



## Cheltenham United Reformed Church

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

*Bulletin 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022*

### The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

16<sup>th</sup> January

Dr Tony Jeans

23<sup>rd</sup> January

Rev Iain McLaren

Communion

**Church meeting after worship**

### The Pulpit at St Andrew's

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

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

**Please sit on Pale Blue Chairs for social distancing**

9th January

Mr Bob Alger

16<sup>th</sup> January

Rev Iain McLaren

**Church meeting after worship**

**Agenda's will be sent out by email during the week.**

23<sup>rd</sup> January

Dr Tony Jeans

30<sup>th</sup> January

Rev Iain McLaren

### The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

Details of all Christmas Services can be found in 'Lantern', and 'Grapevine' both available at

<http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

9<sup>th</sup> January

Rev Iain McLaren

Communion

**Keeping us all safe while worshipping.**

**Wearing masks in enclosed public spaces is COMPULSORY**

Please respect social distancing and the sensitivities of others around you in church.

Thank you.



**Prayer Requests this week:**  
All those known to us who are ill  
The URC community at Warden Hill



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

January, the first month of the year, is associated with new beginnings, often symbolised by the making of New Year's resolutions to be a better person in some aspect of one's life. It will be my birthday on Sunday and so I will have further grounds for thinking in terms of new beginnings. I will be prompted to reflect that I am a year older (and possibly wiser) and invited to embrace the potential of a new year of life.



According to the lectionary, 9<sup>th</sup> January this year is designated as a Sunday for remembering the baptism of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus was a new beginning. It marked the end of his life as Joseph the carpenter's son and the beginning of his ministry of teaching and healing, culminating in his death and resurrection. Prior to returning to heaven, Jesus commanded his disciples to make new disciples, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thereafter baptism became the sacrament marking the beginning of a convert's new life as a Christian.

In church traditions that practise believer's baptism the link between baptism and the beginning of life as a Christian is evident. The candidate professes their faith in Christ, gives testimony about how God has led them to this point and then receives baptism. The link is less clear in traditions, like our own, in which baptism is most commonly administered to infants, with parents making promises on their child's behalf. When I meet with parents for baptism classes I therefore like to describe baptism as a welcome into the Christian family. It marks the moment the child begins a new life as part of the Christian family, with all the rights and responsibilities that being part of a family implies. It is the beginning of a new relationship with God that will have lifelong implications.

Whatever our age, baptism is a sign that God has claimed us and is at work in us. Baptism unites us with all our brothers and sisters in Christ. At the beginning of this new year, I invite you to think about the difference baptism has made to your life.

Yours in Christ,

*Iain*

**Rev Iain McLaren can be contacted at:  
01242-231602, or 0748311842 [revdian@urcic.org.uk](mailto:revdian@urcic.org.uk)**

**Day off on FRIDAYS.**

### **Lectionary Readings:**

Isaiah 43 v1-7

Psalms 29

Luke 3 v15-17,21-22

Acts 8 v14-17

### **Family Services/All Age Worship at St Andrew's**

Starting in February 2022, the 2nd Sunday of the month Morning Worship will be designated as an 'All Age Family Service'. We hope that families will enjoy worshipping together.

### **Midweek Worship at St Andrew's**

Weekly 'Midweek Worship' in the form of a Prayer Meeting, led by Rev Iain, will start on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January, 12.00 till 1.00pm, at St Andrew's. **ALL WELCOME.**

## St Andrew's January Charity

Please give generously to help Refugees make their home here

This month and next St Andrew's will be supporting the town's campaign to extend a welcoming hand to refugees arriving here from Syria, Afghanistan and other countries. In January and February our Charity offerings will go towards CWR's work supporting vulnerable and needy refugees and asylum seekers who are starting a new life in our town.



In 2019 Cheltenham Town Council unanimously voted to become a *Town of Sanctuary* and called for further support to integrate refugees with local communities through basic language lessons and education opportunities. Responding to this, the '*Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees*' organisation was set up, with a large membership of volunteers who devote their skills and their time to ensure that refugees settle in and have what they need. They help to furnish flats, find clothes for the children, and organise community picnics. Teachers with a knowledge of a wide variety of languages teach them a basic knowledge of English. Access to wifi is very important for those with loved ones at home anxious for news of them. Those who have not yet been granted refugee status need legal support to put their case correctly, often a difficult struggle. Our generous donations are needed to support all their work.



The plight of refugees could not have been more eloquently put than by this 3.5 metre high puppet Amal (meaning 'hope'), who spent two months travelling through many countries to the UK, here seen greeted by dancers in Manchester. Her journey represents those taken by the millions of people who have been violently displaced by war or persecution, especially children. At this time of multiple global crises Amal's urgent message to the world is "Don't forget us".

*Robin Derbyshire*

## We all have items that can be recycled after Christmas:

### Cards and Stamps for the Cobalt Unit

Please keep your used cards and stamps for recycling in aid of the Cobalt Unit.

There will be a box in the Link Gallery at St Andrew's, and at the Thirlestaine Breast Centre opposite Linton House. Donation of cards ends **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January**.

Thank you.

*Lyn Ricketts*

### Unwanted Toiletries for the Women's Refuge

If you have any unwanted new, or even part-used, women's or children's toiletries, then please donate them to the Women's Refuge. There are collecting boxes in the vestibule at Prestbury and the Link Gallery at St Andrew's. The families can arrive at the shelter with nothing and these items are gratefully received. Thankyou.

*Fiona Hall*

## Scottish Society Burns Supper



This will be held at the Lilleybrook Golf Club on **25th January 2022**, a three-course meal with entertainment and all the customary traditions of the event. In the light of possible pandemic restrictions, we cannot yet be certain that this will be able to take place, but provisional bookings are already being made.

Please contact Brian Smith to book your place – Tel: 01452 714051

## What's on across CURC

Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	14:00	Community Film Show	Warden Hill URCC
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10:00 – 11.30	Prestbury URChins	Prestbury URC
	19:30	St Andrew's Elders	St Andrew's URC
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	12:00 – 13.00	Mid-Week Worship	St Andrew's URC
	14:00 – 16.00	Wednesday Social Group	Warden Hill URCC
Thu 13 <sup>th</sup> Jan	12:45 – 13.45	Qi Gong	St Andrew's URC
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 - Noon	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC

## Reading Group

The next meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February at 'Karinya'. The book is **'The Seven Doors' by Agnes Ravatn**, a thriller which mixes Jungian and Freudian psychology. New members always welcome.

*Mary Cummings*

## Support the Food Bank

Thank you for your ongoing support. The items we need most at the moment are: UHT milk, long-life fruit juice, coffee, ketchup or brown sauce, tinned ham, hot chocolate, gravy granules, savoury crackers.

We don't need pasta, rice, pulses/beans, soup, tinned tomatoes, cereal or tea as we have plenty of these at the moment.

Thank you.

## From the Editors

Not only Rev Iain's birthday this week, but his first anniversary of being with us in Cheltenham. We send him our best wishes.

????? Does anyone understand or speak Farsi ??????

Please contact Janet

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)*



## **'AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR'**

The Park today was dank and cold,  
but hardy souls still met for hot drinks and a welcome chat  
whilst perched on benches wet.  
"So, how did Christmas go for you?"  
"Well, like the one before -another party much reduced  
by Covid at the door."  
And now it's almost '22,  
we'll celebrate New Year with optimistic hopes and prayers  
that good times will be here.  
We've missed so much and life's been strange,  
pandemic all around;  
and yet we are the lucky ones - 'we're still above the ground'!!  
Let's grasp this opportunity,  
we must not waste this chance to make the world a better place  
and others' lives enhance.  
These winter months will slip away with brighter times in store;  
the Park will be more welcoming,  
we'll meet and chat once more.  
So, *good riddance '21,*  
*welcome '22,*  
*Happy New Year one and all.*  
This, sent with love, to you.

***Geoff Tizzard-King. (Thursday, 30th December 2021)***



Following Geoff's well received Worship service on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, Sandra has sent the following information to enhance one of Geoff's references.

### ***'The Gate of the Year' - who wrote it?***

It was Gloucestershire poet and academic, Minnie Louise Haskins (1875 to 1957), which was titled by her as '**God Knows**' .

She was a Congregationalist and did voluntary work for her local church. She worked for the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, and as a tutor in the Social Science Department of the London School of Economics. She co-authored a work on Industrial Welfare, as well as writing volumes of poetry and novels.

King George VI did not say in his Christmas Message to the nation in 1939 who it was who wrote the lines he quoted, but the BBC did release this information the next day. The book, by William Shawcross, '**The Servant Queen and the King She Serves**', which was published in 2016 by the Bible Society, indicates that it was the young Princess Elizabeth who gave her father a copy of the words.

*Sandra Jeans*

*(Various sources acknowledged including Wikipedia)*