



Open Door

**The Newsletter of
Old Coulsdon Congregational Church**

MARCH/APRIL 2023



**Affiliated to the Congregational Federation
A Member of Churches Together in Coulsdon**

Price £1.80

Welcome to OLD COULSDON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1EH

This community Church was formed in 1953 and has been on its present site since 1958. We hope you will enjoy visiting and sharing worship with us. Please make yourself known to the Minister, one of the Deacons, or a Steward, if you have any questions or queries.

Church Officers

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**Please see inside back cover for list of
Church organisations and contacts.**

FROM THE MINISTER:



Dear Friends

We have begun our walk with Christ through Lent to Holy week, to the Cross and despair and then.....to Resurrection Day. As we walk, pray and reflect on the whole array of events, twists, turns and emotions, I would like to focus on a question often asked of me by church folk and community alike:

What did Christ's death on the cross achieve?

Firstly, through the cross, GOD SPEAKS. God wanted a loving relationship with His people, humankind, but it was broken through sin. Jesus, the only sinless person to walk the earth, went to the cross to somehow write us a cheque. Signed in His own blood, it wiped out the overdraft of sin and regret. It was cleared – forgiven and healed.

In Romans 5: 8 it sums this up-

'God demonstrates His own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us'

GOD WANTS A RELATIONSHIP WITH US:

The relationship between God and humans had broken down. It needed a mediator as mediators

are used in the same way today. The perfect mediator was Jesus. God's son and also human so He could represent both sides.

Through this mediation the cross becomes the decisive movement of God towards His people, you and me. The cross is love transformed, the cross is the reunion of that which was broken.

And so God and humankind were reconciled.

Out of this new relationship, transformation comes. In asking sincerely for forgiveness in penitence allows the Holy Spirit to work. When Jesus went back to the Father we were not left alone. The Holy Spirit came, and at Pentecost was the catalyst of the Church.

All achieved.....through the cross.

Grace and Peace this Lent, Easter...and beyond

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Malcolm', written over a large, stylized 'X' mark.

Pastor Malcolm

NOTES FROM THE MINISTER:

AFTERNOON QUIZ AND TEA:

Saturday 18th March

Our first afternoon quiz and tea social is being held in the Cameron Hall on Saturday 18th March at 2pm [Doors open 1.30pm].

Cost: £5pp. Please sign up with Anthea or contact me ASAP and by MARCH 5th at the latest.

PLEASE NOTE: With catering and seating to plan, places will NOT be available on the day. Advance booking is essential.

Many thanks.

CLOCKS ON 1 Hour – Start of BST:

Please remember that all clocks and watches must be put ON 1 hour before going to bed on Saturday 25th March.

BST Starts in the early hours on Sunday March 26th.

SPEAKER FROM THE LEPROSY MISSION:

At our Passion Sunday Service on March 26th, we have a speaker from the Leprosy

Mission coming to OCC to update us on the latest Mission work.

MINISTER ON ANNUAL LEAVE:

Please note I shall be on Annual Leave from Monday 27th March – Sat 1st April.

Please contact Heather in the first instance or one of the Deacons in my absence.

SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR HOLY WEEK:

Please consult the diary section for dates and times of our Services and other events in Holy Week.

NEXT EVENING QUIZ NIGHT:

Saturday 22nd APRIL

Our next Evening Quiz night will be for a charity and take place in the Cameron Hall on Saturday 22nd April at 7.30pm.

Watch out for announcement and booking forms. Teams, couples and individuals all welcome. Cost is £15pp.

MARCH

The word March comes from the Roman 'Martius'. This was originally the first month of the Roman calendar and was named after Mars, the God of war. The Anglo-Saxons called the month Hyd monath, meaning Stormy Month.

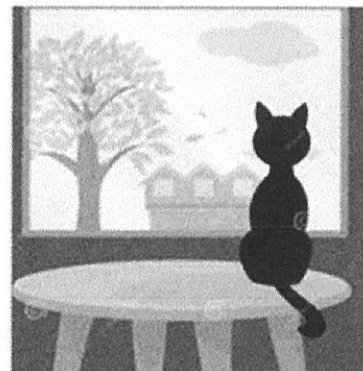
The 31st March is associated with the rhyme Oranges and Lemons. In olden days, when the River Thames was much wider, barges carrying oranges and lemons from tropical climates landed at the Port of London. The docks were below the churchyard of St Clements Dane (disputed by St Clements, Shoreditch!). Local children attended a church service on this day and were given an orange and a lemon, and recited the rhyme. In modern times, the service still takes place, also celebrating the restoration of the church bells.



March is known for being a month of high winds.

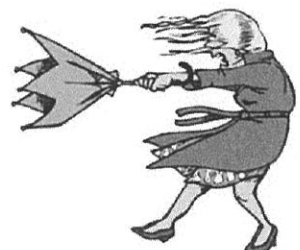
It is an old sailor's belief that high winds at sea are caused by someone keeping a cat shut up indoors on shore.

(St Gertrude is the patron saint of cats).



~~~~~  
"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade".

*Charles Dickens*





## **FRIENDSHIP CLUB – FEBRUARY 8<sup>th</sup>.**

On Wednesday afternoon, we gathered in the Cameron Hall, and had a most enjoyable meeting.

Jenny Blake welcomed everyone - Audrey was out celebrating her birthday - and explained the program.

First we had a bring-and-buy, where all the items were put on a table for us to choose from. It went well, and a good amount raised.

We had previously been asked to bring a childhood photograph of ourselves. Jenny showed us each one, for us to guess who it was. This was fun – and not easy. Only a couple of us were easily recognised. We enjoyed commenting on the hair styles and clothes!

(It was suggested that perhaps on another occasion, we could bring a photograph of ourselves in our school uniform – and this started an enjoyable discussion). We finished with tea and biscuits.

Our next meeting on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March, will be a beetle drive. These are always great fun – do come.

*Barbara*

~~~~~  
With all our tea/coffee sessions in mind

The tradition of dunking biscuits began in the 17th century when ship's biscuits were so hard they had to be dipped in beer!



19th MARCH: MOTHERING SUNDAY, 4th SUNDAY IN LENT

There is an old Jewish saying: *God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.*

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families, which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

It was also was called 'Mid-Lent' or 'Refreshment Sunday', when the rigors of Lent were relaxed more than was normal for a feast day.

In recent years the holiday has changed, and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

19th MARCH
ST JOSEPH, PATRON SAINT OF
FATHERS AND HOLY DEATH

Why should St Joseph's day be in March? Surely, he belongs to Advent and Christmas, at Mary's side in millions of nativity scenes around the world.

In any case, as the foster-father of Christ and husband of Mary, Joseph played a major part in the story of the coming of Jesus Christ. All that we know about him for sure is in the gospels. Read especially Matthew 1 – 2. He was of Davidic descent, but his trade as a carpenter shows that he was not at all wealthy.

Joseph's gentleness and decency towards Mary, and his willingness to do God's will when it was revealed to him, portray him as a kind and godly person. Joseph is the patron saint of fathers of families, and he makes an excellent example. He comes across as a protecting, loyal, thoughtful, self-controlled person, full of integrity, and willing to work hard. Who wouldn't want a father like that?

World Water Day is 22nd March

We take clean water for granted. After all, when did you last turn on the tap and expect filthy water to come out? But sadly, bad water is still a daily reality for billions of people. And dirty water has to be collected from rank pools.

OCC take part in the Lent WaterAid Coin Collection. The jars will be on our tables at coffee sessions – all we ask is for small change to be donated each time we have coffee or tea – and this will be sent off after Easter. I will arrange this – thanks in advance.

Barbara

QUIET LISTENING

2 Timothy 1:12

... and I know whom I have believed and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him that day.

This thought-provoking article was written by the late Eddie Askew, an official in the Leprosy Society.

A priest was being interviewed on radio. He'd been working in a part of the world where people's lives had been devastated by an earthquake which had killed many. The questioner asked 'What did you say to the survivors?'

What do you say to people whose lives have been rocked by sudden tragedy? My reaction was that it's a time to listen and help, not to make statements. First, because I have no easy answer to that sort of event. And, second, because I don't think people can take in much of what you say, anyway, when their minds are brimming with anxiety and fear. People in shock are not searching for explanations, they are crying out for comfort. That goes beyond reasoned argument, back to a basic need to feel there're not alone. They want to know that someone cares. They need to feel arms round them, something, someone, to ease the pain.

God's love becomes real in these situations, not through sermons, but through quiet listening. They need our time, and maybe our tears, but not our logic.

When Paul wrote to Timothy, with all his experience of pain and persecution, he affirmed, "I know whom I have believed". Paul believed in a person, not philosophy. It wasn't ideas or words, but a presence who gave him the courage to go on. Faced with desperate people, isn't our job to crystalise his love and presence through ours? Not in sermons but in the warmth of practical caring. The explanation can come later, when people realise they are loved.

WORDSEARCH NOTES

**St Patrick's Day Mothering Sunday
Annunciation Lent**

**Leeks for St David's day, daffodils for the rest of the month:
March brings us Spring.**

**St Patrick, who brought Christianity to Ireland, is
remembered with parades.**

**Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are celebrated with
more daffodils and Sunday lunch 'out'.**

**March brings us the Annunciation, when the angel first
appeared to Mary to tell her of her coming pregnancy.**

**March is the month of Lent, of prayer and preparation for
Easter.**

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**In Logiebride, Perthshire, stands an  
old ruined church, only a few walls  
remain, and the ancient burial  
ground is overgrown, with most of the  
stones collapsed or broken.**

**A visitor wandered round the burial  
ground, trying without success to  
read some of the inscriptions.**

**However, one stone caught his  
attention – at its base were the easily-read words:**



**“I am The Resurrection and The Life”.**

**No matter the passage of time,  
this message will never fade.**

# WORDSEARCH

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LEEKs

DAFFODILs

SPRING

PATRICK

DAY

MUM

MOTHER

ANGEL

IRELAND

WALES

SUNDAY

LUNCH

PREGNANCY

PREPARATION

PRAYER

PARADES

MARY

MAGNIFICAT

FASTING

LENT





.... has 30 days and brings more daylight hours and warmth as temperatures climb a few degrees higher than March—just enough to open the buds on trees and flowers

on a bright sunny day. Our clocks have gone forward one hour on 26<sup>th</sup> March. This is also the day of the University Boat Race. (Most of us claim to support either Oxford or Cambridge, but the days of wearing little dark or light blue boat shaped badges is now in the past).

It is thought that the name comes from the Latin word “to open” and describes the buds opening in springtime. It could also be that the name comes from the Greek Goddess Aphrodite.

April begins with April Fool’s Day – a day, or rather, morning of fun and jokes. The origin and reason is possible when the Gregorian calendar was introduced, and some people forgot that the date had been moved forward by ten days. Many of us will remember the famous 1957 BBC spoof news item about the Spaghetti Harvest in Switzerland. It showed women carefully plucking strands of spaghetti from a tree and laying them in the sun to dry. This fooled a number of people and some were so intrigued that they wanted to find out where a spaghetti bush could be purchased!

The cuckoo usually arrives from Africa, traditionally on the 14<sup>th</sup> – a sign that spring is here. As the old rhyme says:

The cuckoo comes in April. She sings her song  
in May. In the middle of June she changes  
her tune and in July she flies away.

April showers bring May flowers.

April wet – good wheat.

Til April's dead, change not a thread.

# Easter and Eggs

The egg has been called nature's most perfect container. It also is the world's most popular symbol for Easter, and features on many Easter cards.

In all cultures, the egg symbolizes the beginning of life or the universe. A Latin proverb says, "All life comes from an egg." Eggs were dyed and eaten during spring festivals in ancient Egypt, Persia, Greece and Rome and coloured eggs were given as gifts to celebrate the coming of spring. These cultures regarded the egg as an emblem of the universe, the work of the supreme divinity, the germination of life.

Christians of the Near East adopted this tradition and the egg became a religious symbol – it represented the tomb from which Jesus broke forth.

The chocolate egg started appearing in France and Germany in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were solid dark chocolate that tasted grainy, coarse and bitter. In 1866 however, the Cadbury company made a smoother, better tasting form of dark chocolate. These were the first chocolate Easter Eggs, which were hollow and filled with sugared almonds.

Good news – dark chocolate is good for us -it can cut the risk of heart disease and stroke. Also, chocolate has an anti-bacterial effect that protects against tooth decay.

But – white chocolate is not really chocolate at all – it contains cocoa butter, milk and sugar.

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*The term "moveable feast" refers to Easter, which varies from March 22<sup>nd</sup> to April 25<sup>th</sup>.*



## **ANOTHER PUSSY WILLOW LEGEND**

Further to the pussy willow article in February, here is another story.

The pussy willow is a symbol of a Polish legend for Palm Sunday. Pussy willow is the one that tells the rest of the world and all the other flora, and trees and bushes - it's the wake-up call.

But with an earlier Easter season and a blast of wintry weather, the pussy willows are not in full bloom. The Pussy Willow is also our Easter symbol. One of the most prominent Easter symbols, because out of this dry twig all of a sudden bursts forth this beautiful flower of life, and it is the first bush that blooms.

Palms are used as a church symbol of greeting, ie as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. But in the Polish tradition, you will also see pussy willow branches on Palm Sunday.

According to the Polish legend, Jesus visited a forest on Palm Sunday, barren by winter conditions. He commanded His angels to gather up pussy willows, with soft, cotton buds, the first blooms of spring.

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**WE LIVE AND DIE
CHRIST DIED AND LIVED**

JESUS RETURNS

A legend recounts the return of Jesus to heaven after His time on earth. He returned bearing the marks of His earthly pilgrimage with its cruel cross and shameful death.

The Angel Gabriel approached Him and said, “Master you must have suffered terribly for people down there”.

“I did” said Jesus.

“And”, continued Gabriel, “do they now know all about how You loved them and what You did for them?”.

“Oh no” said Jesus. “Not yet. Right now, only a handful of people in Israel know”.

Gabriel was perplexed. “Then what have you done?” he asked, “to let all people know about your love for them?”.

“Well, I have asked Peter, James, John and a few others to tell people about Me. Those who are told will in turn tell others and the gospel will be spread to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ultimately all of humankind will hear about Me and what I have done on their behalf”.

Gabriel frowned and looked skeptical. He knew people weren’t dependable. “Yes” he said, “but what if Peter, James and John grow weary. What if the people who come after them forget? And what if way down in the 21st and 22nd centuries people get too busy to bother telling others about you; haven’t you made any other plans?”.

“No, I have made no other plans, Gabriel” Jesus answered. “I’m counting on them”.

TERRACYCLING UPDATE

Terracycle items will be collected during coffee morning in the Heath room on the **first Saturday** of each month. The boxes, each labelled with one type of recyclable, will be arranged on the spare chairs at the side of the Heath room. At the moment we will be collecting the following types:

Any brand of -

- bread bag
- crisp / snack packets
- biscuit / cake wrappers
- cheese wrappers
- sweet wrappers
- old toothbrushes / toothbrush heads / toothpaste tubes / floss sticks and containers
- old writing instruments (biros, marker pens etc)

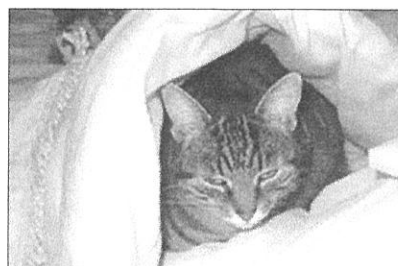
(the last two categories are grouped in one box as I don't expect many of these).

Those who go to a larger Superdrug shop could take their blister packs there (I know that Redhill, Croydon and Sutton collect). Those who are unable to drop off at these shops are welcome to put their blister packs into the Terracycle bin, which will be next to the boxes in the Heath room, and we will take them.

Many thanks, Cathy



Being loved by God is like being allowed to curl up on the duvet in that warm dent beside a sleeping person.



CHURCH COLLECTIONS

– an article from The Parish Pump

You would be surprised at how many different coins end up in church collection plates. Euros and obsolete pound coins can jostle alongside American dollars, Czech koruna and even pesos from Chile. It just shows where some people go on holiday!

In Bible times the Jewish people also had a collection, but it was not voluntary; they called it the Temple Tax. Jews had to pay the Temple Tax by using a coin called a half shekel. They could not just use the change they already had in their pockets, because foreign coins would be 'unclean', and anyway, pockets had not been invented. So instead the Temple Tax was paid in shekels, because they were made to a reliable quality of weight and fineness of silver metal. This led to a roaring trade for the moneychangers, who would take the worshipper's coins and change them into shekels, less a handsome profit.

The moneychangers would have shouted out their exchange rates, which would be distracting for people going there to pray. They were preventing the people from praying and worshipping by overcharging and squabbling for business. No wonder Jesus got angry with them!



Back to our peaceful collections in church, we should welcome the funny foreign coins. Lots of us have jars of coins from holidays abroad, and these could even be a way of raising money for the church. There are some organisations which will collect foreign coins.

PS – If/when we find any foreign coins, then please give them to me. Garwood Charity Shop in Coulsdon collect these – and sell them to add to their funds.

Barbara

SACKCLOTH AND ASHES



We know that this phrase means to admit or demonstrate one's sorrow/apology for a wrong-doing.

Sackcloth and ashes were used in Old Testament times as a symbol of repentance. Malcolm touched on this during a recent sermon.

The person wanting to show his repentant heart would often wear sackcloth, sit in ashes and put ashes on top of his head. Sackcloth was a coarse material usually made of black goat's hair, which made it quite uncomfortable to wear. The ashes signified desolation and ruin.

Very simply, sackcloth and ashes were used as an outward sign of one's inward condition. Such a symbol made one's change of heart visible and demonstrated the sincerity of one's grief and/or repentance.

There are many references to sackcloth and ashes throughout the Old Testament. One of our recent Bible Readings included a verse from Jonah: 3: v6 "When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust."

oooOOOOOOoo

"If one night you see someone committing a sin, tomorrow do not look at him as a sinner.

He may have repented during the night and you did not know."

CHURCH DIARY – MARCH/APRIL 2023

Coffee Pot Wednesdays and Saturdays – 10.30am – 12.00pm

MARCH

Friday	3rd	10.30am		WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, Coulsdon Methodist Church
Sunday	5th	10.00am		Morning Service (2nd Lent)
Monday	6th	10.30am		Bible Study
Wednesday	8th	2.00pm		Community Friendship Club – Beetle Drive
Thursday	9th	11.00am		Events Committee Meeting – at Pat's
Sunday	12th	10.00am		Morning Service (3rd Lent) including Holy Communion
Monday	13th	10.30am		Bible Study
Wednesday	15th	2.00pm		Deacons' Meeting
Friday	17th	7.30pm		Film Club (Downton Abbey – New Era)
Saturday	18th	2.00pm		Afternoon Quiz and Tea (Cameron Hall)
Sunday	19th	10.00am		Morning Service (4th Lent) including MOTHERING SUNDAY
Monday	20th	10.30am		Bible Study
Saturday	25th	CLOCKS AND WATCHES ETC ON 1 HOUR TONIGHT		
Sunday	26th	10.00am		Morning Service for PASSION SUNDAY (5th Lent) and Speaker from the Leprosy Mission)

Monday 27th – Saturday April 1st: MINISTER ON ANNUAL LEAVE

<u>APRIL</u>				
Sunday	2nd	10.00am	PALM SUNDAY Service	
Wednesday	5th	10.30am	Easter Coffee Pot	
Thursday	6th	8.00pm	MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMUNION	
Friday	7th	11.00am	CTC GOOD FRIDAY WITNESS IN OLD COULSON We start in St Mary's RC Church at 11.00am	
Saturday	8th	10.30am	Easter Coffee Pot	
Sunday	9th	EASTER SUNDAY 6.30am Sunrise Service on Farthing Downs 7.15am Breakfast in Cameron Hall 10.00am Easter Day Service in Church		
Monday	10th	BANK HOLIDAY		
Wednesday	12th	2.00pm	Community Friendship Club	
Sunday	16th	10.00am	Morning Service	
Monday	17th	10.30am	Bible Study	
Saturday	22nd	7.30pm	CHURCH QUIZ NIGHT (Charity)	
Sunday	23rd	10.00am	Morning Service	
Monday	24th	10.30am	Bible Study	
Sunday	30th	10.00am	Morning Service led by the Deacons	

Who's Who in Old Coulsdon Congregational Church

The Diaconate: Minister, Church Administrator,
Church Treasurer, Halls Manager
and Deacons:

Jan Edwards	01737 554624
Terry Edwards	01737 554624
Brian French	01737 557447
Audrey Stephens	01883 344863
Sarah Davis (Co-opted)	
Hamish Robertson (Co-opted)	
Pat Robertson (Co-opted)	

Life Deacons: Heather Jones, John Harwood
Judy Earl, John Hughes

Contacts and Organisations:

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**OLD COULSDON
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

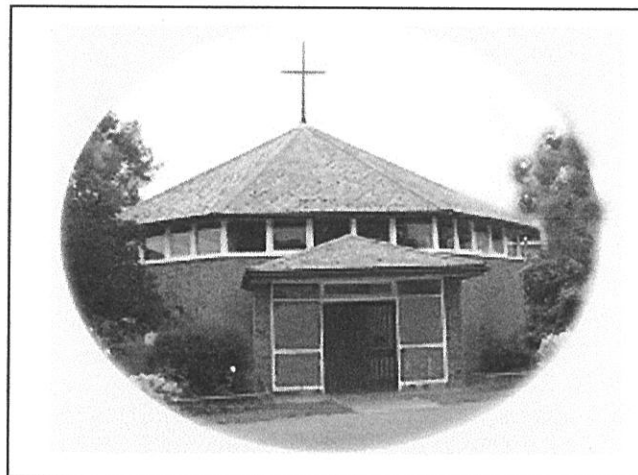
Formed in 1953 and on the present site since 1958

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY YEAR 2003

**DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY YEAR 2013
of the formation of the Church**

**DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY YEAR 2018
of the Opening of the Church Building**

**Over 70 YEARS OF SERVICE
1953 - 2023**



- * A Christian Church**
- * A Caring Church**
- * A Community Church**

**Our Mission Is
To Share Christ's love with the Community**

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