

February - March 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 20th February 2021

and

20th March 2021



In January we also had our first ZOOM Messy Church – 30 minutes or so to explore the Bible story and create our own prayer. You can see the prayer that everyone contributed to here:

<https://youtu.be/Iol93MZ3Qkg>

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

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.messychurch.org.uk)

FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Everyone,

The Lord is my shepherd, I will fear no evil.

*He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me besides the still waters.*

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death

*I will fear no evil for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

(Psalm 23 v1-4)

These are strange times for the church and the world as we journey through a 3rd national lockdown with dismal news about the rate of Covid-19 infections, the numbers of fatalities and the long and painful road to recovery. Added to this are other distressing human stories – the loss of jobs and livelihoods, education and well-being of children and the toll it is exacting on well-being, physical and mental health and on relationships. There is no getting away from the fact that these are very tough and challenging times.

The writer of psalm 23, this most familiar and beloved psalm, declares God to be as a shepherd and himself as the sheep of God's flock. And he uses these images as reassuring reminders of God's faithfulness. The unfailing presence of the shepherd serves as a reminder of 'Emmanuel, God with us'; the shepherd's guidance and direction - '*leading the flock beside still waters and making them lie in green pastures*' – speaks of the nourishment and refreshment God provides.

The '*staff and the rod*', the tools of the shepherd, to ward off attack and to rescue the wandering sheep are the symbols which even in the darkest and dangerous moments provide comforting reminders of security and safety which the shepherd, God, provides.

I wonder how you are coping in these difficult times and what signs and symbols speak to you of the truth and reality of God's presence, which stills your anxieties or fears and gives you hope and comfort, and strengthens your faith?

For many of us the different pace and lifestyle that the pandemic has imposed on us has also been an opportunity to slow down and develop a much more intentional and reflective approach to many aspects of life, from faith to relationships to lifestyle choices. In many cases this has led to a recognition of things and habits to discard, take up or do differently. One area I would encourage all of us to become even more intentional about is our faith habits of prayer, bible study and meditation and seizing the opportunity, whenever it presents itself, to share our stories about God's presence and activity in our lives. Not only is that an encouragement for others but it is also a reassuring reminder to ourselves of God's unfailing love, which John Newton in his hymn, 'Begone unbelief' puts it:

*'his love in times past forbids me to think
he'll leave me at last in trouble to sink.'*

Indeed already there are hopeful signs which encourage us to believe that this period too will eventually pass away. Daily, the numbers of those receiving the vaccine increases and the rate of infection has begun to show slightly decreasing numbers, now the government is giving tentative dates for emerging from lockdown. And so there is every hope that eventually we will be able once more to gather together. The Lord hears our prayers. Looking past the present we enter the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday on 17th February. There will be an act of worship to mark this and then following on we will be having, as usual, a Lent study course. I hope you will feel encouraged to take part in it. It will be held Thursday evenings via Zoom. This year we'll be following a study course put together by Rev'd Michaela Youngson, a Methodist minister and District Chair of London, entitled "Woven".

25 copies of the material have been ordered so please let me know if you're interested and I'll reserve one for you. Alternatively, you can find out more by visiting the website:

<https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/lentcourse2021>

(more details further on in Encounter)

After Easter my news is that I'll be taking some time off on a 3-month sabbatical, taking advantage of this rare and exciting gift the Church gives to its ministers once every 7 years. Doing this reflects the scriptural principle of

Leviticus 25 where God decrees a year of rest for the land and all its workers and inhabitants – a sabbath of rest and recuperation.

It is an unimaginable concept in our world today but one which promises so much in return. I really wish this was something available to everyone but perhaps we could be a bit subversive in the ways we allow ourselves a sabbatical? An intentional 7th cycle practice of stepping away from routine labours that gives opportunity for personal respite and refreshing?

During my sabbatical I'm looking forward to a mixture of rest, study and nurture as I take a retreat on the island of Iona – a place steeped in Christian tradition and practice; study on a placement to observe church life and practice in a different setting and engage in exercises of spiritual development in Loyola.

Back to the present and we pray for friends and loved ones. The loss of another faithful member of our church family in recent times has touched and saddened us all. She was very dearly loved and will be greatly missed. We give thanks to God for her life and the wonderful memories of her and hold in prayer the loved ones she leaves behind.

We continue to pray for the families of those we have lost during the winter months.

And we pray for the sick, the sorrowing, the lonely, the isolated, the anguished and the troubled in these times. We pray also for all medical and health workers; for key workers, for teachers and all school staff, pupils and students. For parents home-schooling and for all family life. May the Lord hear our prayers.

To end, I share with you this beautiful prayer to our Shepherd God for healing:

May your healing come softly,
falling as a morning mist,
kissing the ground with drops of heaven....
May your healing come gently,
as a warming blanket
soft against the harshness of the night...

May your healing come powerfully,
irresistible as the work of the waves
on the sea-shore...
May your healing come completely,
as the work of the Spirit,
filling, transforming, cleansing, and bringing new life...
May your healing overflow,
to be shared and sharing,
loved and loving, given and giving, grace filled and cleansing
May healing overflow..... (Sally Coleman, 2021)

With prayer, love and best wishes

Felicity

NEW ONLINE TAKETIME SESSIONS FOR THE CIRCUIT

Rev Clive McKie is setting 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).

It will be run by Clive and Pat Oakley and will meet at 7.30pm on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings. The meditation will last 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.

It will be starting on 3rd February. All details are available at:

https://www.facebook.com/Taketime-Together-Redhill-East-Grinstead-Circuit-102939978465434/?view_public_for=102939978465434

Or, email clive@taketime.org.uk

MEETINGS TAKING PLACE VIA 'ZOOM'...

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. Please contact the church via our Facebook page.



Windmill Drive Housegroup

Meetings on Zoom 8th and 22nd February.

These will be Bible Studies led by Lorraine on Thessalonians.

If you would like to join us please contact the church via our Facebook page.

Choir

We continue to meet on Friday evening at 8.00pm for an hour of chat, YouTube singalongs and general chaos! If you would like to join please contact the church via our Facebook page.

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. If you have any questions, or have missed communications about the Zoom meetings please contact the church via our Facebook page.

Church Council

A reminder that Church Council will be meeting via Zoom on 24th February.

SPARKFISH



Sparkfish are looking to recruit an administrator for the equivalent of 2 days a week, ideally with the hours spread across the week. More info and application form from harriet@sparkfish.org.uk. Closing date for applications 22 February, interviews 4 March 2021.

LENT BIBLE STUDY

There are many resources on the Methodist Church website for Lent and Easter:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/len-and-easter/len-courses-2021/>

And also, a direct link to the Lent course mentioned by Rev Felicity written by Rev Michaela Youngson: *Woven*, or you can go straight to the page on the London District website:

<https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/len-course-2021>

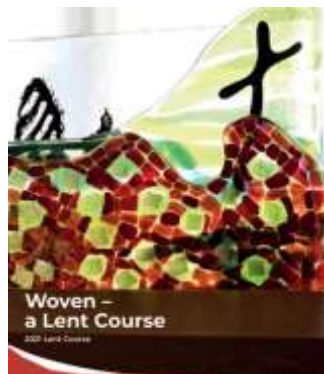
where you will find more details and a link to a PDF of the course.

Here is part of the description of the course on the website:

“As people of faith we know that our story and God’s story are woven together, not because we wish it to be so but because God is interested in the smallest detail of our lives. The God who knit us together in our mothers’ wombs is the same God who knows the number of hairs on our heads and who loved us and the whole world enough to send Jesus to show us the way of love.

Lent is a season during which we reflect on our personal relationship with God and on every Christian’s responsibility to engage with the world as it is. ... We will remember the cost that Jesus paid for standing up for those who were most vulnerable and we will look towards the eternal hope that lies beyond the sacrifice.”

This year our Lent course will run on ZOOM from Thursday 25th February – Thursday 1st April at 8.00pm. Please contact Felicity if you are interested in participating.



NEWS ABOUT SERVICES

Services are currently taking place on-line and can be found here:

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

NEW! News from Worship Group

From Sunday 14th February we hope to upload the video service to our YouTube channel as well to provide an alternative way of accessing the service. There will soon be a link on the website Homepage that will take you straight to the service on YouTube on Sunday morning which will be set up as a 'premiere' with a countdown to 11.00am. That link will then be available all week.

The team has also been working very hard to make 'live streaming' from inside the church a possibility – there will be more news on this in the weekly notices in the coming weeks, including details to join a short act of worship on **February 17th (Ash Wednesday)** - do look out for the details about this via the weekly email, Facebook and the website Homepage.

(www.redhillmethodist.org.uk)

Around the Circuit

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>

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.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN APPEAL

In 2019 we raised at Redhill, over £2000 from 'house to house' collections, Coffee mornings, Cream Teas, Collecting Boxes and the Christmas Day offering. We also participated in raising nearly £2000 with friends from Reigate at a Dorking Garden dinner, an Open Garden day and a box opening event.

In 2020 due to Covid-19, none of these events took place. So AFC received £4000 less to fund their continuing activities, which are needed even more in these difficult times. We have sent £300 in 2020 from several individual donations, and this message is to ask you to consider making your own donation to ACF in the near future.

Ways of doing this are:

sending a cheque payable to Action for Children to:

Action for Children Supporter Care
3 The Boulevard,
Ascot Road,
Watford WD18 8AG

or to give over the telephone:

call 0300 123 2112

or donate on line at:

actionforchildren.org.uk/donate

Action for Children would appreciate so much whatever you feel able to give.
With thanks

Francis

FUNDRAISING FOR MHA Communities East Surrey

Elaine still has a few jars of Blackberry and Apple, Plum jams. Also lots of jars of gooseberry. She can deliver.

FUNDRAISING FOR 'ALL WE CAN' 2020 - 21

A last call for recipes to reach Rosemary by the end of February please.

Janet has a selection of greetings cards produced by Maureen She has received some more cards from Maureen of Reigate town centre (Market Hall) and has others of flowers and views of Cornwall. Please contact the church via our Facebook page if you would like to know more.

Helen still has some items made during lockdown, mostly cushion covers and felt items– if you would like to know more please contact the church via our Facebook page.

UPDATE ON CHURCH DONATION

It's not often we get first-hand feedback about the difference our donations make so no doubt we all will feel very happy to hear just how much difference our donation of £500, agreed at last year's annual general meeting, to support flood victims has made.

After some research the money was sent recently to the Manchester Circuit where the flooding had been very severe and the circuit was supporting a high number of people affected by the floods. Apparently, they had had so much demand for financial support that they had exhausted their Benevolent Fund, and just then our donation arrived.

Below is the message we've received from Deacon Pru Cahill who coordinates the relief effort:

"Hi Felicity,

Just to say that we (in the Manchester Circuit) have been blown away by the generosity of the Redhill M.C people towards the flood victims in Manchester. The sum you collected was the exact sum we were asked for to support two families made homeless! Thank you so much.

Pru"

May we be encouraged to never cease to do all we can, whenever we can to help everyone we can! Well done Redhill!!

A POEM

At the Garden of Gethsemane 9th August 2014 near the church of Dominus Flaviv which is in the shape of a tear...

Jesus...Why? Why didn't you hide?
When the soldiers came?
Was it so I might abide
In you...my spirit to tame?

Jesus why didn't you run
When they came to arrest?
Was it so I might begin?
In you to take my rest

Jesus why didn't you say, 'He I'm not',
And turn away from the soldiers?
Was it to make me honest?
And so become bolder?

Thank you for not running
Thank you being honest
Thank you for passing that test
Thank you for not hiding

That bitter cup today, its essence
Became the cup of salvation,
So may all this worlds turbulence,
To me in you be jubilation

Shanthi

THE CHURCH IN LOCKDOWN AND BEYOND...

A small team have been meeting for conversation and the pooling of ideas to encourage Church growth. They have prepared a questionnaire for all of us to prayerfully reflect on: "Worship during Lockdown".

The introduction has this explanation:

This questionnaire is intended to start a conversation about how people's spiritual needs have been met, whether our own church has risen to the challenge of meeting those needs and how all of us have responded to the challenges of remaining part of a Christian community whilst being physically separated.

.... We anticipate that the responses to the questions below will form the basis of discussions at the church AGM, Church Council, in house groups and other conversations with each other. It is important to get the responses of all ages, young and old, and of people who are loosely affiliated with us as well as others who are closely connected. Please feel free to circulate copies or pass on this email to others you think would be interested and as well as those within our own households.

The questions include...

How did you seek to meet your need for Christian worship and fellowship during the pandemic?

Tell us about whether you felt part of the Redhill Methodist Church community or the wider Christian community during this time?

How did you worship on a Sunday when the church was closed?

How did you feel about the worship material that was available from Redhill Methodist Church?

If you would like to contribute to the discussion, or see the full questionnaire do email the editor (helen.greaves1@googlemail.com) who will pass on all your comments.

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/



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.

PRAYER DIARY

February

- 7th Remember those not able to receive full medical attention--
8th --and pray for exhausted hospital staff
9th For deliverers, that they be enabled to overcome difficult conditions
10th Remember the richness of yield for those seeds that fell on the best ground
11th For teachers, who have to teach at a distance
12th For children who may lack laptops and have to study at home--
13th --especially for those whose parents are not in a position to help
14th At the Transfiguration the full brilliance of Jesus was glimpsed--
15th --and, Lord, help me to learn a deep reverence for what is beyond me
16th For all who have to plan our next budget
17th Ash Wednesday. Recall the huge gap, bridged by Christ, between Godly virtue and our failings--
18th --and give thanks for His bridging
19th Pray for the lonely and isolated--
20th --and for all who give their time to build saving social bridges
21st **Lent 1.** John showed us our need for repentance; and was listened to
22nd May each of us mark Lent in his or her own way
23rd Pray for a swifter and more efficient operation of justice
24th "The fast that I require is to lose the fetters of injustice"
25th Pray for those who suffer boredom at this time, that you may open new windows for them
26th And pray for children trying too in difficult circumstances:
27th May they become able to find more company and new friends
28th **Lent 2.** Because Israel had rejected gentleness, it was to endure the opposite

March

- 1st** Pray that we may show God's gentleness to all
2nd Do not forget to search and give thanks for signs of spring
3rd May Jerusalem "become a theme of praise throughout the world"
4th Give thanks for all who welcome refugees --
5th --and pray that their needs be considerably addressed
6th For enough able language teachers to be found, where most needed
7th **Lent 3.** May the way of unrestrained profit give way to that of God's kingdom
8th For all who have to serve while exposed to infection--
9th -- and for sufficient care for all who become infected
10th "I shall no longer frown on you, for my love is unfailing"
11th Lord, give me faith in that love

12th For the many who cannot at present see any future for themselves--
 13th --and for all who offer retraining, and enable a constructive outlook
 14th **Lent 4. (Mothering Sunday)** God sent his Son into the world, that through
 him the world might be saved
 15th Give thanks for people who take the risk of becoming whistle-blowers--
 16th --and enable the guilty to achieve a more constructive outlook
 17th "If a nation does evil ... I shall think again about the good I had in mind for it"
 18th Lord, help the power identify and repair where they made wrong choices
 19th Pray for stronger and more realistic moves to rebalance our tax system--
 20th --and give our politicians the courage to carry through improvements
 21st **Lent 5.** "Whoever has faith in me shall live, even though he dies"
 22nd Pray for all affected by recent floods--
 23rd --and for authorities to get enough resources to mend failures
 24th "So you will be my people and I shall be your God"
 25th For fairer treatment of who are unpopular minorities in their own land
 26th Give thanks for improvement in international relations--
 27th --and save our Press from destructively fermenting differences
 28th **Sunday before Easter.** "This man must have been a son of God"
 29th Lord, help our prayers to move with this Holy Week
 30th Pray for any you know of who have been wrongly accused
 31st "Trust to the light while you have it, so that you may become children
 of light."

April

1st As our Lent course comes to a close, we thank God that our life stories are
 woven into his loving care for all.
 2nd **Good Friday** Almighty God your Son, Jesus Christ endured the cross for our
 sake. Remove from us all coldness and cowardice of heart, and give us
 courage to take up our cross and follow him.
 3rd Pray for all those who have to endure waiting
4th Easter Sunday Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty
 resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ and made the whole creation new;
 grant that we who celebrate with joy his rising from the dead may be raised
 from the death of sín, to the life of righteousness.

SOMETHING TO TAKE WITH YOU

Something to Think About.

It does seem to me a great pity that we so often hear the maxim “the purpose of any business is to make money.” This is unnecessarily inflammatory and what is worse, largely untrue ... there are banks and other financial institutions where they deal in money itself, and to succeed in their business means to make more of it. But for the majority of businesses the prime objective is to make furniture, or clothes, or breakfast food, and it is only by doing this successfully that they make money.

Ask any good professional manager what business he is in and he will say “making furniture” or making something else. And his pride and motivation, his devotion to long hours and hard work will be just as hard if the company is making little money or a great deal. Indeed, when times are tough he might be trying harder.

Money is essential for businesses to continue ... in the same way, blood is essential for the health of individuals ... But they do not exist for the purpose of making blood. Nor do businesses exist for the purpose of making money.

The word profit ... this word is so badly misunderstood I wonder we continue to use it ... why don't call it margin ... we all know that it will be allocated to better or worse payment of shareholders, directors and staff, and prudent investments for its future. If criticism has to be levelled it could be directed at the proportionate allocation of that margin to the various calls upon it.

So, “the purpose of a business is to produce goods or services happily and efficiently so that sufficient income is produced to pay all its running costs and the investments or reserves it needs for its future well-being.” Not perfect, but better.’ (from Printing World, 1981; but — are the ideas out of date or not?)

Remember the words of Jesus: ‘If only you had known this day the way that leads to peace!’ (Luke 19:42). Perhaps what we can do is first, to make peace with our own personal pasts, and to look outwards and then not tell others, from a distance, how to set their own affairs to rights, for we are hardly experts in those distant matters

My Pin-Up

In our dining room we have a pin-up board showing family groups, places visited or admired. Now we have a new addition; a cover from a recent *The Week* magazine. This magazine carries brief news items from UK and all over the world, and the cover has the not unexpected heading People of the Year. But here it has become more of a surprise, because it's a crowd scene, too populated to reproduce all of it here. The setting is a view looking up Whitehall towards Trafalgar Square. At windows or on pavements stand well-known spectators: Rishi Sunak scattering notes, Kier Starmer, Dominic Cummings scowling from a distant doorway, Boris Johnson with fiancée.

But what fills the picture is the crowd: The People of the Year; and they are the numerous ones: they are not individuals so much as types: figures who represent the various individuals each of us may or may not have met. And for whose services and exposure to infection and danger we need to be humbly and continually grateful: nurses and doctors, health workers, food distributors, shoppers, retailers, bus, train and truck drivers, policemen, teachers, scientists, and however many more. For them we offer our thanks and prayers of gratitude, and ask that they be better rewarded in future. Amen
(Just one half-corner below).



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

THIS MONTH'S WORDSEARCH: rocks

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

Basalt, dolerite, galena, grit, mica, chalk, flint, gneiss, gypsum, pumice, sandstone, slate, schist, tuff, coal, fluorspar, granite, limestone, rhyolite, shale

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

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

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 April- May 2021 Encounter is Sunday 28th March 2021. Please email Helen: helen.greaves1@gmail.com.