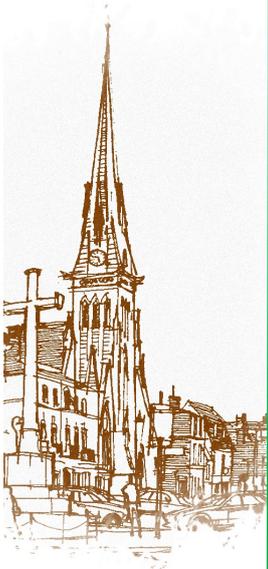


**April & May  
2020**

**inspire**



**THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE FREE CHURCH  
(UNITED REFORMED)  
SAINT IVES**

## *Easter Greetings!*



It is an extraordinary time for everyone, with all our Easter services cancelled – no Maundy Thursday evening service, no Good Friday walk of witness and nor Easter Sunday morning Holy Communion service! The most important time of the year in the Christian calendar – yes, I think it should be even more important than Christmas – and we cannot gather to worship, pray and sing together. However, it has been good that we could keep in touch via email and mail. I hope that you are following our Weekly News Bulletin and Weekly Devotions.

We are still a Christian community, a Christian fellowship, and still a church even though we are needing to work in a different way. For the Church is the body of believers, not our building, nor our Sunday service. So, in these turbulent times we are still to be praying and caring for one another. We may not be able to gather together in person, but we can continue to support and care for each other.

Elders are meeting by conference calls, so that we can consider alternative ways we can be still church during this time period. One of the blessings of our high-tech society, with the world wide web, internet and social media, is that there are many ways in which we can meet. If you are on email we will continue to send out a Weekly News bulletin where we can update you on the latest URC guidelines, pass on messages and perhaps share stories with each other.

I will endeavour to write or share a Bible Reading, Reflection and Prayer each week. We will send these by email to those who are on email – if not we will send by post. This way we can worship individually, but all on the same topic. There are two other opportunities for worship. One is for any interested to click on this link at 10 am Sunday mornings to see a live act of worship by URC leaders from Church House.

For those who are unwell, we will be ringing and where needed, I will visit people, if allowed, in hospital. My phone numbers are 01480 352058 or 07714081930.

Please continue to pray for all those affected by the Coronavirus, those unwell, those isolating themselves and those who are suffering economically. I am greatly heartened by the greater sense of community that is being seen. So many people are offering to pick up groceries or medicines, post letters and popping by, whilst keeping 2 metre distance, to ask how neighbours are doing.

As Jesus said, we may continue to show our faith by loving God and loving our neighbours as ourselves.  
Love and prayers

*Catherine*

## Lift shaft 'graffiti' revealed after 40 years hidden

The radical remodelling of our building in 1979/80 has been well documented. In the commemorative booklet published for the Rededication Service in September 1980 we read -

The raising of £235,000 for the reconstruction project was a formidable challenge for a church with a membership and following drawn from 100 or so families. (The cost today would be over £1m) But with faith, enthusiasm, determination and the generosity of many people, £180,000 has been realised and the balance borrowed.

The project would not have been possible without the Government 'Job Creation Grant' which enabled the church to employ directly a total of 28 people for up to 18 months.

Additionally, a 'Local Appeal' target of £40,000 was realised in little more than a year. Three quarters of this sum came from the church membership - with the remainder from the community at large.

Church members took enthusiastically to a variety of fundraising activities which included a marathon organ playing; selling bricks; sponsored slimming and walking; an auction of goods donated by members; coffee mornings and garden parties; concerts.....

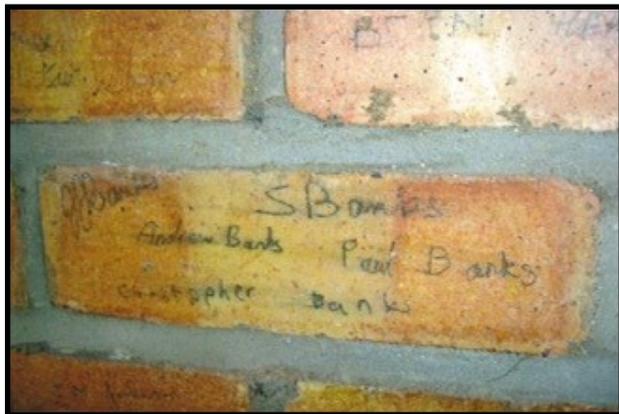


In her book 'Not An Easy Church', Mary Carter writes of a 'Buy-a-Brick' campaign. This took place over two days in July 1979 when real bricks were displayed outside the church and folk were invited to buy a brick for 10 pence each. This entitled them to sign one brick only which would eventually be built into and be visible on the internal walls of the lift shaft - to be seen again at some future date.

That 'future date' arrived in January this year when the lift underwent major repairs and it was possible to have supervised access into the lift shaft to view the signed bricks. It was a slight disappointment to discover that nearly all of the several hundred signatures had been written in pencil - which did not make for the best photographs. There was limited time and light - but luckily just enough to capture the pics shown here.

Work began on site in April 1979 and by July that year, there were enough clean bricks available to display on a table outside the church, where folk were encouraged to buy and then sign their brick(s). One brick does stand out and is shown here. It was included for the benefit of any curious viewers in the future. Sadly no record was kept of the total amount raised by the brick sales alone. Today, instead of asking for 10p per brick, we would probably be suggesting £1 per brick. would be a fair donation.





#### Above

Although limited time was available, It was possible to find signatures relating to current church members. It seems that Jeremy and Sally Banks made a family purchase together. Sally gives the ages of the boys on the day as Christopher 9, Paul 11, Andrew 13.

#### Below

Family purchase seemed to be popular for also seen here is a Course family brick. Thomas and Ethel Course are Anne Strong's parents signing with Anne's brother Alan, his wife Margaret and baby James.



And finally **below** a brick signed by six year old Paul Smith - Rosemarie Smith's son. Neither Rosemarie or Paul have any idea who the James Smith is written beneath Paul's name. Any ideas anyone? **SMD**



## SHINE JESUS SHINE!

Spring-time, and Easter, that wonderful time has arrived when we see the world in a new light! Everything is and bright and pleasing to the eye after a long dark winter. We look forward to Easter and the joy of singing the well-known (and new!) Easter hymns and of knowing that Jesus lives and is alive in us.



Springtime is the land awakening! – it is the awakening of the soul! It is full of promise! It is a time to look forward!

I enjoyed looking for the first snowdrop and this reminded me of my childhood when I would be taken to pick snow drops in the woods, to decorate the church in order to herald the Spring! Fortunately, the snowdrops are still there but unfortunately, there is a fence round them and one is not allowed to pick them. One can still see them and admire their beauty though! I wait for the first glimpse of primroses or catkin, or sticky buds. - Remember them from school?

Spring is my all-time favourite time of the year with its abundance of light, colour and beauty. I think how light plays such a big and important part in our lives. Light is mentioned so many times in the bible! Jesus is the **“Light of the World!”**

Have you ever been caught unawares by a small iridescent light shining from nowhere? I was sitting in church listening to Catherine's sermon and the sun was streaming through the windows. Suddenly my eye was drawn to a small dazzling light no bigger than a grain of sand. It looked like a small diamond; it was so bright! I don't know what it was but the sun had picked it up and one couldn't ignore it. Its light was so intense! It made me think of other incidents, like the sun shining on the sea on a bright summers day. The sun turns the waves into myriads of diamonds all sparkling brightly. Or when the sun catches a small rainbow from nowhere and intensifies the colours.

**Jesus “Light of the World,”** shine on us all and bring beauty and warmth into all our lives as we look forward to His wonderful gift of Spring and Easter.

*Rosemary Whiffen*

## Contacts

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Open 9am - 1pm Mon/Wed/Fri

**Room Bookings should be made through the Church Office**

*The Free Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.*

## Little Gidding Lent Quiet Day

Howling gales and scudding clouds did not deter the 19 of us who trekked off to Little Gidding for the Lent Quiet day. As with all 'quiet days' there was the opportunity to meditate, worship and pray, engage in something creative, relax with music and pictures, enjoy fellowship or simply sit back and read a book.



A few of us braved the elements to take part in a pilgrimage walk to Steeple Gidding although due to flooding, had to take the road instead of heading across the fields. Sheltering from the weather at St Andrew's Church, we shared a poignant reading and a hymn before venturing back to Ferrar House. The remainder shared the experience (and the book used) from the comfort of the house.

As ever, we were fed beautifully by Sue Capp and her helper, including delicious cake, always a winner. Although it's only for a day, the spirituality of the place stays with those who visit, giving the occasion a 'stretched' feel to it, and a sense of peace and restoration.

if You have never taken part in a quiet day, this could be just the sort of 'day off' you need.

