

CHURCH CALENDAR

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2015

August

2nd	10 am	Family Worship led by Revd Ruth Dillon
	6.30 pm	Evening Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon
3rd	2.30 pm	Monthly Prayer Group (in the Church)
9th	10 am	Family Worship led by Mr Ian Fletcher
16th	10 am	Family Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon
22nd	2-8 pm	Open House at the Manse (see p 4)
23rd	10 am	Family Worship led by Mrs Julie Young
26th	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting
27th	8 pm	Film House Group at the Manse (see p 4)
30th	10 am	Family Worship led by Mr John Simson



September

2nd	8 pm	Church Meeting
6th	10 am	Family Worship with Service of Baptism led by Revd Ruth Dillon
	6.30 pm	Evening Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon
7th	2.30 pm	Monthly Prayer Group (in the Church)
13th	10 am	Family Worship led by Mrs Maggie Bridgett
14th	11 am	Church Membership class
20th	10 am	Family Worship & Holy Communion led by Revd Ruth Dillon
24th	8 pm	Film House Group at the Manse
27th	10 am	Family Worship led by Mr John Simson
28th	11 am	Church Membership class
30th	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting

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 August-September Newsletter should be with Christine Gibbons by **Sunday 13th September** (christine.gibbons@building-bridges.co.uk).

Fleet United Reformed Church

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

Newsletter



August—September 2015



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SUNDAY WORSHIP

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

REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Little Fishes:) Sundays, 10 am (*Not meeting in August:*
Loaves and Fishes:) *resuming on 6th September*)

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

Toddlers Group: Tuesdays, 10 am; Fridays, 10 am

Pilots: Tuesdays, 4-5 pm (*Not meeting in August:*
resuming on 8th September)

Coffee Morning: Thursdays, 10–11.30 am (*Not meeting 20th Aug;*
27th Aug meeting at Elvetham Hotel)

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

Further details of all these activities are available from the
Church Office, from the Church Secretary, or on our website.

FROM THE MANSE



Dear Friends

“Trust me!”

How many times have we heard that, and been let down! Whether it be a friend, a member of our family, a professional or a stranger, trusting is a difficult concept. To trust someone totally and believe that they have your best interests at heart is a risk and, yes, many times we have been let down.

I was saddened to watch a TV programme recently about a lady who met someone and believed they were romantically involved. Over a period of time the man gained the woman's trust and she lent him thousands of pounds, and even re-mortgaged her house, only to find out it was a scam, and she was left with nothing.

We can very easily say that that would not happen to us and that we would know better. However as Christians we are told to love our neighbour, always give people a second chance, and to 'see the Christ in others'. This is a massive challenge to us if the other person has openly used and emotionally abused us.

I have often wondered what happened to the lady. Although she must have been hurt and embarrassed, did she forgive him? Did she lose her faith? Did she become cynical?

I am sure that when people heard Jesus talk and preach they must have thought: *“Who the heck is this man? Who does he think he is? Does he think he is the great prophet Elijah come back to life? Not likely! Stay away from him... he is trouble.”*

Learning to trust again after you have been hurt is not an easy matter. Yes, you may be able to forgive, but never forget; and that is OK with God.

For in God we are special, we are **'beloved'**. This means that whatever happens to us, the highs and lows of life, despite all the people we argue with, or who let us down, God remains faithful, for we are God's **'beloved'**, and we are therefore worthy of love and respect.

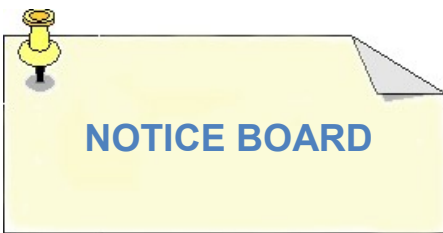
Being **'beloved'** is such a wonderful thing, for God loved us before our parents loved us and before our children and family loved us. And as **'beloved'** in God's heart we know that God will never let us down, for God's love and faithfulness is constant and never wavers.

Therefore, in God's **'belovedness'** to us we are valued, worthy and precious.

In God we can Trust!! AMEN!!

Every blessing,

Ruth



ANNUAL LEAVE

Ruth will be on annual leave
from 3rd to 15th August.

Please contact Moray Henderson or Margaret Armes if you have any queries during this time.

MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP

The monthly Prayer Group will meet on the following dates at 2.30 pm in the Church:

Monday, 3rd August

Monday 7th September

Come and join us for 30 minutes of quiet meditation.

All are welcome.



OPEN HOUSE AT THE MANSE

Don't forget the annual Open House at the Manse, on
Saturday 22nd August, 2-8 pm.

Please bring something for the table (sweet or savoury), and Ruth will provide tea, coffee etc.

Everyone welcome.

BAPTISM SERVICE

On **Sunday 6th September** we shall be baptising
Florence Aimée Chevalier
into God's family.

Please come and support Florence and her family on this special day.

'REEL ISSUES'

Film House Group



The film we will be discussing during August and September is *Paddington*.

There are many themes in this film, ranging from Refugees and Belonging, to Acceptance and Welcome.

Next meetings are on **Thursday, 27th August and Thursday 24th September, at 8 pm** at the Manse.

Please let Ruth know if you would like to come.



MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

On Sunday 15th November we shall be receiving people into URC membership. Many people ask, "*Why do I need to enter membership at the Church? I attend, and I am part of the community.*"

Membership is much more than just attending. It is acknowledgment that you undertake your faith seriously, and that you recognise your need for God to be in your life.

God blesses us daily with Love, Strength and Grace. Therefore within the United Reformed Church it is our custom to accept those who wish to transfer from another denomination, those who wish to affirm their faith again, and those who wish to confess their faith for the first time.

Membership then is our response to God, an affirmation that we are accountable for living out our faith within our community.

Five sessions of Membership 'classes' will commence in September, each on a Monday and beginning at **11 am**:

**14th September, 28th September, 19th October,
2nd November, 9th November**

Ruth



SUNFLOWERS AND FOOTBALL



Here is Kirsten Bailey with her amazing sunflower! Kirsten's school, Hook Infants, held a competition to see who could grow the tallest sunflower, and Kirsten's was the winner at an incredible 277 cm (just over 9 ft!). Kirsten's prizes were a certificate marking her achievement and a book about gardening. Well done, Kirsten!



Congratulations also to Eve Chevalier, who grew the tallest sunflower in her Rainbow Group (1st Fleet West), and to Melvyn Mathew, who plays for Fleet Football Club Under 13s section. Melvyn was awarded a trophy for Best Defender this season and has also been 'Man of the Match' twice.

Congratulations, Kirsten, Eve and Melvyn!

LOAVES AND FISHES

We have had a lot of fun and learning during the past few weeks, both young people and adults! We learnt how Jesus appointed his twelve disciples and asked them to join him on his missions. They travelled far and near, preaching, healing and telling stories, such as the parable of the Mustard Seed. Our children are our *Mustard Seeds*, and we are the older plants (some older than others, but all equally important!) The 'trees' offer hospitality and comfort to the birds, very much as our Church offers comfort and welcome to strangers and friends. The children planted cress in small pots. The story is about patience, and we have to be patient and wait for our 'seeds' to grow.



We explored other parables. We wondered how we would have coped in Jesus' time. No internet, no Google, no newspaper or reference books. We thought we would welcome the parables as they would have helped us learn and remember Jesus' teaching.

Practical experiments are another way to learn, so we made lava lamps with oil, water, food colouring and Alka Seltzer tablets. (It made me smile as the group had never heard of Alka Seltzer. I am sure many in my generation remember making fizzy orange juice!)



We poured in the water first, and then the oil, and waited for it to separate. It was a bit of a surprise to us that the water was heavier than the oil. Twelve drops of red food colouring followed, to colour the water in the bottom of the bottle (twelve because of the twelve disciples) and then.... the Alka Seltzer. That was the exciting bit: lots of Aka Seltzers!!

We discussed how the water in the bottle represents *the world*. The oil in the bottle represents *us*. The red food colouring is *when we forget Jesus and his goodness*. The Alka Seltzers are *our prayers*. So every time we pray to Jesus and think of him, he feels excited, because we're building a relationship with him. We're talking to hm, we're including hm in our lives: he just fizzes with happiness!

One of the group said that when the bubbles return to the water they are our prayers for the world and are returning there.

In September when Loaves and Fishes meet up again, we will have two new members from Little Fishes. We hope they will enjoy being part of Loaves and Fishes. I know they will get a very warm welcome from us all.

Have a happy summer, everyone!

Darrell Henderson

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

In July our church celebrated its 103rd anniversary. Mr Peter Pay, Wessex Synod Clerk, led our morning service and brought along some knitted sheep, whom he likened to all of us, God's flock, who frequently wander away or get lost. Yet our God knows each one of us by name, and cares for each one of us unconditionally.

Following the service our



Loaves and Fishes group presented the church with a special birthday card they had made.

Here's to the next 103 years at Fleet URC!



Aspire

Supporting people with spinal injury

SWIM THE CHANNEL CHALLENGE

I will be undertaking the *Aspire Swim the Channel Challenge*, commencing in September and finishing in December. This involves swimming 22 miles over a period of 12 weeks at the Hart Leisure Centre. (It means I will need to swim 1416 lengths, ie 118 lengths a week!)

Every eight hours someone is paralysed by spinal cord injury. It can happen to anyone at any time and there is currently no cure. Every pound that I raise means that *Aspire* can provide practical help to a spinally injured person, allowing them to lead a more independent life.

If you would like to support me by donating, then please use this link: www.aspirechannelswim.co.uk/user/ruthdillonaspire875

Thank you.

Ruth



PRAYER FOR THE MONTH

The comedian, Roy Castle, was a popular entertainer and presented the programme 'Record Breakers'. He developed lung cancer, thought to be from passive smoking. Before his death on 2nd September 1994, Roy was asked what had been the best day of his life. A committed Christian, he said—with his characteristic smile—*"My best day is yet to come!"*



Always very cheerful, Roy Castle was still fund-raising for lung cancer research until shortly before he died. His 'International Centre for Lung Cancer Research' was opened in Liverpool four years after his death.

Let us pray, using the words of a Muslim prayer:



Lord, may the end of my life be the best part of my life.
May my closing acts be my best acts.
And may the best of my days be the day when
I shall meet you.

Amen

Ruth

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

This year's Harvest Thanksgiving Service will be held on
Sunday, 4th October.

In order to decorate the windows of the Church we are holding
an art competition on the theme of 'Autumn'.
This is open to EVERYONE, not just the children!

So get your creative thinking caps on! You might want to take a
photo of shiny conkers, write an evocative poem, paint a picture of
the colourful trees, or maybe create a collage from leaves and seeds.

Please produce it on a sheet of A4 paper, landscape or portrait,
and bring it in, preferably on **Sunday 27th September** to allow
time for us to display all the contributions.

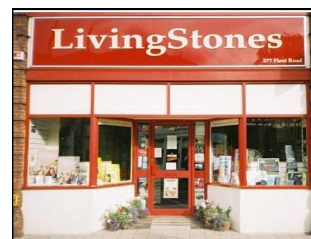
We are looking forward to seeing your talents!

Young People's Group

ON THE GIFT OF A TREE

Nothing we see more lovely than a tree,
Rooted in earth, pointing towards the sky,
Involved in all the pageant of the seasons;
Dark winter tracery against the blue,
Buds opening in the exuberance of spring,
Drinking in sun on dreamy summer days,
Waiting for autumn with its red and gold,
The brilliant climax to the seasons' round.
A tree may thrive and last a thousand years.
Our span on earth is shorter far, we see,
But we can live through all eternity.

Sheila Durbin



LIVINGSTONE'S CHRISTIAN CENTRE: DEVELOPMENT

Livingstone's Bookshop and Christian Centre is considering extending and developing its premises. All the churches in Fleet and those in the surrounding areas are asked to contribute to the conversation.

Livingstone's have started a consultation period, where representatives from the churches have met and gathered together ideas. Our Minister Ruth has been involved in the discussions.

The Vision group for Livingstone's have asked that individuals from churches complete an on line form and return it as soon as possible. For those who do not have access to a computer, then paper copies will be available in the vestibule. (Or please see Ruth for a copy.)

Development will include the ground floor, first floor and top floor, and each floor has its own vision. We are invited to consider which ones we would like to see developed.

The survey includes suggestions submitted by all the churches in the area. The survey is at <http://goo.gl/forms/TvvOpRUprT>, and you are asked to complete the form as soon as possible.

Blessings

Livingstone's Christian Centre



Phyllis
Tuckwell
Hospice

HART MALE VOICE CHOIR

in concert with
**Salesian College Schola &
Farnborough Hill Senior Choir**
at **Salesian College**

on **25th September, 7.00 for 7.30 pm**
Tickets: £10 (£6 for under 18s)
Available from the Hospice shop
or from Bee Griffith or Vera Mosley



COMMITMENT FOR LIFE

Several of the Commitment for Life regions who were already struggling with water, food and livestock issues have been hit even harder by the knock-on effect of drought conditions or, ironically, are suffering from too much rain. War and unrest are also taking their toll.

Therefore I should be grateful if, in addition to your continued prayers for CforL, you would join me in prayerfully considering monetary donations—say, 1p a day, or £1 per day, or so much per month or quarter, or any variation the Lord leads you to contribute.

Each time we use water, do the grocery shopping, watch it rain, or even see the sun shine, let us try to put ourselves in the place of the people CforL partners are working with.

It would be great to see how much we can raise for CforL by Sunday 22nd November (the Sunday before American Thanksgiving Day).

Tamyra Sherratt, Commitment for Life Link Person



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK—UPDATE



The grand total for Fleet's collection during Christian Aid week was **£9,883.08**. An amazing result, so thanks to all our collectors and anyone who helped in any way. We couldn't have done it without you!

Knocking on doors and collecting envelopes is not always a pleasant task, and can be quite challenging, but when you see a result like this it makes it all worthwhile.

Thank you.

Linda Storey & Liz McClune

AND ANOTHER THING....

What Sort of Christian?

*"Seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you."
(Matthew 7: 7)*

Funny that Darrell Henderson should raise this (see June-July Newsletter), as a similar thought recently occurred to me.

Mostly I think I'm a *Seeking* Christian. Well, on most days I'm a Seeking Christian, but on other days old time just seems to fly. Bear with me, and I'll try to explain.

What do I mean by a *Seeking* Christian? Well, for example, the other day I read in a Commentary on Matthew's Gospel: *"The first of all the human instincts is the instinct to do what we like; therefore there comes into every man's life times when he wishes to do the forbidden thing."*

Well, I'm blessed! I never, in all my life, realised that the first of all the human instincts is to do what we like. It accounts for lots of things. Take babies and very young children. They instinctively do what they like. So, as parents, we do our best to correct them. And so life goes on. This would also account for people going 'off the rails'.

Does that mean that God doesn't love us, if we go 'off the rails'. Oh no! *Emphatically no*. Why? Because, as Julian of Norwich said, "Before ever God made us, God loved us. And this love was never quenched, *nor ever shall be*. Hold fast to this and you shall never need to know or learn anything else".

So thank you, Lord... for designing me... for creating me... and for loving me... And please Lord, please go on providing me with all these marvellous facts... and please Lord, please remind me that, like every other man and woman ever born, my natural instinct is to do what I like... in this case, trying my utmost to be a *Seeking* Christian.

Eric Perry



Thank you to Bernard Potter for providing the cover photo: *Crondall Cornfield*. If you have a photo you think would be suitable for a future cover of the Newsletter, please let me know. ~ *Christine Gibbons*