



KINDLE

**Newsletter of the Romford
United Reformed Churches
at Western Road**

October 2023

Ministers' Letter

Dear Friends

Autumn is here, there have been some decidedly cool mornings and evenings recently.

Autumn, "the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" as Keats in his Ode to Autumn describes it, is a wonderful time of year as nature prepares for the winter and we celebrate the incredible diversity of harvest and the awesome display of autumn colours. Everyone was generous with tins, dried goods and toiletries for the Refuge at our harvest Thanksgiving last Sunday. Thank you all.

We can learn much from nature even with our changing climate. The need to prepare for the coming season is important, for many animals preparation can make the difference between survival or not. Gardeners too know that if plants are not prepared for the winter some will not survive. I have a vague memory of being told that autumn is the time to double dig your soil to enable the frost to break it up more and allow more oxygen in. (Not that I do that) I am sure you can think of other examples of animals and plants preparing themselves for the coming season.

Do we in church prepare, not just for the coming season but prepare ourselves for worship, to meet God week by week. Anyone who leads worship knows the need and value of preparation. Worshipers can often tell if a worship leader is ill prepared, is the reverse true? I think it may be. A thought we all might like to ponder on.

I have spent time recently going through papers from conferences that I attended mainly pre Covid, events like Spring/Summer Schools, autumn gatherings and I came across the following which once again caught my interest.

God's Grand Design- 21st century lessons from the Church at Ephesus, 4D church: -

- Devoted to Christ**
- Dedicated to each other.**
- Demonstrating God's kingdom**
- Declaring God's kingdom**

Another thought for us to ponder on as we continue to follow Christ, walk his way and prepare ourselves for worship and service of God.

A thought that can sustain us as we mark the final service at Heaton Way and celebrate the years that the congregation there have been 4D church

Alison

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." — **Albert Einstein**

What's Happening

Whitechapel Mission

There will be a Thanksgiving Service at Whitechapel Mission on Sunday 19th November 19 at 3pm. Preacher Revd. Tony Miles. All are invited to attend.

The next collection of clothing and toiletries will be Monday 6th November. Please bring your items on the morning of Sunday 5th November and leave them in the small meeting room. Many thanks. *Ceri*



Regular Events

- MON** Playgroup 9am -12pm: Line Dancing 9.30am-12pm
U3A Cultural Group (2nd Monday)10am-12pm: Parent & Toddler 1pm – 2.30pm
- TUE** Playgroup 9am -12pm: Line Dancing 9.30am-12pm:
Havering Women's Aid 10-12.30: Coffee Time in the Foyer 11am – 12pm
Trinovante 1.30-3.30pm: Retired Gents 2-3.30pm: Havering Women's Aid 1-3pm
Alcoholics Anonymous 7.30 – 10pm: Yoga 7-8.30pm Badminton 8-10pm
- WEDS** Playgroup 9am -12pm: FL exercise 1.30-2.30pm: U3A Craft Group 1.30-3.30pm
Dementia Music & Social Club 1.30-3.30pm: Rhodes Arts Drama 5-8pm
- THUR** Playgroup 9am -12pm: Rainbows & Brownies 4.30-7.20pm
Western Road Ladies 7- 9.30pm: The Liberty Singers 7-9.30pm
- FRI** Playgroup 9am - 12pm: Crafternoon 1.30 - 3.30pm:
Coffee Time in the Foyer 11am – 12pm
Boys' Brigade 6pm - 10pm: Street Pastors overnight base 9pm – 1am
- SAT** Renee's Dance School 9am –1.30pm: Card Club (1st Saturday) 2-5pm
Romford Embroiderers (2nd Saturday)1- 4pm
- SUN** Morning Service 10am – 11am



Kappy 100th Birthday Dennis

Walking Up Ben Nevis

At the beginning of September, Graham and I went to Glasgow for the 140th anniversary service of the Boy's Brigade. While there, I thought I would challenge myself to do a sponsored walk up Ben Nevis. On the Saturday, I woke up at 5 am and took a taxi to the bus station, where I got a bus to take me on the long journey to Fort William. I aimed to start walking at 10 o'clock, but a car crash delayed my arrival. It also meant that I missed the shuttle bus from Fort William to the bottom of the mountain, so I had to walk. I eventually reached the bottom of Ben Nevis at 11:15.

Wearing my 18-year-old boots (I am sure Dave and Tony would be proud to know I am still using them) and carrying a rucksack full of supplies, I began climbing the 1,345-metre-high mountain. On average, it takes 7 hours to climb - 4 going up and 3 going down. I knew I needed to be quick because the bus back to Glasgow left at 7:10 pm. There were also going to be people running on the paths from 1 pm, so I needed to get as far as possible before then.

I had not gone far when it hit me that I was not as young as I used to be. My leg began to seize up, and I questioned whether I really should be doing this. After a rest on a rock, I continued walking. Hours later, I met a lady who informed me I was halfway to the top. Shortly after that, I needed another rest. I could feel my body was low on sugar, but fortunately, I had brought some glucose shots and energy bars with me. I was soon on my way again, ignoring the blister developing on my right foot.

Further up the mountain is a section I had to climb rather than walk. It was at this point I realised I had packed too much because my rucksack was heavy. It was also a sunny day, which while lovely to begin with, really made me sweat. Eventually, I got to a place where I could rest again, and a man offered me medical assistance if I needed it. I politely declined but later joined him and his girlfriend for some of the walk. They were really lovely people, and it gave me the encouragement I needed to continue.

Close to the top, it began to get cold. I put on all my warm clothing, including trousers, a hoodie, and gloves, which helped lighten my rucksack. It was at this point I came across the runners I had been warned about. The only trouble was the low clouds made it impossible to see anyone until they were almost upon you. Fortunately, I was able to move out of everyone's way.

Finally, I reached the top and met back up with the kind couple. They took my photograph at the trig point. There was not much of a view due to the cloud cover, and it was freezing. We began walking down together when I realised it was already 5 pm. Knowing I needed the 7:10 pm bus, I began running down the mountain. I am a fairly good runner, but by this time I was exhausted. About halfway down, I fell over while trying to pass a group of people. Luckily, I did not break anything, but I repeated the fall twice before I reached the bottom!

The path seemed to go on forever, and I could not see the bottom. I phoned Graham, who told me that if I missed the bus, I would have to pay £180 for a taxi to Glasgow. I kept running and eventually saw the visitor's centre in the distance. With only 25 minutes until the bus, I knew I would not make it from the visitors' centre to the bus stop in time. Luckily, Graham managed to book a taxi to pick me up at the centre and drop me off at Fort William. I explained my predicament to the driver, and he assured me he would get me there on time as long as there were no cyclists on the road. There were cyclists on the road! Fortunately, the cyclists let us pass, and I arrived at the bus stop with 12 minutes to spare. In total, my trip up and down Ben Nevis took nearly 7 hours - 5 hours up and 2 hours down.



The next morning, I felt relatively okay, although it was painful going up and down stairs. Graham and I attended the Boy's Brigade Anniversary Service, which had around 200 people in attendance. The service was slightly overshadowed by a baptism, but we sang a rousing rendition of Will Your Anchor Hold, which brought a tear to the eye.

Thank you to everyone who sponsored me. I raised £630 for The Dementia Music & Social Club.

By Lee Redican

India World Watch List 11

India is a diverse, democratic country with religious equality enshrined in law – but in 2023, in some states, it's a scary place to be a Christian.

In recent years there has been a big increase in Hindutva, an ideology that believes only Hindus are true Indians, and that Christians, Muslims and other religious minorities have 'foreign' roots and must be expelled. Hindu extremists seem able to attack others with impunity, even using extreme violence in some parts of the country.

Increasing numbers of states are implementing anti-conversion laws, supposedly to stop Hindus being forcibly converted to other religions, but in reality, they are often used as an excuse to harass and intimidate Christians who are just doing things like distributing aid or having a private church meeting. These laws do not seem to protect Christians from being coerced back into Hinduism.

Christians increasingly experience social exclusion in their communities, discrimination in the workplace, and have false accusations and rumours spread about them.

Who is most vulnerable to persecution?

The Christians most at risk are those who have come to faith from a Hindu background. In some parts of India, many face constant pressure to return to Hinduism, social exclusion, discrimination at work, physical assaults and are sometimes even killed. Church leaders are particularly vulnerable too; being a pastor is one of the riskiest vocations in the country today. Hindu extremists target them, their wives and children with violent attacks to sow fear in the wider Christian community.

The situation for Christians in India has not improved in the past year. Violence remains at an extreme level, and Christians still face very high or extreme pressure in all spheres of life. Since the current government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in May 2014 (and was re-elected with an even greater mandate in May 2019), pressure on Christians in India has risen dramatically. Hindu radicals can continue their attacks unabated, and the level of impunity is very high.



“we are jailed and brutally beaten and tortured, but we stand strong like the prophets of old”.

Pastor Shekhar was arrested, tortured and forced from his home in India.



**Love your neighbour
who doesn't
look like you
think like you
love like you
speak like you
pray like you
vote like you**

**Love your neighbour
with no exceptions**


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