

Pastoral Letter

Revd Roger Hagon shares his thoughts...

Dear Friends

With graffiti around for thousands of years, the writing is clearly on the wall! Whether we like it or not, some people seem to have an inbuilt need to illegally deface public buildings with messages for everyone to see. Graffiti can take the form of simple and sometimes powerful words, sometimes 'tags' which show a gang loyalty, and sometimes art. Go and see how Croydon's very own Gnasher has spray-painted most of the sites around St George's Walk!



The phrase 'the writing on the wall' comes from the prophet Daniel in the Bible where we find an early example of graffiti containing a prophetic message from God. King Belshazzar of the Babylonian Empire celebrated a feast during which the words 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin' could be seen written on the inside of his palace wall. Daniel, with a reputation as a man of God, was called to interpret the message. He declared the king unworthy of office and explained that 'Mene' means 'measurement', 'Tekel' means 'weighed', and 'Parsin' means 'divided'. The indictment is clear: 'God has measured your sovereignty and

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put an end to it, you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.' (chapter 5, verses 25 - 28).

During the weeks leading up to Pentecost, we shall once again be joining our Archbishops' call to prayer – 'Thy Kingdom come'. Outside the Church on Bingham Road and in the Centre concourse, we will have the opportunity to construct a graffiti prayer wall. Everyone will be welcome to

write a prayer as they pass by and this may consist of words or pictures, relating to people or situations in the world today. May the Holy Spirit inspire us to pray ever more fervently for God's Kingdom to come on earth, as it is in heaven and may God bless the writing on our wall.

Roger



Choir Notes

After a busy Lent and Easter, the choir is back for the Summer term and looking ahead to our annual trip, this year to Guildford Cathedral in late July (see below). We are also working hard on getting a core repertoire together, and are very excited to be recording a Christmas CD.

After Evensong on 26 May our recital series will continue with Simon Pearce (Baritone). We are so lucky to be able to call on so much superb talent here at St Mildred's, without needing to go outside our own congregation!

Please come and hear Simon, you won't be disappointed and you'll also be supporting the Organ Appeal.

Richard Mander, Director of Music

A brief history of Guildford Cathedral can be found on page 17 of this magazine.

For those who would like to support St Mildred's choir at the end of July, the Cathedral stands on Stag Hill on the outskirts of Guildford and has excellent road and rail links. The journey from East Croydon to Guildford Railway Station takes about an hour, with a change at either Redhill or Clapham Junction. There is then a 10 minute up-hill walk from the back of the station to the Cathedral.

The Editors

Guildford Cathedral



Guildford Cathedral is a modern cathedral with a truly remarkable story. In 1932, Sir Edward Maufe won a competition to design the cathedral, coming first among 183 entries with a Gothic design in concrete faced in brick. The cathedral's exterior, including the

nave and aisles together with Maufe's use of space, won him general admiration amongst fellow architects. As a result, he was described as a designer of churches by conviction, as he attempted to produce buildings of austere simplicity aiming directly at the creation of a religious atmosphere. At Guildford, he wanted to produce a design of the times, yet to keep in line with the great English cathedrals already established within the United Kingdom.

Building work on the cathedral started in 1936 but was stopped by the Second World War and its devastating aftermath. Despite enormous setbacks, regular services were held in the Crypt Chapel (the current Choir practice room) from 1947. When building restrictions were lifted and materials were available again, there was a renewed sense of determination in the local community to complete the cathedral. There were very limited funds but, eventually, through the Buy a Brick fundraising campaign, work re-started again in 1954. More than 200,000 ordinary people became brick-givers and their generosity helped ensure the completion of what they thought of as "their Cathedral". It was an extraordinary act of public support, a demonstration of modern community spirit.

With a resilient and 'make do and mend' approach, the inside of the cathedral was furnished. Again, much of this was done with the assistance of local people, for example hand making the 1500 kneelers, which remain in place today.

The 'People's Cathedral' was consecrated on 17 May 1961 by Bishop George Reindorp in the presence of HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the Archbishop of Canterbury and a packed congregation from all parts of the diocese. It is one of only three Church of England Cathedrals constructed in the twentieth century and, artistically, it bridges the gap between Scott's Gothic Liverpool Cathedral and Spence's modern Coventry Cathedral.

The Cathedral is a fusion of the conquest of space, light, massing and principles from the Gothic tradition coupled with twentieth-century constructional techniques, notably the innovative use of high level cast in-situ concrete. This makes the building's construction very unusual and the best example of Maufe's fusion of modern and traditional. Work has continued in subsequent years, but - with Maufe's original plans not fully realised - much remains to be done. The latest addition to the Cathedral was in 2005 with the completion of the statues on the West Front.

Sir Edward Maufe was born Edward Muff in Sunny Bank, Ilkley, Yorkshire, on 12 December 1882 and changed his surname by deed poll in 1909. He retired in 1964 to Buxted, East Sussex, and died aged 92 on his birthday, 12 December 1974, in nearby Uckfield Hospital.

from www.guildford-cathedral.org and Wikipedia
