



## Cheltenham United Reformed Church

[www.uncic.org.uk](http://www.uncic.org.uk)

*Bulletin 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021*

### From the Editors;

Due to the current lockdown all three churches have on-line arrangements for Sunday worship. Church buildings are closed.

This issue includes a letter from Rev Iain to us all. We are still getting the new phone systems set up for him, but we can now contact him on [revdiain@uncic.org.uk](mailto:revdiain@uncic.org.uk). However, please respect Iain's day off on Monday's.

The next **St Andrew's Church Meeting** will be by Zoom after worship on 31<sup>st</sup> January. There are two items of business relating to the buildings. An Agenda with background information will be sent out by email during the week.

**Janet, Fiona and Brian**

### The Pulpit at St Andrew's

All Sunday Services are 11.00am, broadcast on YouTube:

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

24 <sup>th</sup> January	Rev Alison Evans	
31 <sup>st</sup> January	Rev Iain McLaren	
7 <sup>th</sup> February	Rev Iain McLaren	(Communion)
14 <sup>th</sup> February	Mr Bob Alger	

### The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services are 10.30am

24 <sup>th</sup> January	Rev Iain McLaren	(Communion) <b>by Zoom</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> February	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	

### The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

Details of Services can be found in 'Lantern', available at <http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

14 <sup>th</sup> February	Rev Iain McLaren	URC Communion
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## Letter from Rev Iain McLaren

Dear Friends,

Many thanks for your warm welcome to Cheltenham. My dining room table is currently laden with cards from well-wishers. Thank you too to all who attended my virtual induction service via Zoom. I apologise that current circumstances mean I am not able to see more of you in person, but that time will come. In the meantime, I am getting to know my way around my immediate neighbourhood in Up Hatherley and Warden Hill. I look forward to getting to know the rest of Cheltenham in due course.

My previous pastorate, where I served for over ten years, was a trinity of churches in south London. In some ways it was similar to Cheltenham URC: a larger URC, a smaller URC and a Local Ecumenical Partnership with the Church of England. The context however was very different. From the upper storey of my manse in East Dulwich I could see the top of The Shard. From the upper floor of my manse here I can see open countryside. I look forward to learning more about the similarities and differences between the two pastorates during my time with you.

A shared experience for Christians throughout the UK this past year has been worship during lockdown. It has been unsettling for many people to be barred from attending worship in their familiar places of worship. However, this is not unprecedented. One of my London churches was struck by a bomb in 1940 and rendered unusable for the remainder of the war. However, the congregation was able to continue worshipping thanks to the hospitality offered by a nearby Church of Scotland. Whenever anyone from that church expressed the fear that a large repair bill might force the church to close, I would remind them of that story.

Lockdown has taught us that churches are first and foremost communities of people, and only secondly buildings. I would like to congratulate you all on keeping church life going during the pandemic. We have relearnt the importance of good pastoral care. We have found ways to show love for our neighbours through practical actions to help people in need.

At the end of the Book of Genesis, Joseph says to his brothers: "Even though you intended to harm me, God intended it for good" (Genesis 50: 20). Christians are people of hope and so my prayer is that, as we come out of lockdown and enter the 'new normal', we might discern how God can yet bring good out of the harm of the past year.

Yours in Christ,

Iain

21 January 2021

## Prayer Requests this week:



Duncan Westerman (organist at TCiWH) and family following death of  
Geraldine Westerman                      Joan and Ian Thomson

Iain McLaren and family

All those with Covid 19

If you know of anyone who would like to be added to the prayer list,  
please let us know and they will be included in the next bulletin.

*(painting by Bill Cowie)*

## Lectionary Readings

Jonah 3 v1-5,10

Psalm 62 v5-12

Mark 1 v14-20

1 Corinthians 7 v29-31

## Zoom Coffee on Sunday 12.00noon-12.45

This event is being reinstated. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

<https://zoom.us/j/98202381446?pwd=WklrdnhGN2lwNUZ6dGd2WXVwMjgrdz09>

Meeting ID: 982 0238 1446    Passcode: 734960

## Prayers on Mondays at 8.00pm Please note change of time

<https://zoom.us/j/96204565714?pwd=Rm1iZ01ZWkpYmVvbXZScFJISWgyUT09>

Meeting ID: 962 0456 5714    Passcode: 108557

**Tea Time on Tuesdays** Zoom meetings are continuing. **EVERYONE** is invited to enjoy  
friendly conversation at 3pm. Bring your own cup of tea and join the party.

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

Meeting ID 955 7054 4462    Passcode 686988

## St Andrew's Charity for January/February



## Save the Children

## Holocaust Memorial Day

Wednesday January 27<sup>th</sup> will be Holocaust Memorial Day. This year the theme is '[Be the light in the darkness](#)'. We are invited to light a candle and put it in the window at 8pm, sharing a photo on social media using the hashtags #HolocaustMemorialDay #LightTheDarkness.



*Signs of Spring*