October—November 2017

CHURCH CALENDAR

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2017

October

1st	10 am	Harvest Thanksgiving Family Worship & Parade Service led by Revd Ruth Dillon
	6.30 pm	Evening Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon
7th	7 pm	'Bring and Share' Harvest Meal
8th	10 am	Family Worship led by Revd John Whitton
9th	12 noon	Monthly Prayer Group
	2 pm	Monthly Bible Study
15th	10 am	Family Worship & Holy Communion led by Mr Sydney Shore
22nd	10 am	Family Worship led by Revd Anthea Wickens
25th	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting
26th	6.30 pm	Film Evening: Martin Luther
29th	10 am	Family Worship commemorating the Reformation, led by Revd Ruth Dillon
	3 pm	'Service of Remembering and Thanksgiving' led by Revd Ruth Dillon (see page 7)



November

1st	7.30 pm	'Walking with Martin Luther', talk by Revd Ruth Dillon	
4th	10.30 am—	3 pm <i>Autumn Craft Fair</i>	
5th	10 am	Family Worship led by Revd Ruth Dillon, followed by Church Meeting & Election of Elders	
	6.30 pm	Evening Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon	
6th	12 noon	Monthly Prayer Group	
12th		Remembrance Sunday	
	10 am	Family Worship led by Revd John Mackerness	
13th	2pm	Monthly Bible Study	
19th	10 am	Family Worship & Holy Communion, with Infant Baptism, led by Revd Ruth Dillon	
22nd	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting	
26th	10 am	Family Worship led by Mr Sydney Shore	

Please be aware that the dates and times of meetings and social events may change. You are advised to check beforehand on the church website, www.fleet.urc.org.uk, or with Assistant Administrator, Margaret Armes (650994).

Items for the December 2017—January 2018 issue of *In Touch* should be with Christine Gibbons by **Sunday 12th November** (christine.gibbons@beech-ride.co.uk).

InTouch





Fleet United Reformed Church

"We are a community of faithful Christian people, working to spread the love of God to all."

Our Mission Statement



FLEET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Kings Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 3AF

tel: 01252 623629 (ansaphone) email: admin@fleeturc.org.uk web: www.fleet.urc.org.uk



www.facebook.com/fleeturc



@FleetURC

CHURCH CONTACTS

Minister: Revd Ruth Dillon, 01252 625238

revrdillon@btinternet.com

Secretary: Moray Henderson, 01252 659569

moray.henderson@ntlworld.com

Assistant Margaret Armes, 01252 650994

Administrator: b.armes@ntlworld.com

Treasurer: John Gibbons, 01252 614200

jmgibbons@hotmail.com

Hall Bookings: Brian Armes, 01252 650994

b.armes@ntlworld.com

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10 am: Family Worship
Holy Communion usually on third Sunday of month
First Sunday only: 6.30 pm Holy Communion

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

'Footsteps' Young People's Group: Sundays, 10 am (term time only)

House Group: Mondays, 10 am (at 35 Frere Ave)

Prayer Group: See page 5 for dates and times

Bible Study: See page 5 for dates and times

Pilots: Tuesdays, 4-5 pm (not meeting at present)

Coffee Morning: Thursdays, 10–11.30 am

Toddlers Group: Fridays, 10 am

Under the umbrella of the United Reformed Church, *Brownie* and *Rainbow Units* meet each week during school term.

Up to date details of all the above activities are available from the Church Office, from the Church Secretary, or on our website.

FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends

As I write this pastoral letter, young people are in the swing of a new school year. It can be a time of anxiety and hope for future dreams to come to fruition; yet for some children—and indeed, adults—it is tinged with judgement. Why? Because we as a society strive for perfection, believing that only the best is ever good enough.

A couple of years ago there was a television documentary about a school in Yorkshire, where pupils were being taught in new ways to enable learning to



develop. Learning and opportunity do not just happen at school; they happen throughout our life, for we are all **lifetime learners**.

- Look at **Moses**: in his ripe old age, God used him to move a nation;
- Look at **Abraham**: God used him to start a family;
- Look at **Deborah**: God called her to become the first female Judge;
- Look at Paul: God moved his understanding from that of a strict Jewish mind-set to becoming a traveller who met people where they were and spoke about the Love and Good News of Jesus Christ.

As Christians we have a different measurement for success. The Scripture tells us that there were no exams, only memory:

- Remember your Creator;
- Remember your family, and where you have come from;
- Remember your personal life story;
- Remember your nation's history.

And God encourages such remembering, because God knows that human beings are prone to 'elective forgetting'. When this happens judgements are made, hurt prevails, and divisions occur.

Let me explain:

- Do we want to go back to the days of the old education system, where left-handed children were forced to write with their right hand, because it was deemed to be the right thing?
- Do we want to go back to teachers using the cane or strap if you misspelt more than three words?
- Do we want to go back to the days when there was denial of opportunity for late development?

All of the above happened to me and to my friends.

Educational assessments, at whatever age, do not assess all of what makes us unique and special. They cannot assess how many times you have been a caring friend; they cannot assess how many times you bring a smile to a person's

face; they cannot assess your commitment to helping someone in need.

'Educating the mind without educating the heart is not education at all.' (Aristotle)

It seems to me that is why God came to dwell with us, to show us how to educate the heart, to recognise the excluded, to reach out to the unloved, and to speak about the Love of God.

I want to live and be part of a world that embraces uniqueness, that brings opportunity to those in need, that welcomes those who want to move mountains because they feel passionately about injustice, that encourages growth whatever the age, whether we have little hands or silver grey hair.

Why?

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, it is faithfully planted and it is cared for by God.

Has your old seed bed gone dry?

If so, allow God to plant new seeds.

Thanks be to God.

Blessings to you all,

Ruth



CELEBRATING 500 YEARS OF THE REFORMATION



Last Roll Call!!

Tuesday, 31st October is the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing the 95 theses on the church door at Wittenburg, and so starting the Reformation.

So make sure you have the following dates in your diary. We will be joining our friends from Beacon Hill United Reformed Church, and the invitation will be issued across all denominations in the area.

Please invite friends who would like to know more about Martin Luther.

Thursday 26th October:

Film Night: *'Luther'*, the life of Martin Luther, starring Joseph Fiennes and Peter Ustinov, exploring the man, his faith and his challenges. Starts at 6.30 pm, with a short discussion afterwards.

Sunday Service, 29th October:

 $10\ \text{am}$: A special service remembering the Reformation, our roots and heritage.

Wednesday 1st November:

7.30 pm: 'Walking with Martin Luther', a talk by Revd Ruth Dillon, exploring the man, his faith and challenges.

BRING AND SHARE HARVEST MEAL Saturday, 7th October at 7 pm

Our Harvest Thanksgiving meal this year will be a 'Bring and Share' event. You are invited to bring a dish of food to contribute to the meal. To help catering arrangements, please indicate on the list in the vestibule if you intend to come, and also what you will be bringing (whether sweet or savoury).



ANNUAL LEAVE

Ruth, our Minister, will not be available on the following dates due to annual leave:

2nd—7th October 13th—16th October



BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Each month we meet in the vestry to explore the Lectionary readings for the following Sunday. The next gatherings will be at **2 pm** on:

> Monday, 9th October Monday, 13th November

MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP

The monthly Prayer Group will meet on the following dates at **12 noon** in the vestry at Fleet URC

Monday, 9th October* Monday, 6th November

Come and join us for 30 minutes of quiet meditation and prayer.

(*Note the date)



TODDLERS' GROUP

Our church-affiliated Toddlers' Group, which meets on Friday mornings at 10 am, is desperately short of volunteers to join a rota

for serving teas and coffees.

Can you help?

Margaret Armes has contact details.



NEW HOUSE GROUP

A new monthly house group, meeting on Thursday evenings, will start shortly.

Please contact Meg Nicholson or Liz McClune for more details.

Everyone welcome.

BAPTISM

On Sunday 3rd September we were privileged to welcome Lisa Murphy to God's family through the sacrament of Adult Baptism.

Lisa said, "I am so happy to be part of the URC. I have been talking with Ruth for over a year, but the decision to ask to be baptised is one that suddenly came to me in a dream. For years I had avoided the church due to a very unhappy childhood, but the Lord brought me back and now I am a Christian, albeit suffering from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Sensory Ataxia. I look forward to many happy times with the members of the church, and joining in the fellowship."



Welcome to Fleet URC, Lisa!

YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

Footsteps

The young people returned after the summer on Sunday 10th September. It was great to see everyone again, and we started our meeting with a prayer which we would like to share with you:

Father God.

Thank you for the holiday time that we have all just had.

Thank you for the family and friends we have spent time with over the last few weeks.

Help us to keep these happy memories in our heart.

Now we are excited about the new term—catching up with old friends, making new ones, and meeting new teachers.

As we meet here today to think about you with some of those friends, help us to listen, learn, understand, and grow in confidence in our belief in you.

Amen

After catching up with everyone's news we set about planning and working on a new welcome poster for our door. We hope you have noticed it.

Over the next few weeks we are going to discuss with the children what they think is the way forward for the group, and also for the wider church. This was something the young people who went to the March Synod meeting spent some time talking about.

Please pop in and say hello one Sunday. We like to share what we have been doing.

Margaret Armes



Pilots



We have enjoyed a summer of fun activities out and about in Fleet, as these photos show.

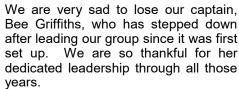
(left) Enjoying Ancells Farm Park



(right) Orienteering at Oakley Park

(left) Pond Dipping at Fleet Pond

Urgent Appeal—Can you help us?



We all enjoy our weekly meetings, and the different activities. But sadly, we

cannot meet without a captain. Please—is anyone able to help us out by taking over this important role? We have experienced helpers who are willing to carry on, and support and advice is also given by the central Pilots Desk, based in London.

Please give serious consideration to whether you can take on this important role. Bee will be happy to tell you more about what is involved.

Maureen Coney



SERVICE OF REMEMBERING AND THANKSGIVING 2017

A short service for bereaved relatives and friends will be held on **Sunday 29th October at 3 pm**

It will be a service with candles, and the names of those we wish to remember will be recalled.

If you would like a loved one to be remembered at the service, please speak to Christine Gibbons or Ruth Dillon.

All are welcome.

PRAYER FOR THE MONTH



About this time of year people of the Jewish faith mark the feast of 'Rosh Hashanah'. The words in Hebrew mean 'beginning of the year'.

On the feast of Rosh Hashanah people celebrate God's creation. During a festive meal pieces of apple dipped in honey are eaten. It is an expression of hope for a sweet and pleasant year ahead. The

Jewish New Year is celebrated on the first and second days of the Jewish month of Tishri (which falls in September or October).

Rosh Hashanah is also the first day of a ten-day period of reflection, asking God's forgiveness for faults of the past and promising to approach things in a better way in the year ahead.

On the 21st September a ram's horn, called the 'shofar', is blown. Genesis chapter 22 details the episode of Abraham and Isaac and the sacrifice of a ram. The blowing of the shofar, the ram's horn, recalls this incident.

Ruth



Let us pray:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation, for having made us all different.
What I don't know about you I need to learn from others, because they reflect your image and likeness in a different way.

I ask you to lead me to seek to understand the many people of goodwill who are different from me. Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
I am grateful for all that is good in my life.
I know that you look on me with tender love, and invite me to assess and renew my attitude and direction in life.
Be with me in my determination to live in a positive way.



DAILY DEVOTIONS FROM THE URC

Amen

Every morning a reading, reflection and prayer are sent out to over 1600 people by the United Reformed Church. A team of 100 or so people with different perspectives and from different places in our denomination collaborate to create this useful resource. People read them on their phones as they undertake their daily commute, on their computers at work, or with a coffee at home on a tablet. If you would like to read some, or sign up to receive them, simply go to: http://devotions.urc.org.uk/.

THE HAWTHORN TREE

Close by my window stands a hawthorn tree. Today the soft but bright September sun, Rising to touch it, set its leaves aflame; Leaves red and green and yellow, berries red, All hung with dewdrops, multiplying light. To dazzled eyes, still blurred by sleep, it seemed A fiery angel.

Nature we see and touch and smell, can speak Of that eternal world invisible. Sun and the turning leaves and dew were signs Telling me God had sent, to bless my day,

A fiery angel.

Sheila Durbin

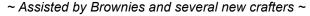


Please support our

11th Autumn Craft Fair

on Saturday, 4th November

10.30 am—3.00 pm



Tea Room ~ 50p entry (children free)

Our Autumn Craft Fair is always very popular, with lots of craft and gift stalls selling gorgeous items.

All offers of help gratefully received—Darrell Henderson (659569)

Donations of new or nearly new items are also requested for the church's own stall.

(Please give these to Bee Griffiths or to Maureen Coney.)

TRIBUTE

This tribute to Morag, who passed away earlier this year, is printed at the request of Dennis Canham.

In Loving Memory



Morag Canham 1949 - 2017

Afterglow

I'd like the memory of me
To be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow
Of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo
Whispering softly down the ways
Of happy times and laughing times
And bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve,
To dry before the sun
Of happy memories
That I leave when life is done.





Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice HART MALE VOICE CHOIR

in concert with

Salesian College Schola Choir & Farnborough Hill Senior Choir

at Salesian College

Friday 13th October, 7.00 for 7.30 pm

Tickets: £12 (£6 for under 18's), including interval refreshments

WINE WORKSHOP in URC Hall Saturday, 18th November

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT at 5.30 pm on 10th December Church of our Lady, Fleet; Tickets: £12

(Tickets or more information about these events from Hospice shop or from Vera Mosley)

JEAN'S JOTTINGS

Another light-hearted reminiscence from Jean Schafer.

Have you ever felt the sudden impulse to throw all your clothes off? And dance naked in a field?



I HAVE!

It was mind blowing and exhilarating.

Never to have done it before surprised me.

What joy! What freedom! How cold...!!

I woke up with a start—the duvet was in a heap on the floor, and I had tried to take off my nightie whilst dancing around.

Thank goodness I sleep on my own!

Jean Schafer



PALANI MISSION UPDATE

Our journey with the Revd John Abraham and the Palani Mission started in May 2016, when we were introduced to his church and congregation in Tamil Nadu. Among the members of his church were two young women who had finished their formal education and were seeking employment. They had been selected for training as midwives but were unable to fund their two-year academic course. Where they live poverty is wide spread and the infant morbidity rate is high: one in three babies do not survive childbirth.

Our gift of sponsorship, £500 each to Sandiya and Vanilla, to cover their first year of study, helped the girls' immediate needs; their future employment as midwives will also bring prosperity to their families and put money back into the community. On 26th September 2016 they started their training, and have now completed the first year by successfully passing their examinations. We have now sent another £1,000, and that will enable the girls to continue their course, which restarted on 22nd September this year.



A third practical year will complete their qualification in the summer of 2019.

Additional encouraging news from Revd John relates to Palani Mission's attempt to found a new church in Pulliyampatti. For us as a church trying to discern how we can develop the partnership, this project provides a wide range of new possibilities. It is therefore appropriate that our minister, Ruth, along with Bee and Gordon Griffiths, has decided to visit the Mission, the girls and the region next summer, and can fact-find on our behalf and report back.

John Gibbons



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child uses gift-filled shoeboxes to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. The young people at Fleet URC will be supporting this worthy cause again this year, and we are asking you to help us. There are many different

ways you can get involved with this amazing outreach:

- Fill a box as an individual or a family;
- Donate items for us to fill the boxes, or money to buy things.
- Give a cash donation to help with transport costs (£5 per box).

Boxes, and leaflets giving more information about the appeal and ideas of things to buy are available in the foyer. Boxes need to be returned to church by **Sunday**, **19th November**.

Each year we have a terrific response. Let's see what we can do this year! Bee Griffiths





COMMITMENT FOR LIFE (CforL)

What does Commitment for Life stand for?

CforL have suggested the following exercise. This is my attempt—I am certain you can come up with even more.

C ARING	F UNDING	L EARNING
O OFFERING	O PEN LIP	I NSTRUCT

M OBILISE R ECOVERY F ORGE

M ENTOR E MPOWER

I NSPIRE

T EACH

M OULD

E NCOURAGE

N URTURE

T RAIN

Please continue to pray for Commitment for Life and their partners. *Tamyra Sherratt, CforL Link Person*



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN FLEET AND CROOKHAM (CTFC)

Autumn is upon us, the weather is getting colder, acorns and leaves are falling. It's goodbye summer: but look on the bright side—Christmas will be with us soon!

Here are a few nuggets of information for you from

Churches Together:

A warm welcome was given to the new minister at Fleet Methodist Church, Revd Billy Slatter, and his wife Pauline. He was inducted on 1st September, and we wish him happiness in his new post.

'Crossfya' is an evangelistic Christian music band who will be performing this half term from 2nd—9th October at Court Moor School. Crossfya will be involved in morning assemblies, and has been organised and sponsored by Fleet Baptist Church in association with FACCTS. Students will be given the opportunity to respond to what they have heard about the gospel.

FACCTS will be advertising for a part time worker (10 hours a week) to join the team. Full application packs will be available shortly. If you require further details please contact Paul Brice on 07713 348291.

Please put **29th November** in your diaries—the date of this year's Fleet Festivities. Carol Dunk will be organising the event again this year.

Christmas Lunch for people living on their own will also be going ahead this year. If you are interested in assisting, or if you know of anyone locally who might be interested in attending, either let me know or contact Carol Dunk directly (01252 444872).

Angel bombing is also well on its way. Here are a few dates for you:

There will be a blessing of the knitted Angels before they are placed around the town. This will be held at 3 pm on **3rd December** at Fleet Methodist Church. All the knitted Angels will be present!

On **Saturday 16th December**, from 6 am onwards, our Angels will be placed around Fleet town. The aim is for all the Angels to be out waiting for their new owners by 7 am. Volunteers will be needed to help place them. Despite the early start, it is fun!

A Facebook page for the Angels has been set up at www.facebook.com/FleetChristmasAngels. This is primarily to let people know that they can collect wool, patterns and labels from LivingStones Christian Centre. It will be interesting to see how many from outside the church community get involved.

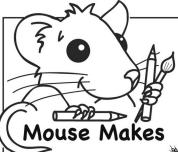
I would like to collect any Angels that have been knitted by **15th October**, and any extra that are done after that date by the middle of November. This is so I can calculate how many tags to print off. If anyone would like to help sew on the labels, please let me know and I will book a date.

Thank you in advance for your help and support. We know from last year that the Angel Bombing really touched the community.

God bless.

Darrell Henderson, CTFC Representative

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY



Can you find these harvest words in the hay bales?

HARVEST
THANKSGIVING
PRAISE • GOD • BLESSED
SEEDS • SOW • LAND
PLOUGH • SCATTER
SOIL • GROW
CROPS • REAP

May all the peoples praise you, O God, may all the peoples praise you!
The land has produced its harvest, God, our God has blessed us.
God has blessed us, may all people everywhere honour him.

Psalm 67:5-7

BALEAR S I T G R R R F S A P W A I D W

WHE A PE SER PE

A MOUSE • BREAD • LOAF

R WHEAT • CAIL R • KAIN • SUN

AUTUMN • GATHER

PICK • REAP • BALE

TRACTOR • BARN • CART

HAYSTACK • FOOD

A MOUSE • BREAD • LOAF

R WHEAT • OATS

RYE • BARLEY

OLIVES • GRAPES • PIPS
PEARS • PLUMS • APPLE
BERRIES • NUTS • VINE
FIGS • BEANS • PEAS

POTATOES • FLOUR
ONIONS
PARSNIPS
RICE • SUGAR

A F C A R T R A C T O R
T O N I O N S F I G S A
H O P O T A T O E S B I
E D E I F L O U R A S
R P A R S N I P S O R E
T O S B E A N S U N R
B A R L E Y O L I V E S

AND ANOTHER THING....

A Favourite Prayer

Many people now find their mobile phones indispensable, appreciating the opportunity to stay 'connected' and 'in touch' wherever they find themselves. Pearl and Bill Thomas have sent the following piece from their church notices, which reminds us that prayer serves a similar purpose in keeping us close to God.



"The first ever cordless phone was created by God.

He named it prayer...

It never loses its signal and you never have to recharge it. Use it anywhere!"

However for many of us prayer does not always come easily, and for those times when it is difficult to find the 'right' words, Eric Perry recommends dwelling on the opening words of a familiar prayer from the *Alternative Service Book* of the Church of England:

"Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden...."

This reminds us that God already knows our deepest thoughts and desires, even when we can't express them. Eric writes, "What truth there is in these words... In my view this makes an excellent start to any prayer!"

Whether or not we can find the words to continue, the important thing is that we are staying 'in touch'.

Christine Gibbons

OBERAMMEGAU PASSION PLAY 2020 & Beautiful Austrian Tyrol

The Oberammergau Passion Play tells the story of Christ's Passion from his entry into Jerusalem and ending with the Resurrection and Ascension. It has been performed every ten years since 1633 by the villagers of Oberammergau, Bavaria, and those who have been in previous years describe it as an amazing lifetime experience.



The Revd Michael Hopkins, Minister of Farnham URC, has booked a trip to the 2020 Passion Play, which will include the opportunity to visit the Austrian Tyrol. The dates are: **17th—23rd May 2020**, and although this seems some way ahead, bookings need to be made this year.

If you are interested, please contact Michael Hopkins on: 01252 711359, or email: michael.hopkins@mansfield.oxon.org.

There is also an on-line brochure at:

https://www.tailored-travel.co.uk/michaelhopkins austriantyrol 170520

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