



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

'The Pew sheet without any Pews'

Bulletin No 19 / 19.07.20

Dear Friends

We are all looking forward to being able to meet again for public worship. At St Andrew's the Elders are working towards the 6th September, as is The Church in Warden Hill, Prestbury have not yet decided on a restart date.

For all of us **Stewards** are an immensely important part of our Sunday worship. At St Andrew's we envisage having teams of 4 or 5 persons each week to cover all aspects, starting in September. The role will be different from our traditional expectations, but absolutely key to the smooth, safe running of events. Again, Prestbury and Warden Hill will have their own arrangements.

Thank you to everyone who has completed a Questionnaire; 21 have come back out of a possible 100 or so.

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

CONGRATULATIONS to Fred Cummings on his 80th birthday this week. Both Fred and Mary will be celebrating their birthdays this month.

Prayer Requests

- Pat Brooks
- Those struggling with Covid 19
- Those with Birthdays and Anniversaries this week.

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.

Virtual Services

For a list of virtual services, please visit <http://www.urch.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 pm **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

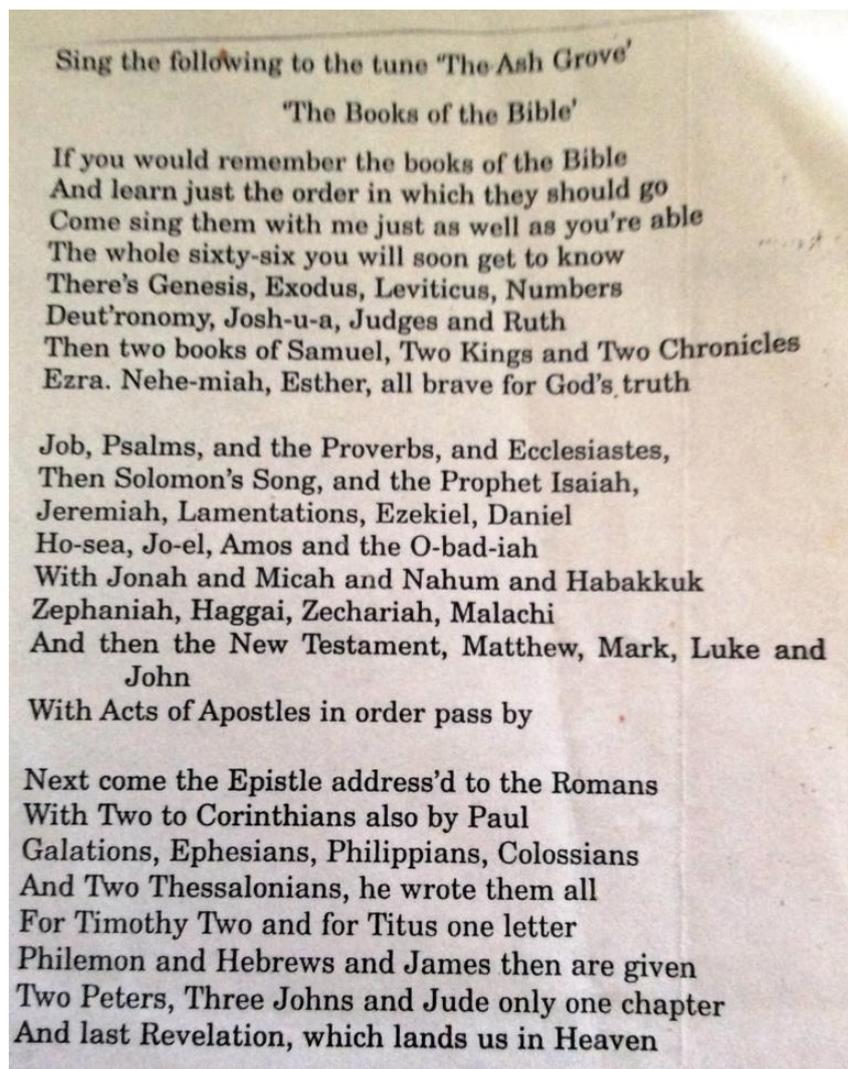
Lectionary Readings

From June to November there is a wider variety of lectionary readings. ROOTS and the URC Handbook use different selections.

Genesis 28 v10-19a OR Isaiah 44 v6-8 OR Wisdom of Solomon 12 v13,16-19

Psalms 139 v1-12, 23-24 OR Psalm 86 v11-17

Matthew 13 v24-30,36-43 OR Romans 8 v12-25



Contributed by Anne Standring

ANNE GRANT 1942-2020



Anne Grant was a longstanding and popular member of Prestbury having been made a member in May 1991. She will be remembered for her poetry, her kindness, her Bible Reading, her running of the bookstall and above all for her pithy comments on Brexit, Donald, Nicola and Boris – those four subjects were never to be mentioned if you were in a hurry!

Anne died of COVID-19 on 30 April 2019. For her funeral in Glasgow, her niece, Liz Hume, wrote the eulogy and she has kindly allowed us to share it (edited).

Anne was born on 8th March 1942 to loving parents James and Annie Currie. The oldest of 3 children (her brother James and sister Patricia sadly pre-deceased her) she was part of a very close extended family. She was born and resided at Fernie Street, Maryhill in Glasgow until she ventured off to Cheltenham in her early twenties.

Cheltenham was to become Anne's forever home where she built her fulfilled life around her friends, colleagues, church and the Women's Institute.

She began her working career as a seamstress but her intellect entrusted her into a position of employment at GCHQ. Her family were never to know exactly what role she played there, but it was a position that allowed her to travel and it took her to Hong Kong for a period of a few years. In the lead up to her retirement she was employed as a waitress at the Kings Arms when it was a Beefeater. She was very fond of this job as she enjoyed meeting new people and had a zealous interest in applying 'people-watching' into her favourite pleasure... poetry!

Poetry was a passionate hobby that Anne enjoyed, both to read and to write herself. She used her observations of everyday life to produce wonderful poems – some of which were even published pieces! She took great pride in her work and always gave the family renditions of her latest poems when she visited in the holidays.

Following a stroke in early 2019, Anne's independence was never to be as before. She decided, with the support of her family that she would move back to her original home in June 2019.

Through all this, Anne's faith never altered. She spoke of her happy fulfilled life and how her unwavering faith had always been a comfort for her. Having her family closer, treasuring many chats over cups of coffee and lots of chocolate cake was a great pleasure, for which she was always grateful.

Auntie Anne was a wonderful kind woman with a wonderful smile. She was eccentric, quirky and fun and an all-round 'one-off'. It is with all these things that she will be fondly remembered with love.

Liz Hume and Fiona Hall

ST ANDREW'S Our July Charity

Commitment for Life is the URC's channel for giving to, learning about, and praying for, areas where some of the world's poorest are struggling with the effects of poverty, climate change and injustice. The money raised goes via Christian Aid to its partner organisations in the chosen country, who devote it to meeting needs of the people. The partners work across all political and religious boundaries.



This year our money will go to a group of countries in Central America, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

So what is life really like for the Palestinians?

Last Year A URC team went to Israel/Palestine to visit. This week five of the team told their stories to a large group of URC members by Zoom. It was very powerfully done by 5 of the team who were ably chaired by Claire Nutbrown Hughes from Dursley Tab.



The group had all seen the inequalities of life in the Occupied areas. The streets of Bethlehem are shabby and untidy, compared with the opulent Israeli settlements with their green spaces on the hillsides. In the centre is the refugee camp housing Palestinians who have lived and brought up their families there since being driven from their homes in 1948. The shops in the Hebron market place are not open to do business, but only to show that they are still there. Wiring is spread overhead to protect the Palestinians from the dirt and rubbish thrown at them by the minority of Jewish settlers. An innocent woman going to do her shopping may be stopped and delayed at one of the 22 checkpoints, or even turned back. Unemployment is up to 50% in the West Bank. Farmers who are carefully tending their olive trees, the source of much of their income, may find their way to the fields blocked by the military, or their trees destroyed by settlers.

They visited organisations where Palestinians, especially women are co-operating to produce goods, especially olive oil. The profits go back to the community. They also heard of Palestinian women and Israeli settler women meeting together as friends, and their children playing together. They visited a village where PARC, the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, is active. Commitment for Life, through Christian Aid works with them, to raise the standard of agriculture in the Palestinian Territories. They use solar power, and high-quality fertiliser made by themselves. The work of PARC has brought the land back to life and transformed the village, and a community centre is being built. But export of their products is hindered by wilful delays at the border.



They visited a Bedouin village in the Negev desert. The village teachers had been approached in friendship by teachers in a nearby Jewish settlement. But the Bedouin village is in imminent danger of demolition. It is those in power, they say, who are standing in the way of peace.

Each of the storytellers had something to say about the spirit of hope in adversity which they found. 'Living our faith', is an easy phrase for us to use, but for Palestinians it is hard, but very meaningful. Love your enemy is a hard rule, when you have been in an Israeli prison, or when your freedom to move about and earn your living have been denied. Why would you not despair? You have to depend on the Spirit and the Power of God.

As the team saw it, this is not a 'conflict', it is an unequal struggle, and is down to the Occupation. All they met repeated their request, saying that they felt ignored. Tell our story to everyone, they pleaded, and help us all you can. We are not terrorists.

Claire Nutbrown Hughes who chaired the meeting, quoted the words of the incoming General Secretary of the URC, John Bradbury, in his interview in the July/August Reform:

'The Church has to call out systems and structures of oppression, those who have so much privilege but spend most of our time not realising it.... We have to be in the thick of it. We cannot afford not to be, because that's where Christ would have been.' *Robin Derbyshire*

REFLECTION by Revd Dr Dee Brierley-Jones

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

In these rather strange times we are living through, it's really important that we try to start and end the day with God, giving everything over to him and allowing him to speak into our lives. So find a quiet spot if you can, tune out the world, and tune into what God might be saying to you. It's 100% worth it!

Come as You are...

We are always so busy, doing this, doing that, and seeing to the other – and sometimes we must really make an effort to STOP and stand before God. Maybe a short pause in a glorious walk, or maybe washing the dishes and stopping to admire the gorgeous myriad of colours in the bubbles, it doesn't matter when or how – its why, and the why is because we are to stand before our loving Father and connect...

So with this thought, let's have a look at these readings and devotions, which are looking at what it means to come to God as we are and stand before Him – as a "Come As You Are" approach - as often we let things stop us from approaching God.

There are many accounts in the Bible of Jesus' life where people come to Him as they are, and He responds with love to help them : Jesus healing the invalid, paralyzed man of 38 years (John 5:1-9)

The poor widow giving what she had to honour God and not letting the little she had to give God, stop her from bringing what she had (Mark 12: 41-44)

Our age not being something that stops us from approaching God (Mark 10: 13-16).

I pray our devotions continue to bless and keep you in front of our loving Father God.

Love and Blessings until we all meet again, Dee

MISSING YOU

Our simple suppers yes, I miss
Our morning tea, our goodnight kiss,
I miss your smiles, your worried frown,
On days when I was sad and down.
I miss the honest things you did,
Noticed the noble way you hid
Your pain; although it hurt too much,
You never lost your gentle touch.
I miss the way you shrugged at rain
Saying "the sun will shine again"
Sometime. Birds sing, and bluebells chime,
But never for the length of time
That my heart beats, yes, it is true,
'Twill never miss a beat for you.

I must be strong, that's what you'd say
I'll grow in strength from day to day.
I'm finding lots of things to do
But from nightfall to early dew
An ache is there - the painful part
Is trying to mend my broken heart.
I gain a sense of joy to see
People smiling back at me
Time, and routine, will help me feel
That warmer air, and as I heal,
Whatever I do, wherever I go
I'll make sure that my friends all know
That, like the scorched earth after rain,
I've come back to life again.

By Anne Grant and read at her funeral

**'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all, now and evermore.'**

Fiona, Janet & Brian