



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 1st May 2022

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

1 st May	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	Family Service
15 th May	Mr Bob Alger	
22 nd May	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

All Sunday Services are 11.00am, also broadcast on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0qso0uzwPJq-Onhf6fN2TA>

1st May	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion then AGM
HYMNS: Rejoice+Sing 238, 293,92,447,StF449		
8 th May	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	Family Service
15 th May	Christian Aid Service to be led by Mr David Black	
22 nd May	Mr Geoff Tizzard-King	

The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

Details of all Services can be found in 'Lantern', and 'Grapevine' both available at

<http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

8 th May	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion then AGM 12 noon
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Prayer Requests this week:



The family of John Hutton, Hanne Lambley, Geoff and Margaret Harmsworth, Mhairi Turner, Edith McKenzie, June Temple, Joan Thomson, Mary Zakotti, The people of Ukraine.

John Hutton's funeral will be at Cheltenham Crematorium on Mon 16th May at 3.00

Living with Covid

There is still a lot of Covid around, so if you have any symptoms at all please do not come. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask please do so, but don't worry if others don't. Hand sanitiser is still available.

Rev Iain McLaren, our Minister writes:



Some supermarkets are limiting the sale of cooking oil. This is an unexpected consequence of the war in Ukraine as apparently 80% of the global supply of sunflower oil comes from Russia and Ukraine. The fighting has disrupted sunflower cultivation in Ukraine and sanctions will be having an impact upon the import of sunflower oil from Russia. That our own food supply should have become so dependent on importing a vital ingredient from such a limited range of places in the world is an illustration of the folly of the modern food industry.

Modern agriculture is an interconnected global business that encourages regions to specialise in the intensive cultivation of a limited range of crops. Not only is this bad for biodiversity and bad for the climate but also, as the effect of war in Ukraine upon sunflower oil production shows, it is not a secure and sustainable way of maintaining food supplies. Intensive agriculture seeks to maximise crop yields, but chapter 25 of the Book of Leviticus prescribes a very different approach to farming. Speaking through Moses, the Lord instructs the Israelites to allow their land a sabbath year of rest every seventh year. They were not to sow seed or harvest crops and any edible produce that grew naturally was to be shared between humans and both domestic and wild animals. Verses such as these provide a theological basis for rewilding – the practice of allowing cultivated land to return to its natural vegetation.

The Eco Church scheme encourages us to think about how we manage land. St Andrew's is giving consideration to setting aside a part of the church garden as an area for native wildflowers. Perhaps this is something all of us with gardens could consider. Also, when doing our supermarket shopping, it is also worth recalling organically grown fruit and vegetables are less likely to have been intensively farmed.

An objection raised to organic farming is that it cannot be guaranteed to produce enough food for everyone. In Leviticus chapter 25, however, God promises the land will produce sufficient food every sixth year to tide the Israelites over until they can plant crops again. Industrialised farming is failing to guarantee food supplies today. Perhaps it is time for us to have more faith in God's promise.

Yours in Christ

Iain

**Rev Iain McLaren can be contacted at:
01242-231602, or 07483118427 revdiain@urcic.org.uk**

Day off on FRIDAYS.

Lectionary Readings:

Acts 16 v9-15

Psalm 67

John 5 v1-9

Revelation 21 v10-22v22b

St Andrew's charity for May/June

We shall be collecting for **Christian Aid** till mid May, then **MIND**, the mental health charity, and information on this charity will start appearing in the Bulletin from 22 May,

Christian Aid Week is 15th - 21st May

It is just over two weeks to the start of Christian Aid week.

Covid 19, the conflict in Ukraine, and the climate crisis is pushing more of our global neighbours into a struggle for survival. This Christian Aid Week we stand together with our neighbours in Zimbabwe, a country where the impact of all these factors is keenly felt, and where drought is leading to widespread hunger.



In rural Zimbabwe, 7 out of 10 rely on farming for income and food. We meet Jessica Mwedzi who is featured in some of the posters this year with her family - her husband is too unwell to work- so she is the breadwinner for her four children.

Jessica tells us that her land is ashen dry. She toils on the farm, but little food grows.

"One year we had no rain. The scorching sun

burnt my crops just as they were about to bloom. It was so painful and disheartening" she says. Jessica is at the mercy of the climate crisis. Drought makes women like her hungrier and poorer, and robs them of the chance to earn a living with dignity.

Jessica often has to send her children to bed on an empty stomach. Jessica is not without hope however, and an incredible spirit of determination that she will provide for her children, good food and a good life, free of hunger. In part, this hope comes from her work with one of Christian Aid's partners who have helped Jessica to grow drought -resistant crops, set up water taps on her farm, learn how to grow food in a harsh climate and to preserve and store that food safely for the driest season.

As we approach Christian Aid week we may want to think of other ways, in addition to giving of our money, that we could support Christian Aid as it works to create a better world for the poorest.

Firstly - delivering envelopes as part of CA's street drop does still raise a lot of money from the public. Last year £ 14,000 was raised in Cheltenham alone. Perhaps you could volunteer this year.

Secondly- consider supporting CA's campaign to urge our Prime minister to push for a new global fund to pay for loss and damage caused by the climate crisis, and to introduce a new climate damages tax on fossil fuel companies.

Thirdly- pray for the people of Zimbabwe or any country where drought is devastating communities. Pray for all those directly working for Christian Aid and their partners.

Alison Veal

What's on across CURC this week

Wed 4 th May	12.15	Midweek Worship	St Andrew's
Thu 5 th May	12.45 – 13.45	Qi Gong	St Andrew's
Fri 6 th May	10.00 – 12.00	Prestbury Spring Fair	Prestbury
Sat 7 th May	10.00 – 12.30	Repair Café	St Andrew's
Sat 7 th May	10.00	User Groups Meeting	St Andrew's
Mon 9 th May	10.00 – 11.30	Prestbury URChins Baby & Toddlers	Prestbury URC
Wed 11 th May	12.15	Midweek Worship	St Andrew's
Wed 11 th May		Wednesday Social Group Outing to Tintern	
Fri 13 th May	10.00 – 12.00	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury
Sat 14 th May	14.00	Community Film Show	Warden Hill URCC
		'Six Minutes to Midnight' Cert12	

Prestbury URC Spring Fair Friday 6 May 10am-12.00

Please do join us at Prestbury for our annual Spring Fair. There will be plants, cakes, bakes, books and a raffle as well as stalls for Fairtrade and cards. Teas and Coffees will be served (and the infamous teacakes!)



MIDSUMMER FIESTA

An afternoon of family fun
July 2nd 2022 in Montpellier Gardens

St Andrew's have booked a stall at this event which is advertised as being **ECO** themed.

We propose using the stall as an 'everyone wins' Tombola and as a vehicle for advertising/informing about our ECO work at St Andrew's, in the form of a display with posters, flyers, information sheets, giveaways.

**We shall need volunteers to man this stall throughout the afternoon (12 to 6, plus setting up and clearing away.)—we suggest an hour at a time. Please contact Carol or Janet if you are able to volunteer.

We are collecting **small items for tombola prizes. There will be a box at St Andrew's for you to leave donations. Any type of item is acceptable – consider whether you would like to win it !

Thank you

Janet and Carol

www.midsummerfiesta.com

ECO News

Last year, a few of us took part in No Mow May. **Plantlife's** annual campaign, **#No Mow May** launches this year on 29 April 2022. To take part is really easy. You just need not to mow your lawn from 1 May and see what comes up. Research has revealed that mowing your lawn less frequently can provide enough food for ten times the amount of bees, butterflies, moths, beetles and other pollinators.

<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/no-mow-may>

At the end of the month, there's the opportunity to join in with **Plantlife's** nationwide **"Every Flower Counts"** survey. You will receive your very own "nectar score" for your lawn and help Plantlife learn more about the health of the nations' wild flowers. You may remember Jenny Evans' completed this survey for the church lawn last year. It would be great to get more people taking part and sharing photos of what comes up in their lawn.

<https://www.countryfile.com/news/no-mow-may-why-you-should-lock-up-your-lawnmower-on-1st-may/>

Carole Drummond

Psalm 23 Garden – Progress Report Easter 2022.

(As many of you know, Tony is heading a sub-committee of the Church ECO group to develop part of the St Andrew's garden into a themed Psalm 23 Garden, as promoted by the Bible Society)

Progress so far.

We have identified the area for the Garden and agreed the general design

We aim to use natural materials and native plants. We have suggested a budget of around £2,000.

The masonry recovered from previous building work on the Church and Hall has been placed in the Garden.

The seat will be a gift from Bob Alger in memory of Kate.

We have established liaison with our neighbours in the Summerfield Flats and with the gardener who has the general maintenance contract.

Work has begun to renovate the fence at the end of the Mews, including pruning the existing bush.

Next steps

We will establish a cutting regime to encourage growth of flowering plants in the "wild" area. We may need some special planting of appropriate species to encourage diversity.

We have to decide on the final location and style of the water feature and put it in place.

Work is continuing on finding the best way to present the text of the Psalm (NRSV) in the various areas of the Garden.

The final location of the masonry will be decided and the pieces put in place.

We are exploring suitable low level lighting, possibly solar powered.

In the autumn, we will undertake the planting of the shrubs and hedging to mark off the garden and enhance the appearance of the fence. We consider that including evergreens is important to enhance the habitat for wild birds.

Other Considerations

We have sort to be consistent with the overall management plan of the main garden and to support our aspiration to the Gold ECO Church award.

We note that work is required on the patio area in terms of both the current planting and the paving, for future consideration.

Tony Jeans, Easter 2022.



A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen

Archbishop Justin Welby

Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



From the Editors

Thank you for all the copy that you send. We can be reached on: magazine@urcic.org.uk

Janet Kemp (Design) and Fiona Hall (Technology)