

From our Minister: Rev Iain McLaren



The month of August is a time for holidays. The schools have broken up. Many people choose to go away and so we may find our neighbourhood quieter than usual.

Our word 'holiday' is derived from 'holy day'. It recalls a time when holidays were religious festivals, observed by taking a rest from regular work. The idea of the sanctity of rest is found in the Bible, specifically the concept of a sabbath day of rest in imitation of the day of rest from the work of creation that God took on the seventh day, according to the second chapter of the Book of Genesis. For many centuries, a sabbath day of rest was an important part of the rhythm of life for both Jews and Christians. When, in a bout of anticlerical zeal, French revolutionaries attempted to replace the sabbath with a decimalised ten-day 'week', this didn't go down too well!

Our modern world doesn't do sabbath rest. The expectation that goods and services will be available 24/7, coupled with job insecurity, leads to pressure to be always productive. Modern technology enables working from home, which blurs the boundaries between work and rest. This is not just a problem in the world of business. In charity work, and even in the church, people can feel under pressure to be always active. There are plenty of jobs to do in the church, after all, even if most of them aren't paid.

This constant busy-ness is not good for us, however. The current epidemic of poor mental health, I suspect, owes something to the unrealistic demands being placed on people's time. Prolonged periods of stress can lead to physical ill health, e.g. high blood pressure. Busy people often neglect to find time for prayer and worship. For the sake of our mental, physical and spiritual health therefore, we need to resist the urge to be constantly 'doing' and allow ourselves some space to simply 'be'.

My prayer therefore is that this August you may find time to take a rest from your regular routine: a day (or more) of holy rest – a true 'holiday' indeed!

Yours in Christ

Iain

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Day off on Fridays

Safeguarding Training - Important for ALL

The Synod Safeguarding Officer, Donna Gordon, will be leading a **Safeguarding** training session at Warden Hill URCC on Saturday 25th September. This will be from 10.30 to 3.00 with coffee and lunch breaks. **ALL Elders and those who work with children and/or vulnerable adults are expected to attend one such Safeguarding Training.**

Please put this date in your diaries. Contact Julie Jefferies, juliecjefferies@googlemail.com or 01242-232892 to book your place, by 10th August or sooner.

Lectionary Readings for this week.

Exodus 16 v2-4,9-15
John 6 v24-35

Psalm 78 v23-29
Ephesians 4 v1-16



Prayer Requests this week:

Andrew Sutherland, John Hutton, Eileen Attwood,
Geoff Harmsworth, Pat Books,
Douglas MacGregor, Rev Iain and his family,
Katie Morea and her family



Congratulations to Margaret and Robin Derbyshire on celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary (60th) on 5th August 2021.

In August St Andrew's will continue to raise money for the local Food Bank.

How a Supermarket works with customers to provide food for those in need



I'm just leaving the Morrison checkout with my Monday morning shop, when I spot a young lady wearing the store uniform, loading up a trolley with Morrison's special foodbank bags. I ask her to explain how the foodbag system works.

She is Jane and she explains that there are several foodbanks in Cheltenham, apart from the one we are donating to this month. Other banks have sprung up, starting with just a dozen or so clients, and now helping over 100 families. One of them is a Community Project, sponsored by the Mayor, and with the strong support of Morrisons, and there are at least six others, she reels off their names. The banks keep in touch with each other, and with the store so that shortages can be evened out. Jane sees to it that customers wishing to donate food know what is in demand, so that they don't give what the bank already has plenty of. She shows me her i-phone, which has messages from the banks saying please, we are short of a, b and c, but have enough of x and y, and equipped with this information she swings into action. If the messages tell her there is a need for, say tinned meat and fruit and cereals, she makes up bags containing particularly these items, prices them and displays them on the stand near the entrance. The customers can pick one up, pay for it as they leave, and place it on the stand opposite the checkout.



Later I returned for this photoshoot, and found myself talking to Jane's colleague Andrea, (in the picture) who shares this work with her. She talks with great enthusiasm of customers who pick up a bag (or two) every week, and of their new project **Hungry Holidays** which will provide free meals for hungry children during the school break. Jane and Andrea, with the strong backing of the store are well informed about what's happening in local foodbanks, and are working hard to link their store with the food needs of those in

poverty. They tell me from their first-hand experience that demands on the banks are growing, due to the increasing numbers who have not found work or who cannot feed their family on the benefits they receive.

The Foodbanks gratefully receive and put to good use all the tins and packets of food donated week by week. As for our own present appeal for money, we are sure that by the end of August, with your help, we will be able to donate a substantial sum towards maintaining the increasingly essential work of the banks.

Robin Derbyshire

Heritage Open Day at St Andrew's will be on **11th September**. The Church will be open to the public from 11.00am – 2.00pm. Tony and Sandra Jeans will then be giving a talk entitled 'The House that moved' from 2.30 till 3.30pm.

Stewards are needed – I have had some offers – but would welcome more, to cover an hour at a time. Brochures are now available, printed and on-line. *Janet Kemp*

"Welcome Party" for Iain. Following postponement from August due to covid restrictions we have now RESCHEDULED this event for **Saturday 4th September. 3.00-6.00pm at St Andrew's**. Please let Janet, Fiona or Brian (as appropriate) know if you want to attend.

What's on this week?

- **Repair Café** at St Andrew's, 7th August. From 10.00am.
- **Prayer Time on Tuesdays**
St Andrew's will be open on Tuesday from 11.00 till 12.00 **WE WELCOME ALL**
- **Teatime on Tuesday**
Come and join us for an hour of excellent conversation, 3pm on Zoom.
<https://zoom.us/j/95570544462?pwd=Q0VHQVVuWHRB1QmpBd2ZDcEZJNlIXUT09>
ID 955 7054 4462, Passcode 686988 Zoom Host: Bob/June

Footsloggers at Deerhurst, Monday 12th July

"Footsloggers" is now 'back in business' and it was wonderful to be able to meet after such a long break. We gathered at Deerhurst and then made our way to the banks of the River Severn. We walked north towards Tewkesbury before climbing up to open farmland where we made our way through fields of cereal crops. The last part of the walk took in great views towards Cleeve Hill. Finally we arrived back at the church which many of the walkers visited. A picnic lunch was then enjoyed by everyone - in perfect sunshine!

Dorothy Odell

The next walk will be on Friday 13th August.



Photo: Rev Iain

Coming Soon

Bible Study/Discussion Group

This group will reconvene in September on MONDAY's. Topic to be decided.

Wednesday Social Group meetings are planned to start on **8th September** from 2.00-4.00pm in the Warden Hill URC Centre. 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.

Further details from Brian Miles 01242-862142.

Qi Gong are delaying reopening till **Thursday 9th September 12noon to 1pm** at St Andrew's.

Further details from Tony Jeans jeanstda@jeanstda.plus.com

ECO News

Our next **Repair Café is on Sat 7 August**, so I was interested to see this article on the BBC news site: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-57785498>

Social enterprise **Remade Network** opened a repair shop in Glasgow, aiming to tackle the growing mountain of broken and unwanted household items in society by making it easier to recycle, reuse and repair things in their communities. Like our repair café, the repair shop offers electrical, IT and sewing repairs. The service has proved so popular Remade Network is having to boost its staffing in order to cope with demand. On average pre Covid, around 50 items were brought in to our repair each month and the café has an 80%+ success rate. Vision 21 has used their experience at St Andrew's to foster and guide the establishment of repair cafes elsewhere in the county and in other parts of the country. It was great to see so many of you at the first café this year in June. By using the Repair café you are helping to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and resources consumed to produce new items.



There's still time to take part in **The Big Butterfly Count** which runs until Sunday 8 August. This is a UK-wide survey aimed at helping us assess the health of our environment simply by counting the amount and type of butterflies (and some day-flying moths) we see. All you have to do is to choose a place to spot butterflies and moths, watch for 15 minutes and record your count. You can add your counts on the website or download an app to do so. There's also a useful identification chart available – see

<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org>

As the **COP26 meeting** in Glasgow approaches, A Rocha's July **Wild Christian newsletter** included a link to a report from a Young Christian Climate Network member on taking part in the first leg of the Relay to COP journey.

<https://arocha.org.uk/walking-day-1-of-the-young-climate-christian-network-relay/>

Earth Overshoot day was on Thursday 29th July. This is the date when we have consumed all the resources that the planet can produce over the year. Five major areas have been identified for improving sustainability: planet, cities, energy, food, and population. Earth Overshoot Day is an initiative of Global Footprint Network, an international research organization that aims to change the way the world measures and manages its natural resources. For more information, see <https://www.overshootday.org>

Carol Drummond