



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 25th July 2021

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

25 th July	Mr Bob Alger	(Communion)
1 st August	Rev Dr Dee Brierley-Jones	
22 nd August	Mr Geoff Tizzard-King	(Communion)

Please note on the advice of Synod:

- ✓ Masks will continue to be worn indoors, but we can now SING.
- ✓ Social distancing will be maintained.

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

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

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

25 th July	Mr David Black	
Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) will give us a presentation as part of the service.		
1 st August	Rev Iain McLaren	(Communion)
8 th August	Mr Bob Alger	
15 th August	Mrs Julie Jefferies	
22 nd August	Dr Tony Jeans	
29 th August	Rev Dr Dee Brierley-Jones	

Please note on the advice of Synod:

- ✓ Masks will continue to be worn indoors, but we can now SING.
- ✓ Social distancing will be maintained.
- ✓ Seating arrangements will continue. Please continue to sign in or contact Alison Stagg. Seating plans will continue, using the pale blue chairs.
- ✓ Coffee after the service will resume on 1st August in the Hall. Social distancing requires NO MORE THAN 6 people sitting at a table.

Regular reviews of these requirements will be carried out.

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 August	Rev Iain McLaren	(URC Communion)
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From our Minister: Rev Iain McLaren

One of the Old Testament lectionary readings set for this Sunday is the story of David and Bathsheba. King David abuses his royal authority to summon a young woman he has taken a fancy to into his presence and has sexual intercourse with her. When Bathsheba informs him that she is pregnant, David's initial reaction is to seek to avoid scandal by passing the child off as an offspring of Bathsheba's husband, Uriah. When this scheme fails, David conspires to have Uriah killed so that he can marry the widowed Bathsheba and thereby create the illusion that the child to be born was a product of the marriage. David's carefully crafted web of deceit is torn asunder, however, by the court prophet Nathan, who publicly reveals David's wrongdoing, calls the king to account and pronounces God's judgement against him.



This story of a powerful politician's sexual indiscretions being outed in dramatic fashion has a very modern ring to it. A few weeks ago, the former Health Secretary was forced to resign when his sexual affair with a colleague was revealed by leaked pictures from a CCTV camera. But the story of David and Bathsheba is not just about a politician behaving badly. David was also a religious figure. Sadly, there have been many examples of religious leaders over the years who have abused their authority to take advantage of vulnerable people and then lied to cover their tracks. The reason the URC now requires all elders and others working with vulnerable people to undertake safeguarding training is to provide some protection against potential abusers.

I would like to focus on two characters from the story of David and Bathsheba: Joab, the commander-in-chief of David's army, and Nathan, the court prophet. Joab never questions David's authority, even the curious command to let Uriah be killed in battle, and so Joab becomes complicit in David's crimes. Nathan, on the other hand, is unafraid to confront David with the truth about his behaviour. Nathan's challenge leads to David's repentance. Safeguarding training helps us to be less like Joab, naïve facilitators of abuse, and more like Nathan – people equipped to identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour, no matter how senior the perpetrator.

Yours in Christ,

Iain

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

(See Minister's letter, above) Please put this date in your diaries.

Contact Julie Jefferies, juliecjjefferies@googlemail.com or 01242-232892 to book your place, by 10th August or sooner.



Prayer Requests this week:

Andrew Sutherland, Bill and Morag Notman,
John Hutton, Eileen Attwood, Geoff Harmsworth,
Douglas MacGregor, Pat Brooks,
Rev Iain and his family



What is the Anna Chaplaincy?

Ann Lewis explained at St Andrew's Church Meeting_

'One of the organisations the Elders have been looking at is Anna Chaplaincy. This scheme was established in 2010 and is now part of the Bible Reading Fellowship. It is an ecumenical, community based ministry and was endorsed by the General Synod in 2019.

Anna Chaplaincy advocates and champions older people in the wider community and nationally there are over 150 Anna Chaplains across the UK.



The mission behind Anna Chaplaincy

- is about nurturing spirituality in its widest sense.
- it is community based, engaging with people where they are and on their terms.
- it offers non-judgemental person centred spiritual care to those of all faiths and none.
- it includes family, carers and care professionals within its ministry.
- it is committed to working ecumenically wherever possible.

Gillian Ford is our local Anna Chaplaincy Co-ordinator. It is her role to appoint 5 Anna Chaplains to cover Cheltenham and Bishops Cleeve. A Chaplain may be an ordained or lay preacher or church worker, they are volunteers and are responsible for leading a team. Each Chaplain has Anna Friends who are supporters and members of the team.

Both roles are committed to the needs of older people and are supported in their role by the local church, the Bible Reading Fellowship and national network.

Anna Chaplaincy

- is a Ministry to older people in their own homes, accompanying, befriending and listening
- is a Ministry to Care Homes offering spiritual care, dementia inclusive worship, supporting residents, families and staff.
- is a Ministry to the Community offering dementia friendly cafes, community lunches and teas, possibly veteran messy church.

How could the churches of CURC get involved

- we could restart lunch club and Tuesday Teas.
- set up a Vintage Messy Church.
- offer a dementia friendly café.
- create a worship team offering services for care homes.
- ????????

If you are interested in being involved, please contact Iain or myself. By networking with Anna Chaplaincy hopefully our outreach work will spread.

Ann Lewis

Lectionary Readings for this week.

2Kings 4 v42-44

Psalm 145 v10-18

John 6 v1-21

Ephesians 3 v14-21

St Andrew's July/August Appeal is for The Cheltenham Foodbank



Thank you to everybody who has already given to this appeal.

Every continuing act of generosity on your part, both in kind and in cash, will help others in our community to enjoy a healthy and happy life.

An Appeal for the Yemen.

Can we support Ashwaq as she works to save the Yemeni children?

This is Ashwaq Muharram, who after 20 years as a doctor in the Yemen, is travelling round the part of her country she can reach, distributing medicine and food, paid for out of her own pocket, using her car as a mobile clinic.

Malnourishment affects the immune system of children and makes them far more likely to fall ill. But at the same time it is becoming more difficult for them to get treatment. Many of the country's hospitals have had to

close, either because of bombing or the lack of medical supplies. She is working near the port of Hodaydah, which is controlled by Houthi rebels who took over most of the country in 2014, and which was until recently the entry point for 70% of Yemen's essential food imports. Now, not only is it under blockade, it has been pummelled by airstrikes carried out by the Saudi-led coalition - the port itself is smashed, and an entire tourist resort on the beach completely destroyed.

Some 20 years ago this unstable country fell politically apart when the president lost his authority and his deputy took over. The rebels saw their chance, supported by their ally Iran. Saudi Arabia could not tolerate this, and formed a coalition with neighbouring Arab countries to oppose it. The US, and the UK which has a long-standing and lucrative defence and trade relationship with the Saudis, also lent their support. So two rival regional powers fight a brutal proxy war over the heads of the mutilated and starving Yemenis, who have no comprehension of the political power struggle of which they are the victims.



I looked up the aid we are giving Yemen this year, scene of the world's worst humanitarian disaster. The figure is £87.2million, which is down from £139.1million last year. The UN Secretary-General said recently: "Millions of Yemeni children, women and men desperately need aid to live. *Cutting Aid is a death sentence.*"

I find another aid appeal sent by a Yemeni in my newspaper. 'For more than six years, it says, we've lived under the shadow of war. Yet the fighting goes on. People have sold their assets, but many are barely surviving. When the bombing starts my wife and I take the children to their safe room. We tell them people are playing with fireworks.'

The appeal suggests donating a figure - it mentions £73 - which would help a family to buy food and other essentials. You can find the address in the press, social media, etc, or I can let you have it. And please remember Yemen in your prayers.

Robin Derbyshire, rmderbysire@btinternet.com

Coming soon

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

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.
Janet Kemp

Dates for your Diary

"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.

Repair Café at St Andrew's, first Saturday of the month: 7th August. From 10.00am. Still lots to do in the garden so if your tools are getting a bit blunt, why not bring them in for sharpening. Small electrical repairs, sewing and IT support continue to be popular. For any of you Facebook users, Lyn has found a site called Climate Science Information Center. Also #gloucestershirerrecycles.
Carol Drummond

What's on this week?

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=Q0VHQVVuWHB1QmpBd2ZDcEZJNlIXUT09>

ID 955 7054 4462,

Passcode 686988

Zoom Host: Bob/June



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=Rm1iZ01ZWkpYNmVvbXZScFJlSWgyUT09>

Meeting ID: 962 0456 5714 Passcode: 108557

Zoom Host: Iain

And Finally for Garden Lovers...

Tony & Sandra invite you to Enjoy 5 mins of relaxation in a lovely walled garden. The link is <https://youtu.be/jln8zxlSlyo>. Bring your own tea and Welsh cakes to this 'Parisian Café'

