



## Cheltenham United Reformed Church

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

*Bulletin 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021*

### From the Editors;

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

Iain can be contacted on 01242-231602 or [revdiain@urchic.org.uk](mailto:revdiain@urchic.org.uk). Please respect his day off on Monday's.

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>

7<sup>th</sup> February                  Rev Iain McLaren                  (Communion)

**Please have your own Bread and Wine ready for joining in Communion.**

14<sup>th</sup> February                  Mr Bob Alger

21<sup>st</sup> February                  Rev Iain McLaren

28<sup>th</sup> February                  Ms Carol Drummond

### St Andrew's Charity for February

Save the Children

### The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services are 10.30am

7<sup>th</sup> February                  Rev Dee Brierley-Jones **via ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/j/99543399454?pwd=ZUhvNkhZVXBOUUNTTjRxSUK2RVh3UT09>

Meeting ID: 995 4339 9454                  Passcode: 141174

28<sup>th</sup> February                  Rev Iain McLaren                  (Communion)

### 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                  South Cheltenham Churches United Communion

(Rev Nick Davies presiding and Rev Iain McLaren preaching)

## Letter from Rev Iain

Dear Friends,

A couple of weeks ago the Gospel passage set by the lectionary was Mark's account of the call of the first disciples. We heard how Jesus called Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John and immediately they left their nets and followed him. They did not know where they were going and they were to experience many ups and downs during their time with Jesus, and would make some mistakes along the way, but ultimately Jesus equipped them to become founders of the Church.

In many ways these first disciples are models for our own discipleship. We each respond to our own call to follow Jesus and set out, not knowing where this will take us. Perhaps we might make a few mistakes along the way, but we have faith that Jesus continues to walk alongside us and will equip us with all the spiritual gifts we need to accomplish whatever ministry he is calling us to undertake.

What is true of individuals is also true of churches, which are, after all, communities of disciples. Christ calls churches into existence and equips them for ministry, calling each church member to fulfil some specific ministry within the church.

Over recent decades, all the mainstream denominations in this country, including the URC, have been experiencing a decline in the number of persons coming into stipendiary ministry. Retirements from full-time ministry have consistently outnumbered ordinations. As a result, there are now fewer full-time stipendiary ministers than church congregations and difficult decisions need to be taken about sharing out this scarce resource. A paper on ministerial deployment was discussed at a meeting of the URC Gloucester Area last week.

The temptation is to see this development in purely negative terms and worry about how churches will survive without ministerial cover. However, I have faith that Christ is continuing to call the right number of persons to exercise ministry in his Church. It may just be that he is not calling them into traditional full-time stipendiary ministry. Our experiences during the covid lockdowns have challenged us to rethink what it means to be a church. I also think we need to rethink what it means to be a minister.

Yours in Christ, Iain

### Prayer Requests this week:



Joan and Ian Thomson

Elspet Carter and family

GIVE THANKS for all who are selflessly helping others in this time of pandemic, especially those who are keeping an eye out for their neighbours.

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

Isaiah 40 v21-31  
Mark 1 v29-39

Psalm 147 v1-11,20c  
1 Corinthians 9 v16-23

## Zoom Coffee on Sunday 12.00noon

<https://zoom.us/j/98622705057?pwd=NHdZaHJtZDdqVG03ckdDMnRRVVZBQT09>

Meeting ID: 986 2270 5057

Passcode: 720767

## Prayers on Mondays are MOVING to Wednesday's at 8 pm

All are welcome to join us for an hour of prayer and prayerful discussion

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87023696508?pwd=ZTNVeWtZTm9JekRDaTNRSjhZM3A2UT09>

Meeting ID: 870 2369 6508

Passcode: 885130

## Tea Time on Tuesdays

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

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

Meeting ID: 955 7054 4462

Passcode 686988

## Reading Group

The Zoom meeting of the Reading Group will take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to discuss 'The Salt Path' by Raynor Winn. I hope that as many of you as possible will join in the discussion.

<https://zoom.us/j/95365354431?pwd=dGgrZG5UK0FXTW9Ud1piVTZkNkNldz09>

Meeting ID: 953 6535 4431

Passcode: 764734

Any ideas for future books for discussion would be welcome. I did suggest 'The Doll Factory' by Elizabeth MacNeal but would also recommend 'The Rose Code' by Kate Quinn which is about three women recruited to work at Bletchley Park.

Also because of clashes on Zoom how do people feel about changing the day to a Thursday evening instead? Keep healthy and good reading. **Mary Cummings 01242 243216.**

## The "Isle of Upton on Severn" (or 'In Severn?')

as seen from space.

Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021

Photo sent by Jenny Evans- who fortunately lives on higher ground.



## LENT COURSE (Warden Hill)

The South Cheltenham Team will be running a 5 week Lent course on the 'Message of the Parables' based on Paula Gooder's book 'The Parables' (no need to buy the book) beginning on Wed 24th Feb via Zoom at 7.30pm. Please email [info@pipandjims.org.uk](mailto:info@pipandjims.org.uk) if you would like to attend.

**In the moment**  
**- exploring Mindfulness in a Christian context**

**An invitation to**

those who have some experience of Mindfulness  
and those who have none.

This is a follow up to the sessions in June, September and December  
but you are welcome whether or not you attended those sessions



**Date: Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 10 am - 12 noon**

**Venue: Online via zoom,  
In a quiet room with a comfortable chair**

The zoom session will be no more than 2 hours,  
but I will leave you with ideas and activities to pursue afterwards,  
either the same day or during the following days.

You will need to book in advance  
so that I can send you the zoom link and other information.

There will be no cost,  
but you may like to consider an extra donation to your local church  
which will have a reduced income at this time.

For more information or book a place,  
please contact Jan Scott [jan.scott@live.co.uk](mailto:jan.scott@live.co.uk)  
using reference ITMonline 060321  
by 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, 12 noon.

## ECO News

Did you take part in the **Big Garden Birdwatch** last weekend? I didn't have much to report – 1 robin, 1 blackbird, 1 bluetit, 4 pigeons and 6 sparrows. I submitted my results on Tuesday and at that time 11,703,005 birds had been counted. Of these, house sparrows were the largest percentage – 20%, followed by bluetits at 13%. Strangely magpies accounted for only 6%. I remember when I rarely saw these but now I can regularly see 6 or 7 on the roofs of the houses opposite. If you did take part, I hope you enjoyed it. **National Nestbox** week takes place from 14-21 February. The aim is encourage everyone to put up nest boxes in their local area to help our birds. <https://www.nestboxweek.com>

An interesting article I came across on the **BBC News website** was on 14 January and asked whether Coronavirus had made us more ethical, more environmentally minded consumers. It reported that a study by research group Kantar said that since Covid-19 sustainability was more of a concern for consumers than before the outbreak. The number of people buying organically has increased and people are choosing to shop locally and to support more small businesses. Sales of vegan food have increased and there are indications this is being reflected in clothing sales. I've noticed more companies reusing offcuts of fabric to make face coverings or using recycled wool. The article concluded that there is an appetite for change and that if everyone made one small change, overall that adds up to millions of changes. Food for thought

The **Show the Love** campaign runs from 1-21<sup>st</sup> February this year. This is something we have taken part in as a church over the years. This year, like many things, it will be slightly different but we can still be involved. One suggestion is to decorate your windows or garden with green hearts on Valentine's weekend. You may have a green heart from previous events which you might like to wear. For more information see <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love>. *Carol*

## **ANNA CHAPLAINCY**      **Knitted or crochet crosses for care homes**

Project to create knitted crosses to give to care home residents for Easter. These lightly stuffed crosses have proved very successful in other parts of the country. Residents hold them during worship and whilst singing but also in quieter moments of reflection and prayer. Holding crosses are also often a comfort in the last days.

- **Using double knitting yarn and 4mm needles, cast on 10 stitches**
- **Knit 28 rows (also known as garter stitch)**
- **Cast on 6 stitches at the beginning of the next 2 rows**
- **Knit 10 rows**
- **Cast off 6 stitches at the beginning of the next 2 rows.**
- **Knit 14 rows**
- **Cast on 6 stitches at the beginning of the next 2 rows**
- **Knit 10 rows**

- **Cast off 6 stitches at the beginning of the next 2 rows**
- **Knit 28 rows on remaining 10 stitches**
- **Cast off leaving tail for sewing up.**
- **Fold in half and sew up putting a little stuffing between the two crosses being sewn together.**

**For crochet version** use the above instructions but replace knit (garter stitch) with double crochet.

**Please wrap each cross in tissue paper, and (if you wish) attach a tag reading: *'May the hope of Jesus Christ be with you always. With love from the Cheltenham and Bishop's Cleeve Anna Chaplaincy [and, if you wish, add the name of the organisation you are knitting with].'***

Please give this pattern to anyone that you know will enjoy this lockdown challenge to help others! We will aim to collect all the crosses by **12<sup>th</sup> March 2021**. **Please email [Gillian.Ford@cabic.co.uk](mailto:Gillian.Ford@cabic.co.uk) with a contact number or email for yourself and the number of crosses you hope to make. This helps us to know the ongoing total and if we need to contact you, we are able to do so.**