



The
United
Reformed
Church

The Pauline

October 2020

Minister Revd Martin Knight

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Harvest Service Sunday 4th October

Our harvest collection this year will be for Purley Food Hub. Please see the list on page 6 and bring your donations to the service on 4th October.

If you would like to contribute but cannot come to the service or maybe you are unable to bring the items along I would be happy to collect donations from you by arrangement.

Please give me a call or message on 07742859552.

| Pat Granville-Overton



From Martin's Study

My dear friends,

It turns out that erecting a tent in high winds and lashing rain is impossible! Those of you with camping experience might tell me otherwise, but as beginners we ended up fighting a giant kite and breaking two vital carbon fibre rods, whilst storm Francis raged around us.



After a night in a Travelodge (other hotels available), the weather had not improved, so we decided to abandon the idea and head home. Thankfully our 1½ week break improved, with wonderful days out and time, sweet time, to read.

The murder of George Floyd back in May, the raising of awareness by individuals and groups like Black Lives Matter, the conversations about statues, and the responses to a dance by 'Diversity' on Britain's Got Talent, challenged me to read and learn about an issue that made me feel uncomfortable.



As a white member of our society I was hearing the experiences of our black brothers and sisters for the first time, or at least, with new ears. From the reactions of friends, family, folk at church and far wider, it is clear that this is another area of today's world that can be highly divisive.

My hope is that we can unite behind the call of all main-stream denominations to be 'anti-racist', as this feels like an important part of being a 'Welcoming Church'.

The unexpected extra space to read during my time-off, meant I was able to finish a book called '*White Fragility: Why it's so hard for White people to talk about racism*' by Robin Diangelo. It was a tough read; an awakening, saddening and surprisingly reassuring process.

A vital truth that stood out in her writing is that those of us caught up in the societal racism that is all around us, are not 'bad people'. This is important to hear. We are caught-up in a system, a worldview, a history that has taught us how to view and to react to those who are not white. This is an important starting place as we engage with racism: that we are not 'bad'. We are, however, entangled in racism's tendrils.

I am feeling the challenge and the call of my faith to be against racism; actively 'anti'-racist. It feels important to name my own white fragility, my lack of knowledge, and the times I haven't spoken out. So, I now commit myself to learn more and to listen to voices that I have not heard before, and I encourage us all to step out in faith on this journey; even if it feels vulnerable to discover that, by virtue of my skin colour, I have disproportionate privilege and power, which diminishes my brothers and sisters; members of the body of Christ, in which we affirm that *there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male or female*' (Galatians 3: 28).

I'm sure that none of us find the issues of systemic-racism easy to wrestle with, but we need not do so alone. There are some fantastic resources available, not least those shared by URC Youth with links to films, books, podcasts, articles and other websites, which can be found here:

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3511-black-lives-matter-urc-youth-stands-in-solidarity>

A thoughtful sermon on Jesus' post resurrection appearance on the road to Emmaus, was shared by The Revd Dr Barbara Glasson, Ex-President of the Methodist Conference, at the online General Assembly in July, which is well worth a look – and can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqUpsokbdI8>

Barbara says:

“As people challenged by diversity, racism and xenophobia, we need to be able to look into the eyes of real people and walk the path together until we realise what we would miss if these diverse companions vanished and we were alone.”

Church Action on Poverty's digital poet-in-residence, Matt Sowerby shared thoughts on 'Breath' and the Spiritual suffocation we experience when our breath is stifled:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKFL46PHrFc>

The URC's Global and Intercultural Ministries is offering online zoom conferences in response to the call to become anti-racist, the first of which: 'Do Black Lives Matter in the URC?' can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0Daqo9vb0w>

If some of you would find it helpful to discuss, explore, and listen together, I am very happy to arrange film viewings, a book club, whatever is helpful, so please get in touch!



**Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
*All are welcome,
all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.***

(Words© Marty Haugen, b.1950)

Every blessing to you all as we walk forward in faith and hope,

Martin

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be 'M.B.V.' with a flourish.

A Zooming good summer – URC Holiday Forum

The theme for our virtual holiday was 'Global pandemic, Global church'. We had four key speakers, each interviewed by Lawrence Moore. We then split into breakout rooms to chat and then back together to ask our own questions of the speaker. This gave us a real 'window onto the world'. At the end of each session we listened to the Blessing as recorded by each country represented.

First off was Nomi Banerji-Gevaudan from the Palatinate Churches in Germany. Nomi is a member of one of Purley URC's partner churches (yes, it is a small world!) and she gave us a good description of life in Germany and German churches during the pandemic. Not a great fan of Angela Merkel, she nevertheless has great respect for the way she has handled the crisis.

Saturday afternoon saw an interview with Dale Rominger, an old acquaintance of the URC. Dale and his wife Roberta are now living in the USA, where Roberta is a minister and Dale is retired and writing books. Roberta's church is entirely digital (on Zoom) Numbers attending are higher than before and members are geographically more widespread. Dale acknowledged that when they do get back into their building then services would definitely be livestreamed to cater for the needs of their new congregation. He also expressed concern about the long-term survival of many smaller churches. Speaking of the wider political situation in the States, he acknowledged the lack of trust in leadership and the problem of very polarized and entrenched views within both country and churches.

Sunday morning brought an interview with Des Morgan, a retired teacher in South Africa. Des is white and lived through the Apartheid era. He spoke about how the Dutch Reformed Church got things so wrong and justified their actions from a biblical perspective, inspiring us to think how the church in the past has actively colluded with evil – slavery being just one example. Churches in South Africa are still divided along racial lines as most attend their local churches and different ethnicities still live in geographically separate areas. The country faces huge issues of overcrowding and poverty; unemployment is increasing and periodic shut down of the national grid also has a disproportionate effect on the poorest. When asked what can be done, Des quoted Desmond Tutu "When people say that the Bible and politics don't mix, I ask them which Bible they are reading". Des maintains that Christians need to love justice, righteousness, be more tolerant of each other and not afraid to try different things.

Our last interview was with Jack Giacaman and his 13 year old daughter, Joyce in Bethlehem. Jack and Joyce are Palestinian Christians and worship in the Church of the Nativity, built on the spot where Jesus is traditionally said to have been born. Jack runs a wood carving business and relies on tourism to earn a living. Bethlehem is surrounded by the Separation Wall and lockdown meant that no one could go from one side to the other. The wall cuts residents off from their farmlands and land can be illegally grabbed by the Israeli government and given to settlers; land that Palestinians have owned for centuries. Internet provision is poor for Palestinians, so too is the water supply; access to water in Palestinian homes is only for 3 days in 30 and it's easy to spot where Palestinians live as there are huge water tanks on the roofs, even so they are not enough. The church works hard to help the poor, but money is short; many families help each other too and share out money and food. Joyce goes to a Catholic school which is 50% RC and 50% a mixture of other churches (e.g. Lutheran) and Muslims.

This was the most desperate story and the most often asked question in the breakout groups was "how can we help/what can we do?" The answer was simple and humbling "tell our story, raise awareness, and support justice for all people around the world". There is no hate for Jews or the Jewish race, just frustration at the policies of the government of Israel; Jack knows plenty of those of Jewish faith who dislike the policies too. We agreed to sustain Jack, Joyce and their family in our prayers.

A perspective on South Croydon

In early 2014 (about a year after I met my now husband Stuart) he suggested I leave behind many years of flat sharing and move to South Croydon. I knew very little about Croydon and had never been there prior to meeting Stu despite having lived in London for over 6 years at the time. We had had our third date in Selsdon in early 2013 (before Stu headed to St Pauls to volunteer at the Night Shelter) and I had also visited St Pauls with Stu several times in 2013. I soon saw that South Croydon was a lovely place with lovely people. One of my good friends had actually just moved from Putney to West Croydon so that helped "seal the deal". In March 2014 I moved out of a flat share in Putney, SW London and into a lovely one bedroom flat just down the road from St Pauls. Stu moved in soon afterwards. My commute to work in Euston wasn't too bad and I was enjoying exploring South Croydon (Coombe Wood gardens, Croham Hurst Woods = wow!!) We were still living the little flat when we got married in 2015 and had our eldest son, Joshua, in 2016.

Other than a year in Purley (which also had its positives) we have lived in South Croydon for over 6 years now and I can't imagine living anywhere else. Joshua has recently started school just down the road at St Peters Primary. The very same school his Popsie (Chris Dean) also went a few years ago! I have already been lucky to meet several lovely staff members and parents at the school. One Mum I instantly recognised from a job I had 13 years ago in Battersea (small world). I had bumped into another lady from the same workplace in Selsdon 10 months ago. All 3 of us had moved out of SW London suburbs to South Croydon to start families (and we all have 2 kids each now). What does that tell you?

South Croydon certainly wasn't a bad area to be "stuck in" during lockdown. We do not have a garden but being close to Lloyd Park and overlooking the Whitgift sports fields helped us not to feel too trapped. We were lucky the boys could also run around safely in the Scout HQ grounds in those first few weeks of lockdown when people were discouraged from stopping/sitting in public spaces such as parks. Plodding along the pavements was not really enough for 2 young boys who could no longer go to nursery or play in their friends and families gardens.

Returning from lockdown and being able to meet up with people in person at St Pauls again got me thinking about how different it feels from 6 years ago. I am no longer a newcomer, I am older, I have kids now and there are guidelines in place due to a global pandemic. Despite all of these things, I am still very grateful to be living in such a wonderful community and to have met so many lovely people over the years. I hope our boys grow up feeling the same - I am sure they will.

When I meet new people and they detect a kiwi accent, I may find them asking "why would you want to live in England/the UK when you can live in beautiful New Zealand?" Going forward I will say "Well, I have such a lot here and South Croydon is truly awesome".

Kind regards, Linda Dean



FOOD LIST - SEPTEMBER 2020



**At Purley Food Hub we provide food and other items to people in crisis.
Please consider donating one or more of this month's priority items:**

- Instant Hot Chocolate
- Tinned Carrots
- Tinned Sweetcorn
- Sugar - Small Bags (500g)
- Tinned Cooked Meat - eg, Chicken
- Jars of Honey
- Jars of Peanut Butter
- Cartons of Long Life Fruit Juice
- Shampoo
- Unisex Deodorant
- Bars of Soap

***Thank you for your continued support - you have helped us
to provide over 195,000 meals since January 2013.***

**PURLEY FOOD HUB | Tel: 07546 635295 | Email: purleyfoodhub@gmail.com
Website: www.purleyfoodhub.net | Charity no: 1152807 | Company no: 08557885**

A very big Thank You, to so many members, who are reaching out to their communities in various ways, the 'Silent Few', are owed 'So Much', by 'So Many', showing love in practical daily tasks.

David White

NEWS FROM THE 7TH/12TH CROYDON SCOUTS & CROHAM VALLEY EXPLORER SCOUTS

The good news is that both the Scout Troop (10-14 years) and Explorer Unit (14-18 years) have resumed weekly face to face meetings albeit with some limitations. Despite the very recent restrictions on group size, Scouting has been exempted because we offer informal education in a structured and well-managed way. We are permitted by the National Youth Agency to hold meetings indoors and outdoors with a maximum of 15 youth members and 5 adults.

To date each section has held 4 meetings outdoors either at the Group Headquarters in Birdhurst Rise or at Lloyd Park. These have comprised a campfire (but no singing!) and cooking on fires, widegames, an information treasure hunt, and pitching our new lightweight expedition tents. Unfortunately, we have not been allowed to hold any camps this year, but we have been positive and booked a fantastic campsite in the New Forest for next August.

Our Beaver (6-8 years) and Cub (8-10 years) sections are yet to meet face to face, and we are currently working on risk assessments to enable this to happen.

After more than 50 years at our own headquarters we are about to rewire our buildings so that we are fully compliant with all the latest regulations. The work should be completed by October half term at the latest at a cost of more than £6,000.

During the lockdown period we have been able to run meetings online, and this has resulted in a number of membership enquiries. It is likely that we will have a few vacancies in each of our sections as well as for adults who we welcome as volunteer Leaders. In either case please contact the undersigned.

And finally 'It's Just Great To Be Back' !

Chris Dean

Group Scout Leader

07956 412609 or 01883 723081

**** The Bible according to children.....**

It comes from a Catholic school test and the children were asked questions about the old and new testaments. The following statements about the Bible were written by children, with incorrect spelling left in.

1. In the first book of the bible, Guinness. God got tired of creating the world so he took the sabbath off.
2. Adam and eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of ark. Noah built and ark and the animals came on in pears.
3. Lots wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. Jesus enunciated the golden rule, which says to do unto others before they do one to you.
5. Sampson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Moses led the jews to the red sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread without any ingredients.
7. The greatest miricle in the bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.
8. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
9. Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
10. Solomon, one of Davids sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
11. St. Paul cavorted to christianity, he preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.
12. Christians have only one spouse. This is called monotony.

Oldies but goodies contributed by Chris Dean - some still make me laugh out loud - and we all need a bit of that don't we? There were a few others stories that I was unable to include in our newsletter - if you would like to hear them - speak to Chris.

ENJOY GOOD COMPANY AND GREAT WINE

ST PAUL'S VIRTUAL WINE TASTING EVENING



Saturday, October 17th @ 7PM

Venue: The comfort of your own home!

Tickets: £15 per person including all you need to take part in the tasting & 5 raffle tickets are also included! Bargain!

Tasting packs will be available to collect from St Paul's URC or delivery to your home can also be organised.

**PLEASE RSVP BY 24 SEPTEMBER TO DENNIS & PAT SIMMONDS
DENNIS.SIMMONDS@GMAIL.COM OR 07715 991303**

Deadline extended to 29 September

Ever wondered what goes on at Synod?

Everyone's invited to the South London Synod Area Meeting
on Tuesday 29th September 2020 at 7.30pm

Zoom Code: Meeting ID 862 0013 3536 Passcode: 240443

Our own Minister will lead the opening devotions, then after a few short reports there is the Main Topic. **Do Black Lives Matter in the URC?** - a presentation by Karen Campbell URC Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries. Karen has presented and led a few groups on this topic on recent months and helps us in churches to understand how unconscious (and conscious) bias and racism can affect us all - and how to tackle it.

OAP - Old and pained or old and persistent.

1. They say age is just a number, well tell my right knee that, or that wisdom comes with age, really! I am the first man to have his state pension delayed, beyond 65, and for women it is worse, catching up to equalise.
2. When much younger, I used to think of pensioners as waiting to conk out, but in today's world, without their volunteering, especially now this country would be in a bigger mess.
3. Some sky dive, others do around the world, bungee jump, and in the case of St Paul's where would we be, and the attitude of most, especially in 'lockdown', is the same as 80 years ago, to soldier on, and as Churchill said, at Harrow 'Never give up'. This is so true, as all lives are affected by Covid-19. It is testing and complex, but Britain is at best, when are backs are up against the wall, fighting for the right to exist, but also be given a chance of a fairer, more just and better world, fit for all, where all can reach their potential and be respected.
4. You have to have dream, be persistent, to challenge not only yourself, but others, to re-assess ones true values, what is it that makes humans so special? If you know the answer to that, then there is hope for us all.

David White



COVID and our buildings

Since we opened for worship in July we have had 20 - 30 people join in person and 2-3 via Zoom. Our lovely sanctuary can hold up to 54 people / household groups all with 2m distancing and although everyone must now sanitise their hands on entry and exit and wear face coverings (unless exempt) worshipping in person is clearly important for those that come along.

Thank you everyone for following the requirements to keep everyone safe, and also respecting those who prefer not to come out.

We've lost 6 months of hall lettings income, sadly, which has hit finances hard, but have lots of interest for events once the government guidance makes these possible – now for many perhaps not until next year. On 15 September CoP friends hosted a wedding blessing in the church and a small reception in the large hall. All beautifully done, with fabulous decorations, sit-down reception and strictly 30 people. Such a privilege to play a minor part in helping them to have such a joyful day.

The changes in guidance require us to be vigilant to the regulations, keep updating our risk assessments and carefully advise enquirers about what is and isn't possible. Huge thanks to Christine and Robert for managing all these enquiries so diligently and sensitively.





Croydon Churches Floating Shelter needs sandwich makers for Nightwatch during the 20/21 shelter season!

Croydon Churches Floating Shelter (CCFS) is unable to operate this year due to Government / scientific advice that dormitory sleeping is unsafe so alternative accommodation is being provided. Many of our volunteers have asked if there's another way they can help the most vulnerable in our local borough during the pandemic.

Nightwatch, which runs a 'soup run' in the centre of Croydon every night of the year is currently having to buy in sandwiches to cover the huge increase in demand for their nightly food service. **CCFS would like to help them!**

CCFS trustees have set an ambitious target to provide 8 loaves of sandwiches to Nightwatch every night during the shelter season - starting as soon as we can and finishing around the end of March. The idea is that instead of hosting our guests for our 4 Saturday evenings during January we would provide sandwiches on those nights for Nightwatch to distribute.

CCFS would cover the cost of ingredients so all we'd need is your time!

Are you able to help?

To find out more, or to offer your time as a volunteer, please contact

Pat Granville-Overton on 07742859552 or Sue Eardley on 07971 068887

For more information about Croydon Nightwatch, please go to:

www.croydonnightwatch.org.uk

Thank you!

Re-thinking our histories

Events in Bristol earlier this year have made us more conscious of our connections to the more shameful events of British history, particularly the slave trade. But when this debate became a major talking point, I was able to reflect with some pride on a series of events a year earlier, through which Glasgow University faced up to its involvement in and profit from the transatlantic slave trade.

In the cloisters of the main university building on Gilmorehill there is now a plaque, which was unveiled in a ceremony attended by the vice-chancellors of the Universities of Glasgow and the West Indies, Anton Muscatelli and Sir Hilary Beckles. The commemorative plaque reads:

"Near this site stood the house of Robert Bogle (d. 1821) a wealthy West India merchant and owner of enslaved people. During the 18th and 19th centuries, this University benefited from gifts made by individuals who had profited from slavery. This plaque commemorates the lives of all those who suffered enslavement."

The plaque will be on permanent display in the University Cloisters.

The ceremony to unveil the plaque also marked a historic Memorandum of Understanding between the two universities, signed in Jamaica in July and in Glasgow in August 2019. The Glasgow website sums up the memorandum like this:

“Together we are forging an academic partnership which will include the establishment of the Glasgow-Caribbean Centre for Development Research. The Centre, co-located in Glasgow and the Caribbean, will help to raise public awareness about the history of slavery and its impact around the world, and will host events and activities, sponsor research work, and coordinate academic collaborations with other universities.

Over the next two decades, we have committed to raising and spending £20 million as part of our programme of reparative justice. We will allocate some resources to support the running of the Centre, scholarships, research, public engagement, and related initiatives. Together with The University of the West Indies, we will work to attract external funding for mutually agreed projects that will benefit the communities of the Caribbean islands and other parts of the world affected by the slave trade.”

Of course, this is a long term project, and, no doubt, it will take a considerable time for most of us to come to terms with the more shameful, as well as the more glorious, aspects of our history. At the Glasgow ceremony the Scots Makar (national poet), Jackie Kay read a poem including the lines:

*“Here’s the redress that’s long been owed.
Here’s the first step on the road.”*

Ron and Bea Pollard



Christian Aid Week 2020

Dear South Croydon Churches

We just wanted to say a huge 'thank you' for taking part in Christian Aid Week 2020. It was certainly a Christian Aid Week like no other!

We are so proud of how you put on your creative thinking hats, stepped up to the challenge and fundraised so innovatively during the coronavirus pandemic. We had quizzes with Rowan Williams, vicars shaving their heads, virtual concerts, supporters walking marathons and a sponsored silence to name just a few!

The current total for CAW2020 and the Coronavirus Appeal combined, currently stands at an amazing £4.3 million! This figure has completely smashed our targets and expectations and this is down to you, our faithful supporters.

Our partners who are working in vulnerable communities are already benefitting from your generous donations and are responding to the vital need of hygiene stations, sanitation kits and isolation hospital beds as they continue to fight the coronavirus.

We have attached an image to this email, personalised to your church/group which can be posted on social media or circulated via email to encourage your fundraisers with their efforts. Please note, we are still working on the data and matching donations to their organisation, therefore, if the amount noted on the attachment isn't the same as you declared, this will be corrected as further data becomes available to us.

Thank you for your continued support, Christian Aid couldn't continue to deliver vital work across the globe without you.

Blessings,

Tim Jessop

Central Supporter Engagement Coordinator

Logo for Welcoming Church

Junior Church were tasked with designing the new logo for our Welcoming Church Vision during the school summer holidays. They spent around three weeks carefully choosing, cutting out and arranging images which they felt best represented this theme. The people were all arranged around, in front of or behind the lettering. Just so that the lettering can be seen, many people are behind the lettering but I hope that when one of our members, (who shall be nameless) joked that the people were 'trapped' in the church that this was indeed a joke! Food for thought.

The whole exercise evoked some interesting discussion in the young people. They were shocked that any of the groups, some of whom have protected characteristics, could be anything *but* welcome in church and this reminded me of the natural inclusivity of the young. However, this also led on to discussion about however welcoming we might be on the surface, are there really measures in place to make everyone feel that they have a voice and contribution and are adaptations made when necessary? The whole exercise was quite a privilege.

Most of you will have had the opportunity to vote for either A, B or C. I can reveal that A was the winner by a decisive majority and this was designed by Camelia Catling. Well done Camelia! However, the others designed by Hamish and Douglas, with a little help on one occasion by Euan received lots of praise and affirmation. Many commented that they particularly liked elements of B and C for various reasons and this also promoted some interesting discussions. So many people commented that the only thing that they felt lacking in A was the number of children so a couple of little ones will be included in the final version which will be the logo on all our paperwork around the vision of welcoming church.



Here is as good a scan of the final image as we can manage but so far, the technical

aspects have proved a bit of a challenge! There may have to be a bit of a rework which keeps as close to the original as possible. The letters will also be coloured to stand out more clearly.

Fran

Vision Update

'A Welcoming Church for All'

As a result of our 'Vision Day' held in July 2019, a sense of God's call has taken shape; for us to grow as 'a welcoming church for all'. This is built on strong foundations of loving God, loving each other, and loving our neighbour (*Matthew 22: 37-40*).

This vision was agreed by Elders in October 2019 and by Church Meeting in November, including a 2-year budget for practical actions. As a church, we now commit to a 2-year Vision Action Plan, outlining where God is calling us to focus our energy and resources.

A welcoming church...

- ...for young people
- ...for our church family
- ...for our community
- ...with welcoming buildings
- ...that is growing in discipleship.

The five areas of this plan, developed in recent months, will help us to move forwards together as we share these missional priorities and how we expect to achieve them. The Elders' and the three Teams will be communicating progress regularly through the Pauline, website and Church Meeting (as soon as we can hold them!), helping us all to focus on where the Spirit is leading us.



A welcoming church...for Young People

"Do you hear what these (children) are saying?" Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself?'" (Matthew 21: 14-16)

We are a church that is purposeful in valuing children and young people, by

- supporting our Junior Church and youth leaders, and nurture new supporters.
- committing to achieve the URC's new 'Children and Youth Friendly Church' award.
- growing our links with two local schools (Rutherford and Coombe Wood)
- forging contact with hall users who work with young people and children (names?)
- keeping contact with those who are baptised at St Paul's
- making social events more child-friendly
- developing the Youth Council and our connection with uniformed organisation
- improving the Youth Room and facilities



A welcoming church...for our church family

'Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing' (1 Thessalonians 5: 11)

We are a church that is committed to growing as a church family, by

- providing social space to share joy and to encourage and support each other
- continuing what has helped us to grow together during the pandemic lockdown
- enriching our conversation and listening in meetings
- focusing attention on 'disagreeing well' and building each other up.

→ using away-days to concentration on important aspects of church life.



A welcoming church...for our community

'So, reach out and welcome one another to God's glory. Jesus did it; now you do it!'
(Romans 15: 7 - The Message Bible)

We are a church that is intent on understanding and reaching our community by

- creating space in our activities and worship to hear speakers on issues that affect our local and global community (poverty, loneliness, racism, dementia, mental health, climate emergency, bereavement, etc)
- meaningfully engaging with those who hire our buildings
- clarifying our vision for 'The Guild'
- providing opportunities for our community to hear different views in a safe space
- conducting a local community audit which will help us to clarify areas for focused outreach
- increasing our visibility and engagement with our immediate neighbours
- growing our links with Unicorn House and local care homes (Lloyd House)
- advertising ourselves better
- renewing the church website.



A welcoming church...with welcoming buildings

'Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out.' (Deuteronomy 28: 6)

We are a church whose buildings will show our welcome by

- improving internal and external signage
- upgrading our noticeboards and maintaining them with up-to-date information
- revitalising our garden areas
- replacing the degraded window protection
- installing the defibrillator.



A welcoming church...that is growing in discipleship

'It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil and struggle will all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.' (Colossians 1: 28-29)

We are a church that places a high priority on developing discipleship by

- fostering a safe environment where faith is talked about openly
- prioritising prayer and equipping members in their own prayer lives
- providing materials to support and encourage personal devotion and study
- underpinning our action with theological understanding
- nurturing our relationship with South Croydon United Church
- being open to worship in different ways
- continuing to offer bible and themed studies throughout the year
- equipping members as they live their faith throughout the week.

Our vision is about so much more than work to our buildings, but here are some of the ‘Welcoming’ improvements that have been achieved so far:

- New side entrance and vestibule door mats
- Improved youth room heating (*temporary solution*)
- Youth room and vestry secondary glazing
- Repainting external doors and internal decorating
- Replacing the stained-glass protective covers
- Commitment to a refreshed website

A huge thank you those who have worked so hard to make these improvements!

Given the serious downturn in our income as a result of the pandemic, Elders have agreed to continue working-up the costings of the other vision projects (noticeboards, garden improvements areas of work in the coming months. As a Church, we can then make an informed decision about how necessary and affordable these things are, given our finances at that time.

These areas include:

- Internal ‘Welcome’ signs
- Renewing the Garden, including ‘Memorial bench’
- Updating internal noticeboards
- New and updated external noticeboards
- Redecoration of the vestibules
- New handrail for the front steps
- Refurbish the vestry/meeting room
- Redesign and refurbishment of the youth room

“Barnabas Fellowship and Barnabas Meets”

As autumn approaches the Elders are hearing the concerns that people really miss the fellowship and contact of the Guild and after-church refreshments. Sadly, these have not been possible to organise compliant with COVID-security. We are therefore piloting two alternative ways to ensure everyone has a chance to meet up safely.

“Barnabas Fellowship” invitations will be offered to up to twelve people (two groups of six), safely spaced in the large hall after Sunday worship. This is a support group for those who may have little other opportunity to meet up, offer a chance to reflect on the worship service and faith life (as well as other things!) and will be facilitated by elders or other volunteers. If you would like to be on the list to attend or nominate someone, please let Sue, Martin or Fran know.

“Barnabas Meets” are pop-up coffee and chat sessions in (to start with) Lloyd Park Café, which is currently complying with COVID guidance. These could be any day or time but announced in advance and limited to six per table, possibly outdoors with warm coats on. If more than six wish to come then separate tables will be arranged, but no mingling! We will ensure that all are invited and included if they wish to participate. A great way to get together and discuss worship, faith, church or anything else to help keep us all going through these difficult times. Again, if you are interested in organising a meet or helping with the planning please contact Fran, Martin or Sue



The first meet will be Saturday 3rd October at 10.30 – contact Fran if you’re interested.

October 10th - Table Top Sale cancelled.

Please note that due to current COVID restrictions the decision has reluctantly been taken to cancel the table top sale - the next one is due in April when we hope it will be possible to run it safely. Thank you all for your patience!

THE CHURCH HALL

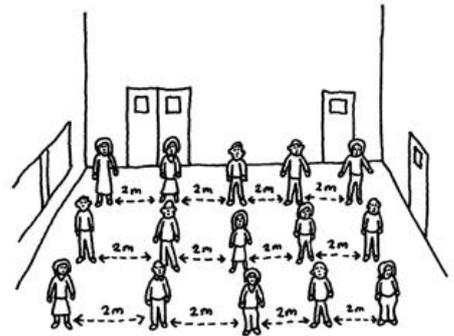
CONDITIONS OF HIRE



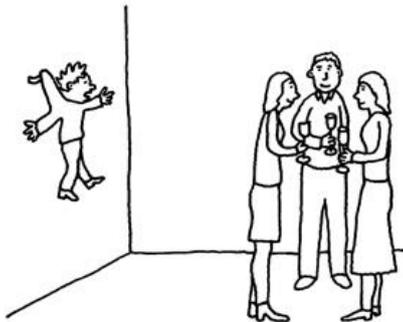
FILL IN THE PAPERWORK



ARRIVE AND LEAVE QUIETLY



DON'T CRAM TOO MANY PEOPLE IN



DON'T STICK ANYTHING ON THE WALLS



STACK THE CHAIRS AS YOU FOUND THEM



CLEAN EVERYTHING UP

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**Next Pauline Copy date – 3rd Sunday –
21st November.**

"...and I will hear you"

Jeremiah 29:12



A Time of Prayer

*for St Paul's URC and South Croydon United Church
Sundays, 9:30-10:00am via 'Zoom'*

Recurring 'Zoom' log-in details:

Meeting ID: 845 5391 280

Password: 496554

*You are very welcome to this time of prayer,
which will include guided, silent, and open-spoken prayers.*

*You are invited to light a candle, wherever you are,
as we unite in prayer to the God who hears us.*



St Paul's
United
Reformed
Church

The Methodist Church 