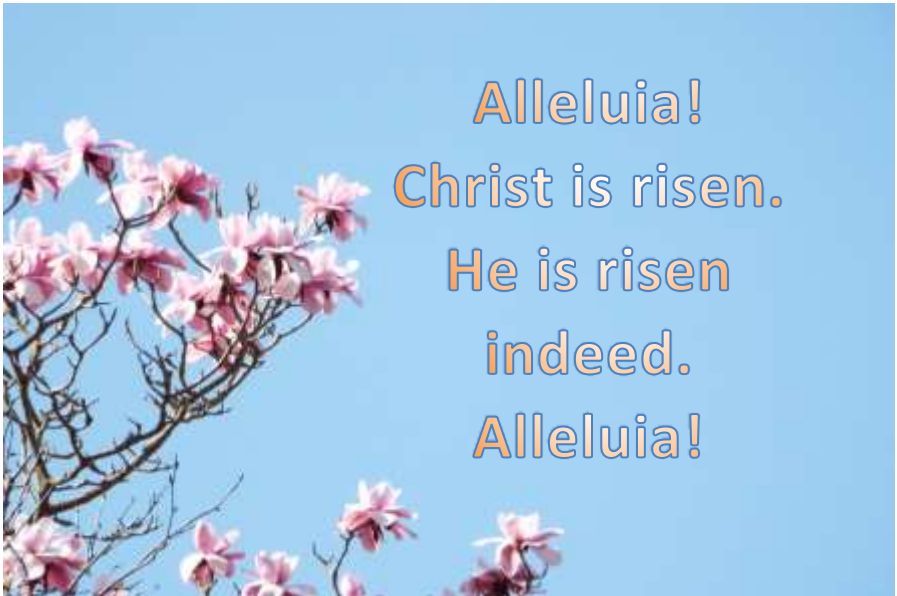


April – May 2021

# ENCOUNTER



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

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



## MESSY CHURCH

**New video clips go onto our website each month**

**<https://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/worship/messy-church/>**

**Look out for new items on**

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**and**

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021**



**In March we made a prayer station with pictures of buses and trains. You can see the prayer that Lorraine created with everyone's contributions to here:**

**<https://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/worship/messy-church/>**

**If you would like to join us at 4.00pm on Zoom please email**

**[messy.rmc1@gmail.com](mailto:messy.rmc1@gmail.com)**

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

**Messy Church at Home**

**More resources can be found on the Messy Church website [here](https://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/worship/messy-church/)**

Messy Church logo © The Bible Reading Fellowship 2019. See [messychurch.org.uk](https://www.messychurch.org.uk)

## FROM THE MINISTER

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in the dark earth many days has lain;  
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
*Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

Hello Everyone,

Christ is Risen. **He is Risen indeed. Alleluia**

By the time you read this article, this will be our joyful greeting celebrating the Glorious Easter Resurrection and declaring: *'hath Christ that once was slain ne'er burst his three-day prison, our faith had been in vain but now is Christ arisen....'*

Our Lord's resurrection is indeed the touchstone of our faith as Christians. It is the amazing logic-defying confirmation that Jesus who died on the cross has overcome death and is alive. He is Lord of life and death and all the living in between and hereafter; and he takes us from one to the other, always in the assurance of his presence with us.

Never has this been truer than the experience of this past year when fear of the Covid19 virus has held us captive; prisoners, locked way from each other and from many of the practices of life which provide us with purpose, identity, joy and comfort. I wonder, what has sustained and kept you going, persevering through it all? I believe we've all had to draw deep on the reservoirs of our faith.

For me there have been two passages I've turned to time and time again. One is John 1:5 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' How comforting is the light, even that of a candle. Often it appears so fragile as it dips and flickers in the air, looking like any draught or gasp of wind will put it out. Yet how tenaciously it burns and cheers and warms up, and how brightly it burns particularly in the darkness!

Another passage is from 2 Kings 5: 2-3. The story of the girl captured by raiders from her native Israel and trafficked to become a servant to the wife of the commanding officer Naaman. The witness of this girl who will forever remain unnamed led to the great warrior's release from his stigmatising disease. I admire the way she did not allow her circumstances to overcome her faith in God and to those things, her faith reservoirs, that she knew to be true and life-giving.

I believe this is what being Easter people calls us to. To stand firmly on the victory of the Cross and share that good news no matter what the circumstances, to all. It might be a fragile quiet witness: a gentle word, a shared confidence, a turning away from the norm – whatever form it takes let us persevere and go out there and share the joy of our Lord with the world which he so dearly loves that he gave his life for and trust in Him to raise himself to life in whosoever will listen and let him in.

And now it comes for me to say 'Goodbye' to you as shortly I begin my sabbatical and at the end of it depart to South Essex to begin my new appointment there. This is the way of Methodist itinerant ministry that after every few years ministers are moved round providing both churches and ministers with fresh perspectives; it's been likened to a refreshing game of musical chairs!

There is no way I can summarise what this time has meant to me – in ministry and personally. I just want to thank each one of you for this utterly enriching, stimulating and learning period of my life. I am grateful for my ministry among you leading as I have felt prompted and guided by God and in the freedom to be myself and, I pray God's truest blessings on you at this time and in the time to come.

***May the Lord Bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Amen.***

We pray too for any known to us who might be going through difficult circumstances of the human experience at this time. Ill health or physical limitations, mental distress, problematic relationships, financial or employment struggles. May God be near you bringing healing, peace and unexpected solutions and may we be his channels.

We hold also in prayer friends who have died in recent times. Praying especially for the family and friends of church members who have died in the last few months that they may be comforted in their loss.

To end, let me share with you this prayer given to be me recently and hoping that it will touch you as it did me.

*God of all creation – who cannot be contained  
by our boundaries or definitions -  
light from beyond the galaxies,  
sea without a farther shore.*

*You are present in every distinct place,  
in every moment of history.*

*You are here and now.*

*Help us to understand that those from whom we are separated in life  
by distance, by sea and land:*

*those from whom we are separated by difference, by prejudice, by language,  
by lack of communication; and those  
from whom we are separated in death, by its long silence, its aching absence -  
are each of them in your presence:*

*that beyond our boundaries,  
beyond our understanding,  
they are all in your embrace. Amen.*

With love, best wishes and prayer,

Felicity

## FAMILY NEWS

It has been a joy to welcome several families from our 4.00pm congregation and further afield presenting their children for Baptism. Five services will have been held between March 14<sup>th</sup> 2021 and April 11<sup>th</sup> 2021. We pray that both the parents and children will feel welcome and supported in our midst as we remind ourselves of the promise we make as a congregation:

*Members of the body of Christ, we rejoice that these children have been baptized.*

*Will you so maintain the Church's life of worship and service that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord?*

***With God's help we will.***

*Methodist Worship Book p 70*

## NEW ONLINE TAKETIME SESSIONS FOR THE CIRCUIT

Rev Clive McKie has set up a new style, 30-minute, online Taketime Together group for the Circuit (and indeed for anyone who people in the Circuit want to invite).

Run by Clive and Pat Oakley they continue to meet at 7.30pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday evenings. The meditation lasts about 15 minutes and then, for those who wish to stay, there will be a 15 minute opportunity to share their experiences, facilitated by a trained Taketime Practitioner.

All details are available at:

[https://www.facebook.com/Taketime-Together-Redhill-East-Grinstead-Circuit-102939978465434/?view\\_public\\_for=102939978465434](https://www.facebook.com/Taketime-Together-Redhill-East-Grinstead-Circuit-102939978465434/?view_public_for=102939978465434)

Or, email [clive@taketime.org.uk](mailto:clive@taketime.org.uk)

# MEETINGS TAKING PLACE VIA 'ZOOM' ...

As lockdown eases these meetings will continue to take place on-line for a while. If you would like to join these groups and/or be notified as changes are made, please contact the church via our Facebook page:

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

## **The Arches**

The regular online Zoom session from 10.30 will continue on Saturday mornings. 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**

We shall be meeting on Zoom, for Bible Study led by Lorraine, at 8.00pm on 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May.

## **Choir**

We continue to meet on Friday evening at 8.00pm for an hour of chat, YouTube singalongs and general chaos! We hope that rehearsals in the building may be able to start towards the end of May.

## **Junior Church**

The leaders and young people continue to meet for 40 minutes of chat, prayer, Bible stories and activities every Sunday afternoon at 2.00pm. Planning is underway to meet safely once more in the building. If you have any questions, or have missed communications about the Zoom meetings please contact the church via our Facebook page.

# JUNIOR CHURCH EASTER GARDENS

Junior Church staff have distributed plasticene and cake boards to the families in Junior Church to create their own 'Easter Garden'. Here is one that was sent in with a description of their garden. Hopefully there will be more pictures to come as more gardens are created over the Easter weekend.



*The garden set within the troubles of the world so has newspaper cuttings around it. The garden is a haven of peace. The green line represents the tortious nature of our times. The cross is in the background with a lighted way to the garden. The tomb is constructed from stones. The Christmas roses are a reminder of Christ's birth.*



# NEWS ABOUT SERVICES

**Services are currently taking place in the building and on-line.**

The Eventbrite booking link is on the website 'Welcome' page:  
[www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/welcome/](http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/welcome/)

Where possible the morning service will also be 'live-streamed' and church members will receive the link to this via the weekly email with the notices.

Not everyone will feel comfortable coming back into the church building and so for the time being there will still be a video service or short act of worship which can be found on our Facebook page:

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

or accessed from the link on the bottom of the website 'Home' page:

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



## **Around the Circuit**

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

10.45 live stream at East Grinstead

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

Live stream from Reigate

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

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

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

To see the archive of worship sheets from the first lockdown, click here:

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

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.

# THE CHURCH IN LOCKDOWN AND BEYOND...Report of Discussion on Response to the Questionnaire March 2021

A questionnaire was circulated early in 2021 to get a feel for RMC's response to the circumstances we found ourselves in from March 2020 when the church building was closed (apart from a short, restricted opening in the autumn) and when, as a congregation, our contact with one another was extremely limited.

There was a limited response to the questionnaire. Those who did respond were largely from the older, well-established members of the RMC community. However, a group of us met to discuss the responses and what this might mean for RMC in the short and medium term. The points raised and discussed are summarized in a series of bullet points with suggestions as to which church group would be best placed to carry forward the issues raised.

## Worship (Worship Group/Stewards/Choir)

- There was a general appreciation of the way services had quickly been transferred online, that this was a steep learning curve and services were never going to be the same as live worship;
- Not everyone has access to the internet and some had difficulties accessing worship via Facebook;
- The response to the worship material itself was mixed but generally positive;
- It is recognized that online services need to be structured differently and that the usual format does not work so well. The way people access material online means that their attention needs to be captured within a couple of minutes. A shorter format might work better. Discussion took place on the use of music in an online service and whether a 'thought for the day' format would be better and would suit the online audience. It was recognized that some people did not find online services engaging. This could be summarized as: we 'need to be more creative in the use of technology';

- Many people used RMC online services alongside other online worship material, radio and television. These latter options became important for people who could not access our own services;
- Live streaming was discussed. We saw this as a way forward to reach those on the periphery of the church and those not able to attend services because they were not well enough. It would also offer alternative options in the world of today where people cannot always attend regularly;
- It is accepted that live streaming is resource intensive, requiring three people at any one time, and they will need training. It was considered that this could be a way of involving younger people who take quickly to the technological challenges;
- Suggestions were made to stream 2 to 3 services a month. Perhaps this could be evening worship or a mid-week service;
- There are issues relating to live streaming – the worship leader needs to adapt their format and approach, and there are GDPR concerns for example;
- For the great majority of the respondents to the questionnaire, they want to get back into church. Worship is a collective experience to be shared with fellow Christians. Online is an add-on not a replacement.
- The reaction to socially distanced worship during the semi-lockdown period was mixed. Some loved being back at church and just accepted the restrictions knowing it was going to be very different. Others did not want to risk attending or felt that it wasn't a form of worship they could accept;
- People missed the interaction of not worshipping together and meeting afterwards for refreshments and chat. 'There is no substitute for physical fellowship';
- A number of respondents missed singing and making music;
- The link up with Horley online was considered to be positive.

#### Keeping in Contact and Social Interaction during Lockdown (Pastoral Committee/Mission and Ministry/Junior Church)

- One heartening aspect to lockdown is that people still felt connected. The 'In Touch' system was highly praised and there was a lot of

informal keeping in contact. All the respondents felt they were part of a connected community that is RMC;

- Various online opportunities were available: Zoom Arches; bible study at Christmas and Easter; Messy Church; Junior Church; house groups. These were much appreciated;
- There was a discussion about the continuing role of online for social events, study and meetings. Online could be a blessing in the winter to avoid going out in the cold and dark and would also reduce our carbon footprint. Nevertheless, this was seen as the exception rather than the rule. Social contact in house groups is valued, but could be mixed with online. Messy Church, Thursday Drop-in and Junior Church are not really suitable for an online format because of the loss of social interaction with children and young people;
- It was suggested that a series of welcome back events would help the transition from lockdown to something more normal.

### General Conclusions

- Overall, the church can be proud of the efforts it has made to keep the spiritual life of the congregation alive and to keep connected. Individuals have worked extraordinarily hard to achieve this. And their efforts have been appreciated;
- It has to be recognized that the questionnaire is biased towards those who are already well-established and involved in RMC and there are no responses from children and young people. The experience of lockdown may be very different for those who are less well connected;
- Rather than simply see the pandemic as something that will pass and we will go back to the way things were, we should look at the things we have learnt and search for opportunities to explore new opportunities for outreach and mission.

# A NEW WAY OF GIVING TO THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

Donations (including offerings) can now be made via the 'Dona' button on the welcome page of the church website

[www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/welcome/](http://www.redhillmethodist.org.uk/welcome/)



This is what you will see at the bottom of the page



Clicking on the *Donate with Dona* button takes you here



Donations are anonymous unless you Gift Aid your donation. You can contact me for further information.

Rosemary [rosemary@willock.com](mailto:rosemary@willock.com)

# PRAYER DIARY

## April

- 6th For better reward for hard-worked NHS staff-  
7th -and for freelancers not to be forgotten  
8th Give thanks for discoveries of the strange behaviour of small particles  
9th Lord, may we all bear the fruit of loving deeds  
10th For all who share with us in God's mission  
11th Let us all remember that we are sent  
12th For reconciliation among the Scottish government  
13th Lord, give us the power that faith in your resurrection brings  
14th "God is light and in him there is no darkness at all"  
15th For scientists to be both brave and humble  
16th We remember those who have died, and give thanks for them  
17th Give thanks for the belief we have in resurrection  
18th "Wait till you are armed with power from above" Dear God, arm me  
19th For the many who have lost their jobs-  
20th -and for an effective process of re-training  
21st "In Christ there is no sin"-  
22nd -but help me to remember that his love for me is as I am  
23rd For tax reforms to take better account of the relatively easy  
treatment of the more affluent  
24th For performers and actors who have to work with no audience support  
25th Lord, may I remember Jesus as my shepherd  
26th For better arrangements to be made to help people enjoy music  
27th Give thanks for a Press that is allowed to speak its mind  
28th "All [worldliness] that entices brings mere arrogance"  
29th For the communities in which we live and work-  
30th -and shop people and others to be given the protection they need

## May

- 1st Do not forget to look for and celebrate Spring  
2nd "If you heed my commands you will dwell in my love"  
3rd And for evangelists to be tactful and encouraging  
4th "The victory that overcomes the world is our faith"  
5th For those who have not yet received the Gospel-  
6th -and may we learn to be humble about how our faith helps us  
7th For clergy who cannot make pastoral visits  
8th Try to re-examine any dislike you may carry for someone  
9th "When we love God we love his children too."  
10th For the life of the world  
11th Give thanks for the lifting of some sanctions

12th Lord, may I bear that true fruit that lasts-  
13th -and teach me what might serve them in the most helpful way  
14th Lord, let me not forget to practice silence  
15th For the people entrusted to our care  
16th "Join us as witnesses to his resurrection."  
17th For writers and journalists get more freedom to report corruption  
18th For nations to step back from any form of vaccine wars  
19th "Holy Father, may you and I become as one"-  
20th -and may I know you as a loving father  
21st Give thanks for the work of testers and tracers  
22nd For our families and friends  
23rd Lord, keep me close to the kingdom of God-  
24th -and may I take notice of small acts of kindness  
25th For politicians to avoid saying what they believe people want to hear  
26th "Christ died for us while we were yet sinners"  
27th For all who are in trouble or distress  
28th We pray for the life of the world-  
29th -and for aid to find its way to those who really need it  
30th "Our old nature has no claim on us"

#### **June**

1st For workers to be found to help with fruit-picking  
2nd Also for fair taxation of financial transactions  
3rd Give thanks for the continuing research about the covid virus  
4th "It is spirit that gives birth to spirit."  
5th Lord, help me notice that others' spirituality may differ from my own  
6th "To love your neighbour as your self means far more than any whole offering"

## **Fundraising for ALL WE CAN: THE ARCHES LOCKDOWN COOKBOOK**

This is now available in a plastic folder which has some spare pockets so can be used as your own recipe file. If you would like a copy in return for a donation to our All We Can Refugee project, please contact Rosemary or Heather.



# SOMETHING TO TAKE WITH YOU

## **Solidarity.**

Solidarity is not a biblical word, but it is a concept deeply rooted in the Bible. Solidarity is a sign of tenderness between peoples. It happens when we stand with others, suffering with them, sharing with them, as if all their troubles were ours.

Solidarity is about being faithful and having integrity. Choosing to follow Jesus is a decision to bring justice to the poor. Learning solidarity begins with small acts of justice practised towards everyone we meet, every day. In this way, solidarity with the poor begins to permeate all our thinking and acting. Tenderness, faithfulness, integrity are the marks of solidarity for those in need of justice wherever they are in the world.

*Revd Peter Price, USPG*

## **Relationships.**

It is essential to note that for growth we need not only ourselves but others because growth occurs in relationships ... The most conducive conditions for growth are relationships of permanence and continuity, reliability and predictability which allow the partners to understand one another and to act as facilitating agents, bringing to the fore the other's hidden talents and helping to formulate that which is latent and confused ...

*Jack Domlnian, Proposals for a New Sexual Ethic*

## **Peace.**

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed, kindle, we pray thee, in the hearts of all people the true love of peace, and guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquillity thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth be filled with the knowledge of thy love.

*Francis Paget*

O Great God,  
How my smallness distrusts you.  
Help me learn to lift my feet  
Off this bottom I have had to invent  
To hide my fear of floating



# THIS MONTH'S WORDSEARCH: LOCAL PLACES

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

Betchworth, Charlwood, Godstone, Horne, Outwood, Salfords, Bletchingley, Dorking, Hooley, Leigh, Redhill, Smallfield, Caterham, Earlswood, Horley, Nutfield, Reigate, Brockham



*A spring day at Nyman's.*

## FROM THE EDITOR

Remarkably I have been editing Encounter (and Elizabeth has been printing and distributing it) since July 2016! This isn't quite 7 years but I have acquired a couple more roles since then and feel it would be helpful to have different eyes to take the magazine forward. There is a loyal team who regularly contribute and it is certainly a way to discover all the things that the church is involved in as people ask if 'such and such' a thing will be in the magazine! If you are interested in this role please talk to me. The August/ September 2021 magazine will be my last as editor.

*Helen*

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**Church Office Hours** The church office is has re-opened. Usual hours are Monday to Friday only (01737 771323)

Church website: [www.redhillmethodist.org.uk](http://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 June – July 2021 Encounter is Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Please email Helen: [helen.greaves1@googlemail.com](mailto:helen.greaves1@googlemail.com).