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NOVEMBER 2017

The magazine of the Romford United Reformed Churches at Western Road and Heaton Way



WORLD HELLO DAY

TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER

WORLD HELLO DAY

Every year, November 21 is World Hello Day. The objective is to say hello to at least ten people on the day. The message is for world leaders to use communication rather than force to settle conflicts.

World Hello Day was founded in 1973 by Brian McCormack, a Ph.D. graduate of Arizona State University, and Michael McCormack, a graduate of Harvard University, in response to the Yom Kippur War. The McCormack brothers mailed 1,360 letters, in seven languages, to government leaders worldwide to encourage participation in the first World Hello Day.^[1] Since that time, World Hello Day has been observed by people in 180 countries.

Any person can participate in World Hello Day simply by greeting ten people or more. This demonstrates the importance of personal communication for preserving peace. World Hello Day was begun in response to the conflict between Egypt and Israel in the fall of 1973. People around the world use the occasion of World Hello Day as an opportunity to express their concern for world peace. Beginning with a simple greeting on World Hello Day, their activities send a message to leaders, encouraging them to use communication rather than force to settle conflicts. In its first year, World Hello Day gained the support of 15 countries.^[4] As a global event World Hello Day joins local participation in a global expression of peace.

Thirty-one winners of the Nobel Peace Prize are among the people who have noted World Hello Day's value as an instrument for preserving peace^[2] and as an occasion that makes it possible for anyone in the world to contribute to the process of creating peace. Other supporters include almost 100 authors, entertainers, and world leaders.

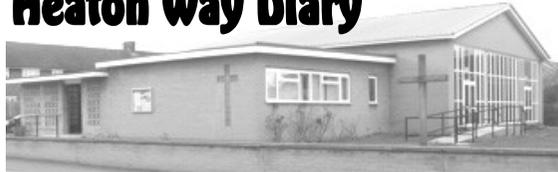
Woodhurst

- Monday 20 Parent & Toddlers House Group @ 83 Clydesdale Road
 Tuesday 21 Playgroup Morning Coffee Trinovante & Retired Gentle
 men's Club Badminton
 Wednesday 22 Morning Prayers Soup & Cheese Lunches Art Time
 Heath & Havering Steering Committee Meeting
 Thursday 23 Rainbows Brownies
 Friday 24 Boys Brigade
 Saturday 25 Messy Christmas Activity Afternoon 2.00 – 5.00pm
 Sunday 26 **Morning Worship – Revd Dorothee Bäärma**
 Monday 27 Parent & Toddlers House Group @ 83 Clydesdale Road
 Tuesday 28 Playgroup Morning Coffee Joan's Friendship Club
 Trinovante & Retired Gentlemen's Club Badminton
 Wednesday 29 Morning Prayers Soup & Cheese Lunches Diary Planning
 For January – July 2018 7.30pm
 Thursday 30 Rainbows Brownies

December

- Friday 1 Playgroup Morning Coffee Boys Brigade
 Saturday 2 Westies Child Contact Centre Trinovante Coffee Club @ BB's
 Card Club JFC & FIG Group Bowling Party
 Sunday 3 **Morning Worship With Communion – Revd Martin
 Wheadon** Mince Pies & Praise 5.00pm

Heaton Way Diary

**November 2017**

- 5th November 11.15am Rev. Dorothee Bäärma
 12th November 11.15am Gill and Fiona -Remembrance day
 19th November 11.15am Ourselves
 26th November 11.15am Rev. Dorothee Bäärma

Minister's Letter

For all the Saints...

Dear friends, fellow-Saints even,

As the year progresses, we are approaching fast the season of remembrance. All Hallows Eve (or Hallowe'en) reminds us of Sinners and Saints, All Saints Day reminds us of the faithful servants of Christ who have gone before us, All Souls Day equally reminds us of those promoted to Glory, and Remembrance Day soon follows to remind us of people who died for their fellow countrymen and -women. Some countries in Europe also celebrate Martinmas on November 11th - a feast attributed to St Martin of Tours, a Roman soldier who became a monk and showed Christ's love to the poor in the 4th century.

As a reformed Christian, I am pondering the importance of recognising the "Saints" of our church history; particularly as the Reformed Church historically placed less emphasis on the role of Saints. October 31st is celebrated across the world as Reformation Day; the day Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany. This year, Protestant churches worldwide celebrate the quincentenary of the Reformation movement, starting on that day with those 95 theses. Would we hail Martin Luther as a Saint? Was he a particularly saintly person?

"What is a saint? The Apostle Paul often speaks of hagioi—a word that means "holy ones," but is usually translated "saints" in our English-language Bibles. Paul writes "To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints" (Romans 1:7; see also 1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 1:1). It is clear from Paul's usage that he intends hagioi — "holy ones" — "saints"— to mean the people of God.

As saints, we are linked to each other by our faith in Christ. The New Testament speaks of Christians as brothers and sisters, so we are one family in Christ. By faith, we are relatives of Godly people who lived long ago—and of those who will come after us."

(Richard Niell Donovan, 2008)

The Communion of Saints, or in Paul's words to the Hebrews, the great cloud of witnesses, is God's timeless family, originated from and intended for eternity. And all God's people are members of this fellowship. All are blessed as saints.

Luther's greatest discovery that influenced his entire theology was the concept of a merciful God, a God who blesses and offers grace even to sinners. Sinners, with God, become Saints. And Martin Luther himself is a good example of this:

a less than perfect monk, a very earthly man with a strong passion for alcohol, food and parties, a man who freed a group of nuns and ended up married to one of them (with 6 children!), a man who later in life voiced some strong antisemitic thinking and betrayed some of his close friends of the Reformation movement. Even someone as imperfect as Martin Luther was able to share God's love and shed some of God's light among the people of his time - and up until today.

A more contemporary theologian, Lutheran pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, writes: "what makes us the saints of God is not our ability to be saintly, but rather God's ability to work through sinners. The title 'saint' is always conferred, never earned. ... I have come to realize that *all* the saints I've known have been accidental ones" (*Accidental Saints*, p.7)

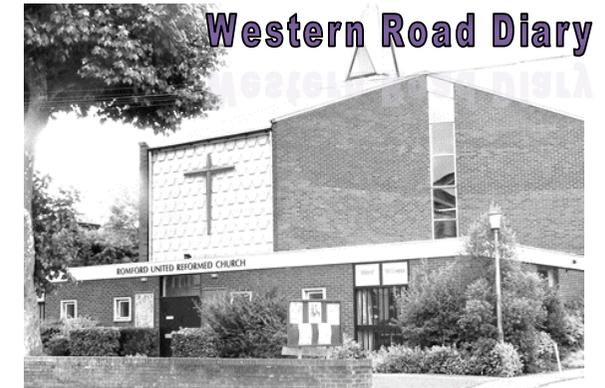
The hymnary website gives this summary about the meaning of the famous hymn "For All the Saints": the verses "describe the common life of all the saints: the credit due to Jesus Christ for drawing us all to Him, the strength and guidance we continue to draw from Him, our joint communion in Christ, the continuing struggle against evil, and the coming day when the dead shall rise and we shall all worship together before God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. No matter what path each of us travels, we all will enjoy the same glorious eternal life."

So as we enter into this time of remembrance and remembering, let us also acknowledge the Saints who travel alongside us on our faith journey. Let us re-member and remind ourselves that we are all part of God's eternal community and family. Let us give thanks for all who inspire us and for all who are simply present alongside us. Sinners, Saints, "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 3:23-24 NRSV)

May this Bible verse, which is central to the Reformation movement, assure us of God's love and grace, and may we in turn share this love and grace with the community around us. May we all continuously be reformed, changed, and transformed by God's Spirit. May our whole lives give glory to God - in times of sinfulness and in times of saintliness.

With love & God's blessings,

Dorothee



October

Sunday 29 **Morning
Worship – Revd Ann
Woodhurst**

Monday 30 Parent & Toddlers House Group @ 83 Clydesdale Road

Tuesday 31 Playgroup Morning Coffee Trinovante & Retired Gentlemen's Club Badminton

November

Wednesday 1 Morning Prayers Soup & Cheese Lunches Elders' Meeting

Thursday 2 Dothan House Rainbows Brownies

Friday 3 Playgroup Morning Coffee Boys Brigade

Saturday 4 Westies Child Contact Centre Trinovante Coffee Club @ BB's Card Club

Sunday 5 **Morning Worship – Revd Dorothee Bührma**

Monday 6 Parent & Toddlers House Group @ 83 Clydesdale Road

Tuesday 7 Playgroup Morning Coffee Trinovante & Retired Gentlemen's Club Badminton

Wednesday 8 Morning Prayers Soup & Cheese Lunches Art Time

Thursday 9 Rainbows Brownies

Friday 10 Playgroup Morning Coffee Boys Brigade

Sunday 12 **Morning Worship – Gill Shepherd & Fiona Skidmore
Evening Communion at Trinity**

Monday 13 Parent & Toddlers House Group @ 83 Clydesdale Road

Tuesday 14 Playgroup Morning Coffee Joan's Friendship Club
Trinovante & Retired Gentlemen's Club Badminton

Wednesday 15 Morning Prayers Soup & Cheese Lunches Church Meeting

Thursday 16 Rainbows Brownies

Friday 17 Playgroup Morning Coffee **7.00pm – Boys Brigade
Youth Praise – Enrolment**

Saturday 18 Westies Child Contact Centre

Sunday 19 **Morning Worship With Communion – Revd Ann**



OpenDoors
Serving persecuted Christians worldwide

India



Leader: **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**
Population: **1.3 billion (63.9 million Christians)**
Main Religion: **Hinduism**
Government: **Federal republic**
World Watch List Rank: **15**
Source of Persecution: **Religious nationalism**

On average, more than 15 Christians were physically attacked every week in India in 2016.

Since the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power in 2014, radical Hinduism has increased steadily. There are anti-conversion laws to prevent people from leaving Hinduism in five states, and there have been efforts to impose such a law at a national level. Some of those who have left Hinduism to follow Jesus have been attacked and even killed by their own parents.

Please Pray

For protection and strength for Christians from Hindu backgrounds, particularly those who have been attacked and stigmatised by their families and communities

For wisdom and guidance for those who are still choosing to evangelise, even in states with anti-conversion laws

That a national anti-conversion law would not be passed, and that God would be at work in the hearts of India's leaders

Romford United Reformed Church invite you to share in their Advent Journey

At Western Road each Sunday afternoon between 4.00 and 5.30 pm from the 12th of November, and then 19th and 26th November and 3rd and 10th December.

A time to share in our Advent Journey through verses from the Bible, through art scrap booking and special colouring posters.

The themes are Keep Awake, Prepare, Do not be afraid, My Soul magnifies the Lord, and finally the Christmas Story.

Can you please let Gill know if you are coming so we have enough resources on 01708 749873.

There will be a small charge to cover the materials of £5.00.

We hope you can join us.

The Church are having a Messy Church Afternoon from **2.00 - 5.00 on Saturday 25th November** a time of activities, games and worship. If you would like to attend please see Gill.



A service of Thanksgiving for Martin's Ministry

The October Heath & Havering service was specially to thank Martin for his dedicated support for us over the past six years. The service was led by Revd. Dorothee Büürma assisted by Revd Ann Woodhurst. The congregation read a Statement of Release, asking God to encourage Martin in his new situation and to help us to move forward without him as part of our Ministry team. Martin will now be serving the East London group, but thankfully will not be moving away (as a non-stipendiary Minister he can choose where he lives). Before communion Martin addressed the congregation in his usual relaxed style, saying how much he has enjoyed all the activities he has undertaken with us. Helen has supported him so well and we will miss them both. Of course, Martin finished with one of his famous jokes. Martin was presented with a cheque and a bunch of flowers, he went over and presented them to Helen. During refreshments after the service it was an opportunity to chat to Martin and Helen wishing them every success in their new situation.

Thank you

I didn't realise how special the Sunday evening Communion Sending service was going to be until I looked up and saw a full church. So many made the effort to be there and say goodbye. I really appreciated seeing you all. Thank you for all the cards and gifts, I'm not sure how you arranged a collection so quickly but I'm very grateful and will buy something to remind me of 6 very happy years plus as Minister in the Heath and Havering group.

The plan is I explore possibilities with the East London Group, however I want to discover more about Mental Health and eating disorders, plus as Director of the Christian Education Project bringing the Gospel to schools in Redbridge is another avenue I want to pursue. My role as Ambassador of World Vision and an advocate for the charity 'Lendwithcare' will also now take up more of my time.

Thank you again for your kindness I truly appreciate all the memories.

Martin

Thank you for all the cards, telephone calls and get well wishes while I was unable to get around because of my back problems. It is getting better and it is nice to be back among my church friends. *Doreen*



This summer, the Lectionary invited us to hear again the stories of the Sower in Matthew's gospel. I preached on those stories while at the same time doing gardening in my spare time. Most impressed by the sower's generous spreading of seeds onto all types of ground, I felt inspired to sow my lawn seeds in such a fashion too. A few weeks later the "harvest" of my sowing efforts was visible: grass had indeed grown, even where I had sown it among weeds.

Paul reminds us, in 1 Cor 3:6: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." (NRSV)

In a world, where humanity is powerful, resourceful and often selfish, it is important to remember that we are called to tend to God's Creation. We are stewards, workers, labourers in God's fields - not our own. And our actions (or inaction) have consequences.

At times of worries about natural disasters, we pray for our world and its people:

*Not so safely gathered in, in recent years.
Climate change, floods and disease have taken their toll.
As we sing the joyful hymns and admire the harvest display,
give us compassion and understanding
which moves beyond our dismay at the increased prices in our shops
into prayer and active concern
for those whose livelihood depends on the harvest in all its forms.
We pray for farmers,
especially those whose life's work has been destroyed in an instant;
for local people who suffer the knock-on effects;
for all affected by climate change across the world.
(by Carolyn Morris)*

Lord, this Harvest, give us joyful hearts and thankfulness for this world and its wonderful productivity. Help us to reassess our personal impact on the environment and help us to make small adjustments to our living that will have a big impact on our world.

Most of all, may we always appreciate life and all the blessings it brings.

Amen

I will fortify myself with contentment, for it is the gate to mental health and fitness.
Anon

Here is the Minister;s letter for September

Happy Harvesting!

Dear friends,

The year 2017 is moving speedily towards the colder seasons. We find ourselves in autumn and I am currently preparing 4 Harvest services! Alleluia!

When I think of harvest, I still think of farms, tractors and produce:

I grew up in a village, in the heart of the Hohenlohe plain in South Germany. There were fields and farms all around our village - and an abundance of crops.



My favourite childhood memories include riding around on the tractor of a church member through their fields (health & safety concerns were different back then), or walking through corn fields higher than ourselves and picking some of the corn on our ways. Our church was the main church in the village and giving thanks to God for the fresh produce from our farms was an important part of church life. During the annual summer holiday club, we always held the Sunday service in someone's barn rather than at church.

One Sunday each year, all the local groups and farming organisations were invited to a special service on a farmyard. We enjoyed worship, dancing, and the ever-important German sausages! On Ascension Day (still a bank holiday in Germany), we always worshiped on another farmer's lawn next to a stream of water, looking up at the clouds in the sky.

To me, the Bible verses came to life differently when I was surrounded by nature rather than inside our church building.

A wonderful team of workers provided a surprising Harvest Supper with such a variety of dishes chosen from beef and chicken casserole, baked mushroom, tomatoes and cauliflower cheese, by Gill and Fiona, and seven various deserts provided by Glynis. If you missed it you missed a treat! Then there were the washers-up to make everything go smoothly. In between courses we sang favourite hymns, and this year Graham was joined by Lorraine, Ryan and Dorothee for some of the tunes; that made the music very special.

harvest supper



So, a big THANK YOU to all who worked so hard to make the event such a success raising £150 towards this year's charity, Whitechapel Mission.

Whitechapel Mission Clothing Collection



A huge THANK YOU to all who supported the Autumn clothing collection. It was our best effort ever, and almost filled Tony Miller's trailer. He was delighted and told me that without this kind of support Whitechapel Mission would not be able to work. By offering showers, food and a change of clothes to the homeless they can then be put in touch with social services and other agencies to help them to move on and return to normal society, sometimes this is a long process but very worthwhile. Tony expressed concern at the number of young women that are coming to them at the present time.

present time.

Tony Miller writes, "Your support is particularly welcome now and in the future as we strive to meet the constant demand for the services, simple and specialised that we provide in your name".

Please remember the Whitechapel Mission in your prayers that they can continue the valuable work that they do. The next collection will be in the spring - date to be announced.

Betty.