



Open Door

The Newsletter of
Old Coulsdon Congregational Church

SEPTEMBER 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
(www.occc.coulsdon.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

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

FROM THE MINISTER



Dear Friends

When I was inducted as your Minister in January 2001 [delayed because of the terrible fire], I remember saying that my Ministry would be, at least in part, focused on what I call “The 4 E’s”:

**Enable
Equip
Encourage
Empower**

The work and mission we carry out evokes those four important words. I am NOT here to do everything and for you to sit back and let it happen. I AM here as your Minister to Enable you to be part of God’s family, to seek out your gifts and talents, to lead and be supportive of your hopes, dreams and ideas.

I am here to Equip you for service in Christ’s Church, which is the body of Christ.

I am here to Encourage you, to help, give you confidence to do and speak in His name.

I am here to Empower this part of the body of Christ that, together, we can adapt, take Christ’s message forward, show that light in a darkened world.

In a little over two years, we will be a quarter through this 21st Century. That in some ways is staggering as I’m sure, like me, you remember where you were as we celebrated when 1999 became 2000. [NB Of course the 21st Century didn’t formally begin until January 1st 2001 but let’s not spoil the moment !!].

I believe we have been a beacon of light; we have worked tirelessly with the community and our ecumenical colleagues; we have been here. There has been continuity.

So much done. So much always still to do. Someone said to me once: "Does God take holiday or annual leave". I smiled and replied that I doubted it. Too much to do. But don't forget Genesis – on the seventh day God rested.

That said even in the quiet [!] month of August Hamish led an excellent maintenance week. Why excellent? Because not only did so many jobs get done, and done well but the atmosphere, humour, team work were great. Because those who were there were *happy* to be there.

Quite rightly the team running Coffee Pot/Welcome Place twice a week – especially Heather, are having August off.

Bible study works to terms so we can reflect and 'have a break'.

I think the modern term is 'work/life balance'.

There is always work to do for the Lord. At the same time, we need periods of rest and relaxation to re-charge our bodies, our minds, our spirits.

As we come into September and towards Autumn let us look back on what's been done and forward to the tasks ahead, knowing we are doing God's work, and doing it in love.

Grace and Peace



Pastor Malcolm



NOTES FROM THE MINISTER:

CHURCH QUIZ NIGHT: Saturday September 16th [Cameron Hall]
Our next Quiz Night is on September 16th when we're raising money for the Salvation Army. Karen is organising the OCC Team and I hope we have another great evening.

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING: Saturday 23rd September
Our traditional morning as part of WBCM for McMillan Cancer Care will be on Saturday 23rd September this year from 10.30am in the Cameron Hall.

All proceeds go straight to McMillan.

They raise millions every year through Coffee Morning's like ours and it funds the vital support McMillan give to cancer patients and their families.

*Please come. Please support. Please tell families and friends.
Thank you.*

ADVANCE NOTICES:

-Preparing the Church for Harvest.

This will be on FRIDAY 6th October from 10.30am. We're getting Harvest ready on Friday as the Doctors are using the Church on Saturday for Flu Jap Clinics.

-HARVEST FESTIVAL:

Sunday 8th October at 10am. The Food and produce will go to the Purley food hub. This service will also include Holy Communion.

CHURCH MEETING & CHURCH AGM:

These will be held on Saturday October 14th in the Church from 10.30am. Coffee/Tea will be available in the Heath Room from 10am. Please make every effort to attend these important meetings in the life of the Church.

EVENTS BACK IN JULY



Here's our church stall at the Village Fair on 1st July. We had a successful day. (Photo by Gary Watson)

Our Deacons' Service on 16th July was excellent. Thank you to everyone, and especially to Brian French who gave us a most interesting and thought provoking sermon. His theme included harvest items, and I am reminded of this old rhyme when the seeds were sown:

**One for the mouse
and one for the crow.
One to rot,
and one to grow.**

Another old saying: “Its no use putting your hand to the plough unless you’re prepared to push it”.

Brian told a wonderful tale of overcoming a physical problem by not giving up or deviating from the situation – the unexpected punch-line was remarkable and emotional. We were all amazed.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB – 12 JULY 2023

We gathered in the Heath Room at 2.00pm, for a most interesting afternoon.

Audrey Stephens welcomed us, and outlined our programme.

She gave a demonstration of flower arranging – creating two beautiful items. We learned how to build up the flowers in the oasis blocks, starting at the bottom and working upwards.

Audrey used greenery, mainly from her garden, and added flowers after. To save time, she concentrated on the front of the arrangements, but told us that it is the custom to put a flower in the back – so that the Minister can see it!



We learned a lot – and were particularly interested in the fact that we should break the stem of carnations just above a node, ie knot, otherwise the water won't rise to the flower head. This explained why some of the flowers I'd been given a while ago died!

We'd been given a raffle ticket on arrival, and the lucky numbers won the arrangements.

Thank you so much Audrey.

We then had tea and some delightful little cakes.

We do not have a meeting in August – the next is on 13th September, when Mark Cooper will entertain. We always enjoy his singing and sing-a-long – do come, this will be a very popular event.

Barbara

ICE-CREAM EVENT **– 5th AUGUST**

This was so enjoyable – Heather's home-made ice-cream was excellent. However, instead of going to her garden, we gathered in the **Cameron Hall**, as the weather was extremely wet and windy. In fact, the rain was gushing in sheets off the gutters!



Here's the table with the many varieties of ice-cream laid out. We also had biscuits, wafers and Pimms. (There's a glimpse of Pat helping with the serving). We all had our favourites, the mango and salted caramel in particular. We all had a wonderful afternoon.

Thank you so much Heather.

~~~~~  
And a thank you from Barbara. On Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July, I was given flowers and cards to mark my **80<sup>th</sup> birthday** on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> August. I've had several celebrations.

Here I am at Blossoms Coffee Shop, Flittons Garden Centre – photo by Margaret.



I have been coming to the church for an amazing 70 years!! The church of course is the people, not the building, and I began as a child in the Sunday School, held in the old Purley Boys' School. We were saving for the new church even then, and collected £30. A lot of money for children to donate in those days. It was spent on the lectern that Malcolm uses every Sunday – there is a small plaque at the foot – do have a look.



**WITH OUR SUMMER HEATWAVES** in mind, in times gone by, in warmer countries, there was a tradition to insert cobbles with dips in them at intervals along roads and pathways.

The dips gathered the rain or morning dew and provided a cooling drink for birds or the street animals. People might step over the concave cobbles, not even noticing they were there.

It doesn't take much to help! A little thought by the stonemason, or whoever was paying for the road, and thirsty creatures had a drink.

**If we are concerned enough to help even the smallest and neglected, there is always a way.**

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**O**nce, when T H Huxley, the famous English Biologist (1825-1895) was walking on a Scottish moor, he plucked up a moss-cup and stood examining it through his pocket magnifying glass. A shepherd nearby watched him curiously and when Huxley saw him he asked if he would like to look at the flower through the glass.

The shepherd took it and gazed in wonder through the lens. Then, after a long pause, he said "Sir, I wish you had never shown it to me". "Why?" asked Huxley in surprise.

"Because", the shepherd replied, "I tread on thousands of them every day of my life".

**Well, of course, that kind of treading is impossible to avoid, but we do well to be sensitive about "treading on people's feelings", upon their hopes and enthusiasms. Remember what W B Yeats wrote:**

**I being poor, have only my dreams ....  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.**

## **ENCOURAGEMENT**

The teacher had asked everyone in the class to write a list of their best attributes.

Eight year old Elias did not have any trouble and rattled his list off.

Then he looked around and saw Jack who hadn't written anything, and was just sitting, staring into space.

So, he went over to him, and told the boy six things he liked about him and encouraged him to write them down.

"My mum and dad are always telling me what I'm good at" he told the teacher. "I guess Jack's parents have been too busy, so I did it for them".

This brings St Barnabas to mind, whose name means "son of encouragement". Barnabas joined the Jerusalem church soon after Christ's crucifixion, sold his property and gave the proceeds to the community. He had a reputation for coming alongside people with consolation and comfort. When preaching he encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

~~~~~

Two overseas visitors arrived at an Oxford College, where Mahatma Gandhi once stayed.

They revered his memory and were excited to think that they were sleeping in the very room which Gandhi had used. However, there were two beds and they did not know which was the right one.

So, they set the alarm for the middle of the night and when it rang, they changed beds, so that each of them could be sure of having occupied the bed in which Mahatma had slept. Next morning they told the College Warden what they had done.

He smiled as he said: "Ah, but when Gandhi slept here, he slept on the floor!"

Prayer for September 2023

Dear Father in heaven,

September is a time of change, a change of season, changes in many areas of our lives as a new term begins and new opportunities present themselves. It can be a time of challenge and uncertainty for many of us as well as excitement.

Thank you Lord, that You never change, Your promises never change, Your Holy-Spirit inspired Word never changes. You are constant and rock-solid, always.

Help us to remember that You make all things new when we put our trust in Jesus, You give us new life and new ways of understanding, but help us also to remember that You never contradict Your revealed self. Help us always to check out our thinking with what You say in Your Word. Help us to be faithful to You as we take each step forward, each new day.

In Jesus name, Amen

By Daphne Kitching

September brings the Feast Days of the Archangel Michael and All Angels.

Angels are the dispensers and administrators of the
divine beneficence towards us. - *John Calvin*

For he will command his angels concerning you,
to guard you in all your ways - *Psalms 91:11*

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
William Shakespeare

WORDSEARCH NOTES

For some reason, the Church gives thanks for angels in September. The 29th is the feast day of Michael and All Angels.



Since the days of Genesis, these messengers of God have been sent many times to intervene for the good in human affairs.

Angels guarded the Garden of Eden, they led Lot away from Gomorrah, they helped Gideon, they stopped Balaam, they closed the mouths of lions for Daniel, and, most important, the Archangel Gabriel was sent to tell Mary that she would mother the Messiah. Angels sat in the empty tomb of Jesus, and told of His Resurrection.

Revelation is teaming with angels, sent on all sorts of missions by God in the last times. Today, many Christians in the world's hot spots report having had angels help them when in mortal danger.

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### STAMPS

Thank you to all those who have been putting their used stamps in the box in the vestibule.

I have a good collection already, and will be sending them off to the Cats Protection by the end of September. So, if anyone has more, now is the time to bring them in.

Thank you. *Barbara*

## WORDSEARCH FOR SEPTEMBER

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THANKS

ANGELS

CHURCH

FEAST

MICHAEL

ALL

GENESIS

MESSENGERS

GOD

SENT

INTERVENE

GARDEN

EDEN

LOT

GIDEON

BALAAM

MOUTHS

LIONS

DANIEL

ARCHANGEL

GABRIEL

MARY

MOTHER

TEAMING

REVELATION

DANGER

## **RE-CYCLING – NATURE’S WAY!**

With our Tetracycling in mind (next Sat 9<sup>th</sup> September), here are some observations made by a small girl.

She had been told that the previous year there had been a wasps’ nest in her garden hut. Of course, the wasps had left, never to return. She learned that the wasps gathered the material for the nest by biting little bits of fences, decking and whatever wood they could find, and mulching it up.

Her garden fence was stained green and there were plenty of green streaks in the wasps’ nest. “That’s recycling” she said.

Then she observed that the birds were taking bits of the disused wasps’ nest, and using it to make their own nests in nearby trees.

“They’ll lay eggs in their nest, and after the chicks hatch, learn to fly and leave, the nests will fall off the tree and fertilise the ground for more trees to grow. And maybe we’ll make green fences out of them” she explained.

There is no teacher (or recycler) like Mother Nature.

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Another little girl, Joanne, often struggled with her schoolwork, so was not usually awarded for achievement.

One day though, her mother was delighted when she came home from school and said she had been given a sticker to put on the class’s ‘well-done’ chart.

“What did you do to win it” asked her mother. “I was kind to someone” she replied.

Apparently one of her classmates had been in tears in the playground. Joanne had gone across to comfort her, and a teacher noticed her response.

Winning a medal for kindness is worth a lot.

THE PERFECT PRAYER

Thank you for the world so sweet,
Thank you for the food we eat,
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you God, for everything.

In her teens, Edith Leatham (1870-1933) used to write verses for Christmas cards. The family had little money to spare, and what she earned was a godsend. One day Edith was asked to put a poem to a picture of a child with its mother, head bowed and hands folded. She wrote three simple verses, and was paid five shillings.

Forty years later she read four lines in a newspaper – by then nobody knew who had written them. But Edith recognised them as her own work, one verse of that poem she wrote so long ago.

Before her death in 1933, she had seen the verses travel the world as perhaps the most perfect prayer for children that has ever been written.

The first two lines are often swapped round, making it a prayer of grace before meals.

I remember singing this in my days at the Sunday School in Purley Boys'. (It only appears in the very old little red hymn book Sunday School Praise, number 56).

Barbara

“MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB” is a rhyme known to children everywhere, but have you ever wondered who Mary was?

Mary’s father was a shepherd in the Welsh hills and often came home after a stormy night with weak or sick lambs to be looked after. His daughter Mary would take them until they were able to look after themselves. Two of these lambs were her special pets, and she named them Billy and Nell.



Soon they were following her everywhere, watching her from the farm gate every morning as she left for school, and waiting when she came home. Once, Billy managed to escape, and to the teacher’s dismay he turned up in the classroom.

This story became known throughout Llangollen, and a few years later a visitor from London heard all about it from Mary herself. That visitor, Jane Buell, wrote stories and rhymes for children – and before long, she’d turned Billy’s escapade into five short verses.

Today its one of the best-known nursery rhymes in the world. When Mary was an old lady of 87, she confessed that to hear her story on the lips of so many children was one of the great joys of her life.



Several months ago, our Margaret Thiry wrote about her time looking after and bottle-feeding orphaned lambs.

But the farmer warned her not to make pets of them – when they had recovered, it was time for them to join the other lambs in the field.

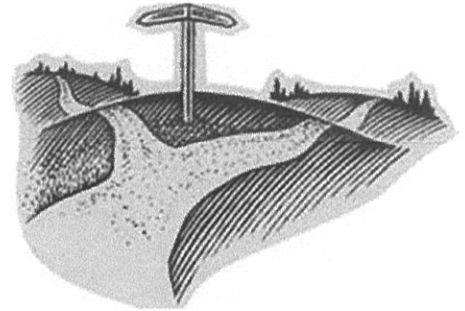
QUOTES ABOUT TRAVEL

"A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step."

Lao Tzu

Two roads diverged in a wood,
and I, I took the one less travelled
by, and that has made all the
difference.

Robert Frost



Like all great
travellers, I have
seen more than I
remember, and
remember more
than I've seen.

Benjamin Disraeli



Tourists don't
know where
they've been,
travellers don't
know where
they're going.

Paul Theroux



We may walk, run, stumble, drive,
or fly, but let us never lose sight of
the reason for the journey, or miss a
chance to see a rainbow on the way.

**When preparing to travel, lay out all your
clothes and all of your money. Then take
half the clothes and twice the money.**

Susan Heller



No one realizes how beautiful it is to travel until he comes home
and rests his head on his old, familiar pillow.

Lin Yutang

CHURCH DIARY – SEPTEMBER 2023				
Coffee Pot/Welcome Place Wednesdays and Saturdays 10.30am – 1pm/2pm				
Saturday	2nd	10.30am		COFFEE POT/WELCOME PLACE RESTARTS
Sunday	3 rd	10am		Morning Service
Monday	4 th	10.30am		Bible Study Restarts (Heath Room)
Wednesday	6 th	11am		Christmas Fair Committee Meeting (Vestry)
Sunday	10 th	10am		Morning Service inc. Holy Communion
Monday	11 th	10.30am		Bible Study
Wednesday	13 th	11am		Film Club Committee Meeting (Vestry)
Friday	15 th	7.30pm		Film Club (The Dam Busters)
Saturday	16 th	7.30pm		Church Quiz Night (Cameron Hall)
Sunday	17 th	10am		Morning Service
Monday	18 th	10.30am		Bible Study
Wednesday	20 th	2pm		Deacons Meeting
Saturday	23 rd	10.30am		WBCM in Cameron Hall
Sunday	24 th	10am		Morning Service led by the Deacon
Monday	25 th	10.30am		Bible Study
ADVANCE DATES FOR OCTOBER				
Sunday	1 st	10am		Morning Service for THANKSGIVING SUNDAY
Friday	6 th	10.30am		Decorate the Church for HARVEST
Sunday	8 th	10am		Morning Service for HARVEST FESTIVAL inc Holy Communion
GOD LOVES YOU AND IS ALWAYS WITH YOU - AMEN				

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
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Pastoral Care Co-ordinator:	Pat Robertson	0208 660 0792
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Leprosy Mission:	Evelyn Wooden	01737 552456
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South East Area Representative:	Contact the Minister for Federation Information	01737 554362
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Bible Fellowship Group:	Minister	01737 554362
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Community Friendship Club:	Audrey Stephens	01883 344863
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**Copy for the October 2023 issue
must reach Barbara by
Tuesday 26th September 2023**

**OLD COULSDON
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

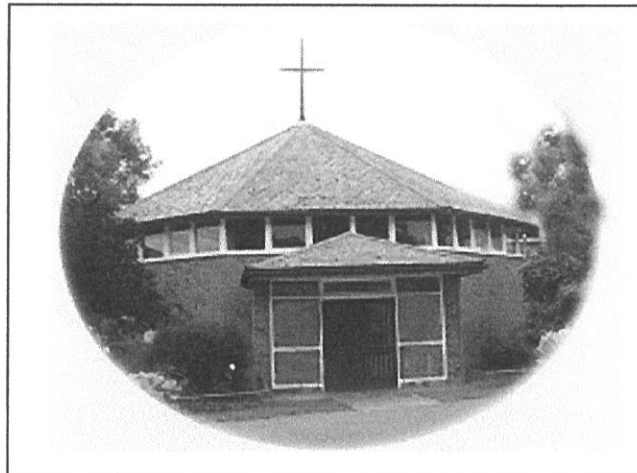
Formed in 1953 and on the present site since 1958

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**

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