



## Cheltenham United Reformed Church

*'The Pew sheet without any Pews'*

*Bulletin No 13 / 07.06.20*

### Dear Friends

In company with all other organisations, the Church is following Government guidelines and not meeting for worship while the coronavirus emergency is on.

This weekly bulletin has worship, news, prayer requests, information about virtual services, plus anything else that might be 'in the notices'.

### Prayer Requests

- Geoffrey Harmsworth, Mhairi Turner
- Steve and Joan Osmond, friends from Christchurch
- Family and friends of Gwen Hewinson
- Family and friends of Vicky Dunn, an ex-Prestbury URChins mum
- Those with birthdays and Anniversaries this week.
- The country as we start to slowly emerge from lockdown

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.

### Lectionary Readings (Trinity Sunday)

Genesis 1 v1-2,4a

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13 v11-13

Matthew 28 v16-20



## Virtual Services

For a list of virtual services, please visit <http://www.urch.org.uk/news.aspx>

**Message from Bob Alger, [realger@sky.com](mailto:realger@sky.com)**

The 11.30 am **Sunday morning Coffee Chat** on Zoom continues to be well supported with 27 of us meeting last week. If you would like to join in and need a little technical help to set things up, then do give me a call on 01242 512343 and I will try to help. For this Sunday the links and password are the same as before: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6147530476>

Meeting ID: 614 753 0476 and the Password is 6Bcgyc



Cheltenham United Reformed Church Coffee Morning 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 – host Bob Alger

**NEW** this week:

I also invite you to join me in a Zoom **Prayer Meeting** to be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June at 8.30pm. The same meeting ID and password as above will apply. This is very much an on-line first for us so we will have to see how it develops and please be prepared to share your own ideas for future improvements! Hope to see you there. *Bob*

### **Addendum, from Tony and Sandra**

We liked the inclusion of the bookshelf image. Below is information about the originator/artist. The originator of the piece of artwork published in Bulletin 12 is Dr. Phil Shaw. It is titled '**Shelf Isolation**'. Below are some reference links:

<https://twistedstifter.com/2020/04/bookshelf-story-written-with-titles-by-phil-shaw/>  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bookshelf-art-tells-a-story-for-our-time-gmmkc7m8c>  
<https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/Shelf-Obsession-by-Phil-Shaw-artist-Phil-Shaw-artist-Matthew-Sturgis-contributions-Dominique-Sirois-Rouleau-contributions/9781911164869>

## **ST ANDREW'S June Charity**

### **The Midlands Air Ambulance**

On average each flight costs £2,500. In all each year it costs in excess of £9 million to maintain the three aircraft and to provide all aspects of this life-saving service. The Air Ambulance relies on donations from businesses and from generous gifts and fund raising from local people. Please support this life saving service.

If you have not signed up for regular giving to our monthly charity, in lieu of the retiring offertory plate please see the document from Finance Committee sent out by email prior to the AGM in April.

*Robin Derbyshire*

### **Reflection from Rev Dee Brierley-Jones**

#### **Because We Believe in the Gospel**

The Gospel account of Jesus Christ, the Lion of Judah, and the Sacrificial Lamb, is a precious story on which our very soul and life depends.

The fact of the resurrection of Jesus is what makes the gospel story not merely a great experience to read, but a life-changing power, and this power carried the disciples after Pentecost.

Let us remember what Paul said about “they *saw* Him, and *touched* Him...” - and it was this awesome news of the Passover lamb rising from death that these Jewish men – now called Nazarenes - carried.

They joyfully announced that this proves the Kingdom of God is real and will triumph, and that if you believe you enter His realm and power now, and that the story of Jesus, the Jewish Rabbi, changes lives because it *is* true.

I think that you will agree with me when I say that in no way is the Gospel story sentimental or escapist. In fact, the gospel takes evil and loss with utmost seriousness, because it says that we cannot save ourselves – because nothing short of the very Son of God can save us.

But as a story there is a “happy ending” to the brutal sorrow of the cross, and the historical resurrection is so enormous that it swallows up even the sorrow of the Cross.

It is so great that those who believe it can henceforth fully face the depth of the sorrow and brokenness of life.

So, what about those who do not believe in the Gospel story? Well, they could weep for joy at the happy ending of some other inspiring story, but the enchantment will quickly fade, because the reality of life will poke through.

But those of us who rejoice and believe in the words of the Bible, then our hearts slowly heal even as we face the darkest times (*...the valley and the shadow of death... Ps. 23*) because we *know* that, because of Jesus Christ life *is* like that.

Then even our griefs, even the *dyscatastrophes* we know, will be taken up into the miraculous grace of God's purpose.

*“Death has been swallowed up in victory ...Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory though Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 15)*

So when we hold our Bible in our hands we know that it contains the ultimate story that shows victory coming out of defeat, and strength coming out of weakness, and life coming out of death, and because it *is* a *true* story it gives us hope because we know life is really like that.

Jesus Christ the Messiah – the sacrificial lamb – took the suffering – He absorbed the darkness - so that we who believe can finally and dazzlingly become our true self and take our seat at His eternal feast. AMEN

*Blessings, Dee*



*Philadelphus*



*Poppies*

### **A Prayer for the Nonconforming**

How heavily we rely, Lord, on systems, procedures, tried and tested ways of doing things, our best laid plans.

And still, Lord, you choose to move lively, and decidedly to shake our Babel towers.

How inconvenient for our sense of order, for our need to control, that blessings spring out of nonconforming places, that blessings are showered on righteous rebels; blessings confounding expectations, blessings scandalising careful predictions.

Lord, you have often used our nonconforming to reveal your will.

Help us as church, at times held back by who and where some think we ought to be, to work with who and where we are.

*Stephen Best (prayer for Pentecost in URC Handbook 2020)*

**Fiona, Janet and Brian**