

PRENTON NEWS

The Magazine of
Prenton United Reformed Church
Prenton Road West, Birkenhead



OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2024

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Church Website: prentonurc.org.uk Any information, pictures or articles for the website should be sent to Philip Roper at phil.e.roper@btinternet.com

Church & Community Activities during school term time

Monday	Little Movers	10.00 a.m.
	1 st Tranmere Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	5.00 p.m.
Tuesday	Guitar Group	6.30 p.m.
Wednesday	Warm, Welcome Space	
	Coffee	10.00 a.m.
	Lunch	12.15 p.m.

Donations towards the cost of the magazine would be appreciated.



HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE

11.00 a.m.

**ON SUNDAY 6th OCTOBER 2024
followed by a CHURCH LUNCH**

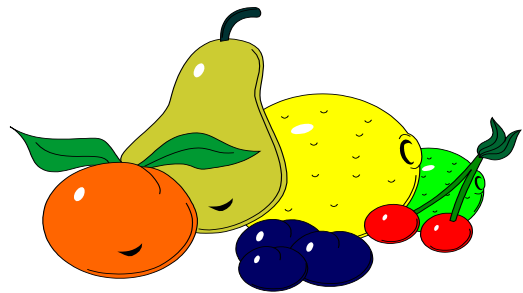
We will be decorating the Church on SATURDAY 5th OCTOBER from 10.00 a.m. and any help would be appreciated.



Please bring any gifts of flowers, fresh fruit and vegetables on the Saturday Morning. Tins of food are also required.

If you wish to come to the Lunch, please ensure that your name is on the list at the back of Church.

We will be distributing the Harvest gifts on MONDAY OCTOBER 7th from 10.00 a.m. so again if you can help it would be appreciated.



FROM THE MANSE

LORD OF THE HARVEST

I was shopping for baking apples the other week and, in the 4 or 5 supermarkets I tried, I couldn't find a single one – fresh mangoes, yes! but no baking apples. It made we realise just how far removed we've become from being reliant on seasonal foods. We can get whatever food type we want at whatever time of year.

Whilst we can be happy with the rich variety of food available to us any time of year, it can make us a bit complacent when it comes to the celebration at harvest time.

This special time of year offers us a moment to pause, reflect, and give thanks, and rather than bemoaning the fact that I couldn't get what I wanted at precisely the time I wanted it, Harvest allows me time to take a step back and be thankful for such an abundance of richness God supplies.

As we gather once again to celebrate the season of harvest, we are reminded too of God's abundant provision and the many blessings He bestows upon us each day. As we do so we learn to have grateful hearts and eyes to see God's abundant blessings.

Harvest-time is also a beautiful reminder of God's faithfulness. Just as the seeds planted in spring have now grown into a bountiful crop, so God nurtures and sustains us throughout our lives. But God calls us to be faithful too as Galatians 6:9 reminds us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." This promise encourages us to keep sowing the

seeds of the Gospel; love, faith, and kindness, as we trust in God's perfect timing to reap the fruits of our labours.

At this time of year, as we reflect on God's abundant blessings let's also take the opportunity to think about how we can be a blessing to others. That could be through acts of service, giving to those in need, or simply offering a kind word or prayer for someone who may be struggling.

My prayer is that this season reminds us that we are called, not only to receive but also to give, just as Christ gave Himself for us. Let our hearts overflow with gratitude and let us be eager to share God's love with the world around us.

God bless,
Jeff

CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH

WEDDING

On Saturday 21st September 2024

Rev Jeff Hughes conducted the Marriage Service
in Church

for

ROBERT JAMES HUGHES

&

HELEN CLARE ABRAM

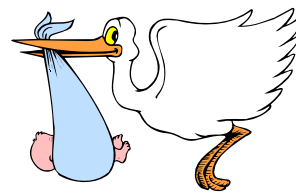


We send our congratulations on this joyful occasion and wish them every happiness for their future lives together.



NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY & FRIENDS

Congratulations to the **Parkin family** on the safe arrival of Fynn Arthur weighing in at 8lb 11oz on 18th September, son of James & Katie & brother for Elis.



Pauline Green is now waiting for a date for her knee replacement operation and **Dougie Kite** is waiting for a date for a new prosthetic lower leg limb. Please remember them both in your prayers.

Many readers of Prenton News will remember **Andrew Halliday**, a former Church member and son of Bryce and Joyce, who has been in contact with Philip via our website. Andrew is being treated for severe epilepsy which was diagnosed following a number of falls at home. He is now on a high dosage of anti-seizure medication and is banned from driving for at least 12 months. Please remember him in your prayers.

We continue to remember, in our prayers, all the members and friends who are unable to join us regularly on a Sunday morning especially those who are in hospital.

REFORM MAGAZINE

There are several copies of the Reform Magazine, published by the URC, at the back of church. The September issue has some very interesting articles on “The Church Life Review”. For those of you who have no idea what this is, it is an investigation into what exactly the situation is in the URC.

John Bradbury’s article on page 36 makes very interesting reading where he sums up Phase 1 of the investigation. We are now in Phase 2 which is summed up in an article on page 45. If you think this has nothing to do with you, it does! Please take a magazine home and have a read.



CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES

On Thursday November 7th, we will be packing the shoe boxes from 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. at Wallasey Village. Please come along and lend a helping hand.

Please have all contributions in by Sunday November 3rd.

Thank you,

Heather

WELCOME PACKS FOR NEW NEIGHBOURS

As a result of a conversation with Heather, the Elders have supported the idea of visiting “new neighbours” in our community and presenting them with a Welcome Pack.

This could contain fruit, chocolate, bottle of wine, flowers, a copy of our Easy to Read Bible and a card explaining who we are and some of the events that go on in our Church, rooms that are available for hire and the time of the Church Service on a Sunday.

If you have a new neighbour in your street, please let us know and the Elders will arrange to go and say “Hello and Welcome”.

CHARITY NIGHT

We are planning another charity night fund raising event. The last one was enjoyed by all who came along, so if you missed out, do consider coming this time. It was an evening of fun and fellowship as well as supporting a good cause.

It will be a **Pie and Pud night** and we thought we would send the money raised to **Children in Need**. The date is **Friday 29th November at 6.00 p.m.** There will, of course, be food, also a raffle and other activities which are still being planned! Please support this.

50 YEARS OF PRENTON URC MEMBERSHIP

In 1974, St. Paul's United Reformed (previously Presbyterian) Church was forced to close and most of its members, including Glyn and I as well as Mum and Dad, became members of Prenton.

Other members of St. Paul's who transferred, and whose names will be familiar to many of you, include Suzette Henning, Jean Brown, Elsie Davies etc.

Although Prenton had previously been Congregational (hence some areas of its patterns of worship were unfamiliar to us) we were made to feel very welcome and soon felt at home in our new Church.

Prenton had been an obvious choice as its Minister at the time, Rev. Donald Flawn, had been looking after St. Paul's for a while before its closure, in the absence of a Minister of its own. Also, some other members of Prenton had conducted services at St. Paul's including Rhoda Smith, so we felt as though we already had friends here.

Glyn and I are the only two out of the original St. Paul's members who joined Prenton in 1974 and are still members today, although another current member, Iris Hatton, joined Prenton a few years later. I was one of the last two people to become a member at St. Paul's in 1973, so I was a member there for just over a year and have now been at Prenton for half a century!

Philip Roper

WINTER SERVICES

We will be worshipping in the hall from October 13th so hopefully we will be warm all winter. We will go back into the church when the weather warms up, in April or May depending on the temperature.

CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD IN SEPTEMBER

As the new school term commenced in September for many children and adults, our conversations this month focused on Teaching and Learning.

We shared some of our experiences of our “first day” and of the teachers who had inspired and, in some cases, “terrified” us! We acknowledged the importance of our education system and prayed for the work that teachers do in our nurseries, schools, colleges and universities.

Our conversation then turned to where / when / who taught us about God and the life of Jesus. This was fascinating as for some of us this occurred in our home with parents reading Bible stories or saying bedtime prayers or saying “grace” before meals.

For others this was being taken to church with family or friends or by attending Sunday School. Sunday School was such a powerful influence on all our faith lives and remembered with a lot of affection, even those of us who went on to be the “Sunday School teacher” ourselves.

Maybe you have a memory of Sunday School you could share with the readers of this magazine.

We prayed for Sunday School teachers still working with our young people and for the young people themselves exploring their faith and trying to make it relevant for today and in the future. We looked at what an amazing teacher Jesus was and his ability to teach anywhere and to anybody.

There is a display on the Notice Board in the hall if you would like to see some more of what we did this month. If you think you would like to come and join our “conversations”, we meet every first Tuesday in the month at Pauline’s home in Prospect Road. If you were not able to make it this month you missed the chance to sample some Polish chocolate!!

BUEN CAMINO WITH JULIE & TIM JONES

'Buen Camino' was the greeting we heard throughout our trip and indeed it was a good walk!

We both enjoy a walking holiday and during the last year we've followed several films and TV programmes about people walking the Camino. We had thought it might be a nice thing to do in retirement when we'd have more time. Then we thought Carpe diem – let's seize the day! Couldn't we walk the last stage of the Camino from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela fitting it into our summer holidays? Immediately, we then thought if we're going to do the walk then why not do it for a good cause? Supporting Chapel House to create a Sensory Garden seemed a perfect fit. It would be something to support Dad, Don Howard, and everyone else at Chapel House and Plessington Court both now and into the future.



We began walking at these steps in Sarria and followed the old pilgrimage route for 114 km. Some days we walked as much as 24km and on others as little as 10km.



We stayed in Casa Rurales and Refugios often dating back to the 15th to 17th centuries. Many of these were family homes and we were made to feel extremely welcome and were provided with wonderful evening meals and delicious breakfasts before leaving with a cheery 'Buen Camino'.



The route was straight forward to follow. Every few hundred metres there was a waymarker with the shell symbol showing us the way and the distance to go. To be honest there were always other pilgrims ahead or behind us so there was no need for a

map. At one of the waymarkers where there was a lovely 360° view we placed a stone to remember all the residents' families and staff at Chapel House and Plessington Court. Due to all the rain they'd had, the route was very green – there were lots of ferns, mosses, dry stone walls and fields of sweetcorn and of course vines for which Galicia is renowned for.

Each day we were required to collect two stamps (Sellos) on our Pilgrim Passport to show we'd completed the journey which we collected at our overnight accommodation and at various churches, town halls, cafes, bars and restaurants along the way.



At one of our stopping places we came across a Christian group from USA who were offering refreshments, a chat and of course a sello! There were a mix of pilgrims on the route; families, groups of teenagers, couples like ourselves and solo travellers. We met people from France, Spain, Italy, Australia,

China, Japan, Peru and Ireland and the sense of wellbeing and good spirit that was shown by everyone we met was contagious.

As we got closer to the end-point the excitement grew. We left behind the rolling hills and began walking through the outskirts of Santiago de Compostela and the waymarkers were replaced by brass shells set into the pavement. The streets became narrower and crowded as we and all the other pilgrims edged closer to the square outside cathedral. Once there the atmosphere was euphoric.

Happiness oozed from every corner of the square. Everyone was celebrating the successful conclusion of their own particular, unique Camino.



Sitting on the cobbled square we reflected on what it meant to complete our own journey.

A few moments later there was a Pilgrim's Mass at the cathedral which was a wonderful experience giving us a time of contemplation. We reflected on

the kindness and generosity shown to us by so many of our family, friends, colleagues and indeed complete strangers. Everyone has supported us on this journey by thinking of us and donating to our cause. The total raised is an incredible £2,339 and we are pleased to report that Chapel House have already started work on the garden.

A big thankyou to you all for your good wishes and donations. Finally, we wish you all 'Buen Camino' for whatever journey you are on or make in the future.

*Chapel House Care
Chapel House Lane,
Puddington CH64 5SW*

Dear All,

Re: Kind donations towards the sensory Garden at the home of one of your community.

Both Cathrina, our Director and owner of the homes, and I are amazed at how much Julie & Tim raised for the sensory garden, as I am sure many of you are. £2,339 will make a big difference for both the member of your community living with us, their dad, as well as others in our care. Indeed almost £1,000 of it has already been assigned to a water feature.

A significant percentage of the sponsorship was gifted from you at the Church. I am humbled and grateful for your support, especially during financially challenging times for all of us.

Nature is so healing for all of us, the presence and sound of water bringing comfort to many. It touches so many of our senses, whether it is water trickling over a hand or the sound it makes as it meanders on its course. We know that water can help sustain life, and for many of us it can in fact sustain memories. How many of us can sit by water, a babbling brook or waves on the shore, and be taken back to previous times in our lives, hopefully happy ones. The water feature, some of the money has paid for, is a central feature of the garden.

Another significant amount will go towards the planting to be put in place. Julie is helping with the choice of plants, whether they be for colour, touch, sound or smell.

John Wesley wished for members of your Church, or as I see it “Community”, to be directed to live a good life in the eyes of God, living out your values, and perfecting love in your lifetime.

I see your act of kindness as a perfect example of reaching out and sharing your love and giving without expecting something in return. On behalf of our Community here, thank you. Your generosity will bring so much joy to people living here and their loved ones who visit.

I know that some members of your community visit the member of your community who lives here, Julie's dad. When the sensory garden is complete, I am sure they will visit with him and bring back some stories to you.

In all of this, we do not forget the selfless act of Julie & Tim. I am certain there were moments of both joy and pain. I believe the end goal kept them focussed during those moments when they could just have given up. We will never forget their kind act, both for their dad and others in our community here. Thank you everyone.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Ley

Home Manager

FABRIC

As you know, everything is ongoing, but we are getting there. The new cooker should be fitted by the time you read this and that will also improve the electrics in the kitchen. Many of you will not be aware that we have had electric wires running along behind the sink. They will now run much higher up, so will be much safer.

The flashing light in the hall is due to be sorted – no date yet.

We will also have new sockets in the hall for the TV screen and for the tea urn. We also hope to update the Klinghorn lights.

Saturday 26th October is the date for our garden clear up so if you can, and the weather permits, please come and help. Bacon butties for lunch!

**AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR, OF THE ELEVENTH DAY, OF THE
ELEVENTH MONTH, 1918, THE GUNS FELL SILENT.
THE FIRST WORLD WAR WAS OVER.**

Arthur Ingham and John Moody were 18-year-old school friends who had grown up together. When war broke out, the two lads joined up at Manchester Town Hall. Like many young men they joined local regiments that drew in people who all lived in one area or came from one workplace.



Sent to the front in France, they were both involved in the Battle of the Somme. And it was here that the little Bible that Arthur kept in his top pocket saved his life.

He was in the 1st Manchester Regiment at the Somme when an exploding German shell sent a piece of shrapnel flying towards him. It hit his chest and would have meant a certain death had he not had his Bible in the breast pocket of his uniform. It took the full force of the shrapnel, which left an inch - wide hole.

John Moody's son, Philip, remembers Arthur well. 'He was such a fantastic bloke', he says. 'And he was really proud of this Bible. He used to say to me, "this saved my life. If it had not been in my pocket, I would have died."'

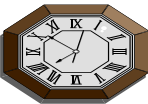


The shrapnel also made a mess of Arthur's uniform, resulting in a 'telling off' from an officer for 'not looking after his uniform properly,' says Philip.

The incident changed Arthur's life. 'He was a religious man after that,' Philip recalls. 'He wasn't beforehand, but after that he became a regular churchgoer, and who can blame him? He knew the Bible had saved his life. The shrapnel had hit but there wasn't a scratch on him.'

From "Hear My Cry"

**At the Going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them**

DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2024

OCTOBER			
Tuesday	1st	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God
Wednesday	2nd	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Saturday	5th	10.00 a.m.	Decorate the Church for Harvest
Sunday	6th	11.00 a.m. 1.00 p.m.	Harvest Festival with Communion Rev Jeff Hughes Church Harvest Lunch
Monday	7th	10.00 a.m.	Distribute Harvest Gifts
Wednesday	9th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
ALL SERVICES ARE IN THE CHURCH HALL UNTIL 2025			
Sunday	13th	11.00 a.m.	Mrs Margaret Meade
Wednesday	16th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Sunday	20th	11.00 a.m.	Mr Fred Foulkes & Mrs Sue Kite
Wednesday	23rd	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Saturday	26th	9.30 a.m. 	Church Garden Clear Up Clocks go back an hour tonight
Sunday	27th	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
Wednesday	30th	10.00 a.m. 12.15 p.m.	Warm Welcome Space Coffee Morning Lunch
Thursday	31st		Halloween 
			

DIARY FOR NOVEMBER 2024

NOVEMBER			
Sunday	3rd	11.00 a.m.	Communion. Rev Jeff Hughes
Tuesday	5th	9.30 a.m.	Elders' Meeting at the Manse
	Bonfire Night	1.30 p.m.	Conversations with God
Wednesday	6th	10.00 a.m.	Warm Welcome Space
		10.30 a.m.	Coffee Morning
		12.15 p.m.	Worship Group Meeting Lunch
Thursday	7th	3.00 pm.	Packing Shoeboxes at Wallasey Village
Remembrance Sunday			
Sunday	10th	10.45 a.m.	Prenton War Memorial
		10.45 a.m.	At Church. Dr Philip Roper
Wednesday	13th	10.00 a.m.	Warm Welcome Space
		12.15 p.m.	Coffee Morning Lunch
Sunday	17th	11.00 a.m.	Rev Jeff Hughes
		4.00 p.m.	Church Meeting
			Remembering Service
			Items for the December 2024 & January 2025 Magazine
Wednesday	20th	10.00 a.m.	Warm Welcome Space
		12.15 p.m.	Coffee Morning Lunch
Sunday	24th	11.00 a.m.	Mr Ron Taylor
Wednesday	27th	10.00 a.m.	Warm Welcome Space
		12.15 p.m.	Coffee Morning Lunch
Friday	29th	1.00 p.m.	Masonic Ladies
		6.00 p.m.	Pie & Pudding Charity Evening in aid of Children in Need

REMEMBERING SERVICE

As well as Remembrance Sunday on November 10th, when we honour those who lost their lives in wars, we also have our personal Remembering Service. This will be held on Sunday 17th November at 4.00 p.m. when we can remember, in a quiet and reflective service, those loved ones who have passed away and we can recognise before God the loss and pain that we still feel.

We will read out the names of loved ones who have passed away and there will be cards available to fill in or you can speak to Jeff personally and give him any names you wish to be included.

REMEMBER!

I find, as the years go on, that my memory isn't as good as it used to be. Heather keeps telling me about things we did in our teens of which I have no recollection (I think she might be making some of it up). But that's what happens, the further away we get from an event the details of what we remember fade or even fail completely.

So, as we approach the season of remembrance, we stop to remind ourselves of the past, not through rose tinted glasses or with distorted memories but with a clarity that comes from a desire to end all conflict. During this season our hearts and minds turn to those who have suffered and died as a result of war and hostility. As a nation we will gather in churches, at war memorials, and take quiet moments of reflection in order to honour the lives of loved ones and strangers who have been crippled and lost in the cause of freedom. But as Christians, remembrance carries even deeper meaning - it is not only a reflection of the past but also an act of worship and faithfulness to God's eternal promises.

Throughout Scripture, we are called to remember. God's people are frequently reminded to think about His mighty acts, His

covenant love, and His faithfulness across generations. In the Old Testament, the festivals such as Passover were given as lasting memorials so that God's people would never forget how God delivered them from slavery. Moses urges the people, "...be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."

Why is remembering so important? Because in our remembering, we recognise God's hand at work in our lives and in the world, and we rightly celebrate God's provision in the past, even as we consider the terrible cost of freedom. Such remembrance strengthens our faith for the present and gives us hope for the future.

During the Last Supper as Jesus broke bread and poured the wine he urged His disciples to remember. It was only after His death that they understood that it was His body broken and His blood shed that would buy them freedom. Each time we take Communion, we remember not just an event in history but the very heart of our faith - Jesus' sacrifice for our salvation. In this act of remembrance, we are drawn closer to Christ and reminded of His promise to be with us always, even to the end of the age.

As we observe Remembrance Day or other moments of reflection, it is fitting to honour the sacrifices made by those who have fought for peace and justice. We remember soldiers who laid down their lives, the martyrs of our faith, and the saints who have gone before us. Their lives are reminders of courage, service, and unwavering faith in God.

But Christian remembrance extends beyond the past. It invites us to consider how we live today. How do we honour those memories in our actions? How do we pass on the stories of faith, hope, and love to the next generation? How do we embody the love and grace that Christ modelled for us?

In these moments of remembrance, let us also look forward. As Christians, our ultimate hope is not rooted solely in the past but in the promise of a future redemption. The apostle Paul writes, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26). Our acts of remembrance point us to the day when Christ will return and make all things new.

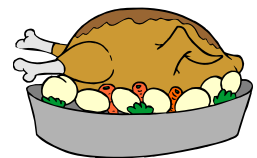
As we remember, let us do so with hearts full of gratitude and hope. May our reflections on the past strengthen our faith for today and fill us with anticipation for the eternal future we have in Christ.

God bless,
Jeff

LOOKING AHEAD

At the beginning of November, I will be putting out the menu for our Christmas Lunch on Friday December 20th at The Masonic Temple in Clifton Road, Birkenhead.

I would ask you to return the forms, indicating what your choice of menu is, together with the cost of the Meal - £25.00. It is a three - course meal with coffee or tea, and I would ask that the form is returned to me by Sunday December 1st so that I can pass that information on to the Chef.



As it is a private venue, it is basically a set menu but if you have any dietary requirements please indicate that on the form so that it can be catered for. There will be a vegetarian option as well. I do hope this “new” Christmas celebration is well supported.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Margaret Meade

OUR MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING on Wednesday 25th September raised £ 275.00 for this worthy cause.

Thank you to everyone who contributed, in whatever way, to this excellent result.

THE LATEST FROM THE THREE INTREPID TRAVELLERS

On Saturday 21st September we had to be outside the Old Pumping Station down at Woodside at the ungodly hour of ten minutes past five in the morning to get on our coach for our visit to London.

Fortunately, my very kind neighbours, Jane and Nigel, offered themselves as our taxi. The remarkable thing about that was that they were guests at a wedding on the Friday and did not get home themselves until one o'clock on the Saturday morning!

It was a lovely bright red "Alpine" 54 seater coach which had started its journey in Liverpool.

We picked up passengers in Bebington and Ellesmere Port and then got on the M53 AND M56 motorways and proceeded to our next stop at the Knutsford Service Station on the M6 at ten minutes to seven where we picked up more passengers who had come down on a "feeder" coaches from Blackburn, Bury and Widnes and we also had a change of driver. But it was only a "comfort" stop for us.

We went down the M6, across the M6 Toll Road, on to the M42 and then on to the M40, stopping for 45 minutes at the Warwick Services. This was a "compulsory" break for the driver so we were able to have coffee, toasted sandwiches and Danish pastries. Our next stop was in the middle of Banbury by the Banbury Cross to pick up more passengers before proceeding down to the Oxford Service Station for our last "pick up" and "comfort" stop at 10.45 a.m.

London here we come! We arrived on schedule, despite the stop start traffic, at our drop off point which was Kingsway by the Aldwych, in the middle of theatre land, at 12.30 p.m. 7 hours after we left Birkenhead!!

The majority of the passengers were going to the matinee performances of a show, but we had a “free” afternoon and had decided that once we got off the coach, we would grab a taxi and go shopping in Harrods. Pauline had never been inside Harrods; Elaine had been many years ago when her children were small; Margaret, however, had been many times.

Obviously, with the limited stops, we needed to eat and a visit to the Ladies’ Washroom was essential. Having obtained a copy of the shop’s Store Guide, we decided to start at the top and work our way down. The Harrods Tea Rooms on the fourth floor was our starting point.

We were shown to a table outside on the balcony where there was waiter service and we had ‘light’ refreshments because we knew that we would have to have something more substantial later on because we were not going to leave the city for our overnight hotel until 7.30 p.m. and it was over an hour’s drive away.



However, Harrods was open until 9 p.m. so we could eat there. The service in the Tea Rooms was excellent, no tea bags here and the waiter poured our tea

using a tea strainer but we felt that the teapot, sugar bowl and milk jug were in need of a good polish. As we were outside, ashtrays were available for those who requested them!!



Also on the fourth floor was the Toy department – a must! As you can see their main theme was Wild Animals. Last time Margaret was there, the main exhibit was a replica of Michael Schumacher’s Ferrari made from Lego!

The third floor was Bed & Bath and luxury Linens. Harrods towels were on the shopping list and Margaret grabbed a bargain. 50% reduction in certain colours.

The young lady said “Oh, leave those on display madam, I will get yours from the store room”. Back she came with them all individually wrapped, untouched by grubby human hands! Now we had a large green Harrods bag!

The second and first floors were all Ladieswear and Menswear, so we by-passed these and went down on the escalators to the Lower Ground floor which was all The Harrods Shop and Christmas Shop. Absolute euphoria!! The Christmas trees were decorated and this was where the Harrods logo items were, including the 2024 Teddy Bear. He is white and called Noah but he did not have an ark!!



Time was going on and so we went up to the Ground floor and into the Food Halls and Chocolate Hall. Pauline headed for the fresh meat counters and spotted Wagyu Beef only £400.00 per kilo. She thought it was a bit too expensive for the Wednesday lunch at Church! Next was the Chocolate Hall where we were given a free sample of some sugarless chocolate – it was delicious.

By now it was time for a proper meal which we had in The Grill. There was a good selection and it was excellent.

We reluctantly left at 6.30 p.m. and took a taxi back to our drop off point for 7.30 p.m. The traffic was very heavy but we had time to go for into a Costa café for a drink and use their facilities before getting on the coach for our journey to the Atrium Hotel at Heathrow.

That was a nightmare journey, dark, raining and the traffic was horrendous. It took over an hour and when we arrived the aircraft were taking off in rapid succession! Thankfully the hotel was sound-proofed and once inside you could not hear the aircraft. We did not hang around, we were all very tired and so ended our first day.

On Sunday Morning, we went for breakfast at 7.30 a.m. as we were leaving at 9.00 a.m. to go back into London for our visit to Buckingham Palace and the theatre people had “free” time. The coach dropped us off in Park Lane opposite The Dorchester Hotel at 10.10 a.m.



We then had to make our way across Hyde Park Corner and Piccadilly, using the underpasses, to get to Green Park to walk down to The Mall. Unfortunately, there were road closures because there was a 10k race starting in Green Park and the number of people and diverted road traffic made it a nightmare. It took us 30 minutes walking at a fairly steady pace to Constitution Hill and down to the Palace.

There were a lot of people pressed up against the Palace railings, so we were dodging in and out of the sightseers who I think were probably waiting for the Changing of the Guard. At that time,



it was the Gurkhas who were on duty and their uniform is not brightly coloured, they blended in rather than standing out like the Grenadiers' red jackets.



We went around the corner to the left-hand side of the Palace to the entrance in Palace Road where we collected our tickets and at 11.00 a.m.

were ushered into a waiting area with some seating. At 11.15 a.m. our group were called to go through an airport type of security, then, collect a set of headphones to go with the guide commentary of each area that we would see.

You go in through the Grand Entrance which is located on the inner courtyard and you go up the left-hand side of the Grand Staircase and into the Green Drawing Room and through to the Throne Room which is where the Royal Wedding photographs are taken. Next is the long Picture Gallery leading to the Ballroom.

The Ballroom is a magnificent room where State Banquets, seating up to 170 people, and Investitures are held. High up on the left is the Musicians Gallery which is where the organ is situated and where the orchestra plays during a meal and the State Trumpeters stand when members of the Royal family are heralded in.

On the opposite wall, on the far right hand side, is the latest portrait of King Charles, which appears to be all red. I had not been over impressed when I saw it on the television news but actually seeing it close up, it is fantastic. We all felt that this was one of the highlights of the tour.

I spoke to one of the members of staff who was standing near the portrait and he told me that this was there for the public to see it and in future it is expected to reside in the King's Gallery which is alongside the Palace and open to the public all year round.

From the Ballroom we went through the West Gallery and into the State Dining Room. This was followed by the Blue Drawing Room, the Music Room and finally on the first floor the White Drawing Room.

We are nearing the end of our tour by going down the Grand Staircase on the right-hand side into the Marble Hall and through into the Bow Room.

This room leads to the steps that you see on the television when the Royal family come out for the Garden Parties. Guests to the Garden Parties come in through the Grand Entrance and through the Bow Room and out into the gardens.

I have not gone into details of the rooms because some of you might take a tour like we did and I don't want to spoil the surprises within the Palace. However, I must tell you about something I noticed. In one of the rooms there were table lamps on beautiful "side tables" and they had put the electric plug sockets on the wall, about waist height, and the socket, plug and flex were all painted in the colour of the wall covering so that they blended in and were more or less invisible! I must tell my decorator to do the same in my house!! (His response might be unrepeatabe!)

All the rooms are very elegant with priceless ornaments, clocks, pictures and furniture and one should look upwards at, what I consider to be the crowning glory, glistening chandeliers and very ornate ceilings.

You go from room to room through large doorways and the only time you have to walk any distance to the next room is when you go down the galleries.

Once outside there is a self-service refreshment area to the right which has a canopy over the seating area, with absolutely gorgeous large scones with jam and cream.

We also indulged in a large slice of chocolate cake with butter icing between the two layers of sponge, which we all shared! Please note the cups, plates and cutlery were disposable so you could not pocket a souvenir!!



Now the long walk began to get us through the garden and back on to Palace Road. Our first stop was the toilets, absolutely immaculate, unlike some at Harrods, followed by the shop – credit cards at the ready – and they were needed!! Christmas presents and thank you gifts were bought as well as souvenirs.



The Corgis



Carrying on, we passed the Ice Cream Parlour by the Palace lake and out on to Palace Road, where the road closures had been lifted so we were able to get a taxi back to Park Lane. There is no way we could have walked it and got back by 3 o'clock.

We were not the last ones back to the coach so we were a few minutes late leaving for home. The London traffic was still chaotic and we crawled along and when we hit the motorway caught up with the torrential rain and it stayed with us all the way home.

All the “stops” were the same, but the traffic got lighter as it got darker. Elaine sent a text to Jane as we left Ellesmere Port and she replied to say that Nigel would be at Woodside and he was, when we pulled in at 9.45 p.m.

The Intrepid Travellers were back home – very tired – but very happy that we had had a most enjoyable weekend.

P.S. One thank you gift I bought at Buckingham Palace was a jar of Lemon Marmalade with gin and juniper berries – not quite what you would expect at breakfast time!!



These pictures of King Charles and Queen Camilla were displayed on the walls inside the shop



ROTAS FOR OCTOBER 2024

Duty Elder

October 6th Jean Bayley
 13th Shelby Ambrose
 20th Marian Davies
 27th Fred Foulkes

Communion Elders

October 6th Pauline Green & Elaine Parkin

Door Duty

October 6th Elaine Parkin, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper
 13th Jean & Les Bayley, Barbara Jones
 20th Pauline Green, Sue Kite, Barry Lawrence
 27th Elaine Parkin, Glyn Roper, Philip Roper

Readers

October 6th Pam Lawrence & Joyce Holland
 13th Barry Lawrence & Glyn Roper
 20th Shelby Ambrose & Philip Roper
 27th Jean Bayley & Marian Davies

Prayers of Intercession

October 6th Barry Lawrence
 13th Pauline Green
 20th Jean Bayley
 27th Sue Kite

Sound System

Heather Hughes

Church Flowers

October 6th **Harvest Festival**
 13th Elaine Parkin
 20th Pam Lawrence
 27th Peter Carroll

ROTAS FOR NOVEMBER 2024

Duty Elder

November 3rd Pauline Green
 10th Sue Kite
 17th Elaine Parkin
 24th Shelby Ambrose

Communion Elders

November 3rd Shelby Ambrose & Sue Kite

Door Duty

November 3rd Jean & Les Bayley, Heather Hughes
 10th Pauline Green, Barbara Jones, Elaine Parkin
 17th Heather Hughes, Sue Kite, Barry Lawrence
 24th Jean & Les Bayley, Barbara Jones

Readers

November 3rd Joyce Holland & Fred Foulkes
 10th Pam Lawrence & Glyn Roper
 17th Philip Roper & Jean Bayley
 24th Fred Foulkes & Marian Davies

Prayers of Intercession

November 3rd Philip Roper
 10th Barry Lawrence
 17th Claire Thomas
 24th Sue Kite

Church Flowers

November 3rd Barbara Jones
 10th **Remembrance Sunday.** Margaret Meade
 17th Glyn & Philip Roper
 24th Jean Bayley