



## Cheltenham United Reformed Church

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

**Bulletin 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (Mothering Sunday)**

**Clocks go FORWARD one hour this weekend**

### The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

27 <sup>th</sup> March	The Elders	Mothering Sunday
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	Family Service
15 <sup>th</sup> April 10.00am	Prayers at the Cross	<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Mrs Julie Jefferies	<b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>

### The Pulpit at St Andrew's

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

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

27 <sup>th</sup> March	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	Mothering Sunday
<b>HYMNS: Rejoice+Sing 671, 373, 187, 72, 39, Mission Praise 465</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Rev Iain McLaren	Baptism
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Mr Bob Alger	<b>PALM SUNDAY</b> /Family Service
15 <sup>th</sup> April 3.00pm	Rev Iain McLaren	<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Rev Iain McLaren	<b>EASTER SUNDAY</b> /Communion

### The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

Details of all **HOLY WEEK** Services can be found in '**Lantern**', and '**Grapevine**' both available at <http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

10 <sup>th</sup> April	Rev Alison Evans	<b>PALM SUNDAY</b>
14 <sup>th</sup> April 7.00pm	Rev Iain McLaren	<b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> /Communion at URCC

### Worship on Wednesdays

1<sup>st</sup> Wed of Month at Warden Hill URCC, Rest of the month at St Andrew's. 12.15pm

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

### AGM Season

Prestbury	24 <sup>th</sup> April	following Worship
St Andrew's	1 <sup>st</sup> May	following Worship

**Please send St Andrew's Annual Reports to Janet before Easter, for inclusion in the Report Book**

Warden Hill (TCiWH) Change of date to: Sun 8<sup>th</sup> May, 12 noon

## **Rev Iain McLaren, our Minister writes:**



The Bible reading set by the lectionary for Mothering Sunday this year has no mention of mothers, but instead features a father, specifically the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. However, the parable is not really about the father, but rather about the relationship between his two sons. It is a story about sibling rivalry: the older brother takes offence at perceived favouritism shown towards his younger brother.

Anyone who has a brother or a sister and any parent who has more than one child will know that sibling rivalry is a thing. Whether the source is competition for parental love and affection or the need for each sibling to assert their individuality, family life is often disrupted by conflict between the family members who are most closely related. Parents reluctantly find themselves drawn into the role of peacemaker in settling squabbling between brothers and sisters.

The Church has been likened to a family and it is common for Christians to refer to other Christians as brothers or sisters in Christ. As with other families, the life of the Christian family has historically been marred by conflict between brother and sister Christians. At its worse we have seen fratricidal wars of religion break out between people who supposedly shared the same Christian faith.

Around a hundred years ago, the modern ecumenical movement began as an attempt to bring conflict between Christians to an end by drawing the various Christian denominations together into ever closer fellowship. A high point was reached fifty years ago when the Congregational Church in England and Wales merged with the Presbyterian Church of England, on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1972, to create the United Reformed Church. This year is the URC's 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Year and we intend to mark this locally with a united Cheltenham URC Jubilee Thanksgiving Service at St Andrew's on 25<sup>th</sup> September. As we prepare to mark this important landmark in our history, I invite you to continue praying and working for closer relations with all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Yours in Christ,  
*Iain*

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

**Day off on FRIDAYS.**



### **Prayer Requests this week:**

Hanne Lambley, Geoff and Margaret Harmsworth, Mhairi Turner, Edith McKenzie, Cyril Bleasdale, The people of Ukraine, The friends and family of Deacon Mark who are in Ukraine.

### **Lectionary Readings:    (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent)**

Joshua 5 v9-12  
Luke15 v1-3, 11b-32

Psalm 32  
2 Corinthians 5 v16-21

## CURC Lent Group

The Lent study group takes place via zoom on **Wednesdays** at 7.30pm.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86817591596?pwd=MkkzSzRWdzFPUTViUnZjNitLZStKUT09>

Meeting ID: 868 1759 1596

Passcode: 368163

We are following '**Days to Lament**' from Embrace the Middle East.

*Rev Iain*

We are all invited to a **Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration** of the United Reformed Church's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972**

On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022, 3pm-5pm at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London SW1H 9NH, where the Uniting Assembly and first General Assembly took place. **Free tickets: [www.bit.ly/urc50](http://www.bit.ly/urc50)**

## ECO

**The Prestbury ECO Mole sits on a bollard by the Kings Arms.**



**St Andrew's Charity for March/April : Maggie's in Cheltenham.**

**Maggie's restores the joy of living to people with Cancer**



**MAGGIE'S**

Everyone's home of cancer care

Maggie's is a charity, entirely free to those who go there, and funded by the kindness of donors and gifts in wills. It also has a vigorous programme of fundraising by supportive well-wishers. It appeals on behalf of the many cancer sufferers in our community who need support beyond their medical needs.

Please give to Maggie's, this month's St Andrew's Charity. It's a cause which many people are thankful for.



**Good News on our Charity giving to CWR.**

**The total raised for the appeal was £565.25. The CWR committee are delighted to receive this money as they plan forward to meet the many needs of our refugee guests.**

*Robin Derbyshire*



We (that is, St Andrew's Church Meeting) agreed this year to learn more about Bangladesh, and Christian Aid's work there, so here, as an introduction, is a picture of Shikha, who is fixing netting to a pole, which extends round her Crab Farm. Yes, Shikha is a Crab Farmer. It's a welcome change from seeking out the depleting fish population in deeper waters, where they risked encountering sharks.

Climate change is already altering the traditional ways of farming and fishing. Agriculture is no longer a viable option because of the salinity of the soil, and the lack of fresh water available. A Christian Aid partner organisation is working with people living in poverty, and with those, especially women, who are often excluded, to develop sustainable livelihoods and improve their lives. Previously these women had to fish in the dangerous rivers for a catch to sell, to provide food and education for their children.

Women are trained how to use the extensive flooded areas where the Ganges and other rivers empty the polluted waters they bring down from the Himalayas into the Bay of Bengal. Once these farmers are earning their own income they no longer have to depend on their husbands for money. They can take a full part in deciding how the household's money is spent, for example on food and the children's education. and of course, on equipment for their business.



The crab farming communities experienced challenges during the pandemic, as the lockdown measures stopped them selling and exporting crabs. The organisation which supports them helped with alternative opportunities, such as duck rearing, and vegetable gardening. And now that crab farming is viable again, the families have restarted their businesses.

*Please look out for our poster-size picture of Shikha on the charities noticeboard. It brings out the smile on her face, and the exciting colours of her dress!*

**Robin Derbyshire**

### **Dates for your Diary**

29<sup>th</sup> May CURC AGM with Lunch, following United Pastorate Service, at St Andrew's, 10.30am

### **Community**

2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June Queen's Platinum Jubilee Holiday

26<sup>th</sup> June Montpellier Brass Concert at St Andrew's

2<sup>nd</sup> July Montpellier Fiesta

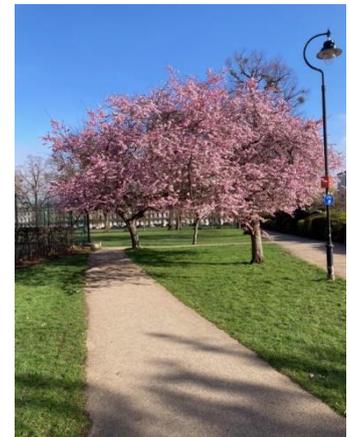
9<sup>th</sup> July Prestbury Village Fair

## What's on across CURC this week

<b>Sat 26<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<b>19.00-20.00</b>	<b>Organ Recital</b>	<b>St Andrew's</b>
Mon 28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	10:00 - 11:30	Prestbury URChins Baby & Toddlers	Prestbury URC
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	19.30 - 21.00	CURC Lent Group	zoom
Thu 31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	14.00	Area Meeting	Abbeydale, Gloucester
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	10.00 - 12.00	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	10.00 – 13.00	Repair Café	St Andrew's
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10:00 - 11:30	Prestbury URChins Baby & Toddlers	Prestbury URC
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14.00-16.00	Wednesday Social Group	Warden Hill URCC
		<b>Talk – Pets as Therapy and AGM</b>	
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19.30-21.00	CURC Lent Group	zoom
Thu 7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12.45-13.45	Qi Gong	
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10.00 – 12.00	'Easter Special' Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10.00	Footsloggers	
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14.00	Community Film Show	Warden Hill URCC
		<b>'Respect' cert 12</b> starring Jennifer Hudson as Arethra Franklin	
<b>Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	<b>10.30 – 14.00</b>	<b>Family Fun Day</b>	<b>St Andrew's</b>

### 'HOPES SPRING ETERNAL'

I've struggled hard just recently for 'up-beat' inspiration, with Covid not defeated yet and now - the Ukraine nation. It seems we're in a 'free-fall world' with nothing good ahead; an Armageddon of despair - when hopes and dreams lie dead. And yet we know we must not yield to harbingers of gloom, our duty is to persevere - give aspiration room. So often it's the little things that help us all feel better:- a stranger's smile, a chat with friends, an unexpected letter. And now at last the sun has shone providing warmth and light, and walking in the park today - a truly wondrous sight. A tree which, through the winter long, has battled wind and rain while standing naked 'gainst the sky has blossomed once again. A canopy, incredible, of fragile flowers, pink, encouraging all passers-by to ponder, gasp and think. This tree, like us, has long endured hard times of deprivation, but suddenly, it's bloomed anew providing much elation. Mother Nature teaching us this is no time to mope, there's new life bursting all around and 'while there's life, there's hope'. The soldiers who, in Flanders Fields, saw landscapes blown asunder, we're comforted by poppies, frail - sure signs of hope and wonder. And though their time has long since gone, their legacy endures, and promises a future, brave, spite Covid, pain and wars. So let us all, this welcome Spring, from dark despair be free; embrace the hope the poppies gave - just like that glorious tree!!



*Geoff Tizzard-King. - 20th March 2022 (Words and photo)*

## Report from Cheltenham Christian Aid AGM



The Cheltenham Christian Aid AGM took place in person this week! I thought you might want a little feedback.

Quite clearly the war in Ukraine is foremost in our minds at the moment, and one of Christian Aid's tasks is to allocate its 7 percent share of the £200m DEC Appeal funds donated to date. (£2.5 m of this needs to be spent in the first 6 months.)

- Already £500k has been distributed to Hungarian Interchurch Aid to provide immediate food aid for those crossing the border to Ukraine.
- In the coming months, at least £1m will be funding emergency kits for use on civilian casualties.
- £1m and rising will be going to Hungarian Interchurch Aid to provide cash grants to Ukrainian people fleeing the country, to support them in setting up new lives and paying for essentials.
- A further £1m is to reach Romania via the Swiss Agency HEX, for the same level of support.

In the long term Christian Aid is developing partnerships with:

- World Jewish relief, to support elderly Ukrainian's displaced in European countries.
- Habitat for Humanity who specialise in post conflict reconstruction work.

While the situation in Ukraine is terrible, Christian Aid is mindful of the fact there are many other countries in the world, where the Hunger issue is grave and these countries urgently need our continued support;

- Afghanistan
- Ethiopia
- South Sudan
- Zimbabwe

### **Christian Aid Week 2022 is from 15- 21 May**

Zimbabwe is our focus country for this week, but as the horror of war continues in Ukraine, CA is having to review how this will impact the CA week message.

In particular - we need everyone to understand that the war in Ukraine will have far reaching impacts on global communities, like Zimbabwe, resulting in even more food shortage.

Please hold the work of Christian Aid and all agency and charity workers in your prayers, so that together we can make every contribution count to its absolute maximum.

Thank you

*Alison Veal*

### **From the Editors**

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

*Janet Kemp (Design) and Fiona Hall (Technology)*