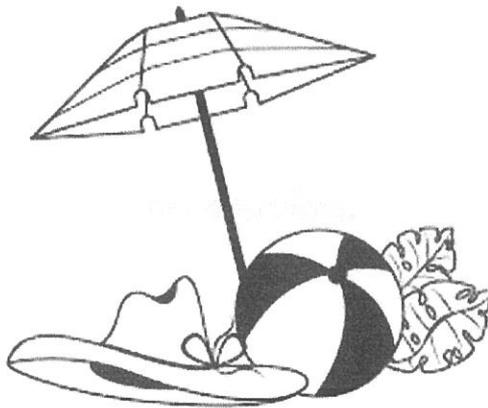




Open Door

The Newsletter of
Old Coulsdon Congregational Church

JULY/AUGUST 2023



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

Price £1.80

Welcome to OLD COULSDON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Coulston Road, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1EH
(www.occc.coulston.net)

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

Minister	Pastor Malcolm R. Newman 82 Court Avenue Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1HE Tel: 01737 554362 or 07713 248704 email: pastormalcolm@btinternet.com
Please note:	Tuesday is the Minister's day off-duty
Administrator	Heather Jones 32 Tollers Lane Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1BB Tel: 020 8406 0164 or 07788 418591 email: jones.heather47@gmail.com
Treasurer	Nigel Spencer 142 Coulsdon Road Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2LE Tel: 020 8660 2959 Mobile 07800 699553 email: nige.spencer61@gmail.com
Halls Manager	Cathy Spencer 142 Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon, CR5 2LE To hire the Cameron Hall or Heath Room Tel: 0208 660 2959 Mobile: 07722 565433 email: bookingsoccc@gmail.com

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

FROM THE MINISTER



Dear Friends

The summer months that bring sunshine and warmth [perhaps too much!!] bring the opportunity to spend more time outdoors, to enjoy social time with friends and family, to think of holidays.

But they are also a time – this year – to reflect more on community, on who we are. The Village Fair on July 1st will be a great opportunity for thousands to come together and enjoy Old Coulsdon's largest community event of the year. Our friends at St John's will soon be going in to an interregnum for the first time in twenty years as Paul retires as Rector.

At the same time, they are looking urgently to raise the funds necessary to repair the church spire. Here at OCC the Deacons are looking into how to best move forward with projects on the site that will cost a lot of money but are, in some cases, urgently needed.

So I'm talking about community, churches...but most importantly of all, about PEOPLE. People make community. The people of faith ARE the Churches and what we have to try and ensure is that the time, money, love and effort that has to go into looking after our church buildings to maintain, restore or extend them is *balanced* by the time, effort and love that goes into looking after the PEOPLE, who are the living, breathing voice and body of God in communities.

Our buildings need maintenance, love and care, yes of course – and those who make up what the church is need it just as much if not more.

Recently ‘the church’ of St Mary’s and St Peter’s Tidenham turned up on a Sunday morning to find their church buildings, their house of God, was locked. Vandals had superglued the church door locks shut.

But they, the people of God shrugged their shoulders and turned the situation into a great advantage – they held an impromptu service outside, followed by tea, coffee and cake and posed for a photo.

The Vicar, who was celebrating his 50th birthday that day, galvanised his church and they responded. The church met, worshipped and witnessed. The locks will cost over £200 to fix. Far more importantly the people turned an act of pointless vandalism into a total triumph. To quote the Vicar, Revd David Treharne:

“God’s people will keep on worshipping. We did not lose heart and we will not lose heart. We have prayed for the person or people that did this, that the love of Christ will bring a change to their heart.”

Amen

Grace and Peace

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

Pastor Malcolm

NOTES FROM THE MINISTER

VILLAGE FAIR: Saturday 1st July 12noon

A reminder that we will be having our cake stall at the Village Fair on July 1st starting at 12 noon. Cakes please [NO Nuts and PLEASE don't freeze].

Offers of help, cakes, etc to Pat Robertson.

**FAREWELL TO REV PAUL ROBERTS,
RECTOR OF ST JOHN'S:**

As many of you will know, the Rector of St John's for the past 20 years, Rev Paul Roberts, is retiring at the end of July. His last service is Sunday 23rd July.

To mark Paul's leaving Old Coulsdon, Churches Together in Coulsdon are holding a farewell service in the grounds of St John's, by the Memorial Garden, On SUNDAY JULY 2nd at 3pm. All Welcome.

This will be an ecumenical service which I have the honour of leading and will involve as many of the CTC Churches as possible. As we thank Paul for his many many years of ministry in Old Coulsdon and his ecumenical friendship with the 'next door neighbours' at OCC, we all wish Paul and Nicy a long and happy retirement in Herefordshire.

MINISTER ON ANNUAL LEAVE

MONDAY 10th – SUNDAY 16th JULY:

Would friends please note that I shall be on Leave from 10th-16th July. Please contact Heather or Pat [pastoral/fellowship] in my absence on any matter needing attention. If contact proves difficult please contact another member of the Diaconate. Many thanks.

CHURCH MEETING: Saturday 29th July at 10.30am.
A reminder that our next Church Meeting will be on Saturday July 29th at 10.30am in the Church. Coffee and Tea will be available in the Heath Room from 10am.

Everyone is welcome to attend Church Meeting and speak - with the Chairman's permission. Please remember that if any matter goes to a vote then *only* Church Members may participate.

ICE CREAM AFTERNOON: Saturday 5th August at 2.30pm.
Our annual Ice Cream Afternoon social is again being very kindly organised by Heather and will be on Saturday 5th August at 2.30pm.

This will be held at Heather's house, 32 Tollers Lane.
IMPORTANT: Space and thus numbers are limited. Please listen out for announcements on how to let Heather know you'd like to come. Many thanks.

CHURCH MAINTENANCE WEEK: 8th -11th AUGUST:
This year's Maintenance week will be from Tue 8th – Fri 11th August inclusive.

Because of the nature of the work, there will be NO COFFEE POT on August 9th.

Could I also ask that unless you are helping with the week *and* have discussed this with Hamish Robertson in advance, please don't come on to the Church site during this period for your own safety. Thank you.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB – 14th JUNE

On a very hot afternoon, 19 of us met in the Heath Room.

Audrey welcomed everyone, and announced a slight change to the afternoon programme. Instead of her flower arranging demonstration, we had a “Memories” session, followed by strawberries and cream, and tea.

This was most interesting – in no particular order we heard items from:

Anthea, who amused us with her story of driving a car round a race track. Despite the bonnet flying open – twice – she actually won!

Sylvia told us of her time of being evacuated from Battersea to Cheam. One of her items was of the time she had a gin and tonic with Prince Charles!

Yvonne told us of her time living in Malaya, where she worked in some important offices. It was a most interesting experience.

Julie remembered her time in Arbroath, where many of the Polish men had been posted. Her mother met her Polish father there.

I added two items – one on behalf of Margaret Thiry, whose family had two sad little boys evacuated with them, and the story of my strict scary teacher in Wroxham village school.

We paused for the refreshments – beautifully prepared by Audrey and served by Les and Maureen, then tea. We continued to talk to each other about our memories.

Our July 12th meeting will be the flower arrangement demonstration, with tea and cakes.

Many thanks everyone – it was most enjoyable.

Barbara

A SERMON BY OUR JEREMY FISHER

On Sunday 11th June, we were treated to a wonderful thought-provoking sermon. Jeremy had written an item for Malcolm, but it was decided that would be ideal if Jeremy delivered it.

The subject was the creation of the Universe. Jeremy told us that it would be a bit scientific at first – and it was! But he started with explaining the Big Bang, where life would not have been possible.

After some technical details, he related a rhyme:

“I keep six honest serving-men,
They taught me all I know;
Their names are What and Where and When,
And How and Why and Who”.

These posed the questions: What is the Universe, Where are things in the Universe, When did an event take place, Who? created the Universe, (The only answer that makes sense is that God made the Big Bang). How? God summoned into existence all matter. Why? Jeremy said that this is something about which philosophers have speculated for ages. And Jeremy’s personal view lies in the fact that GOD IS LOVE. God was lonely, with no outlet for His love. He needed creatures to love, hence the Universe. It had to be long-lasting, so that life and later intelligent life could develop, and become capable of knowing Him and returning His love.

Although this is my personal cosmology, perhaps you can think that way too. *Jeremy*

(This is a precis of the sermon – which neatly links the scientific aspect to the emotional. Thank you so much).

Barbara

QUOTES ABOUT LEISURE

With summer and holidays in mind.....

Summer is the season when a man thinks he can cook better on an outdoor grill than his wife can on an indoor stove.



We all need empty hours in our lives or we will have no time to create or dream.



Leisure: A fancy word for people who don't want to admit they're bored.

Gene Perret

The real problem of leisure time is how to keep others from using yours. *Arthur Lacey*



Leisure only means a chance to do other jobs that demand attention.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

We seldom enjoy leisure we haven't earned.

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.



John Lubbock, The Use Of Life

I would not exchange my leisure hours for all the wealth in the world.

Comte de Mirabeau

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

Genesis 2 V2 King James

A JOB WORTH DOING

A small repair was needed, to a favourite garden bench.

Ron was asked to do just that, but when it was returned to the owner, the whole bench had been beautifully renovated.

“If a job’s worth doing, its worth doing well” he had responded modestly when being complimented.

It is true just how apt that commonplace remark could be. For whether we carry out a task for others, or for our own benefit, while there’s little satisfaction to be had in doing it poorly, there’s no better reward than the pleasure of knowing we’ve done work to be proud of.

All this leads to the conclusion that whoever coined that phrase made a very good job of it!

~~~~~

This reminds me though, of the time that our neighbour asked my father if he would mend her metal watering can, which needed soldering. It was a very old can – and the base had bowed out, so it barely balanced.

My father did the soldering part, but when he returned it, the can now sported three wooden legs, shaped on to the base and held in place with wire. NOT the best job in the world, but the watering can did have a new lease of life.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **The Nervous Nun**

“People get nervous when they think that they have to call me ‘my Lord’ said an Irish bishop. “Especially the poor nuns. One was giving me a cup of coffee. As she pushed the sugar bowl towards me, she said, ‘How many lords, my lump?’

## WISDOM FROM THE REVEREND BEECHER

In our June issue, Malcolm mentioned the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher in his letter.



This famous preacher (June 24 1813-March 8 1887) was an American Congregationalist clergyman, social reformer and speaker, and was a prolific writer. He was known for his support of the abolition of slavery and emphasis on God's love.

By chance, I recently came across the following again, which often appears in scenes of relationship drama.

What I spent, I had;

What I kept, I lost;

What I gave I have.

But this time, on checking, I found it was one of Beecher's quotes!

There are many other excellent quotes:

The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond; but, if he looks at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that.

Troubles are often the tools by which God fashions us for better things.

A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life.

All words are pegs to hang ideas on.

A house without books is like a room without windows.

## WILD FLOWERS?

When a visitor from Malaya first arrived in Britain, she was struck by the beauty of the flowers growing on the banks as she approached Manchester during a long train journey.

Coming from a country where flowers wilted all too quickly, she thought that she had rarely seen anything so fresh and beautiful.

The flowers she so admired were, in fact, dandelions and daisies, and she was horrified to learn we think of them as weeds!



**Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them.**

*A good garden may have some weeds. - (Proverb)*

"And so it criticized each flower,  
This supercilious seed;  
Until it woke one summer hour,  
And found itself a weed."

*Mildred Howells, The Different Seed*



He who owns a garden,  
However small it be,  
Whose hands have planted it  
Flower or Bush or Tree.  
He who watches patiently  
The growth from nurtured sod  
Who thrills a newly open bloom  
Is very close to God.

*Katherine Edelman, He Who Owns a Garden*

# POSITIVE THINKING

Thoughts by the late Eddie Askew of the Leprosy Mission.

*Matthew 13:28-30*

*The servants asked him, “Do you want us to go and pull them up?” “No” he answered, “because while you are pulling up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let them both grow together until the harvest....”.*

Driving down a country lane, away from heavy traffic, I pulled into a lay-by. It was just the usual rough earth parking space, but in place of a van selling hamburgers it was bordered by a lovely old hawthorn hedgerow full of wild flowers.

There was Queen Anne’s Lace (also known as cow parsley), all cream and feminine, ranks of extrovert dandelions trying to take over everything, and bright pink campion.



Then I saw the nettles. Just standing there, waiting for me to put a hand out. “There’s always a nettle among the flowers I thought, rather cynically. Always a catch”.

But there’s another way of looking at it. The colour and joy of the flowers was still the same. They weren’t affected. They hadn’t changed. So we could turn our thoughts round and say that even in a nettle bed there are beautiful flowers. There’s still colour and beauty there. It’s the same situation but the way we look at it can lighten our day.

As the lifestyle gurus say, “Think positive”. Its not always easy but it can change our day. Let’s give it a try.

*Lord, when the nettles sting  
let me know the comfort of your nearness.*

## WORDSEARCH NOTES – JULY/AUGUST

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July the Church remembers St Thomas, also called Doubting Thomas, because he would not believe his fellow disciples' news of the Resurrection.

But 'doubt' did not mean that Thomas did not love Jesus!

Only a few weeks before, Thomas had urged his fellow disciples to follow Jesus to see Lazarus in Bethany, despite danger from the Jews. "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:16) Instead, Jesus had brought Lazarus back to life.

Thomas was sometimes very confused about just where Jesus was headed. But in John 14:5 Jesus untangled his confused commitment: "I am going to my Father", and "No one comes unto the Father but by me".

Finally, after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Thomas, showing him the wounds of His crucifixion. Thomas was electrified, and his response immediate: "My Lord and my God" (John 20.26ff).



Thus Doubting Thomas' honest doubts, turned to honest faith, have become a reassurance for thousands of people down the centuries.

# WORDSEARCH

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JULY

THOMAS

RESURRECTION

DOUBT

DOUBTING

LOVE

JESUS

FOLLOW

LAZARUS

BETHANY

DANGER

JEWS

DIE

LIFE

CONFUSED

GOING

FATHER

WOUNDS

CRUCIFIXION

RESPONSE

IMMEDIATE

LORD

GOD

HONEST

FAITH

REASSURANCE

## St. Swithun - Saint for a rainy day

St. Swithun is the saint you can blame for rainy summers. It is said that if it rains on his special day, 15<sup>th</sup> July, it will then rain for 40 days after that.

Swithun became Bishop of Winchester in 852, under King Ethelwulf of Wessex, in the days when Wessex was the most important kingdom of England. Swithun was famous for his charitable gifts and for his energy in getting churches built.

When he was dying in 862, all he asked was that he be buried in the cemetery of the Old Minster, just outside the west door. But on 15<sup>th</sup> July 971, the monks decided to move Swithun into their newly built cathedral. And so his bones were dug up. The unusually heavy rain that day, and on the days following, was attributed to the power of St Swithun. Swithun was disturbed again in 1093, when he was moved into the new Winchester cathedral.

So if it rains on 15<sup>th</sup> July .... get out your umbrella!



“How thoughtful, wearing something all the wedding guests could shelter under in case of rain”.

## PARABLE OF THE TWO SEAS

The Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea are made up of the same water.

The Sea of Galilee makes beauty out of it, for this sea has an outlet – it gets to give. It gathers in its riches that it may pour them out again to fertilise the Jordan Plain.

The Dead Sea has no outlet. It gets to keep.



Nobody likes setbacks or difficult times, but how would we learn and grow without them?

Louisa May Alcott, author of 'Little Women' summed it up well when she wrote:

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning to sail my ship"!

THERE IS A LITTLE STORY that Somerset Maugham told about his mother and father. Mrs Maugham was a charming woman, loved by everybody, while her husband had few obvious gifts and graces.

Someone once said to her "When everyone is in love with you and when you could have anyone you liked, how can you remain faithful to that ugly little man you married?"

She answered simply "He never hurts my feelings".

# **THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD written by Martin Rinkart**

**This is one of the hymns of praise and thanksgiving written in astonishing circumstances of pain and distress.**

**We sing it regularly – it is number 486 in Mission Praise, and the familiar first lines are:**

**Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices**

**The joy and serenity of this hymn are staggering, when you learn the circumstances in which it was written. Martin Rinkart was a pastor at Eilenberg, Saxony, during the terrible Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). As a walled city, Eilenberg offered some protection to the inhabitants. No wonder that political and military refugees of all sorts poured into the city, making it dangerously overcrowded.**

**In 1637 a terrible pestilence swept through the city, killing some 8,000 people, including Rinkart's beloved wife. Rinkart alone conducted the burial services for 4,480 people, sometimes taking as many as 40 to 50 funerals a day. Eilenberg was besieged and overrun three times. A Swedish general demanded the town pay him a large levy – impossible for the town's people. Rinkart said: 'Come, my children, we can find no mercy with man; let us take refuge with God.' On his knees there and then, Rinkart led his friends in a prayer and a hymn, and the levy was reduced by the Swedish General.**

**Somehow, out of the hell of the Thirty Years War, came this lovely hymn of peace and total trust in God. Martin Rinkart had had to dig deep into his faith to survive, and the result was utter, serene dependence on God – despite chaos and destruction all around.**

## SILENT THINGS

A retired Minister was walking through a beautiful garden with a friend. They were enjoying the peaceful scene in the early morning sunshine, with small white clouds skimming above.

He said to his friend, “You know, I’ve learned through the years of my life and ministry that most of the silent things in nature have great strength. The sunshine is noiseless, but what power and energy it has! The clouds are quiet too, but look what they do for us. The dew makes not a sound – but think how it sustains all these lovely flowers.

It’s the same with people. As I have moved from place to place, my most faithful friends have been the people who did not make a great fuss of me on my arrival, but stood quietly in the background. They were always the ones that I could rely on to give me strength when I needed it the most”.

~~~~~

In another garden, a man, who was a renowned orthopaedic surgeon, was walking round, enjoying his pond and surrounding flower beds.

He spotted a toad, who was struggling to walk, and dragging a back leg. He investigated - the toad did not appear to be injured, but the leg was dislocated. So, the great man picked it up and clicked the leg back into the joint. And the toad recovered and went on its way.



WORKING FROM REST

August sees many of us taking holidays to get some well-earned rest from working. But what is the biblical relationship between rest and work? The Bible shows us that we are to work from rest, not rest from work. How is this working out in our current experience?

When God created human beings on the sixth day, the next full day was a day of rest before the work began: 'Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work of creating that He had done.' (Genesis 2:3). Sunday is a day of rest at the beginning of the week.

Jesus lived out this rhythm of rest and work in His own ministry: 'Very early in the morning, Jesus got up and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed'. He then told His disciples: 'Let us go somewhere else so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come'. (Mark 1:35-38).

Here is a rhythm for our own lives: 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit' (John 15:5).

Our work/fruitfulness arises out of the time we abide/rest in Jesus. He will then show us what aspects of our lives need pruning: 'while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful'.

Let's use this month to reflect on how this pattern is working in our lives:

Remember God created us as *human beings* not just *human doings*!!

CHURCH DIARY – JULY/AUGUST 2023

Coffee Pot and Welcome Place Wednesdays and Saturdays – 10.30am – 2.00pm approx.

JULY

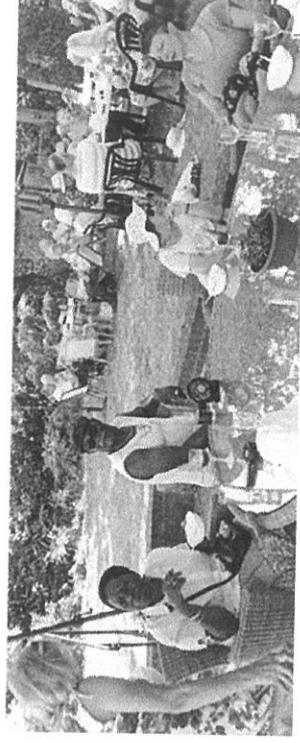
Saturday 1 st	12 NOON	VILLAGE FAIR – GRANGE PARK
Sunday	2 nd 10.00am 3.00pm	Morning Service CTC Farewell Service for Reverend Paul Roberts
Monday	3 rd 10.30am	Bible Study
Wednesday	5 th 11.00am	Film Committee Meeting (Vestry)
Saturday	8 th 7.30pm	CHURCH QUIZ NIGHT
Sunday	9 th 10.00am	Morning Service including Holy Communion
MONDAY 10th - SUNDAY 16th MINISTER ON ANNUAL LEAVE		
Sunday	16 th 10.00am	Morning Service led by the Deacons
Wednesday	19 th 2.00pm	Deacons' Meeting (Heath Room)
Thursday	20 th 10.30am	Maintenance Committee
Friday	21 st 7.30pm	Film Club (Sound of Music)
Sunday	22 nd 10.00am	Morning Service
Saturday	29 th 10.30am	Church Meeting (Coffee/Tea from 10.00am)
Sunday	30 th 10.00am	Morning Service

AUGUST

Saturday	5 th	2.30pm	ICE CREAM AFTERNOON at Heather's house
Sunday	6 th	10.00am	Morning Service: THANKSGIVING SUNDAY
Tuesday 8 th – Friday 11 th MAINTENANCE WEEK ON SITE			
Sunday	13 th	10.00am	Morning Service including Holy Communion
Friday	18 th	7.30pm	Film Club
Sunday	20 th	10.00am	Morning Service
Sunday	27 th	10.00am	Morning Service
MONDAY	28 th	BANK HOLIDAY	

GOD LOVES YOU AND IS ALWAYS WITH YOU - AMEN

A happy reminder of last year's ice cream party. It was the hottest of hot days, but we all kept reasonably cool and enjoyed the variety of ice cream.



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:

Church Premises/Church Office		01737 552303
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator:	Pat Robertson	0208 660 0792
Leprosy Mission:	Evelyn Wooden	01737 552456
South East Area Representative:	Contact the Minister for Federation Information	01737 554362
Bible Fellowship Group:	Minister	01737 554362
Community Friendship Club:	Audrey Stephens	01883 344863

Magazine Team:

Editor:	Barbara Ann Brown 83 Chaldon Way Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1DN email: brownba1947@gmail.com	01737 552045
Business Manager:	Evelyn Wooden	01737 552456
Proof Reader:	Evelyn Wooden	01737 552456

**Copy for the September 2023 issue
must reach Barbara by
Thursday 24th August 2023**

**OLD COULSDON
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

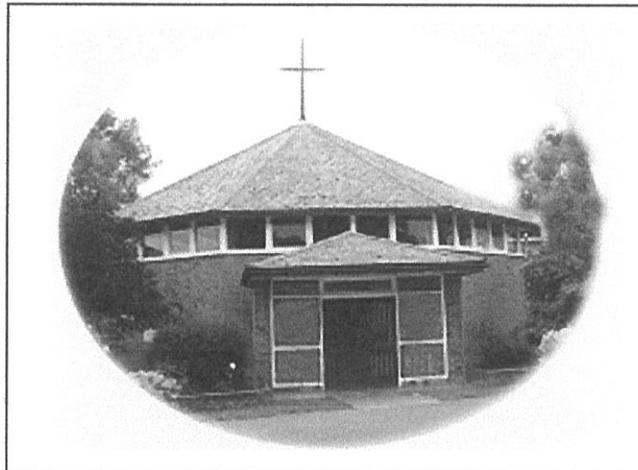
Formed in 1953 and on the present site since 1958

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**