidden. As Methodists whose tradition it is to sing our faith this could be rather unsatisfactory. The use of books – pew bibles, hymnbooks or service books is also forbidden – for the reason that virus can linger in these and be transmitted with use. These pose a number of challenges. Lockdown has led to the 'discovery' of technology as the means to new ways of being and doing church. Proof of how good we are at adapting as humans is that this has almost become the 'new normal'.

There are of course many benefits to this 'new normal'.

I received a 'selfie' recently from someone out walking with the family in the woods on a Sunday morning and at the same time following the service via their phone internet. I was able to see myself in the picture leading the service with the family in the woodland setting. I also heard from someone sharing how much she had enjoyed listening to the service at home and in her own time and wondering whether she would ever get back into the routine of attending church at a set time on a Sunday morning. The flexibility of lockdown technology has been considerable with the added

bonus that being online has enabled many unknown others to hear the 'good news' by joining our services. Weekly viewing figures have confirmed this. Adapting to change can be tricky but also very rewarding not least in urging us to reconsider our reasons for doing what we have always done. It allows us to be objective and to think what might no longer be important or what might serve better or be more relevant.

Last week as managing trustees of the church we met (online) to talk through some of these issues in relation to the reopening of the church building. We agreed to do this in stages beginning in August with set periods of time for individual prayer thus giving people a gentle reintroduction to returning to using the building for worship and then to restart Sunday service sometime in September.

However, guidelines change all the time so here's to hoping that we might see further easements between now and September. I ask your prayers for the small action group led by David that has been appointed to lead on this project.

Scripture tells us of the many instances of change and how people inspired by God have responded to such circumstances. The disciples and followers of Jesus following the death of Jesus were in a time of fear. In John 20:19 we are told they were 'hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jewish leaders' but then came the day of Pentecost and what transformation! Gone was the fear and in its place a tremendous zeal for sharing the good news to all. I pray we may know that confidence in this time of change as the Holy Spirit inspires and leads us on.

Change of another sort is also on the cards. By now you might know that I will be leaving the Circuit next July. It means that as a Circuit (and church) we will be in what is referred to as "stationing"; the process to appoint a new minister. Itinerancy is one of the very wise practices of Methodism which allows for a change for both church and minister every few years. A bit like crop rotation in the vegetable garden it offers the promise of enriching and benefiting both church and minister in this way. I can confidently say my time here has been enriching and beneficial indeed. I ask your prayers for all involved in this process of stationing particularly our local reps, church and

Circuit Stewards, members of the church community and for myself and Ralph.

Let us also remember and pray for any going through any particular time of change or anxiety and any going through illness or significant loss at this time.

Throughout this period of change may we seek to know God's plan and purpose and confidently place ourselves under his guidance and know His peace.

With prayer and best wishes
Felicity

MEETINGS TAKING PLACE VIA 'ZOOM'...

The Arches

The regular online Zoom session from 10.30 on Sat mornings will be continuing for the next 2 months at least. Anyone is free to join for a chat between 10.30 and 11.30. Sorry coffee and cakes not supplied. 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 is continuing to meet fortnightly on Mondays on Zoom. The meetings are at 8.00pm: 3rd and 17th August, 7th and 21st September.

Choir

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

To join any of these please message us on our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/redhillmethodistchurch/>

FROM THE EDITOR

The church and circuit are continuing to provide a wealth of resources:

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>

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/>

The page of ideas for Young People continues to have up-dated links for material from 'ROOTS' that can be used by all the family. Rodney is taking a well-earned holiday! We thank him for all the care he has taken over 20 letters – do go and read the collection and start a conversation on your favourite letter.

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

And don't forget the 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 do not receive a paper copy from the Pastoral Team please contact the Editor.

FROM THE PASTORAL TEAM

Many folk have been making use of their gardens now that we are able to meet in groups of 6 outdoors; others have met for walks, appropriately distanced. The Pastoral Team hope that everyone feels that they are beginning to have some social contact. Do contact Heather Snowdon if you are feeling isolated, or you know someone who might like to see a friendly face in a safe way so that the team can continue to put people in touch with each other.

FAMILY NEWS

Golden Wedding Anniversaries.

Congratulations are due to Pauline & Eddie whose anniversary was on the 27th June, and Heather and Alan whose anniversary will be on August 8th.

A REFLECTION

We are living in strange, challenging and changing times at the moment, times that many of us have never experienced before. Some of us will remember the Bird Flu scare and the outbreak of Polio, but somehow this feels different and quite scary!

One thing that never changes is the God we serve who is always the same in the good times and the bad, he walks beside us and I am sure at times carries us through difficult situations. I have been thinking how true the words of the song are, *'What a faithful God have I, faithful in every way'*.

Thank you to all those who have worked behind the scenes to ensure that what has needed to be done has been attended to.

I guess for many it has been a time of isolation and the only means of contact with friends has been via phone, email or maybe Zoom. What a blessing friends are and where would we be without them!

It has been encouraging to hear that communication has been maintained during this time with 'In Touch' and I trust this will continue. I am sure we are all looking forward to the day when we will be able to meet in Church again but I fear this is a little way off. In the meantime, have you thought about perhaps meeting up in the park as an option?

It has not been an easy time for anyone but hopefully we have all had time to think and evaluate what we are doing and if necessary how we might change or improve things those things.

If you feel you would like a chat I am at the end of the phone and would be happy to talk with you or meet up in the park. If you need any help with shopping, or taking to appointments please ask, I am sure we will be able to assist with this.

Perhaps the most important thing is that we keep communicating with one another so no one feels forgotten. Let's hope it won't be too long before we are able to meet up again to worship and get used to a very different kind of Church, in the meantime please take care and keep safe.

Best Wishes, E

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ENCOUNTER READERS....

To Eastbourne and a walk.

We decided a little change might do us good, and after some research decided on Eastbourne and a Travelodge just outside of the town. We visited Pevensey Castle on our arrival and Herstmonceux Castle gardens on Friday before coming back.

Ann particularly wanted to take me to the Birling Gap, which she had visited with the Gateway Club which she had helped with. Having got some books from the library of the area, we found a walk of 7 miles that looked good. But it did have three stars against it for a high level of difficulty! The walk was called 'Birling Gap to Beachy Head'.

We set off from the Birling Gap car park along the bottom of the hill, looking after about a mile or so, for a concrete farm track on the other side of the road, which ran parallel with the path we were on. We found this and after

some way had to go through a gate to set off across field foot paths, before stopping for a packed lunch.

Walking further we eventually crossed the road again and came over the top of a hill to see the sea. Hoping we were now following the right path, we eventually arrived at the Beachy Head Countryside Centre. Thankfully the facilities were open! We did find a cup of coffee too.

We were now following the South Downs Way back to the Birling Gap. What became obvious was why the walk had three stars! The walk took us up and down as we followed the coast line with wonderful views of the sea and also the light house, made all the better as the sun was now shining and the sky a clear blue. Eventually we came down the hill back to the Birling Gap. The weather had been really good for walking making it a very enjoyable day. Something positive to remember from the Covid pandemic!

R & A

Online puzzle found during lockdown

There are 30 books of the Bible named in this paragraph – can you find them all?

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually

takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, *The Chronicle*, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

Found on <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/hidden.htm> This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Janet writes:

Richard and I have continued to walk regularly, revisiting local footpaths and byways. In the last Encounter, I reported that the swans on the Watercolour Lakes had hatched five cygnets. Last week, we saw them all, visibly bigger, on one of the lakes. But it seems that nearly every time we set off by the Watercolour Lakes and Mercers Lake, we have an unexpected encounter with animals, as these pictures show.

At the end of June, we witnessed a brave rescue of a cat stuck in a tree next to the footpath between the lakes. A couple of weeks later, we saw a fox, perhaps hungry, perhaps not so hungry, looking at several rabbits in a field on the other side of the path. The rabbits, all big ones, not babies, just looked at the fox, who eventually slunk away. On another picture, taken after the fox had gone, we spotted eight rabbits, so perhaps the fox knew he'd



never catch one. And in the same week, on another day, we saw a deer and her baby in a cornfield beyond Mercers Lake. Unfortunately, the picture shows only the mother; the fawn had got left behind in the corn. It's comforting to know that wildlife continues to survive despite increasing urbanisation. I wonder what we'll see next time we go for a walk?



Photo competition: life in lockdown.

Here are the entries with the titles suggested by the photographers... news on the winners will appear in the weekly notices...



Cute pets competition?



Garden Visitor



'Life still goes on'

Earlswood Common 3





Earlswood Common 1



Earlswood Common 2



Garden Meadow

Watercolour



PRAYER DIARY

August

- 2nd Lord Jesus, we read that your heart went out to the crowd, and so we learn of God's love through you
- 3rd For the work of the aid agencies
- 4th And for a relaxation of hostilities in the Middle East
- 5th May we do all we can to eradicate anti-semitism
- 6th For wiser and more enforceable management of the Internet
- 7th Give thanks for any small kindnesses that have benefited you
- 8th And keep alert to see where you might do something similar
- 9th Lord, help me not to be guided solely by my limited experience
- 10th For young people looking for work at this time
- 11th And for employers to search for wise and creative decisions for their future
- 12th Lord, help me work to attain the faith that leads to righteousness
- 13th For wiser management of the recovery of business
- 14th For more people to learn how to think more independently
- 15th And for election campaigners to deal less with slogans and more in real issues and specific policies to meet pressing needs
- 16th Lord, may I be open enough to learn from unexpected people
- 17th For the continuing repair of our country's weakened infrastructure
- 18th Give thanks that families can come closer together again
- 19th Lord, may I accept and respect the faith of others
- 20th For party leaders to refrain repressing honest or principled disagreement
- 21st For continuing work towards the development of an anti-virus vaccine
- 22nd And for companies to renounce destructive competition over rights, etc.
- 23rd Lord, help me not to get tangled up in religious disputes
- 24th Give thanks for hearing or seeing your favorite bird
- 25th For closer attention to the needs of all those small creatures and plants on whom the food chain relies
- 26th When is re-wilding sensible?
- 27th Lord, may I never cherish a high opinion of myself--
- 28th -- but value only that I am valued by Christ
- 29th Examine your own feelings about possible tax rises
- 30th May I have the courage to risk losing myself--
- 31st --and come to value the preciousness of your kingdom

September

- 1st Lord, train me to keep on eliminating all thoughts of revenge
- 2nd For family members who are still kept apart, and carers whose patients cannot understand the need for separation
- 3rd For all who have been deprived of personal contact in recent weeks

- 4th For churches, trying to decide when and how to re -open
 5th For continuing negotiations with the European Union
 6th Lord, teach us all the patience needed for the slowness of reconciliation
 8th For creative negotiations with Europe
 9th May I remember my neighbour's needs and never fail to pay promptly
 10th Give thanks for our network of rights of way
 11th For all those involved in tracing and testing--
 12th --especially the call centre workers recently infected by the virus
 13th Lord, may I learn that forgiveness is costly, yet pay that cost
 14th Pray for the many young people looking for a job --
 15th -- and for the many who have recently found themselves unemployed
 16th May I learn never to rank or measure anyone
 17th Give thanks for relative lack of corruption in our legal system --
 18th -- and pray for improved access for the relatively poor to justice
 19th Pray also for measures to reduce inequality
 20th May I never indulge in any envy
 21st Give thanks for improved access to jobs for women --
 22nd -- and pray for remaining barriers to be eliminated
 23rd May I, whatever hits me, stay worthy of my Christian faith
 24th And pray for all who are persecuted for their faith
 25th Give thanks for preservationists --
 26th -- and pray for reasonable, creative work alongside developers
 27th Teach me to feel care for others, and not mere self-promotion
 28th For people charmed by the worldly trappings of success --
 29th -- and for others who appear forced to be involved
 30th Remember and learn from the tremendous humility of Christ --
 31st -- and let the sheer size of that speak to your feelings

September 1st

- 2nd For any church meetings or planning for future days--
 3rd --and for the people who have tuned in to our internet worship
 4th Lord, let me learn to strip away any sense I have of entitlement
 5th But may I yet keep in mind that I am special to You
 6th For greater restraint of crimes committed out of sheer ambition

DEC CORONAVIRUS APPEAL

Thanks to Elaine for pointing out the link to this appeal - it can be found on their website:

https://www.dec.org.uk/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIYtYLH1Zb36gIVE-3tCh0P-g1uEAAYASAAEgIZlFD_BwE

SOMETHING TO TAKE WITH YOU

Truth

If there is one the Christian journalist should have, have, it is it is a disinclination to accept stereotypes or to join the denigration of popular scapegoats; and the same would apply, surely, to the Christian politician. ... Language is a sacrament; it has been consecrated by our Lord's use of it.

Gerald Priestland, *The Dilemmas of Journalism*, Lutterworth, 1979

Handling Pain

[*One option is*] positive ... An attitude of acceptance and by physical relaxation ... Allowing the response to be spontaneous, with no emotional anticipations... Resignation or fatalism means opting out, not responding at all.

Ursula Fleming, *Grasping the Nettle*, p. 43

Using One's Past

I am what I am not in spite of being a refugee but because of it. The terrible past is not an adversary but my greatest asset: I will not fight against it but put it to work. I cannot alter what has happened but by making a tool of it I can at least give it a purpose.

Karen Gershon, *We Came As Children*

Reflection

Holy Spirit of God, go gently today among those who mourn, especially if it has been a sudden death, a cruel death, an undeserved death. Use my prayers and the companionship of God's people not to provide cheap answers to the mystery of death. Rather, let those who weep know that they don't weep alone; let those who are bewildered have the chance to express their confusion: and let those who have no faith lean on someone who has.

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

Keeping Going

Lord, help us remember that as our lives are a journey, we should not be held at a standstill by grief or anger. Let us admit their presence, but let us also allow life to carry us along in hope, while we seek your healing grace.

FUNDRAISING FOR 'ALL WE CAN'

(OUR CHARITY MAY 2020 - 21)

'All We Can' is the Methodist relief and development organisation, whose purpose is to "find solutions to poverty by engaging with local people and organisations in some of the world's poorest communities to end the suffering caused by inequality and injustice". It is the charity that is being supported by the Redhill Methodist Church community through fundraising in 2020/2021.

On 4th October I shall be running in the London Marathon (unless it is postponed again!) and I'd like to invite you to sponsor me in support of 'All We Can'. In these unusual times when we are mainly at home and not yet meeting one another at church, creative means of fundraising are called for!

So, here is what I'm asking you to do:

Find a jar or bowl at home and fill it in the coming weeks with **TOKENS, each representing 10p**. You could use counters, pieces of jigsaw, scraps of paper marked 10p ... whatever is best for you. Put in tokens in response to the following events:

- Each time you take part in a Zoom meeting, Skype session or similar – put in **2 TOKENS**.
- Each time you telephone a family member or friend – put in **ONE TOKEN**.
- If your birthday is in August or September, celebrate by putting in **10 TOKENS**.
- If your birthday is in any month that has an 'r' in it, celebrate now by putting in **5 TOKENS**.
- In celebration of the school holiday, each time you go to a theme park or playground or cinema or swimming pool or to the beach – put in **ONE TOKEN**.
- If you do a 5k run or go for a long walk in the countryside – put in **ONE TOKEN**.
- 2020 Prayer. Find out more about the work of 'All We Can' on allwecan.org.uk and on 20th August and 20th September at 20.20 include prayers for the people receiving much needed help as a result of support from 'All We Can'. Put in **10 TOKENS** knowing you will be helping someone for whom life is a struggle.

- On hearing that the London Marathon's 26.2 miles has been conquered – put in **10 TOKENS**.

Please wait until after 4th October before counting up the number of tokens in your jar. Further instructions will be announced at that time regarding how to give the money you have raised to the church specifically for 'All We Can'. Many thanks! Have fun! If the London Marathon is again postponed I shall do a solo marathon run in the Merstham/ Redhill/ Horley area instead!

Eddie

Rosemary also writes:

All We Can – Refugee Appeal

All We Can is the charity that used to be called the Methodist Relief and Development Fund and is now our current fundraising project. Despite the restrictions there have already been some suggestions for fundraising and some money has started trickling in. Please watch Elaine's weekly email to see how you might participate.

<https://www.allwecan.org.uk/give/current-appeals/refugee-appeal-2/>

THE MCCABE EDUCATIONAL TRUST

It is good that despite the lockdown curtailing our final efforts we raised £2500 for the Trust. They have asked me to pass on their grateful thanks to everyone at Redhill Methodist Church. The funds are needed more than ever at this present time.

BIBLE MONTH – A REFLECTION

A summary of Spurgeon's comments on Ruth's declaration to Naomi and reflection on it as a confession of love for Naomi which made her become a follower of Naomi's God.....the comments in Italics (mine) are for clarification. Anyone wishing to see the very detailed and admirable commentary by Spurgeon could view it on the internet as 'Sturgeons sermon on Ruth'.

1. The affection for the Godly should influence us to Godliness .

Ruth had lived with Naomi even before her husband died, as did her father in law. The deep faith and acceptance of Gods will by her must have made Ruth admire Naomi and made Ruth wonder about this God who provided such inner strength.

a. *The influence of their companionship. Ruth saw in Naomi an unusual mother in law who would have made her even in those days a personal maid or someone to just be a person at her beck and call, but a friend who shared her joys and sorrows. The fact that the three of them had begun their trek to Bethlehem together shows*

the love of Naomi who might have really meant to take both of them with her to prevent them starving in Moab.

b. The influence of admiration of Naomi.

In Ruth's case it was her admiration of the whole personality of Naomi, like the disciples' following of Jesus.

c. The influence of their instructions...

The advice that Naomi must have given Ruth during the mourning periods could have been very different from the Heathen rituals followed by the Moabites and may have given Ruth more freedom and joy even as a widow

d. The wish to cheer the person whom they so love.

This is a very common reaction to love. This desire could make us wish even to follow their beliefs and/or to learn more about it....

e. The fear of separation.

When Naomi requested them in no uncertain terms to go back to their community, it must have been her realisation –after they began their journey ... that she also needed to provide husbands as well as food for these two young widows. She explains the reason why that was not possible for her.

2. Resolves to Godliness will be tested.

It had been tested by the poverty and sorrow of her mother in law.

b. When Ruth was told to count the cost by her mother in law.

c. Ruth was tested by the apparent coldness of one in whom she trusted.

d. Ruth was shaken also by the going back of Orpah. by the silence of Naomi.

3. Godliness must mainly lie in the choice of God.

a. God is the choicest possession of a believer.

b. Henceforth God was to Ruth the ruler and law giver as for Naomi.

c. He must be her instructor.

d. Her entire trust and stay,

4. This decision should lead Ruth (us) to cast our lot With God's people as well as with Himself.

Casting our lot with Christ is the best thing and the most joyous action any human being who wants to have the abundant Life could possibly take.

Spurgeon emphasises the fact that as Jesus said (Luke 17:10) “in the same way I tell you that there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repent”

THIS MONTH'S WORDSEARCH: Local places

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

Bletchingly, Dorking, Hooley, Nutfield, Reigate, Caterham, Earlswood, Horley, Outwood, Salfords, Charlwood, Godstone, Leigh, Redhill, Smallfield

[Apologies to residents of Bletchingly! Ed]

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. Deadline for October - November Encounter is Sunday 27th September 2020. Please email Helen: helen.greaves1@googlemail.com.