

# Newsletter — September 2011

## Remembering Doris

*Thankful for her tremendous lifelong contribution*



It was with sadness that we learned that our dear friend Doris Clark passed away on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August. Our thoughts are very much with George and all the family at this time.

Doris and George joined the church during the ministry of Reverend Martin Hall back in the 1950s. During the intervening years they have been involved in so many facets of church life that it is difficult to express in a few words the tremendous contribution that both have made to our community. They were a good team, of course, but each had their individual strengths and talents.

Doris served for many years on the church management committee and for fifteen of those years, (1978 to 1993) was the church secretary, as well as being a building trustee since 1981.

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### Newsletter Articles

*Please can all contributions for the next newsletter be emailed or sent by September 14th contact Steve at [stephenwdick@gmail.com](mailto:stephenwdick@gmail.com) tel no: 020 84072866*

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Doris was a marvellous cook and some of us will particularly recall her culinary skills being utilised to the full in the preparation of anniversary and harvest meals and other social occasions over the years, as well as in the production of cakes for church sales and coffee mornings.

There are such a lot of memories and yet foremost in my mind at this time is the commitment which she gave to the Horsham Women's League – over 50 years as treasurer – keeping the members on their toes with regard to raising funds for

national and local charities, as well as contributing towards practical items for the church itself.

She would urge members to save their “brown money” - after all, every penny counts when you are trying to reach your target! Who remembers the large bottle of copper coins on their hearth at home, the contents of which George kindly carried to the bank when it was full?

It was largely through Doris's encouragement (and I hope she would not mind me also saying “through her strength of will”) that our few Women's League members,

supported by family and church friends, were able to raise very nearly £11,000 for many different causes over the last fourteen years.

This is not to say that our meetings only revolved around fund raising. There was a feeling of fellowship, as well as much fun and laughter when we met and happy summer “at homes” in the shade of the apple tree in the garden at Longfield Road, where there was always a warm welcome.

Thank you Doris.

*Eileen Wield* – on behalf of the Women's League members.



### Church Officials

Minister	Rev Steve Dick, 020 8407 2866, stephenwdick@gmail.com
Treasurer	Andrew Wickens, 01403 891432, andrew@wickens50.fsnet.co.uk
Minutes Secretary	Patrick Wynne-Jones, 01403 267271, patrickwynnejones@googlemail.com
Deacons	Dorothy Ericson, Diana Ramsden, Pam Spencer
Chairman	Andrew Ramsden, 01798 812044, aramsden49@aol.com
Committee	Carol Chambers, Stuart Coupe, Officers & Deacons
<b>Women's League</b>	Secretary: Eileen Wield, 01403 258179
Hall Bookings	Cathy Stanton 01403 267735 cathycrick@hotmail.co.uk
Flower Rota Organiser	Diana Ramsden, 01403 790447

# 101 Reasons Not to Go to Church

There was a fashion some years ago, which I suspect was invented by the publishing industry, of a series of books whose titles began with 101 Things To.... The first wave were filled with the blackest of humour. I seem to recall the first one was authored by Simon Bond and was titled *101 Things to Do With A Dead Cat*. The volume contained prose and illustrations suggesting a variety of uses for such an artefacts such as an ashtray, as a fruit bowl, as a tv stand, as a shower cord, as a broom, as a car aerial, as a book end etc.

Suddenly there was a whole series of books with creative uses for all sorts of dead things up to and including my favourite, *101 Things to Do With A Dead Computer*. This one proved to be quite useful as I do have problems with them from time to time.

Growing out this was a revival of art of list making with the magic number of 101 of this and that. Well I tend to come to things rather late, so I thought it was finally time that I have a go at creating such a list to create my own best-selling book.

So here is a go at **101 Reasons Not to Go to Church**.

Some of you -- well a number of you actually -- may be wondering why I have chosen to make my list of reasons not to go to church. Well, have a listen, and you can always lock me up in the loony bin afterwards if necessary.

A reason not to go to church is because people there care about you (1). Another reason to stay away is because your ideas are challenged there (2).

Church is a place to avoid because at various times you may be move to smile (3), frown (4), laugh (5), become angry (6), sing (7), be thankful (8), seek forgiveness (9), forgive others (10), cry or weep (11), or be happy (12).

Even worse than that, church is a place where you might be expected to drink a cup of coffee (13), eat a biscuit (14), share your news with others (15), hear other people's news (16), renew your acquaintances with friends (17), and make new friends (18).

Regrettably also church is a place where you are asked to endure listening to music (19), prose (20), poetry (21), sermons representing opinions (22), and old and new ideas (23).

It is a place where some come into contact with God (24), others commune with the spirit of humanity (25), others get in touch with themselves (26), and some people do all three at once (27).

Another set of disadvantages is that you are expected to be concerned -- concerned about nature and the environment (28), concerned about freedom (religious and otherwise (29), about justice and making life fairer (30), and concerned about this local community (31), this country (32), and about peo-

ple all over the world, both near and far (33).

Indeed you are expected to tolerate others views and beliefs (34), even to be respectful of them (35), and to listen to them, really listen (36), with as open a mind as possible (37).

In some ways a church is like a library and if you go there you might suffer being exposed to readings from the Bible (38), and from other elements of our religious and intellectual heritage (39). You will have to listen to stories (40) and to accounts of personal experiences (41).

You may be disturbed (42), you may be enheartened (43), you may have your own religious experience (44), you might even be changed or transformed (45).

You have to put up with ministers like Steve Dick, with all his strengths and weaknesses -- that's reason number 46 -- and with hearing him and others spout ideas, views, beliefs that you may or may not agree with (47).

You might find meaning in something you hear (48) or you might find that something you thought had meaning does not (49). You might find meaning in something unexpected (50) or you might even make meaning (51).

It gives you a regular focus in your life (52), a community to which you can belong and feel a part (53), and a spiritual home (54).



Rev Steve Dick

Steve shared these thoughts in the service at Horsham Unitarian Church on Sunday August 21st.

So many folks present asked for a copy that he has decided to risk sharing this list with others, conscious that the printing of sermons may constitute yet another reason not to go to church.



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It is a place where you are valued for being you (55), and where others are valued irrespective of their sex, or colour, or sexual orientation, or age, or origin (56).

This church might involve you in a discussion in the service (57) or the minister or someone else might ask you what you think or feel about something in the service and expect an honest answer (58).

It is a place where you are expected to believe what you live (59) and to live what you believe (60).

It is a place where you are expected to be honest in what you think (61), in what you say (62), and in what you do (63). You are even expected to be honest to yourself (64).

That's up to reason 64. I hope you get the idea, but so as not to bore you, I want to jump to my 100th reason.

And my 100th and 101st reason as to why people should stay away from church is because it can help to recharge your spiritual batteries and because it can help you get through the week.

Those are the terrible things that a church such as ours is up to at its best or you might say its worst.

With all these reasons to stay away from church, to be quite honest, I sometimes really wonder why every seat in here is not filled.

The big thing once upon a time, thanks to the last Conservative Prime Minister Mr. Major, was the idea of a citizen's charter.

Everywhere you turned around in that era someone was trying to give you a citizen's charter to cover this service or institution. They fell out with the gas and electric bills.

I even had someone chase me into a tube train back then to give me one covering the London Underground.

Well with all these reasons why people should stay away from church, and with expected increase in attendance once people learn these reasons, perhaps we should have a citizen's charter of sorts for this church.

If I was drafting one, it would go something like this, paraphrased from some words found at the Unitarian church in Evanston, Illinois:

I have a right to be happy and to be treated with kindness in this church; this means that no one will laugh at me, ignore me, or hurt my feelings.

I have a right to be myself in this church; this means that no one will treat me unfairly because I am fat or thin, fast or slow, young or old, man or woman.

I have a right to be safe in this church; this means that no one will hit me, kick me, push me, or pinch me.

I have a right to hear and be heard in this church; this means that no one will yell, scream or shout, and my opinions and desires will be considered in any plans we make.

I have a right to learn about myself in this church: this means that I will be free to express my feelings and opinions without being interrupted or punished.

Friends in all the free time you have by not going to church, take a moment to think about what you would have in a citizen's charter for this church .... and what you might have on a list of 101 reasons not to go to this church ..... and share those thoughts with others.

You never know, someone might find some of those reasons not to go to church, enough to encourage them to come visit with us.

*"Creator of life and truth and beauty, We are grateful that this beautiful Church is here, that we may have the chance to seek what is most truly important.*

*We are especially grateful to know those people whose lives have been dedicated to helping us learn.*

*May we grow in love, in wisdom, in helpfulness and in understanding each time we enter this Church."*

Amen.



## August Management Committee Notes

Music featured prominently this month, firstly with acceptance of distinguished organist Gerald Taylor's offer to support church funds by giving lunchtime recitals in the church on the Fridays of 30<sup>th</sup> September and 28<sup>th</sup> October and, secondly, with the decision to make 25<sup>th</sup> November the date of the first practice evening for the congregation on a selection of hymns from the blue book.

In planning future worship it was agreed that Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October should be a 'Celebration of Membership' congregational service at which it is hoped there will be the widest possible attendance to welcome in the three new applicants for church membership.

In discussing his absence on ICUU matters later this year Steve reported that he had arranged for the Croydon minister, the Rev. Art Lester, to be

available to provide standby cover for any emergency pastoral matters which might arise. He also reminded the committee of the 'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life' series of reading groups he will be starting on 7<sup>th</sup> September and which he aims to mirror in his future preaching plan.

On garden matters it was agreed to research possible re-positioning of the mid-lawn memorial to a less prominent location, taking the opportunity to refurbish it and restore its obelisk. Also commented on was the miraculous disappearance of the roofing contractors' rubbish from the garden. It emerged that this was due to the committee chairman, Andrew Ramsden, 'doing good by stealth'. There was no call on the services of Stuart and Andrew Wickens who had kindly volunteered to take on the task but, in Hamlet's phrase, "the readiness is all".

### FUNERAL SERVICE FOR DORIS CLARK

*All are welcome at a service of thanksgiving  
for the life of Doris Clark  
to be held at the Horsham Unitarian Church  
on Friday September 9 at 11 am*

Refreshments will follow in the Church Hall while the family leaves for a committal ceremony before returning to the church.

*Flowers from family only. Donations in memory of Doris can be sent to Freeman Brothers Funeral Directors, 9 North Parade, Horsham, RH12 2BP to be shared between UNICEF and RNLI.*



### HORSHAM UNITARIAN CHURCH

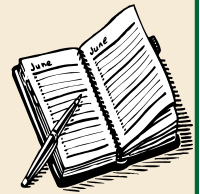
Minister The Rev Steve Dick  
Worthing Road, Horsham  
West Sussex, RH12 1SL  
01403 256788  
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### WELCOME

*Our church welcomes all who seek the meaning of life. We believe that religion is wider than any one sect and deeper than any one set of opinions. Whilst having deep respect for Christian tradition, we seek exploration of all possible truths from all possible sources. Our open community encourages freedom of individual thought and belief. We look to offer a spiritual home within the context of a loving community. A place to share your joys, find comfort in times of need, and enjoy the warmth of friendship. Through our open and inclusive attitude, we hope to promote understanding, reason and tolerance within the wider community.*

*Our beautiful church dates back to 1721 and apart from the Parish Church, is the oldest place of Christian worship in Horsham. At one time our church hall housed the first lending library in town which continued until 1939. In the 1890s the Horsham Museum Society was founded by members of the church and exhibits were kept in the hall until 1930 when they were moved to Park House. Our peaceful garden was formed out of the extensive grave-yard which at one time surrounded the church. In 1976 it was dedicated as a Garden of Remembrance, and is open to all.*

## Minister's Diary September



Steve will reflect on "Learning About Compassion" on 4 September. The Twelve Steps To A compassionate Life discussion group will start on 7 September. He will work in the vestry on 7, 14 and 28 September from 11 am to 5 pm. Steve will also attend congregational events. He will be in New York on behalf of ICUU from 17 to 22 September. In case of emergencies during that period, please contact Chairman Andrew Ramsden for assistance.

### VACANCY

*Are you free on the first Friday of the month? If so you may be interested in joining the Soup Lunch Team.*

No experience is necessary, just a willingness to participate in the overall activities involved with Outreach and Fundraising for our chosen charities.

Experience: none required

Hours of work: 11.15am ---- 2.30pm  
(part timers welcome)

Salary: A big thank you at each session

Holidays: May to September

*We really need help so if you could spare an hour for setting and clearing up it would be very much appreciated.*

If you are interested please contact Eileen Wield or Dorothy Ericson.

# September



Sun	Preacher	Flowers	Coffee
4 10.30 am	Rev Steve Dick <i>Children's chapel</i>	Roanne Moore-Loizides	Stuart Coupe
11 10.30 am	Rev John Harley	Ted Stevens	Pam Spencer
18 10.30 am	Tim Firth	Stella Eve	Dorothy Ericson
25 10.30 am	Rev Daniel Costley	Dorothy Ericson	Christine Vaughan

## Schedule of Events

### SEPTEMBER

- Wednesday 7th September—3 pm Women's League invites everyone to come along and take part in a light-hearted Carpet Bowls and Target Bocchia Tournament. There are prizes for the winners and the tea will be accompanied by toasted tea-cakes!
- Wednesday 7th September—TWELVE STEPS TO A COMPASSIONATE LIFE Reading Groups from 1 to 2.30 pm (bring lunch) or from 7 to 8.30 pm. Details in August Newsletter or contact Minister.
- Friday 9th September —11 am FUNERAL OF DORIS CLARK followed by refreshments in Church Hall. All welcome.
- Wednesday 21st September — 7.30 pm Church Committee Meeting in Church Hall
- Friday 30th September—1 pm ORGAN RECITAL by Gerald Taylor for benefit of Church Repair Fund

# October



Sun	Preacher	Flowers	Coffee
2 10.30 am	Rev Steve Dick <i>Harvest Service &amp; Children's chapel</i>	Harvest	Eileen Wield
9 10.30 am	Rev Ashley Hills	Jopie Boeke	Ted Stevens
16 10.30 am	Rev Steve Dick	George Clark	Barbara Meaghan
23 10.30 am	David Darling	Ethel Hyde	Jane Bellinger
30 10.30 am	Rev Steve Dick <i>Celebration of Membership</i>	Celia Goldie	Louise Nadim

### OCTOBER

- Sunday 2nd October — 10.30 am HARVEST SERVICE & LUNCH All welcome.
- Wednesday 5th October—3 pm Women's League meets in Hall
- Friday 7th October —12 noon to 1.30pm RETURN OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS SOUP LUNCH to benefit Water Aid and Chestnut Tree Children's Hospice
- Wednesday 16th September—TWELVE STEPS TO A COMPASSIONATE LIFE Reading Groups from 1 to 2.30 pm (bring lunch) or from 7 to 8.30 pm.