



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 20th June 2021,

From the Editors:

Due to the extension of the Covid restrictions to 19th July we are amending arrangements for our planned events:

- **The CURC AGM will go ahead on Sunday 27th June as part of The United Pastorate service. The service will begin at 10.30 am.**

Worship will include celebrations for the 30th Anniversary of CURC, the Re-Induction of Elders and will be led by Rev Iain. Rev Steve Faber, Moderator of West Midlands Synod will be preaching. Neither Prestbury nor Warden Hill/St Christopher's will have morning services. The **SERVING ELDERS** from each church are requested to attend.

- The AGM meeting papers will be sent out by email prior to 27th.
- **The Buffet is cancelled.**
- The planned Garden Party to welcome Iain is being postponed till the autumn. Date to be arranged.
- Rev Iain is changing his day off, as from July 1st – it will be FRIDAY.

Janet, Fiona and Brian

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

4th July Rev Dee Brierley-Jones

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

All Sunday Services are 11.00am, broadcast on YouTube:

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

20 th June	Rev Iain McLaren	(Baptism of Lili Price)	
27 th June	Rev Steve Faber/Rev Iain McLaren		Service starting 10.30am
4 th July	Rev Iain McLaren	(Communion)	
11 th July	Mr Geoff Tizzard-King		

- If you wish to attend St Andrew's services please reserve your seat with Janet before noon on Saturday.
- Please see above for details of United Pastorate Service on 27th June

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>

11th July

Rev Iain McLaren (URC Communion)

From our Minister: Rev Iain McLaren

This Sunday I will be leading a service of baptism. The child being baptised will be 'christened', not in the sense of being assigned a name, but with the underlying meaning of being 'made Christian'. In former times, people were, and in some cultures today, people still are, given 'Christian names' at the point of becoming a Christian (think of 'Saul' becoming 'Paul' in the Book of Acts). In our own culture, however, it is more usual for names given prior to baptism to be retained. Nevertheless, a baptism is still a christening in that it marks a welcome into the Christian family. This is why, in the URC tradition, services of baptism always take place as part of regular worship, so that both the candidate's birth family and spiritual family can be involved.



When a child joins a family the adults in that family acquire responsibilities to protect and nurture that child. With that in mind, I have been pondering how our churches can provide for the Christian education of the children and young people who have been baptised into our church fellowships. Every child has the right to receive an education and, for Christian children, this includes a right to receive teaching about what Christians believe. It seems the old model of Sunday School / Junior Church no longer works, and newer forms of provision, like Messy Church, have had to be put on hold due to covid. However, we cannot afford to neglect teaching the Christian faith to the younger generation and so we need to find new ways of connecting with children and young people. Exactly how we do this is not clear at this stage and so requires discernment through prayer, reflection and discussion.

Perhaps the greatest gift any child can receive is to know they are loved and cherished and so my prayer is that all the children we baptise may come to feel at home in the Church.

Yours in Christ,

Iain

P.S. Thank you to Keith Norcott for pointing out the error in last week's letter. Jesus was, of course, a descendant, and not an ancestor, of King David!

Yours in Christ, *Iain*

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

Lectionary Readings

Job 38 v1-11

Mark 4 v35-41

Psalm 107 v1-3,23-32

2 Corinthians 6 1-13



Prayer Requests this week:

Donna Sutherland and Family,
Edith Black, Bill and Morag Notman,
Ann Standing, Fred Cummings
Rev Iain and his family: Diana, Gift, Kimberley and Keke
Lili Price and family on the occasion of her Baptism



Laura Stagg and Nick Heathcote are getting married at St. Andrew's on Saturday 26th June at 2.30pm. As Boris Johnson has lifted the restrictions on numbers attending weddings, Laura and Nick would like to invite the congregation to come to the ceremony.

If you would like to come, please sign up email Laura (laura.stagg@outlook.com) so that we have an idea of numbers

What's on this week?

Prayer Time on Tuesdays

St Andrew's will be open for Prayer on Tuesday from 11.00 till 12.00

WE WELCOME ALL

Study discussions on Wednesday's

We are working on a series of discussions based on the Emmaus Course. 8pm on zoom.

EVERYONE WELCOME

<https://zoom.us/j/96204565714?pwd=Rm1iZ01ZWkpYNmVvbXZScFJISWgyUT09>

Meeting ID: 962 0456 5714 Passcode: 108557

Zoom Host: Alison

Teatime on Tuesday

Come and join us for an hour of excellent conversation, 3pm on Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/95570544462?pwd=Q0VHQVVuWHB1QmpBd2ZDcEZJNlIXUT09>

ID 955 7054 4462,

Passcode 686988

Zoom Host: June

June has given notice that she will be unable to host this meeting after the end of June. Please consider if you are able to take over this duty, and thus the future of this meeting. Response to Janet please.



Coming soon

Footsloggers the first walk will be on 12th July, Jenny will be sending out details.

Qi Gong aims to reopen at St Andrew's on **Thursday 29th July 12noon to 1pm**. Further details from Tony Jeans.

ECO News

Great British Spring Clean

Last Saturday, 5 of us - Rev Iain, Anne Gimmingham, Alison Veal, Ann Lewis and myself did a litter pick in the streets surrounding St Andrew's and towards the Minster. We separated out any items we could recycle eg cans and bottles and collected quite a bit of litter. We had a lovely sunny day for our pick and we also got several appreciative comments from passers by.



Ink Jet Cartridges

Thank you to all who have left their ink jet cartridges in the recycling bin at Church over the past year. At the beginning of 2020 we registered with a new supplier Recycle4Charity but obviously our collection has been limited due to the church closure.

Last month Ann Lewis returned 2 boxes full of empty cartridges and the Church is due to receive £57.80 in July. To date we will have received £100.80 and saved 7.58kg from landfill, so please keep the cartridges coming - just inkjet please not laser. Thanks to Ann for organising this.

Carol Drummond

'The Tent of Nations'

What it means to refuse to be Enemies.

Some twenty years ago we were taken to visit the large plot of land near Bethlehem which since Ottoman times had belonged to a Palestinian Christian family, the Nassars. Under Israeli occupation however it has been under constant threat of confiscation, like so much other surrounding land. The family has many times argued their rights at the military court, and even gone to the archives of the former Ottoman Empire in Constantinople. They have vigorously cultivated their land and invited friends from many other countries to visit them, to help with the work, and to form an international support community, called the Tent of Nations, under the family's motto: "We refuse to be



enemies", words engraved in stone at the entrance to the land. They have had to live under constant threats to their rights from neighbouring Israeli settlers, but their land has flourished, and they have become known internationally as a beacon of friendship in an environment where this is sometimes difficult to find.

Two weeks ago this report reached us from Daoud Nassar, who runs the farm:

"On the 20th of May, a fire was deliberately started on the farm destroying hundreds of new and old trees, ages between 5 and 20 years old. We were able, and with the help of many young people from the village and the fire department from Bethlehem, to control the situation and extinguish the fire before it reached more fields. Thank God no one was hurt. The fire department reported that the fire was most likely done intentionally, who caused it, or/and who was behind it remains unknown.

It was very painful to witness the damage. The ongoing challenges are making us feel tired both physically and mentally, but we are determined to move forward and to overcome our obstacles. We have already started to repair the damage, and to prepare the land for new trees. This coming fall, we will be planting hundreds of olives and other trees.

We are glad that volunteers have started to come again. During the next months, we will have two volunteers coming to help once a week on the farm. We are thankful that we will start having an international presence soon on the farm, after more than one year. Moreover, I received some requests from international groups planning to come in September and October to help with the olive harvest, which gives us hope and strength.

We are determined to continue this journey without giving up despite the current struggles. We need to rise from the ashes, continue to rebuild what was destroyed and replant more trees because when we plant a tree we believe in the future. We try to maintain a strong motivation and a high spirit by converting the negative energy into a positive and to continue trying to make a difference.

Our path is difficult, but we need to keep moving forward. My friends, our journey will continue with faith, love, and hope in action. Thank you for accompanying us on this path.

Blessings and Salaam, Daoud Nassar, for the Tent of Nations."



We would like to share with our friends at St Andrew's this extraordinary story, at once troubling and inspiring. You can find more about the Tent of Nations and its programme of activities from its website: www.tentofnations.org

Margaret and Robin