



Rodborough Tabernacle News

July/Aug 2018



**Sharing God's Love:
Serving the Community**

Dear Friends,

Summer days, what wonderful warmth, lovely colours, delightful scents, actually it soon begins to feel like the television advert where two young people meet and love is instantaneous but fractures within moments, to remind us not to rush into paying for our licence all in one go. We can already hear people saying its too hot, too dry and we need rain soon. Perhaps we just need a little shade and a moments rest from our rush into life, taking the time to enjoy the summer, to be thankful for the gifts of creation that need the warmth to bring their life to fullness. We might want to leave wasps out !!

Not rushing in is a gift that Jesus has. There are a number of stories where an approach with blue lights flashing and a siren wailing would seem appropriate, yet he so often steps forward to face very difficult situations with a determined and deliberate stride, taking with him hopeful folk, and some significant doubters. Jesus, who brings the kingdom of God closer to our experience, hints at the power of God.

The power of God is such a challenge to us. We are faced with life as we know it and it often throws things at us that we do not like, Ageing we have to accept, we know we grow older, but does it really have to be so painful?

Just a few days ago I sat with someone who while being old in number of years is young in thought and sees from the window a view on life which holds the needs of others at the centre of thought. Experience of life with its joys and its sorrows brings a wisdom that the world can sometimes rush by. Kingdom of God thinking shows itself.

I heard of concern for the young, and we are aware that loneliness is a growing experience amongst young people, and I heard a reflection on earlier days where happiness was found in simple things, a walk on the common and games with friends. I heard about personal care and the thankfulness that flows from well exercised care and I heard of a challenge to us to strengthen our own pastoral care.

Pastoral care stems from the care Jesus has for people, we will in this month hear of healing stories, and renewal stories and for some the stories have real resonance. Faith is so often at the very heart of healing stories and faith is something we can rush into - a new found

faith can be like a new found stone cooking pan. The pan will not make you into a better cook and your faith will not make a better disciple unless you practice it and the practice is an every day thing. We plan to use the book Holy Habits to help us grow in confidence in our faith.

This faith of ours offers us a new perspective, it is the perspective of eternal life. In our faith journey we may not have sensational things to offer other than our trust and our hope, our determination to live as followers of one who leads us into eternal life. We will however experience amazing things, fellow travellers will love us and uphold us in darker moments shedding some of their light into our troubled times when darkness can seem like a real threat. The need for healing is very evident in our darker moments.

The gestures will not all be grand, but some can be. It is the gift of some people to make a cup of tea and a few kind words go to the very heart of our suffering. Some give practical help, even to the point of financial help, and others give something of themselves a tissue to brush away a tear can be an amazing gift.

Don't rush in, walking the way is a very real adventure in faith, it calls us to try our best to walk together and to encourage others to walk with us, there is love enough for everyone.

Have a lovely summer Eric

Welcome to my world

Welcome to my world, won't you come on in?

Miracles, I guess, still happen now and then.

Step into my heart, leave your cares behind.

Welcome to my world – built with you in mind.

Knock, and the door will open.

Seek, and you will find.

Ask, and you'll be given the key to this world of mine.

I'll be waiting here, with my arms unfurled,

Waiting just for you

Welcome to my world!



Wednesday Fellowship

On Wednesday 20th June we gathered together in festive mood as we happily celebrated Barbara's special birthday and looked forward to being transported to the Isles of Scilly thanks to Geoff and Beth King who had put together a documentary of these lovely islands.

Peter opened the meeting talking about his holidays when he was young, some on the Isles of Scilly, mentioning how his birthday always fell on the week that he was away with his family at this time of year. He went on to say how holidays can relieve the stress that so many people feel, especially the young. That we do need some stress in our lives but the way the world is today with our 24/7 economy and the 7th day of rest now gone, to be able to get away is so beneficial, as is keeping calm and opening the bible more often.

Coincidences play a big part in life too and Augusta John Smith who became The Lord Proprietor of the Isles of Scilly came from Berkhamsted like Peter. He acquired the lease on the Isles of Scilly from the Duchy of Cornwall for £20,000 and is responsible for the economy of the Islands as they are today. He changed the Islanders' way of life and built a new quay at Hugh Town on St Mary's, grew trees to provide shelter and built schools and implemented compulsory education. Geoff and Beth mentioned this in their commentary as they started their film.

The sights and sounds of the islands of St Mary's, St.Martin's, Tresco, Bryher, St Agnes and Gugh played to our senses as we saw many white beaches just like in the tropics, turquoise sea with the waves lapping on to the shore, all set against an azure blue sky. We heard and saw thrushes and other birds singing, laughed at the rabbits playing and surprised by seeing cattle grazing on grassland on Bryher. The biggest attraction, of course, was the flowers, growing everywhere like daffodils from one visit in spring and many other varieties from a visit in June. On Tresco there was so many spectacular colours and shapes that it was breath-taking in it's beauty. We were shown amazing views with stone-works, lighthouses, castles and Scillonian cottages, with Geoff knowing some of the names of the people who had lived in them. We saw the trip boats and the Scillonian on it's way back to Penzance in calm waters but would probably hit rougher seas once out of the bay.

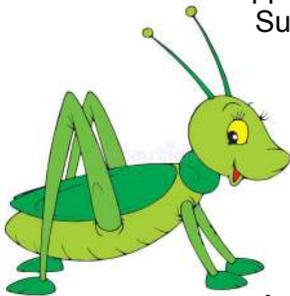
It was very relaxing looking at such pleasant scenes and surely relieved any stress that we might have been feeling and we wished that we could have shared it all with the people who couldn't be with us. We celebrated the other birthdays, had a hymn and a prayer and let everyone know about our next meeting which will be all about entertainment with Eric and others, not forgetting tea and cake to follow. We hope that you feel that you would like to join us, you would be most welcome.

On behalf of the Fellowship - Dorothy

Grasshopper Green

Grasshopper Green is a comical chap,
He lives on the best of fayre;
Bright little trousers, jacket & cap,
These are his summer wear.
Out in the meadow he loves to go
Playing away in the sun...
It's hopperty-skipperty, high and low –
Summer's the time for fun!

Grasshopper Green has a quaint little house,
It's under the hedge so gay...
Grandmother, as still as a mouse,
Watches him over the way....
Gladly he's calling the children, I know,
Out in the beautiful sun –
It's hopperty - skipperty, high and low –
Summer's the time for fun!



(Kingscourt Infants' School 1940s)

Author Unknown—submitted by Maureen Arthur

**"Gazing at him-they saw his face was like
the face of an angel" Acts 6:15.**

When Leonardo de Vinci was painting the Lord's Supper he frequented crowded places in search of the face he wanted for the various disciples. The search for the face of Judas proved very difficult, there seemed no one evil enough. The pope became increasingly irate with the artist for so much unnecessary delay. So persistent was he that Leonardo lost his patience and said "In which case I will paint your face as Judas. The pope said no more!

Have we ever seen the face of an angel? The answer must be yes for "angel" means messenger of God. Surely God has spoken to us at some time, somewhere. Perhaps that was Leonardo's problem - there was a touch of the angel in every face he saw.

Of course in the bible angels cannot always be seen. The slightly comic story of Balaam the priest and the donkey. It is only the donkey who could see the angel!

It is curious how when we want to portray an angel we do so through a little girl- or perhaps a grown woman, but "angel" is a masculine word. Maybe we have difficulty in finding our ideal beauty of an angel in man. However, male and female have nothing to do with it because "angel" in the bible means God more often than not, as when Jacob wrestled in prayer all night with the angel. In fact the angel meant God. This was prayer at its most sublime - a meeting of man with his maker. We witness this in the garden of Gethsemane. No wonder we sometimes shrink from prayer.

Stephen was about to die. The Sanhedrin council were about to pronounce sentence upon him and his face was like that of an angel. Was it the sheer beauty and luminous spirituality that they could not stand? Did his face silently condemn them? Was his love so sublime that they felt he had no place in their world?

I have vivid memories of a sixteen year old girl whom I taught R.E at a school for physically disabled young people. Her name was Jean and although very intelligent she suffered from a paralysis which took her ability to speak and caused her face to be twisted.

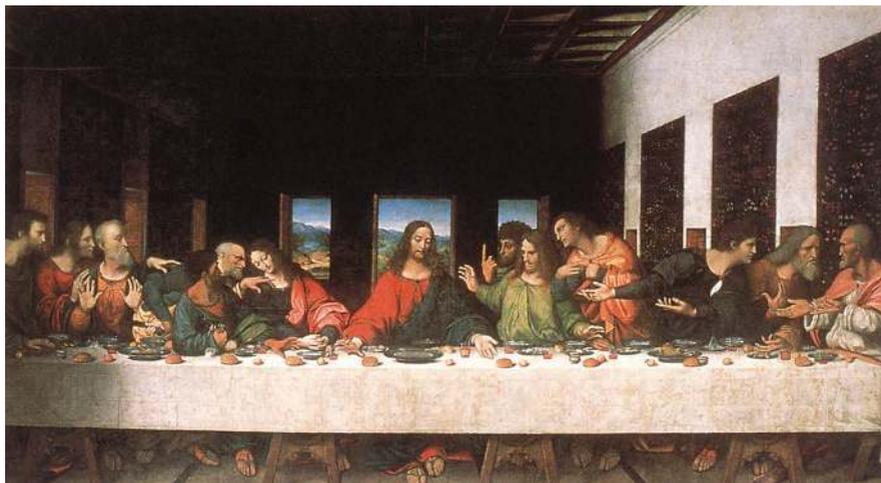
One Sunday evening, with twelve others, she was baptised by immersion. A symbol of death and burial and resurrection.

As I lifted her from the water her face suddenly became the face of an angel. She smiled. She had dark hair and it fell back from her face and she seemed to glow - a glimpse of heaven. Within a year Jean died and was taken to be with her lord in heaven.

It is strange that, perhaps none of us would say "yes, I have seen an angel", but when confronted with a face reflecting heaven we instantly recognise it.

The tragedy of the council of leading religious leaders recognised the angel in Stephen but they could not rejoice and worship - rather it poisoned their hearts against him. It bred feelings of hatred and there is their tragedy. Sadly this too happens today, the angel in our midst goes unrecognised or rejected and may be that is our calling, to open our eyes to the beauty we seen in others and to embrace that beauty and who knows, someone else may see the angel in you?

David Price



Leonardo da Vinci - Last supper

Church outing to Cotswold Water Park

Sunday 19th August,



We are planning a church outing to Cotswold Water Park following café Church on Sunday 19th August. South Cerney Outdoor, lake 12, has good facilities, including a picnic and barbecue area, lakeside walks, and great variety of boat hire, including canoes, Kyaks, paddle boards, fun boats and Katakanus which takes up to six people. Bring your own picnic, or hire a barbecue and cook your own food. Enjoy a leisurely afternoon in good company, go for a walk, or take a boat on the lake. Boat and barbecue hire could be shared.

We need to make a group booking in advance, so please could you sign the list on the noticeboard in the Tab Community Room as soon as possible, or email me to let me know that you are intending to come. Please also indicate whether you would like to use a barbecue, and whether you are interested in boat hire. You do not need to decide which type of boat at this stage.

For more information; www.southcerneyoutdoor.co.uk

South Cerney Outdoor, Lake 12, Spine Road, GL7 5TL

Jenny Wills *email* j_m_wills@hotmail.com

Worship on Friday evenings.

On Fridays at 6:30 pm there will be an opportunity to come together to worship. The programme will be different and sometimes there may be things you would love and at other times things you may not like.

Iona style worship is short and quiet because it happens on Family Fun Evenings, you may not have tried family fun, you may need a life to family fun? Games, crafts, with every degree of ability and of course being together (the church word is fellowship).

Taize offers a time of quiet, of unaccompanied singing (cantor led) or very simple accompaniment. Quietness, and a thought around the word of God from a passage for the day. Prayer is a focus too.

New Songs to sing is always a challenge for some. There are writers today wrestling with the world as it is and the need to sing in a way that the singers can relate to the words. Traditional hymns to new tunes doesn't always do it and very few of us might know the origin of some of the songs we sing. This will be CD singalong style or even projected video style, the Little Chapel was created for the young at heart I am told so lets use it with a degree of imagination and open our hearts to what we might want to sing today.

If you are in need of a quiet time the twenty minute service slot may be what you would need or perhaps you would like to try and lead it we have some very good worship leaders amongst us and I am very much open to offers.

In times of slavery the slaves on plantations were not allowed to speak to each other so they sang as they worked. Swing Low Sweet Chariot - the idea of being carried off to the heaven rather than continue in the human hell, spoke volumes about the need to trust in God. In a similar way Stuart Townend's version of the 23rd Psalm puts the stresses on the need to trust in God for the whole of life and beyond.

Worship: Friday evening. 6:30 pm Little Chapel.

Eric Massey

Holy Habits.

This book will be at the heart of our onward journey. The material for “walking the way” will now be available in September. There are now separate booklets for each phase of Holy Habits. For Christian folk these are not surprising; discipleship is the model we tend to use but understanding what makes disciples is something we may need to hear more about.

The book eventually works to the point where I would like us to begin, Worship, Gladness and Generosity.

Worship should be at the heart of our life together and we might look at how we can play a part for there is a part for everyone.

Gladness is something of a challenge when you are a carer for instance, or a patient with a long term illness or simply an impatient patient. Gladness stems from the knowledge of God’s love for us, in whatever situation we find ourselves alone and deserted is not one, for there is the promise of God never to leave or abandon us and the promise of our fellow disciples to stand by us in every situation.

Generosity is a gift of the spirit that we can never have too much of. It is the cornerstone of our welcome and the heart of our fellowship, it is an expectation that disciples model the love they have for each other on the model of the grace of God.

No programme can make the church grow in number only you can do that by invitation and by practicing welcome.

Eric Massey July 2018

Short review of the chapter on Prayer in 'Holy Habits', by Andrew Roberts.

This book about discipleship, published in 2016, comes recommended by the URC so a few of us at the Tab have been reading it on and off, with varying degrees of enthusiasm – perhaps in keeping with most guinea pigs! I think we have acquired about five copies so far.

I must confess I dipped into it a few times and came to the perhaps hasty conclusion that it might not be for me – until I read the chapter on Prayer,

which is prefaced by the words from Acts2: 42

They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. I was intrigued by the definite article preceding *prayers*. More of that later, but I was reminded of a recent conversation with Brian and Eric in which one of us remarked how many details like this we may not notice, despite having read a passage from the Bible scores of times. Ministers like Eric and John Sutcliffe and others have taught us an awful lot about the Bible and how to interpret it and it pays to listen to them! I have been attending services and reading the Bible all my life – perhaps a little smugly - but I realise more and more how much there is to learn.

Roberts begins by exploring different ways of praying and at the end of the chapter there are clearly set-out useful suggestions for further reflection and action, including information about resources: reading, retreats, DVDs, websites and so on (he does this throughout the book, so it is not only thought-provoking but practical too).

For me the best part was his attitude, which is open and inclusive. Different personalities need different spiritualities. He refers to prayer as 'the most frequently practised of the holy habits' and acknowledges and describes some of the ways we do it. Some people through silence, dance, music or even Pilates! He suggests, for example, that we need not always bow our heads and close our eyes – a habit most of us have adopted. He speaks of the Breath of God - prayer is the spiritual air we breathe. We breathe in the grace of God and breathe out our adoration, confession and so on. Prayer is an adventure where we encounter mystery and silence. For some the experience can be charismatic, for others, contemplative. Roberts points out that for Luke, prayer was an important focus. Immediately after Pentecost, with the disciples 'on fire', prayer was spontaneous. I imagine it must have sounded like babbling. For us today it is usually more structured, with some Christian denominations repeating known words as part of their litany. But even in Luke's day, he spoke of *the prayers*, implying they were specific, regularly used ones. Roberts concludes that part of the chapter by asserting that diversity is a good thing, reflecting God's creation. There is a lot more detail, about praying personally and in groups, about recalibrating our relationship with God – *prayer is a transformative habit and way of being* – and about transcending boundaries.

I hope when you read it you will find it as interesting and helpful as I did.

Carole Oosthuysen

URC Update : Presbyterian Church in Ireland loosens ties with the URC



The Moderator of the United Reformed Church General Assembly, has expressed sadness after the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) voted to loosen its ties with the United Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland.

On Wednesday 6 June, during its meeting in Belfast, the PCI General Assembly voted 255 to 171 to accept the recommendation of the doctrine committee's 'Relationships with other denominations' task group which was to '... no longer accept invitations to the Moderator of the General Assembly, or any other formal delegation, to attend the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church and no longer issue invitations to those two denominations to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland'.

During the week the PCI also adopted a new policy that means anyone in a same-sex relationship cannot become a full member of its denomination and their children cannot be baptised.

The Revd Kevin Watson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the URC, represented the Church at the PCI Assembly. He said: 'Although we know that this is a difficult issue for many people, including some in our own congregations, we are saddened that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have reached the decision that they have. We endeavour to treat all members of the United Reformed Church, and people within in our local communities, equally, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, economic status or sexual orientation.'

The report recognised that: 'The United Reformed Church had taken a similar line to the Church of Scotland in adopting a revisionist trajectory in relation to decisions about [same-sex relationships] ... [and that the URC] was significantly further down that road.'

In 2016, the URC became the largest UK denomination to open the way to the celebration and registration of marriages of same-sex couples in its churches. Mr Watson added: 'Our Church's decision

That Jesus called us to not only love God with all our hearts, but to also to love our neighbour.'

In a statement, the Revd Trevor Gribben, General Secretary of the PCI, called the events of Friday, a 'sad day' for 'many on both sides of the debate' in respect of the historical relationship between the three Churches which dates back to 1843. But he added: 'The decision today was taken by a clear majority after a full and respectful debate.'

In separate resolutions, the PCI General Assembly agreed that where there were areas in which the Presbyterian Church in Ireland could collaborate with the URC or the Church of Scotland for mutual benefit, then such collaboration should continue or could be considered.

Mr Watson continued: 'We are pleased that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland remains open to informal opportunities for collaboration with the URC, and although we do not work extensively with them, we have enough in common to believe that continuing contact is important.

'There are many people within our congregation, and some in our ministry, who have moved from Ireland to the lands that we serve. We value these people highly and shall continue to welcome members of the PCI who wish to worship with us, either as occasional visitors or after moving to settle here.'

Holy Humour

A bus stop was sited close to the church which had a wayside pulpit notice board on which was boldly questioned.....

- **Where will you be on Judgement day?**

Underneath someone had written;

- **Still waiting for a number 125 bus**

A notice in a Church kitchen read:

- **"Ladies, when you have emptied the teapot please stand upside down in the sink"**

To which had been added:

- **"No hot bottoms on the Formica"**

Source: Christian crackers submitted by Roger Barnfield

The Most Beautiful Flower

The park bench was deserted as I sat down to read
Beneath the long, straggly branches of an old willow tree.
Disillusioned by life with good reason to frown,
For the world was intent on dragging me down.

And if that weren't enough to ruin my day,
A young boy out of breath approached me, all tired from play.
He stood right before me with his head tilted down
And said with great excitement, "Look what I found!"

In his hand was a flower, and what a pitiful sight,
With its petals all worn - not enough rain, or too little light.
Wanting him to take his dead flower and go off to play,
I faked a small smile and then shifted away.

But instead of retreating he sat next to my side
And placed the flower to his nose and declared with surprise,
"It sure smells pretty and it's beautiful, too.
That's why I picked it; here, it's for you."

The weed before me was dying or dead.
Not vibrant of colours, orange, yellow or red.
But I knew I must take it, or he might never leave.
So I reached for the flower, and replied, "Just what I need."

But instead of him placing the flower in my hand,
He held it mid-air without reason or plan.
It was then that I noticed for the very first time
That weed-toting boy could not see: he was blind.

I heard my voice quiver, tears shone like the sun
As I thanked him for picking the very best one.
"You're welcome," he smiled, and then ran off to play,
Unaware of the impact he'd had on my day.

I sat there and wondered how he managed to see
A self-pitying woman beneath an old willow tree.
How did he know of my self-indulged plight?
Perhaps from his heart, he'd been blessed with true sight.

Through the eyes of a blind child, at last I could see
The problem was not with the world; the problem was me.
And for all of those times I myself had been blind,
I vowed to see beauty, and appreciate every second that's mine.

And then I held that wilted flower up to my nose
And breathed in the fragrance of a beautiful rose
And smiled as that young boy, another weed in his hand
About to change the life of an unsuspecting old man.

Author unknown

Source: <http://www.rogerknapp.com/inspire>

Cream Teas on the Manse Lawn

Sat Aug 4th

2.30 - 4.30pm



Latest News from the Food bank

Over the past couple of months our drop-ins have been quieter, as is typical for this time of year. It's a good time to catch our breath in the office and warehouse. We've done our annual stock-take and our Summer Tesco collection at the Stroud and Cam stores which yielded 2.2 tonnes of food and toiletries over the two days. Over 70 volunteers took part in the collection: in the stores, driving stock from store to warehouse and putting away in the warehouse.

In between our regular activities it's not unusual to have groups in to do one off volunteering or for us to go out to talk about the work of the Foodbank. Below you can read about three groups that we've engaged with this week.

The **Eastcombe Scouts** held a 'camp out' to raise funds for their troop and for the Foodbank. We visited them the week before to talk about what we do at the Foodbank and gave them a tray of beans for their camp out dinner. They had so much fun they want to do it again next year, they raised an impressive £175 for the Foodbank and took a food collection of nearly 30 kg.

Stroud College

One of our former volunteers Molly got in touch asking if she could bring in a couple of her students from Stroud College to help in the warehouse. The students face a range of learning challenges, but absolutely thrived helping make holiday bags in the Warehouse yesterday morning.

Thomas Keeble Citizenship Project

Yesterday afternoon we hosted a class of year 10 students from Thomas Keeble who are designing their Citizenship projects for the autumn. They were on a fact finding mission and we gave them a thorough tour of the warehouse including Kids Stuff and the Furniture Bank where they could ask plenty of questions. We are looking forward to working with them and seeing how their project develop.

Current shopping list

Tinned Tomatoes
UHT Juice/Fruit Squash
Boxes of tissues
Washing powder/liquid
Washing up liquid



Stroud Timewalks



- Led by blue badge tour guide/ musician Steve Hill and actor Kim Baker.
- We'll be weaving and bobbing through the fabric of time, and Stroud's rich and fascinating history.
- Actors, factors, farmers on tractors; poets, shoers, clothiers and brewers, have all left their mark on this nitty-gritty working town. We'll be meeting some of them and hearing their stories and songs.
- From ridge and furrow to stately lawn, Stratford Park has been moulded by many generations of families. We will unravel the landscape and lives of the people who have lived and worked there.
- Sat 23rd June (Town)
- Sat 28th July (Town)
- Sat 25th August (Stratford Park)

Walks start at 11:00 and 14:00 each day

Tickets £5.00 per person available online www.subscriptionrooms.org.uk or call our box office on 01453 760900 for tickets.

Preserving the Plot

Do you have childhood memories of sitting on the kitchen doorstep podding freshly-picked peas and being reminded not to eat too many as they were needed for dinner? Helping to scrape new potatoes whilst savouring the aroma of lamb coming from the oven...then being sent to pick some mint and chop it to make the mint sauce?

Growing peas in this well-drained garden is a hit-and-miss affair if the season lacks sufficient rain. Being very shallow-rooted they soon wither if you don't keep up with enough watering, so we stopped planting them many years ago. Nowadays, I buy them just for the pleasure of podding and eating raw peas again but from the comfort of my armchair. We did once have a memorable crop of the Sugar Snap variety and, when I served a dish of them with a tea-time salad, a visiting very unadventurous, female relative was predictably appalled....she couldn't see her husband ever eating pea-pods he immediately took one and munched it up!

We've just had the driest June since 1925, but when recently visiting premises alongside the River Frome, we noticed that the water level was still very high. Stored rainwater was quickly used up. Plants in containers benefit from a regular high potash feed.

An abundance of blossom has kept the garden really buzzing with life - bees being noticeably attracted to the blue and mauve flowers of campanula, geraniums and lavender. I didn't expect to see quite a few around the Bramley apple tree - they were crawling inside curled up new leaves on the tips of branches presumably taking nourishment from the aphids like ants do...

Butterflies are still really scarce. "Grace" magazine suggests creating a butterfly bath using an upturned terracotta flowerpot, a terracotta saucer on top with water, a couple of islands of small pebbles and/or stones, plus fresh fruit and herbs, ensuring this is placed in a sunny position.

"Take time to enjoy the flowers & bask in summertime's golden hours."

Maureen Arthur

Lemon Cheesecake

Base

- 6oz biscuit crumbs
- 2½ butter or margarine
- Loose bottomed cake tin

Topping

- 8oz cream cheese
- Lemon jelly
- Packet of dream topping
- Jar of luxury lemon curd

Method

- Melt butter, mix in biscuit crumbs and press into greased cake tin. Allow to cool.
- Melt jelly in ¼ pt of water and allow to cool but not set.
- Cream cheese in bowl and gradually add the jelly beating all the time.
- Make up Dream Topping as per instructions
- Stir into the jelly and cheese mixture then add the lemon curd.
- Leave in fridge to thicken slightly before pouring onto base.
- Return to fridge to set.
- Decorate with whipped cream before serving.



Contacts:

Minister: **Rev Eric Massey** **01594 541006**

Email: minister@rodboroughtab.org.uk

Secretary: **Diana & Richard Davis**

01453 762373

E mail: secretary@rodboroughtab.org.uk

Treasurer: **Clive Malcolm** **01453 873373**

Email: treasurer@rodboroughtab.org.uk

Hall Bookings: **John Rohrbeck** **01452 812934**

Email: hallhire@rodboroughtab.org.uk

Website: www.rodboroughtab.org

Church Mobile: **07305 176151**

Sunday services held @ 10.30 am unless notified

Bible Study and Holy Communion

Thurs 10am – 1200 in the Tab Community Hall

R.T.N **Gill Gyde** **01452 812587**

Email: news@rodboroughtab.org.uk

Copy date for next issue :