



Journeying with God

**Forming
Community**

**Celebrating
Faith**

**Deepening
Discipleship**

Gazette

January - February 2022

Dear friends,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Is the year beginning happy for you? As I write that greeting, part way through December, I have paused to ponder whether I should indeed begin with such a greeting. As we face yet another period of uncertainty through the arrival of the Omicron variant of Covid, will January feel a happy time?

One of the challenges I find with church leadership, which has been particularly acute in the last 2 years, is that I have to spend some of my time planning ahead. That is very difficult to do when the path ahead is very unclear. But through that struggle God has challenged me to pay more attention to the present. To lay aside the uncertainties of the future and celebrate today's joys and give thanks to God for today's blessings.

As we turn the corner into 2022, with all the uncertainty that is before us, I encourage you to celebrate today's joys and give thanks to God for its blessings.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

Along with greetings for a Happy New Year, I pray you will begin the year with a strong and tangible awareness of God's peace. A peace that surpasses our understanding and eases our struggles with our current uncertainty.

As I look at our church vision statement, Journeying with God: Forming Community; celebrating faith; deepening discipleship; I'm struck that one of the places all those things are achieved is through Christian fellowship, bible study and house groups. One of the ways I have always been strengthened in times of uncertainty and personal struggle is through fellowship with fellow Christians. It is often at some of my lowest points that God has spoken to me through others. At the turn of 2022 I wholeheartedly encourage you to commit yourself to Christian fellowship as you are able. It really is a life-changing source of Christian love, deepening discipleship and encouragement as we travel through life.

May 2022 be filled with God's peace, joy and hope for us all.

In Christ,

Rev Dan

Greetings from Janet Tapping

I do hope that everyone has had a blessed and happy festive season. We go on to say 'Happy New Year' knowing it will be the usual mixture of good things, and the not so good. When the latter invades us, we aspiring Christians know that we are not alone. Jesus' example assures us of His constant message of hope and His love for us. We must share that with as many people as we can, in Him nothing is hopeless. In that frame of mind, we embark on the new year.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths".

Proverbs 3:5-6.

Here are some dates for your new 2022 diaries!

Mon 17 th Jan	World Day of Prayer, coffee morning & table top sale	11.00am Our Lady of Sorrows
Fri 18 th Feb	Rehearsal for WD of P's main service	10.30am BRMC
Tues 1 st Mar	Pancakes & sale for Mission in Britain	10.30-12.00 BRMC
Fri 4 th Mar	World Day of Prayer main annual service	10.30am BRMC

Further to my mention of World Day of Prayer:

This is an Ecumenical movement celebrated once a year by over 100 countries. Each year, a different country prepares the order of service, and on the first Friday of March, it is the basis of services held worldwide and in many languages. This year it's special for two reasons:

Firstly, it has been prepared by the United Kingdom (omitting N. Ireland & Scotland – their decision).

Secondly, it is to be celebrated in our BRMC – see details on page 5. We listen and learn of other people's lives, we sing, we pray, we take a collection for use where it is most needed in the 'host' country.

Recently, the title of Women's WD of P was amended to World Day of Prayer – everyone is invited to this special service. Once attended, I find people look out for it every year. I pray help us to be aware of, and appreciate God's blessings throughout 2022 and beyond.

JANET TAPPING

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 2nd March 2022

7.30pm

in the church hall

CAN ANYONE HELP
DAVE & BEV CHITTENDEN?

We are looking to buy or rent a property from the end of February, as we do not want to renew our current lease.

We are looking for:

- at least 2 bedrooms
- preferably 2 loos (but not necessarily 2 bathrooms)
- some outside space - a garden or courtyard is a *must*, however small

Does anyone know of an appropriate property coming up for sale or rent please?

If so, please contact us on 01243 824575.

Many thanks.

BEV & DAVE CHITTENDEN

OUR ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS

When the second half of the Michael Wooldridge concert was about to start, the lights and power went out at the back of the church and a problem that has reared its head in the past occurred again. In the past the problem was solved by replacing a fuse in the junction box outside the Hatters across the road.

After much investigation, the 'experts' came to the conclusion that there was a fault in the cable outside the church. So that's why the pavement was dug up and how the problem was exposed. However, after further discussions with the men it appears that the problem is much larger and involves cables outside the Hatters and possibly under the road.

Fortunately, power to the back of the church has been restored on a temporary basis by running a cable from our other power supply around the outside of the church to the fusebox which supplies power to the back of the church.

Eventually when all the road works have been done the cable will be taken away. So I must stress **DO NOT TOUCH THE CABLE** and **DO NOT** open the West Doors (opposite the bowling green) or the North Doors (opposite the Hatters) as the live cable runs outside these doors on the floor and one could easily trip over the wire.

It is hoped to have the work finished early in the New Year.

Incidentally, the Concert was a great success. The audience was a mixture of people from far and wide who all expressed their pleasure at being able to get out and be entertained for once during the past 18 months. It was very good to get back to some form of normality and hearing music played on our baby grand, our organ and Michael's electronic organ was wonderful.

Tony Poland

Property Steward

HAPPY NEW YEAR

To all our readers

**“The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”**

Numbers 6:24-26

SOME THOUGHTS

Having had a discussion with friends (not all from BRMC or even Bognor) the following quote led to a very interesting discussion.

Quote:

“Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can.”

John Wesley

The question is: Why did the Methodist Church feel it was necessary to produce the booklet “A brief guide to a Methodist Way of life”?

Did the quote not say it all?

What do you think?

Val Poland

THE CASE OF THE MISSING SPEAKER Continued.....

Despite this odd introduction, I rather warmed to this character with his little charm, but self obsessed pride in himself and disregard for others, save that they provided him as objects and personalities to dissect.

I moved in the next day. I was so glad I did. It was not long after my first delightful mouth watering lunch there, a foreign dish, Poland cottage pie with mixed vegetables, that she entered my life. Mrs Budson introduced her. "Mr Gnomes" she said, " this is Marybella Dear who seeks your help". "Welcome, Miss Dear won't you take a seat," Gnomes said not in his usual unwelcoming manner. He introduced me "This is my colleague" – (wow I thought, what a privilege) " you may share any information, he said , "and be assured of our utmost confidence".

"But first" Gnomes said "I see you've come from the country by train and have been in London for less than 30 minutes and something is obviously worrying you." Pardon the vernacular, dear reader, but Miss Dear was a peach. About 5ft 4 tall, thin with a round kindly looking face, jet black hair, a fabulous figure, blue eyes - oh my heart fluttered.

She looked at Gnomes and gasped "Oh how did you know?" "Elementary Miss Dear, From this window, I saw you alight from a Hansom cab with a Charing Cross identification. You are also carrying a copy of the Godalming Gazette. The first train from Godalming stops at Hazelmere and doesn't arrive until 1.30 pm at Charing Cross. You reached our rooms by 2.00pm."

Miss Dear said “Let me explain. I live outside of Godalming town with my uncle Stefus Bartholomew, he is the brother of my late mother. We reside at Bartholomew Towers, a 20 bed mansion which sits in a 1,000 acre plot filled with flowers, trees, lawns, lakes, fountains, and all the solitude and peace which the good Lord can provide. My uncle, who was my guardian, but I am now of age, employs a cook, a gardener, a cleaner, and a general maintenance man. We live quietly except when my brother Albert, he really is a dear, comes to see us from Tooting with his brass band. But I digress,” she continued. “Uncle Stefus works on a new invention, the like of which hardly seems possible. He says one day he will be able to speak into the small hand held box he is working on and speak to and see someone in the outback of Australia. Let me assure you, Mr Gnomes, he is not mad, just imaginative – and the kindest, generous and most helpful man I have ever met.”

“And he has disappeared,” interjected Gnomes. “Yes, but how did you know?” the gorgeous creature asked. “Well,” replied Gnomes “it's on the front of your Godalming Gazette *Mystery disappearance of local inventor stumps police*”.

“Yes”, Marybella cried. “He's gone, gone, gone -suddenly and I need all the help I can get to find him. Can you help Mr Gnomes? Please.” My mind raced urging Shylock to say yes, yes, yes. Shylock softly, gently and kindly replied “But of course, Miss Dear. I think it best if my colleague and I came to Godalming tomorrow. It could be that your uncle really hasn't gone far.”

“Oh, you are so kind,” she murmured.

As Gnomes saw her out, he hesitated by the door and smoothly remarked like a lime jelly disappearing down a slippery gullet, “That'll be ten guineas for the consultation, my dear, but we can settle that later.”

The next day, having packed an overnight bag, at Gnomes' suggestion, I arranged for any medical appointments to be postponed. Marie, my practice nurse, said that would be no bother at all. Gnomes and I took a cab from 221b Baker Street mid morning to Charing Cross station and boarded the train going to Godalming. Gnomes insisted on sitting with his back to the engine, a not unwise selection as we barrelled through at least two long tunnels and I forgot to close the window. If they could only one day invent a smokeless engine!

On alighting at the glorious country station, which was Godalming, with the sun shining and the birds whistling their beautiful songs, we were met by three locals each willing to transport us in their horse and carriages to our destination. However, as soon as they heard it was Bartholomew Towers, their enthusiasm to oblige evaporated.

We were left with no choice but to walk -fortunately Miss Dear had left instructions with Mrs Budson as to how to get there – proving to me what a resourceful young lady it had been my pleasure to meet.

A half hour stroll in the country was sufficient for us to welcome the sign 'onward to Bartholomew Mansions – ¾ miles '. While looking at the sign, a horse and carriage passing us stopped. A ride, I thought. A seedy looking woman called out "Hullo darlings. Are you Gnomes and Watson?" "Yes," we replied in unison. The woman looked at us and said "don't worry, it's only another 20 minutes or so to walk -see you there" and off the carriage went. While it was obvious to us that the carriage had room for two passengers, the owner of the vehicle obviously felt differently.

A hedgerow to our left seemed to go on and on forever until, just like magic, it turned into a double iron gate attached to two brick columns. We could now see the estate so eloquently described by my dear— sorry –by Miss Dear. A driveway, about a quarter of a mile long or so it seemed, led us to Bartholomew Towers an imposing three storey dwelling with 6 chimney pots, double windows encircling the whole ground floor, broken in conformity by an entrance way outside of which was the carriage which had contemptuously passed us by. The crunch, crunch of gravel by our well worn feet reminded us that we had yet to reach the beginning of our investigation.

I rang the bell beside the giant door. As the clanging of the bell echoed through what sounded like a cavernous dwelling, steps could be heard advancing towards us on the other side.....

A screaming creek caused by the oil less door preceded its opening to reveal the visage of what could have been the cook, the cleaner, the gardener or the general maintenance person, but it certainly wasn't my dear Miss Dear.

It was that non-amiable woman with the carriage. "Hullo, darlings" she said, "come in" whilst struggling to hold at bay a savage, vicious looking hound whose fangs and spittle emerging from an ugly mantrap of teeth discouraged the usual courtesy of patting the house pet and commenting "there's a good boy." But all that unpleasantness was quickly dispelled by the appearance of my dear Miss Dear. "Come into the sitting room," her velvety dulcet voice invited. "You've met Lady Gertrude, I believe. Lady Gertrude is the president of the Godalming Girls Friendly Society."

When we had eased our tired limbs into soft pleasant armchairs, Marybella explained her concerns. "My uncle was due to speak next week at a special public meeting of the Society attended by the Mayor, the editor of the Godalming Gazette, our local MP and as many people as we could attract at £2 a ticket. Lady Gertrude, as am I, is particularly anxious to find our missing speaker as the only alternative is to have Butler the gardener give a recital on the spoons or ask wobbly Warren White from Wimborne to do his juggling and knife throwing act.

Gnomes interjected "well we hope it won't come to that, but if it does my friend Watson on his nose flute, could accompany Butler and your evening won't have been completely spoiled."

The hound laughed. Or that is what it sounded like.

While we sat in the comfortable armchairs, the view through the windows gave a sense of peacefulness and a feeling of relaxation. The view on the way to this idyllic situation was enhanced by the presence of a fine example of feminine pulchritude, not Lady Gertrude of course although she must have had her qualities not evident to me as yet.

Gnomes said "Miss Dear, tell me about your uncle's habits." "Well," she said a quiver disturbing her usual articulation "he goes to Godalming town by carriage every other day for discussions with his friends. On the days he's not in Godalming, he is locked away in his laboratory on the second floor working on his inventions and trying to tame his pet gorilla. Gnomes asked "When did you notice he was – excuse me to put it bluntly – missing?"

"Well," Marybella replied, as she brushed away a tear from her gorgeous blue eyes with a lovely perfumed kerchief, "when he didn't appear for meals and never answered knocks on his locked laboratory door, didn't take a stroll in the grounds even when it was raining, as was his want."

Gnomes pursued his vigorous cross examination. "What did you do?" he asked. Miss Dear replied " I summoned all the staff and we searched everywhere, even the two outhouses, the doors usually stick there. I asked Butler the gardener to go into town and enquire of all my uncle's friends, as to his whereabouts. Unfortunately neither of them knew.....

To be continued....

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PREACHING ROTA

JANUARY

DATE	PREACHER	10.30am
2 nd	Mrs Sheila Morgan	Morning Worship
9 th	Rev Dan Balsdon	Holy Communion
16 th	Rev Bob Sneddon	Morning Worship
23 rd	Mr Roy Firth	Morning Worship
30 th	Mr Stephen Waters	Morning Worship

FEBRUARY

DATE	PREACHER	10.30am
6 th	Mr David Parr	Morning Worship
13 th	Rev Dan Balsdon	Holy Communion
20 th	Mr John Carr	Morning Worship
27 th	Rev Tony Brazier	Morning Worship

I FINALLY DID IT!!!!

**I BOUGHT A NEW PAIR OF SHOES WITH
MEMORY FOAM INSOLES.**

**NO MORE FORGETTING WHY I WALKED
INTO A ROOM!**

Prayer for 2022

Merciful & loving God,

We find ourselves at the beginning of another year. We do not know what it will bring, but ask you to help us be ready for whatever it may be.

If we are to speak out, help us speak bravely;

If we are to sit quietly, help us to sit still in your presence;

If we have to wait, please help us to wait patiently with you;

and if we are to do nothing, may we do it with grace.

Help us to take each day as it comes, appreciating its blessings.....

We pray just for today, for the next twenty-four hours, for the ability to cooperate with others according to the way Jesus taught us to live. "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." May these words that Jesus taught us become our way of life.

Please free us from self-centeredness, dishonesty, and deception. Along with our brothers and sisters, grant us the freedom to make our choices today according to your desires. Send your Spirit to inspire us in time of doubt and indecision so that, together, we can walk along your path.

We pray Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

This story came up recently in conversation and I thought it would be good to remind ourselves once again of message in Matthew 25:34-40.....

Pastor Jeremiah Steepok transformed himself into a homeless person and went to the 10,000 member church where he was to be head pastor. He walked around outside his soon to be church for 30 minutes while it was filling with people for the service....only 3 people out of the 7-10,000 people said hello to him. He asked people for change to buy food... NO ONE in the church gave him change.

He went into the sanctuary to sit down at the front of the church and was asked by the ushers if he would please sit at the back. He greeted people to be greeted back with stares and dirty looks, with people looking down on him and judging him. As he sat at the back of the church, he listened to the church announcements and such. When all that was done, the elders (who were in on this!) went up and were excited to introduce the new pastor of the church to the congregation...."We would like to introduce to you Pastor Jeremiah Steepok"..... The congregation looked around clapping with joy and anticipation.....The homeless man sitting at the back stood up... and started walking down the aisle... the clapping stopped with ALL eyes on him.... he walked up to the altar and took the microphone from the elders and paused for a moment.....then he recited: **"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.**

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

After he recited this, he looked towards the congregation and told them all what he had experienced that morning... many began to cry and many heads were bowed in shame... he then said... Today I see a gathering of people... not a church of Jesus Christ. The world has enough people, but not enough disciples... when will YOU decide to become disciples? He then dismissed service until next week.....

Being a Christian is more than something you claim. It's something you live by and share with others.

God of love & grace, as we enter another new year, we bring you our hearts and ask you to help us to live our lives as you want us to, sharing with & loving others. Help us to be a church of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu gone home to glory.....

Have you heard the story about how Archbishop Desmond Tutu became a priest?

Growing up in Apartheid South Africa, when a white person walked past a black person the black person was supposed to step into the dirty street and let the white person pass. A white visiting priest from England was visiting South Africa. While Desmond Tutu was walking with his mother, they met the priest on a corner by coincidence, the priest instinctively stepped off the road and let Desmond and his mother pass, counteracting the social norm without even knowing it.

Desmond knew immediately he wanted to be a priest like this Man of God.

IT MAKES SENSE.....

CHOCOLATE COMES FROM COCOA....

COCOA COMES OUT OF A TREE....

THAT MAKES IT A PLANT.

THEREFORE, CHOCOLATE COUNTS AS SALAD

THE END.

A message from *DAY BY DAY with BILLY GRAHAM*

As a man was riding along in his Ford (car) suddenly something went wrong. He got out and looked at the engine, but he could find nothing wrong. As he stood there, another car came in sight and he waved it down to ask for help.

Out of a brand new Lincoln stepped a tall, friendly man who asked "Well, what's the trouble?" "I cannot get this Ford to move " was the reply. The stranger made a few adjustments under the hood (bonnet) and then said "now start the car". When the motor started, its grateful owner introduced himself and said "What is your name sir?" "My name" answered the stranger "is Henry Ford."

The man who made the Ford knew how to make it run. God made you and me, and He alone knows how to run your life and mine. We could make a complete wreck of our lives without Christ. When He is at the controls, all goes well. Without Him we can do nothing.

New Year resolutions (Taken from *Every Day with Jesus* by Selwyn Hughes):

- 1. Live in peace with each other.**
- 2. Encourage the timid : timid people get that way because of a lack of encouragement.**
- 3. Help the weak.**
- 4. Be patient with everyone.**
- 5. Act kindly towards people: they will remember your kindness when all other events slip out of memory.**