



**KINDLE**

**Newsletter of the Romford United  
Reformed Churches at Western  
Road and Heaton Way**

**October 2020**

## **Minister's Letter**

*Dear Friends,*

Thank you all for your welcome to Romford, the cards, flowers, cake were lovely. My move has taken a long time, but I am gradually settling into a significantly smaller manse. Your prayers have also been greatly appreciated.

A colleague said to me recently "what a strange time to move", not knowing that I should have moved much earlier in the year and of course it is. Even though the buildings are open, and we are worshipping physically together, many of the other activities have not yet started to meet. We are all having to be creative and imaginative about how we do things. I am gradually introducing myself to folk by phone. If you see me out and about, please tell me who you are as I will not necessarily be able to match face and name.

The last 6 months have not been easy for many with lockdown and the lack of physical interaction, but I think there are opportunities as we continue to emerge out of lockdown. This is the case even if lockdown is re-imposed.

Many of you will be aware of the tool of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis used to assist companies, organisations to look at themselves objectively. In churches I have also used the BLIP (blessings, losses, inspirations, problems) tool. It is far too early for me to have any idea about the strengths/blessings or weaknesses/losses of the congregations. But I think we can see the Covid 19 pandemic as both an opportunity and a threat. A threat physically to our health as individuals and fellowships, a threat if we expect everything to return to pre lockdown/pandemic "normality".

It is an opportunity for us, we have had time to reflect, think, take stock as Margaret said in the last Kindle. We now have the chance to start afresh, maybe some activities, aspects of our life together need to die so that different activities, and new ways of being church can emerge. Our life together, our worship, our fellowships do not have to be the same, in fact I would dare to suggest cannot be the same.

I like the book of Ecclesiastes, one of the Wisdom books in the Hebrew Scriptures, attributed to King Solomon, but unlikely to actually have been written by him. The book is the source of that wonderful passage about there being a time for everything under the heavens (Ecc 3:1-8). It also has other interesting bits one in particular that is relevant to this letter is "Never ask, "Oh, why were things so much better in the old days?" It's not an intelligent question." (7:10).

Talking about change is often threatening to folk, yet God is changing us daily as we pray, worship and serve in whatever way we are able and in the new ways that I believe the pandemic has given us the opportunity to grasp. If this makes you uncomfortable then do remember whatever we are going through God is with us, calling us on to be God's people, building the kingdom. We can take heart from Jesus' words at the end of Matthew's gospel "I will be with you always to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20)

*Alison*

# What's Happening

## **Soup and Cheese Lunches**

We would like to resume lunches in October, but for this to happen we need customers and helpers.

A number of plans need to be put in place before resuming, so please could you indicate to Andrew or Ceri by WhatsApp/ text or by speaking to us if you would like to come and join or help us.

We miss you all, hope to see you soon

**Soup and Cheese Team**



The front notice board will also be updated ready for Harvest. There will be autumnal leaves, a poster and some plastic fruit and vegetables hanging from the arms of the cross. 🍁

😊 For Remembrance Sunday we will have poppies on the cross. The Service that Sunday is at 10.30 so that the minutes silence can be at 11.00.

We hope to change the theme regularly.

## **Love to you all,**

An enormous thank you from the Women's refuge. When we arrived the first time, we have now been three times recently, they said that they had just given out the last package of cereal to a new family that had just arrived. The Larder was just about empty. Of course, they had not had any deliveries during lock down They also said a very grateful thank you for our financial donation of £500. They rely heavily on donations. We will deliver regularly but particularly after our Harvest Service. A reminder that as well as gifts of non-perishable food toiletries are very welcome. We all know how different you feel when showered and shampooed with something that smells nice. Toilet rolls, sanitary products and nappies add to the necessary mix of essential goodies. In fact, a rummage in the sale basket at the supermarket, on a shelf in Wilko often produces something good. So, keep bring gifts in, especially on October 4th for Harvest

## **I cannot believe they grow up so quickly**

Congratulations everyone, look forward to the next stage.

Katya	Anglo European School in Ingatestone	Drama
George	St. Martins 6th Form in Brentwood	PE, Biology Phycology A 'Levels
Josia	Havering 6th Form	English Lit & Sciences A 'Levels
Adam	Havering 6th Form	BTEC Business Level 3

Brianna has started school

Daniel and Liam are now in Key Stage 2

Caris after getting a First in her first degree is now doing an MA in Fashion

Gill's granddaughter Helen has finished her Masters in Marine Biology

and to everyone else keep going and work hard.

**Gill**

## **Whitechapel Mission**

Please remember the date

SUNDAY OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup> or MONDAY OCTOBER 12<sup>TH</sup>

This is a collection for the homeless in London and the church's contribution is vital to keep the clothing shelves well stocked. There is a wonderful team of volunteers who sort everything out when it arrives so that those less fortunate can be supported. So, thank you to everyone for all your efforts for this very worthwhile cause.

**Betty** 01708 708760607

And here is a letter received by Olive:



*Bringing hope where  
there is despair*

Registered Charity No: 227905



Dear Olive,

We are living in difficult times, with uncertainty being the new normal. We are told to self-isolate and "stay at home". Our guests who are experiencing homelessness don't have the option to "stay at home" to avoid risk to themselves or others — so we are reliant on friends like you to pray for us and spread the word.

We are closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as pro-actively seeking and following the latest guidance from the Government and other community partners. And we are thankful for our supporters who help make it possible to continue our work.

As the Whitechapel Mission cares for an increasing number of our most vulnerable guests during the coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency, we remain committed to the health, safety, and well-being of all.

We continue to offer our essential services (**100,000 free meals served since March**). Our response balances the consideration that our guests are highly vulnerable to many challenges. Organisations like ours have a duty to care and not prematurely suspend potentially life-saving services. We are seeing new faces, with new worries — people who are desperately in need of the food, shelter, advice, and hope offered at The Whitechapel Mission. People in need continue to be welcomed at our Whitechapel Centre.



Our harvest message, as a video is available here:



**We remain open and Serving!**

**Tony Miller MBE**  
On behalf of Whitechapel Mission



Why not catch up on news via  
our new social media pages

Find out about our new  
kitchens and computer suite

### **Collection Envelopes and Sunday Offertory**

It is lovely to be back in church, even if we have to wear masks and cannot sing! I did not realise how out of practise I was at counting the offertory, you would have thought it would be easier with less different bits to add up and balance! Thank you to all of you who help with the counting after the service, it is much appreciated.

Many of you use the little envelopes for your Sunday collection and I have new ones for 2021 which I will distribute nearer the end of the year. If you would like to have envelopes next year but do not currently use them let me know and I will add you to my list.

I am aware that some people have swapped to standing orders and no longer need envelopes, if anyone else no longer requires envelopes (for whatever reason) please let me know.

Should you wish to make your offering by standing order I am happy to give you details of the church's bank account so that you can set it up.

Thank you to everyone for all you give to our church

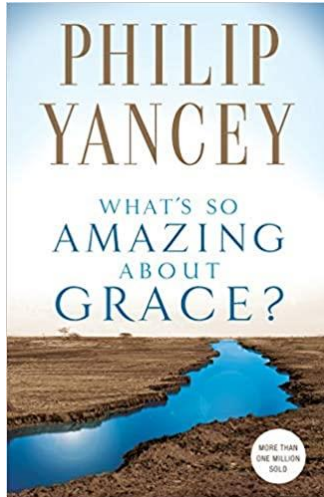
***Jill Cottrell***



## House group Update

After some very serious heart searching and prayer, as the current Covid situation seems to be escalating again, I have taken the decision that we will not resume House group until at least after Christmas. I do this with a heavy heart because I enjoy our times together so much, but your safety is paramount. I know this is disappointing and I wish it could be other than this, but until this virus is under control it would be negligent on my part to put you in this situation.

However, do not think you can get away with doing nothing. Ruth mentioned a book called What is so amazing about Grace? By Philip Yancey. This book is available on Amazon and there is also the possibility of buying a study guide to go alongside it. My suggestion would be that you got a copy of the book and worked through it. I have put a precis below. If you are not part of House group, it is still worth reading it.



As soon as it is safe, I will let you know when we are going to restart. For now, stay safe and trust in the God of Grace.

**Fiona**

In 1987, an IRA bomb buried Gordon Wilson and his twenty-year-old daughter beneath five feet of rubble. Gordon alone survived. And forgave. He said of the bombers, "I have lost my daughter, but I bear no grudge...I shall pray, tonight and every night, that God will forgive them." His words caught the media's ear--and out of one man's grief, the world got a glimpse of grace. Grace is the church's great distinctive. It is the one thing the world cannot duplicate, and the one thing it craves above all else--for only grace can bring hope and transformation to a jaded world. In *What's So Amazing About Grace?* award-winning author Philip Yancey explores grace at street level. If grace is God's love for the undeserving, he asks, then what does it look like in action? And if Christians are its sole dispensers, then how are we doing at lavishing grace on a world that knows far more of cruelty and unforgiveness than it does of mercy? Yancey sets grace in the midst of life's stark images, tests its mettle against horrific "ungrace." Can grace survive in the midst of such atrocities as the Nazi holocaust? Can it triumph over the brutality of the Ku Klux Klan? Should any grace at all be shown to the likes of Jeffrey Dahmer, who killed and cannibalized seventeen young men? Grace does not excuse sin, says Yancey, but it treasures the sinner. True grace is shocking, scandalous. It shakes our conventions with its insistence on getting close to sinners and touching them with mercy and hope. It forgives the unfaithful spouse, the racist, the child abuser. It loves today's AIDS-ridden addict as much as the tax collector of Jesus' day. In his most personal and provocative book ever, Yancey offers compelling, true portraits of grace's life-changing power. He searches for its presence in his own life and in the church. He asks, "How can Christians contend graciously with moral issues that threaten all they hold dear?" And he challenges us to become living answers to a world that desperately wants to know, *What's So Amazing About Grace?*

## Cards

Birthday? Anniversary? New Baby?

Need a card?

During the lockdown and the following weeks, I spent some time making cards.

I have taken about 100 cards down to church and restocked the card stand so please have a look when/ if you need a card. The 'plastic' bags are all recyclable/compostable and the money for any cards can be placed in the pot as before or given to me. All the money goes to the church's charity.

I have tried to arrange the cards into categories to make it easier to find what you are looking for... but it does get a bit difficult to fit everything on!

All the cards on the stand are homemade either by me or Glynis and generally do not have words inside.

If you cannot see what you want, or you notice a lack of a particular type of card please let me know!



**Jill Cottrell**



Don't you think we should be getting cross, doing something ,jumping up and down , writing letters to the organisations that say you can only join in if you have an iPad or posh phone if , for example , you want to book a flu jab at Tesco's. You can phone Tesco's pharmacy in Romford who tell you have to book online. They offered me Hammersmith, Surrey Quay and 6 other places in London. Even Havering Council make it difficult to order garden sacks, paying your council tax or getting parking tickets. It might be convenient to use your computer to book a doctor's appointment but so it is easy to phone

Does anyone else find this an area of our lives that is becoming exclusive to those who have and those who have not.

I am not against progress but find I often spend more time trying to deal with an issue online than if I could just phone! Moan over but it is

frustrating.

We have about 12 out of 70 people connected with our church who do not use either WhatsApp or the Service online or are not able to get Kindle Online.

Should we protest?

*Gill*

This is just a short but sincere appreciation of the Birthday wishes sent to me as I entered my 98<sup>th</sup> year on this somewhat benighted planet. I never cease to be surprised that I have survived so long, and I am grateful to be able, still, to walk an active dog and drive the car. There must be some reason, which I have failed, so far, to fathom, although I am able to continue to be of some use where financial matters are concerned.

Thank you again for remembering the 28<sup>th</sup> August, and here is Hopefully to the next time!!

*Dennis.*



### **A new friend, my basket**

When we had to start using a tick, (being a little unsteady), life became a little difficult. As there was only one free hand carrying anything was a problem. Also, only one thing could be carried at a time. When we wanted coffee, this entailed two trips from the kitchen, which was frustrating as well as tiring. That was until I spotted a small, sturdy, basket that was languishing in the back of the larder. This would hold two cups as well as other things like cutlery. Cutlery, crockery, gathering produce from the garden etc. The basket was received as a gift one Christmas time, filled with lovely plants which and been set out in the garden some time ago. The basket was too good to dispose of and what a blessing it has been. \I am so luck y to have found such a welcome friend.

*Betty*

Sunday School Teacher: "Now Little Johnny, I want you to memorize today's motto, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Little Johnny: "Yes ma'am, but I know it already. My father says he has always used that as his motto in his business."

Teacher: "Oh, how noble of him! And what is his business?"

Little Johnny: "He's a boxer."

## Harvest Festival – what a difference a year makes...

As I enjoy the sunshine and blue skies and look at the late summer colours in the garden, my thoughts are turning to preparing a service for Harvest Festival.



A year ago, we were blessed with a church full of delightful scarecrows as we brought our harvest gifts and our young people led us in a Thank You to the Lord of the Harvest for all his blessings on us and our church family, what a gathering they made! This year may seem subdued by comparison, and with a socially distanced congregation not allowed to sing, can we still offer our joyful thanks...it may be different in style but YES, of course we will because we have so much for which to be thankful!!

Harvest is a time of looking back and seeing how much we have been blessed. At every turn this year we are affected by how things were before Covid, how they are now and wondering what is coming next. But even with initial shortages in supermarkets, I doubt whether any of us actually went hungry.

I include in my prayers of thanks for God's provision all those unseen folks who grow, harvest and pack our food, logistic teams directing the flow of supplies, delivery drivers and store assistants who have all continued working so that those of us shielding or in lockdown could be fed.

We are asked to bring gifts for the Refuge, may we be generous in our offerings. They are not just to help the Refuge and the families they serve but also an expression of thanks to our generous God.

We may not know what tomorrow will bring but we know our faithful God will be there with us.

**Jill Hunt**

## Princes Pies and Preserves

It's that time of year again when apples are leaping off the trees like lemmings, and carefully cultivated tomato plants have delivered a bumper crop and more than we can possibly eat, so I have taken to producing a few jars of chutneys to sell for our church charity (BLESMA). But, due to our current viral problems, it looks very unlikely we shall be having an Autumn Fair at church this year, so I decided to have a virtual fair of my own. Currently in the larder I have:

- Apple and Tomato Chutney
- Tomato and Nigella Seed chutney
- Plum and Apple Chutney
- Beetroot Chutney
- Blackcurrant and Apple Jam
- Orange Marmalade
- Lemon Marmalade (will be available shortly when I can find the time)

Suggested minimum donations for all jams and marmalades is £1.50 a jar.

Chutneys come in three sizes and suggested minimum donations for these are:

- Small jar (about 180g) - £1.00
- Medium jar (about 260g) - £1.50
- Large jar (about 500g) - £3.00

Ring or text me on 078555 96563 to place your order and I can deliver it to you at church the following Sunday. I will have a BLESMA box with me to collect your money, but I would prefer to trust you to put it in your own BLESMA collection box.

*Many thanks, Graham Davies*

Oh, and if you are wondering what has happened to the “Pies” part of the partnership, I’m afraid the bottom has fallen out of the pie market (too soggy perhaps!) but, after considerable persuasion, the cook’s resistance crumbled and she will make medium sized apple crumbles to order for £1.50.

### **Life Is Short- Enjoy It!**

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better  
 To paint a picture, or write a letter  
 Bake a cake or plant a seed  
 Ponder the difference between want & need

Dust if you must, but there is not much time  
 With rivers to swim & mountains to climb  
 Music to hear and books to read  
 Friends to cherish, and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the world's out there  
 With the sun in your eyes & the wind in your hair  
 A flutter of snow, a shower of rain  
 This day will not come round again

Dust if you must, but bear in mind  
 Old age will come and it's not kind  
 And when you go – and go you must  
 You yourself will make more dust.

**Anon.,**

*Found for us by Olive*

**Life is like a book.  
 Some chapters  
 are sad, some are  
 happy, and some  
 are exciting, but if  
 you never turn the  
 page, you will  
 never know what  
 the next chapter  
 has in store  
 for you.**



## Just For Fun- Do You Remember Your Nursery Rhymes?

1. With what did jack mend his head?
2. How much money did Simple Simon have?
3. Where did Mary's lambs follow her?
4. When the cow jumped over the moon, who laughed?
5. By what time should the cobbler mend my shoe?
6. If one is for sorrow, what is five for?
7. Who put pussy in the well?
8. What did little Miss Muffett eat?
9. What did the Old Woman who lived in a shoe give her children to eat?
10. What grows in Mary Mary's garden?

Answers next month

Thanks to Olive for the Quiz

I am currently clearing out the room I use as a study ready for repairs and decorating and, of course, it is taking **much** longer than I anticipated - do I really need all these books, papers and mementoes, where am I going to store them all??

However, I could not help but smile as I took down a card with a lovely poem including the words 'may you be at peace knowing you are exactly where you need to be'!

Some of you will be familiar with these verses but I share them here in thanks for our faithful God who is with us at all times and situations, even in mundane & frustrating tasks.

**Jill Hunt**

Today may you be at **peace**  
Knowing that you are exactly where you need to be,  
And have everything to fulfil God's purpose for you.

Today may you **believe**  
That you are God's precious child  
In whom He is well Pleased.

Today may you feel the **love**  
Shining through all of creation  
From the beginning of time  
Till the end of eternity.

Today may you **trust**  
That all is well,  
And you are safe in God's arms...  
**Forever**

**Kindle** At the beginning of lockdown the church was closed but the Editor wanted to continue to produce Kindle so that the members and friends could keep in touch. The only possible way to do that was electronically. It was hoped to reach as many readers as possible but it was recognised that not all have access to the internet, so Elders were asked to pass copies to those on their pastoral lists who did not have such access. Now, as part of our church's preparation for resuming Sunday Services we have been advised by the United Reformed Church not to print a service leaflet as this may be handled by many persons and so be a potential to spread the virus. For this reason, the Editor has not provided a hard copy of Kindle to lie around in the entrance hall. If the congregation would like to have a hard copy available, please do not protest but see the Editor who will arrange for a hard copy to be supplied)

Minister

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