



NO SERVICES DURING JANUARY OR FEBRUARY

UPDATE (13th Jan) - THE LEADERSHIP TEAM HAS DECIDED THAT, OWING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING CONCERN OVER GROWING INFECTION RATES, NO SERVICES WILL TAKE PLACE UNTIL AT LEAST THE END OF FEBRUARY.

Visits to any of the church buildings should only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and your details should be entered on the track and trace record on the noticeboard in the vestry.

Please send contributions for future Pyramid Posts by mid-day on the Wednesday before the following Sunday.

Please send me items that you would like to share – prayers, readings, “thoughts”, news, photos, humorous or serious.

Philip Sandiford, Editor

ONLINE SERVICE FOR SUNDAY 17th JAN BY OUR MINISTER ROSEMARY:

The link below provides access to a brief online service led by our minister, Rev. Rosemary Richter.

Among other items, the service includes a conversation between Rosemary and Philip Richter relating to Christian Unity Week.

<https://youtu.be/Gc6eohBIDY0?t=1>

A transcript of the conversations from the online service are at the end of this Pyramid Post.

FUTURE SERVICES:

To be advised.

TRACK AND TRACE:

Sometimes church members, and possibly others, do need to come into the church buildings.

If you have cause to do this, please will you fill in the details on the chart which is pinned to the notice board in the vestry. This is all part of 'Track and Trace' if it's ever needed.

Thank you

The Church Leadership Team



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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

18th Rebecca Larkin

PETER THOMPSON:

Some members of the Church Family will remember Peter Thompson, a cousin of Marian Stringer.

Peter passed away in the early hours of Thursday morning, the 14 January 2021.

Peter was the son of the late Rose Thompson and cousin to Marian Stringer. When Marian moved to Courtlands Crescent Peter would often stay with Marian, and he always attended church with her. For many years he also helped with the Christmas Day lunches, acting as one of the taxi drivers. A job he loved and often spoke about.

About 10 years ago when both his and Marian's health started to deteriorate Marian persuaded Peter to come back and live in Banstead to be near to her and his many friends.

For the past 8 years Peter has been living at Rosebery Manor. On Boxing Day Peter had a fall and was taken to Epsom Hospital. On return to Rosebery Manor, he tested positive for Covid-19 and was sent back into Epsom Hospital where he sadly passed away on Thursday..

DAILY THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY – REV. CHRIS MORLEY:

The Revd Chris Morley, supernumerary minister in our circuit, has begun a daily thought on You Tube called Take Five. Having seen a couple of them myself, I think there are many in our churches who will enjoy watching them regularly. If you feel you would like to do so, you could publicise the link in your church newsletters.

Here's the Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxkirCKDb-4ror1QLxFp-Kw>

Best, Revd Dr David Dickinson

HAPPY MEMORIES FROM EVELYN BUTLER:

My father was a quiet unassuming man with a wealth of general knowledge that my sister, brother and I tapped into regularly. He went to school in West Street Sutton and one of his friends was Philip Odd the son of Montagu Odd the cricket bat maker whose workshop was also in West Street.

At 14 Dad went to work there to learn the craft of bat making.

We lived in Church Lane and I often popped in on my way home from school. The floor was carpeted with wood shavings and there was a pot of glue heating on the central wood-burning stove. I loved the smell of willow, glue and linseed oil.

It was a three-man business Philip and Alec Odd, and Dad.

Philip and Alec did tennis racquet restrings and helped with the construction of the bat handles and Dad was the craftsman who made all the blades. Among others he made a bat for Colin Cowdry who signed

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a bat for my brother. Dad also made bats for his four grandsons but only one remains. Matthew managed to keep his.

Arthur, Matthew's eleven-year-old son is a member of a junior cricket club at Beddington and plays an awesome game of football.

Dad would have been delighted as he was a devoted follower of Sutton United, and he also played football in his teens for Banstead.

This photo of my father Mr Eric Carter appeared in the sports section of The Times in an article by Mike Atherton last Wednesday 6th January. My father would have been amazed.

I hope this little article is of interest and I am sure you all have something to remember from happier times.

Evelyn Butler





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FOODBANK UPDATE:

The latest news from Foodbank HQ

The latest news from Foodbank HQ

During the last week (week ending 15th January) we made 113 deliveries and fed 316 people . Whilst we had a vast amount of food donated in the lead up to Christmas we do find ourselves short of a few specific items as follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sugar 500g bags URGENT | Tinned Rice pudding URGENT |
| Instant mash | UHT milk - semi skimmed and full fat only |
| Longlife fruit juice | Longlife sponge puddings - not from chilled counter URGENT |
| Pasta sauce | Tinned vegetables |
| Washing powder/tablets/capsules URGENT | |
| Shampoo | Hair Conditioner |
| Coffee | Powdered milk |
| Ladies deodorant | Soap Bars |
| Tampons | Washing up Liquid |
| Tinned Potatoes | |

I can be contacted on **01737 356201** or **07753 236115**, if you would like me to collect items. There are also Food Bank bins in most of the major supermarkets if you just want to pop an item or two in. These will still be emptied regularly.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity. Janice Barber

TRANSCRIPTS OF THE CONVERSATIONS FROM REV. ROSEMARY'S ONLINE SERVICE

Conversation between Rev. Philip Richter and Rosemary Richter:

Philip: Tomorrow is the start of a special week in the church's calendar called the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity and we thought this week we'd have a conversation together about some of the things that we've learned from working with other churches.

We're also going to have a special guest in a minute but we'll introduce you to him in a moment or two. But first, Rosemary, when did you have your first experience of the Roman Catholic church?

Rosemary: Well when I was a child the Catholic Church was an absolute mystery because when we had assemblies at school the Catholic children were withdrawn from them and went to see their own priest and we'd never set foot over the threshold of the Catholic Church in my hometown and of course none of us travelled very far anyway so Bognor Regis was perhaps the most exotic place we went to! So I had no real knowledge about the Catholic Church and if you'd said to my ten-year-old self that in the future I would have Catholic priests as colleagues and be sharing meals with them and sharing prayer time with them, and work I would have gone 'What?' It would have been incomprehensible to me!

Philip: So what has most impressed you about working with catholic colleagues?

Rosemary: Well one of the things I've really appreciated is their prayer discipline and routine on a daily basis. I think that whenever we've had an opportunity to meet together instead of doing what I would do which would be to organize a time to meet and then fit my

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prayer time around it they would say 'no I can't meet until after morning prayer or evening prayer and we're very aware that they had this special way of going through the day. I found it deeply impressive that they would pray first of all and study the Bible and that was the most important thing and there was no fitting in around your prayer time like you know me - sort of 'Oh God I've got a few spare minutes now I'll have a time of prayer.

Philip: Are there any other things that have noticed about the approach of the Catholic Church compared to our own church?

Rosemary: As a church we're usually very wordy in everything we do. We're speaking sermons, words, prayers and reading the Bible - but with the Catholic Church what I've particularly appreciated is that you have the ability to have times of silence. Silence has been very important and I've found when praying if you can have times of silence then they can give you a sense of God coming into your situation, and they can give you a sense of conviction that what you're doing is something you should go forward with - or reassurance for the time you're in. I particularly like to the way that they focus prayers because when you light a candle it gives you a focus and particularly if you're praying for people who are going through very difficult and dark times there is this sense that there is light.

The other thing that impressed me - Catholic priests do a lot of blessing and I found particularly in hospital ministry when I was a part-time chaplain - and I did that for years as well as circuit ministry - I found that to actually be alongside someone - to hold their hand and to say words of blessing was actually very moving. Not just for them but also for me because you had the sense of bringing Christ's blessing into a situation.

Philip: It's interesting mentioning the candles just now because I can think of the times when we've been to Italy and we've spent quite a lot of time visiting Catholic Churches in Italy and one of the things that stands out there are the candles that people go and light. Anything else that you've drawn from those visits when we've been in Italy?

Rosemary: I just love the art. We have very plain churches always and the art is fantastic that you can find in even just quite ordinary churches. I remember going into a church in Rome - if you can remember that one - and when you went in the door it was sort of quite dark and there was lots of what I would call indifferent chapels with pictures that were really not particularly good and statues and everything and I thought 'Oh is it worth it?' We did go in and I was just walking round and suddenly I turned and into this chapel and it was absolutely fantastic. There was a Caravaggio picture of the Call of Saint Matthew and it just was tremendous and that sense of going in somewhere and finding this tremendous art was amazing. Another time that it absolutely hit me and spoke to me was when we were in Florence and there was church, San Lorenzo and this was a modern picture. It was Annigoni - who did a portrait of the queen I think that was quite famous - and I think it was called Saint Joseph and the Christ Child in the carpentry shop or something like that. It had the shadow of the cross from the wood and it was a modern picture but absolutely fantastic - and so I can enter into faith through that.

Philip: So lots and lots of things to appreciate about the Roman Catholic church.

Rosemary: Philip in your working life you've often worked collaboratively ecumenically and particularly done a great deal with the Anglican Church so what do you appreciate about the Church of England?



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Philip: Yes you're quite right I spent a lot of my time um working ecumenically, particularly with Anglicans when I was a chaplain at Lancaster then when I was also chaplain down at Southlands in London and then when I was on an ecumenical training scheme training people for ministry in Salisbury.

I was an Anglican at one time actually - as a little child I was baptized as an Anglican but the Anglican church where we lived was so high it had all sort of bells and incense and my parents didn't get on with that church so they sent me along to the local Methodist church and so no looking back from that but I must have some Anglican roots somewhere inside me from my baptism!

One of the things I most appreciate about the Church of England is that it's such a broad church - it is inclusive. You find people within the church with so many different styles of being a Christian in the same denomination. You can get - and this is not from one extreme to the other but these are just two examples - you get a charismatic a happy clappy church with an intensely personal approach to their faith - somewhere like Holy Trinity Brompton in South Kensington where the Alpha course was first invented (and I think we ought to say that our daughter was married there as well) but you also within the Church of England have something like the Shrine of our Lady at Walsingham in Norfolk. I don't know if any of you have ever been there but the services there include incense, and their communion is described as Mass and in many respects it's more traditionally Catholic than many Roman Catholic churches so it would be seen as sort of higher church than many Catholic churches.

So the Church of England somehow manages to encompass great soaring cathedrals uh with beautifully sung evensong as well as much smaller plainer parish churches. It is an inclusive church where people can grow and coexist together. There are disagreements of course, as in any church, but they recognize the same discipline and the same authority.

Rosemary: So what do you think are the key differences between other churches and the Church of England?

Philip: I think a key difference is that the Church of England seems to have a heart for everybody in this country. I think the clue is in the name of course Church of England - you know church for everybody in England and so you have a system of parishes that covers the entire country so everybody is in a parish whether they know it or not. Vicars consider everybody in the parish to be part of their flock - a hundred percent of the parish belongs to them - unless somebody of course is of another faith or somebody chooses to opt out. I don't think it's an attempt to sort of monopolize on the part of the vicar - there's a real sort of pastoral sense there that they're there for everybody in their parish and trying to make sure that nobody gets missed out. It's interesting that everybody has a right to be married in their parish church if they have legal links with their parish church. It's not just where they live it's it can be where their parents got married, where their grandparents got married - then they have an absolute right to get married there but with some exceptions whereas of course Methodists, Baptist, URCs are actually gathered churches and people choose to join and become members. So I think there's a subtle but important difference there - it is an inclusive church that includes everybody in the parish.

Rosemary: Do you enjoy visiting Anglican churches?

Philip: I do yes. Some are more interesting than others of course, and I think one of the things that always strikes me is the connection with history and tradition particularly when you go into really ancient parish church and that history goes right back to the Reformation - Henry VIII and all that but also often much earlier than that. You get churches that were put up in in Norman times and so on. So I always like to go and look at the board that lists the vicars on the wall in the parish church - usually somewhere near the porch - and sometimes the names go right back to the Norman conquest, and there you've got sort of

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French-sounding names of the vicars at that time. I think that sense of the depth of history and tradition takes us beyond our preoccupations today - our everyday preoccupations - and links us to a much wider spectrum of Christian history.

So that's just a few of the things that I appreciate about the Church of England.

Rosemary: When you see those boards I always like counting the number of names that there are on it and I'm always amazed how few people it takes you to get back to say the 12th century. But did you know that at Wellington there's a board with the name of the ministers on and our names are at the bottom!

Philip: because we're the most recent! But we don't go quite so far back in length! I promised that I'd introduce you to a special guest to our conversation. Before we came here many of you all know that I was working helping to train people for ministry in Salisbury - people from the Church of England, Methodist church and the United Reform Church and when I was there one of my friends and colleagues was David Holgate. We worked together for 16 years - I moved on and eventually he moved on and he is now subdean and canon for Theology and Mission at Manchester Cathedral and just a few days ago I took a zoom call with him and asked him what he most appreciated about Methodists. So welcome David it's good to see you again What is it that strikes you most about Methodism?

Conversation between Rev. Philip Richter and Rev. David Hughes:

David: Philip it's wonderful to see you if only via zoom - it's wonderful to be reconnected. I have very many happy memories of our working together at STETS and working very closely as senior colleagues and got to that point where I felt we were able to finish each other's sentences or think each other's thoughts almost we worked so closely together, so thank you very much for the opportunity of reconnecting in this way and for rekindling memories of the precious times of working ecumenically. If I think about Methodism both in my own personal experience going back to my childhood in fact and also to recent experience including my experience working here in Manchester um I value the way Methodist colleagues and churches are very pastorally welcoming. I find them both pastoral and welcoming personally but also institutionally.

In my experience as a theological educator, I have often found that Methodists more frequently would invite me to talk to a training group or something than Anglicans and I just find that rather curious! Perhaps I am more of a Methodist at heart!

The other thing of course that I, and I think everybody loves about Methodism is the combination of preaching and hymn singing constituting the core of worship. Obviously Methodists value Holy Communion very highly but it doesn't kind of loom large in quite the same way as it does in Anglicanism and so at the heart of worship is as preaching and singing.

Philip: Is there a particular hymn you enjoy?

David: Well there are loads - seasonally in advent I love the hymn 'Lo he comes' in some ways it's a more solemn hymn and less typical of some of Charles Wesley's more joyful hymns. 'And can it be' would be another one. In our worship whenever we're singing a good hymn frequently the name Wesley is down at the bottom of the lyric.

Philip: You grew up in Methodist circles - what was it that really struck you about the Methodist church in those early days?

David: Well as I say the pastoral welcome was really the start for me. My earliest experience was of being in an Anglican Sunday School but then

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when my parents sadly got divorced when I was still quite young the Anglican church declined to give my mother holy communion as a form of discipline as has happened in those days even though she was not the offending party in the divorce. And so we moved on to a first a Presbyterian Church which happened to be nearby and then when we moved to a different part of South Africa where I grew up. We joined the local Methodist church and I spent probably from the ages of 10 to 20 roughly - those formative years- in a

Methodist youth group. So that pastoral welcome which my mother received I think was extremely important to me but also just the way in which the church seemed to just get on with life in a jolly way. I was not aware certainly in those days of any church politics. I never experienced any kind of undercurrents or tensions within the congregation. I'm sure they were there but as a child and as a teenager you know I just went along and enjoyed participating.

I enjoyed the sermons - some older ministers would trot out their jokes and they spoke in a way that I found inclusive and accessible for me. I didn't feel as if I was being spoken down to but nor did I find myself you know being baffled by kind of doctrinal controversies from the history of the church.

Philip: As time went on and you started to work in an ecumenical context with Methodists over the years what are the key things that you discovered about the Methodist church that you appreciated?

David: Well I think it's the way the Methodist Church is organized that I find very attractive from the concept of using the small group for pastoral care. There's the organizational system I think that allows for fluidity and participation or so it seems to me as an outsider so people seem to be carry offices for a limited period of time. As I understand itinerancy would normally assume people would move on after a period of five years in a particular church or circuit, the the presidency the vice president and president's roles are rotated annually so people have the experience of taking that role of national oversight but not in such a way that it disables them from moving on to other things. I'm a great admirer of Barbara Glassen for example who was recently was the president and has now returned to theological education. I'm sure she was a great president and I'm sure she is being a great theological educator so that sense in which people's gifts are developed and people have a time in different layers of leadership seems to foster a greater consultative sense overall mind of the mind of the church and as I say probably enables the church as a whole to be more pastorally welcoming.

Philip: One final question now - out of all the gifts that Methodism brings to the church at large is there one that stands out very strongly for you?

David: Well I think it goes back to the the preaching and singing at the heart of Methodist Worship. I would say that the preaching seeks to commend the core gospel the transformative gospel which is at the heart of evangelism combined with singing together. Congregational singing enables people to express their emotion and connect emotionally. As I say 'Lo he comes with clouds descending' I always find a very solemn but emotionally moving hymn - that kind of combination of a mind and heart of enabling worship to engage with one's own personal faith but also the wider faith of the church and to still celebrate it together is one of the things that I think is the great treasure that Methodism offers to the wider church. With that I would say it has a strong social conscience and commitment to be socially engaged so that the life transforming force of the gospel is not just an individual thing or even a congregational thing or a circuit thing but is meant to then reach out and to flow into the whole of society where the church is based.

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