



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

'The Pew sheet without any Pews'

Bulletin No 14 / 14.06.20

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
- 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

Exodus 19 v2-8a

Psalm 100

Romans 5 v1-8

Matthew 9 v35 – 10 v8, 9-23

Virtual Services

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

Coffee and Prayers

Please join Bob Alger on Zoom for :

- The 11.30 am **Sunday morning Coffee Chat**
- The 8.30 am **Monday Prayer Meeting**

The link is: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6147530476> (Meeting ID: 614 753 0476/Password : 6BcgyC)

Any problems please call Bob on 01242 512343 or email realger@sky.com

ST ANDREW'S

Arson Attack at St Andrew's

The Fauconberg Road church doors were damaged by fire from arson overnight Tues 9th /Wed 10th June. The damage is restricted, if unsightly, and the building is secure. Thanks to Marcus for covering up the gap created.

The light fittings outside of the Garden Room were also damaged by trying to set fire to them as well. Insurers have been notified and we have commenced the process of organising repairs.

The fire was discovered by our near neighbour, the Principal of the Ladies College, early on Wednesday morning. She called the emergency services, and both police and fire service attended. There is still a smell of smoke in the sanctuary but most of it was dissipated by a very powerful blower the fire service had.

*God bless
David, Janet and Bob*



Janet is discussing the attack on Breakfast on BBC Radio Gloucestershire on Sunday 14 June from 6am-10am. (Available on *BBC Sounds* for a few days if you don't want to get up too early!)

We have received prayers from Salem, Christchurch and St Mark's Methodist. *Ann Lewis*

June Charity – Air Ambulance

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 Louis Ndekha

Called into God's Mission

Texts: Exod. 19:2-8; Mt 9:35-10:15; Rom. 5:2-8

God has surprising ways of enlisting individuals and groups into his work. In Exodus 19:2-8 after re-affirming his choice of Israel as his special people, we see God inviting these newly liberated slaves into a mission to be a holy people and a priestly nation. The imagery of a priestly nation (even when priesthood had not formally been established) suggests that this was a call to the whole congregation of Israel to live out Yahweh's vision for his people. As priests, they were to both represent Yahweh on earth and mediate his presence. This mission becomes clearer when Isaiah (42:6) later calls on them to be a light to the nations. This theme also echoes Abram's mission to be a channel of blessings to the world (Gen. 6:1-3). Thus, while the call was corporate, it was also at the same time individual.

Like Yahweh in Exodus, in the New Testament, Jesus also called his disciples into a special mission. It is interesting to note that by Matthew chapter 9, Jesus had only appointed four disciples (Mt 4:18-22). The final list of disciples (Mt 10:1-4) is presented in the context of Jesus' concern with the state of the masses (they were harassed and helpless Mt 9:35-38) and their need for care. In this case, the disciples are enlisted to serve the people. What is striking about the call is that the disciples are not recruited as 'special forces' to rescue the masses. They are called from among the masses and therefore share in the vulnerabilities of the common people. Like the masses, they also needed the care and nurture that Jesus tells them to go and offer to the helpless masses.

The disciples' shared experiences with the masses suggest that we do not need to be super Christians or a super church to minister to one another or the community around us. At a basic level, it takes us appreciating the peace we have with God through Christ (Rom. 5:1-10) and proclaiming to the world the possibility of peace with God and all the benefits that come with it. At the peak of the results of peace with God is the ability to have hope even in the most challenging circumstances (Rom. 5:3-5). According to Paul, this hope does not disappoint (Rom 5:5).

We currently live in a world where hope is certainly in short supply. There is despair and uncertainty everywhere over what will happen to jobs, how schools will look like and the structure of social relationships as we head into the future. As vulnerable individuals ourselves, we do not have the answers to the present challenges. Yet we have something more precious; we have hope that ultimately God will put an end to all uncertainty.

Therefore, like the disciples, we are called as ordinary people sent to ordinary people to make a difference not in our name but that of the one who sent us. In these times, when hope is needed most, our mission does not need to be something dramatic. A little thought and a prayer for a lonely friend or neighbour, the encouraging phone call or email constitute the little things that matter in people's lives. Through these, we would be sharing in the mission to which we have been called.

Louis Ndekha



peonies



geraniums

CHRIST'S ETERNAL INVITATION

Walk in my Word, Because you have heard, Then others will know that I live.

Walk in my love, Light, as the dove, The symbol my Father gave me.

Walk in my peace, Then all wars will cease, As love from my cross shall pour down.

Walk in my light, Against evil to fight, Let goodness and God-ness prevail.

Walk, and be pure, Soul soreness will cure, With prayer when walking with me.

Walk to the end, My hand I extend, Keep walking until you reach me.

Rev. Dee.

Fiona, Janet and Brian