



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 22nd May 2022

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

22 nd May	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion
29 th May	United Pastorate Service at St Andrew's	
5 th June	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	WHITSUNDAY/Family Service
19 th June	tbc	

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

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

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

22nd May Mr Geoff Tizzard-King
HYMNS: Rejoice+Sing 713,398,523,274,477, Junior Praise 140, Mission Praise 445

United Pastorate Service, 10.30 at St Andrew's on 29th May

Led by Rev Iain McLaren

**Followed by Salad and Pudding Lunch with CURC AGM between courses.
Please indicate if you wish to book lunch, or could help with preparation.**



WHITSUNDAY / Queens Jubilee

Sunday 5th June

Rev Iain McLaren will be leading worship with Communion

Followed by: **'Bring and Share Buffet'** details on page 3



12 th June	Mrs Margaret Marshall	Trinity Sunday
19 th June	Rev Iain McLaren	

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>

29 th May	United Pastorate Service at St Andrew's	
12 th June	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion

Rev Iain McLaren, our Minister writes:



From 9th to 12th May I attended the second national Ministers' Gathering of the URC at the Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre in Staffordshire. Two hundred and fifty ministers and Church Related Community Workers from across the URC's 13 synods came together to network with one another and with the staff based at Church House. We began each day with inspiring worship and thought-provoking Bible study on the theme of jubilee. Keynote speakers were Rev Najla Kassab, Director of the Christian Education Department of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and current President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, Pdraig O Tuama, poet and former leader of the Corrymeela Community in Ireland, Rev David Cornick, now retired but formerly Principal of Westminster College in Cambridge, General Secretary of the URC and General Secretary of Churches Together in England, and Rev Dr John Bradbury, current General Secretary of the URC.

I came away from the conference feeling greatly encouraged. There was frank acknowledgement of the difficulties we currently face and also of disappointment that the ecumenical vision that led to the creation of the URC has failed to materialise. However, David Cornick reminded us the picture of church decline in Europe is not mirrored in the global south. Worldwide the Church is growing and migration from outside Europe has rejuvenated many churches in this country, especially in London. The URC acknowledged this in our declaration that we are a Multicultural Church in 2005.

Najla Kassab spoke of the importance of hospitality in Christian mission. She made a distinction, drawn from the hotel industry, between service, which is doing what we have been trained to do, and hospitality, which is concerned with how other people feel. She shared stories about how the Presbyterian Church in Lebanon has been transformed by undertaking work visiting prisoners and setting up schools for Syrian refugees. She said, "This ministry shaped who we are as the Church today. We discovered that unless we reflect hospitality in our daily life, then we have missed the real meaning of the Gospel and the love of God to all people."

A possible barrier to being more hospitable might be the burden of compliance for local churches, i.e. complying with best practice in regard to health and safety, safeguarding and charity law, and John Bradbury spoke about this. He noted we believe such things are important for church life. After all, who wants to be part of a church that is unhealthy and unsafe, where vulnerable people are not kept safe and where charitable funds are misused? The problem for the URC is that too much of the burden of compliance currently falls on local churches, many of which are ill-equipped to bear it, and so the national URC is currently undertaking a piece of work with a view to recommending changes to the structure of the denomination so that the burden is shared more fairly.

I think hospitality and sharing resources will be important for the future of the United Reformed Church in Cheltenham and the surrounding area. The structure of the URC in our locality will be changing in September with the merger of St Andrew's and Warden Hill and the addition of Brockworth Free Church to the pastorate. Now would be a good time to review how we share the burden of maintaining church life across the pastorate. Meanwhile, a new mission field is emerging in the housing developments springing up

between Cheltenham and Gloucester. I think the calling of the Church is to make the newcomers moving into these new estates feel welcome amongst us.

I would like to give the last word to Najla Kassab. She said, ““God surprises us with new attitudes. God surprises us in new places. If we want to be surprised as a Church, we need to offer hospitality; If we want to be revived as a Church, we need to offer hospitality. The table is the Lord’s table, not ours.”

Yours in Christ, *Iain*

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

Prayer Requests this week:



Geoff and Margaret Harmsworth, Mhairi Turner, Edith McKenzie, Mary Cummings, Joan Thomson, Joyce Whiting, The people of Ukraine.

Lectionary Readings:

Acts 16 v9-15

Psalm 67

John 5 v1-9

Revelation 21 v10,22-22b

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Prestbury - Jubilee Coffee, Chat ++ - Friday 3rd June

Please do join us for a Jubilee themed Coffee Morning from 10 am - Noon.



If you have any memorabilia or other royal items that would be suitable to loan for a small display then Rose West/Julie Jefferies would love to hear from you.



St Andrew's - 'Bring and Share Buffet' - Sunday 5th June

To celebrate Whitsunday and the Jubilee there will be a Bring & Share lunch following morning worship. Please bring a dish for the Buffet suitable for 4/6 portions. It can be hot or cold, homemade or bought.

Choose from: **SAVOURY** - a main course style dish

SALAD - a dish of salad

SWEET - or pudding

Remember that other people will not have tried your favourites! We will provide Bread, Spreads, Cream and Drinks.

We look forward to a wonderful selection on the Buffet to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

PS If you have a Gazebo that you are willing to lend, please talk to Janet.

The St Andrew's Charity Appeal, 29 May-26 June



MIND works on the principle that *nobody should suffer mental health problems alone.*

Perhaps you watched Fergal Keane's recent account of how through his prolonged work as a war reporter he contracted post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and how by confronting his condition, and getting the help he needed, he is on the road to recovery.

That's an extreme example, but many of us will know somebody whose life has been affected by depression, anxiety or low self-esteem, and needs help. The causes may be life events such as bereavement or relationship problems, or loss of a job or other traumatic experiences. The covid pandemic has also upset many people's lives, and brought to the surface emotions such as insecurity, sadness and despair.

Family and friends turn to family and friends first, for reassurance and understanding, and they are fortunate when those who are nearest to them can guide them to recovery - nothing helps more than knowing that you are accepted and supported. But modern living has increased the mental pressures on many of us, and one person in four needs support which goes beyond the warmth of normal human relationships. Often these people live alone. MIND has a network of local advisers, only a phone call away, who talk with understanding and sympathy to mentally stressed people, and are a gateway to trained specialists, who use their therapeutic skills on a one-to-one basis, and may hold group sessions with other sufferers.

Who are the people most at risk of developing a mental condition which needs treatment? We can immediately think of adults who are under strain in their employment, or who are unemployed, or who are struggling to bring up a family. People in poverty are likely to be living with continuing anxieties, and a growing number of young people are depressed by the worries of growing up and the low self-esteem linked to the feeling of failure. MIND also works in communities to combat the stigma of mental illness and, the growing problem of prejudice present in Black and Asian communities. But mental illness can occur anywhere. Please look up the MIND website, to get an idea of the extensive work it is doing to promote their aim. It is a mine of information on the many disturbed mental conditions, and their possible treatment. It contains much reassurance to sufferers and their loved ones, and an encouragement for them to seek help. It brings together those needing help, with those who can provide it.

Our MIND charity appeal will run from 29 May until the end of June. Please support it, especially, but not only, if you know somebody who has a mental health problem. Please tick '**retiring offering**' on the front of your envelope, and complete the **gift aid** form on the back, if applicable. More MIND information in later Bulletins.

Robin Derbyshire

Christian Arts Festival

Sat 18th June, 11am-3pm in Pittville Park

Art Extravaganza & Demos in Pittville Park in celebration of the Queen's Jubilee.

Henry Bowers and Antarctica

Anne Strathie, a member of St Andrew's who has been to Antarctica to do research for her books, will give a talk on Henry "Birdie" Bowers, a Scot whose mother was from Cheltenham and a friend of Edward Wilson of Antarctica fame, on Thursday 26th May at 2pm in the Garden Room at St Andrew's URC, Montpellier. £2.50 includes tea. **ALL WELCOME**

Christian Aid Week is 15th – 21st May

Many thanks to our trusty band of deliverers this week. Together we have delivered nearly 700 envelopes in the Leckhampton area. We hope and pray many will be motivated to donate.



Thank you to all those who have already donated from our congregations. I have banked £300 so far, and there is still plenty of time to donate using the envelopes at church! I'm writing this on day 5 of Christian Aid week. The Bible passage in today's Christian Aid daily devotional comes from Revelation 7:16-17. This reading paints a wonderful image of a time when all suffering will cease.

In the meantime, Christian Aid is playing its role in bringing an end to hunger and suffering for those who live in the poorest of circumstances, by giving them alternative ways to lift their families out of hunger. Thank you. *Alison Veal*

What's on across CURC

Mon 23 rd May 10.00 – 11.30	Prestbury URChins Baby & Toddlers	Prestbury URC
Wed 25 th May 12.15	Midweek Worship	St Andrew's
Wed 25 th May 14.00 – 16.00	Wednesday Social Group	Warden Hill URCC
	Talk on 'The Arthritis Trust', Steve Morton	
Thu 26 th May 12.45- 13.35	Qi Gong	St Andrew's
Thu 26 th May 19.30	Worship Group	Zoom
Fri 27 th May 10.00 – 12.00	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury
Tue 31 st May 10.30 – 14.30	Family Fun Day	St Andrew's
Wed 1 st June 12.15	Midweek Worship	Warden Hill URCC
Fri 3 rd June 10.00 – 12.00	Jubilee Coffee and Chat	Prestbury
Sat 4 th June 10.00 – 13.00	Repair Café	St Andrew's

Sun 5th June Bring and Share Buffet at St Andrew's

Fri 24th June Summer Lunch and Concert by the Ukaladies at Prestbury

Sat 2nd July Midsummer Fiesta in Montpellier Gardens

Can you help on the stall and/or offer small gifts as Tombola prizes???

Sat 9th July Prestbury Village Fair on Prestbury Playing Fields

Offers of help on the day would be welcome as are donations for bottles for the tombola

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)