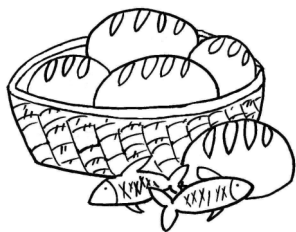


Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT

No. 331

July/August 2020

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends

At the time of writing the lockdown is being slowly relaxed and there is the possibility that church buildings will be open soon. However what we can do in our buildings and who can access them is not at all clear and it will be a careful journey we have to make.

During the lockdown there has been more singing in our house than usual. Louise's chorus and quartet, like all choirs, are unable to gather together to sing and have been exploring other ways of sharing together and enjoying their hobby. Whilst the quartet have not come round for their occasional rehearsals, Louise has been joining in online gatherings, singing to pre-recorded tracks and recording pieces for her chorus and, on a couple of occasions, for our weekly worship service.

When we gather again for worship it is very unlikely that initially we will be able to join in congregational hymn singing, since it is believed to provide a far greater risk of spreading the virus. This will be hard because it is one of the things that many really enjoy about our worship and it brings people together.

And yet, was there ever a more contentious subject than church hymns?

In some places a minister may be a bad preacher, they may wear the wrong vestments, forget the name of the baby he or she is baptising, and still be forgiven. However if they choose the wrong hymns, select ones that nobody knows, or worse still dictates that familiar hymns should be sung to unfamiliar tunes, their position can be very precarious!

No doubt for generations people within the church have complained about "new hymns" and bemoaned the loss of "golden oldies", but maybe we need to remind ourselves that some of the "golden oldies" we now enjoy were new hymns once! I wonder whether congregations 250 years ago complained about the new hymns of Isaac Watts and the loss of some others that were well known to them?

Whichever hymns and tunes a worship leader selects there are always going to be those who don't appreciate his or her choices, and maybe those of us who lead worship will just have to put up with that, just as members of congregations will have to put up with the fact that ministers are not always going to choose their favourite hymns and tunes.

Most hymns are affirmations or prayers - they are not just sung as a piece of music, but as a collective declaration or prayer of the people of God. The words have sense and meaning beyond just sounding nice, and the music should help to bring out that sense. It is always worth asking, what is the author of the hymns saying here, and trying to get us/me to say? It is probably also worth considering why it is that the worship leader has included that particular hymn at that particular point in that particular service - I try very hard to select an appropriate hymn for each point of the Sunday services.

The desire to select a hymn that fits the service and a particular point in the service has remained during these months when we have been worshipping together via an audio service in our dispersed places. However the range of hymns is far more limited since we can only use those for which we can find a recording that suits our needs. It may be that in time we pick a few more hymns that are unfamiliar but perhaps we could see that as an opportunity to learn something new which may in time become one of our "old favourites"?

Craig Bowman

For Our Wider Church Family

Our thoughts and prayers go to all who have suffered during this lock-down, those who have lost family members or friends, and those who have struggled. We continue to think of all those who are caring for others, either in a temporary or permanent role particularly during this very difficult time.

Over the last few weeks we have seen a number of peaceful demonstrations, some erupting into violence, when people, often inadvertently, get hurt. In the midst of the turmoil, we hold on to hope, trust in faith and know that you are still God. Your love reaches to the ends of the earth.

We ask your prayers:

For families as they move through the summer months, sometimes being able, once more, to see family members.

For these 'bubble' meetings that will make a huge difference to so many people, just knowing that their family members are there.

For all the families who have been able to see their children return to school to continue their education, even from a safe distance.

For all who are waiting for exam results, which will feel so very different this year.

We ask your prayers for all who are unwell, handicapped, disabled, anxious or concerned for loved ones, and those who are housebound or have any difficulties at this time.

Your continuing prayers for:

All friends, relations, colleagues and all those in our wider world that are feeling under the weather, lost, forgotten or just out of sorts.

May God grant you his peace.

If you have any news of the church family to bring us up to date please contact Alan. 020 8274 2136

Or Email: pastoral@wurc.org.uk

Names will only be shared in the version of Contact which goes to our usual fellowship and not put into the version posted on our website.

Are you listening...

Are you listening to our Sunday services either from the website or by phone? I hope you are, and I know many of you are as you've said how comforting it is to have something approaching normality on a Sunday morning.

Maybe you're wondering how it's done. Perhaps the most difficult part is the music, as Craig and Steffi look for songs which are relevant to the theme of the service and for which we can also find recordings which are suitable.

Craig puts a draft order of service together on Wednesday and Thursday. As you may have noticed, we have two readings each week, one from a St Andrew's reader and one from Wallington. The prayers of intercession are written and read by someone from each church alternate weeks, and so far the 'For the family' talk has come from one of the St Andrew's congregation.

Early on, I got in touch with everyone on the St Andrew's usual list of readers to find out who had the ability to record speech on their computer and to email it to me. That took a little research and investigation, but we now have a team prepared. Readers from Wallington have also been identified. As this may go on for quite a while, if you are willing to read or pray and have a laptop or smartphone, please let me or Alan Cruchley know.



For the songs, mostly the recordings come from the internet, but I have to listen carefully to the words as they often differ slightly - or sometimes a lot - from what's in our hymn books. From doing that I prepare the order of service which is also available on the website - or if you can't access that, let me know and I will try to arrange for you to receive a paper copy.

By Thursday the recordings start to arrive. Last week there were 18 segments. The first thing I do is to reduce the ones which are in stereo to a single track. There is little point in having stereo for a voice recording, and a mono track can reduce the amount of data needed by up to 50%. I then listen to each one, sometimes cutting out coughs or doorbells, and adjusting the silence at the beginning and end. I also adjust the volume, amplifying some and reducing others so that they are all about the same level. Some of the recordings have a

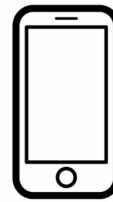


steady hum or noise from a computer fan, and in most cases I can remove that, and I 'equalise' some of the tracks, which is like adjusting the bass and treble controls on a radio. Lastly I join them all together and check that I have everything there and in the right order.

All this is done digitally on my computer. Digitised sound consists of 44,100 numbers for every second of sound, which is about 120 million numbers for a 45 minute service. That's a lot, even for a computer, so the last step is to compress the data down to about a quarter of the size. Compression slightly degrades the quality of the recording, but most people won't notice it.



Once it's all done I upload the data file to the website and send a copy to Chris for adding to the Wallington website. We also have a contract with a telephone company to play the service from the website over a dedicated telephone number - 020 3870 2810 - which you can listen to if you don't have a computer, tablet or smartphone.



Peter Campbell (St Andrew's URC, Cheam)

A Feast and a Future

I like things familiar:
Words, sounds
Faces I know.
I long for the familiar.
Somewhere I can stop worrying.
Somewhere I can get on
with doing what I do best.

We come, when we do not understand.
We come, when we don't know what to do.
We come, when all we used to know has disappeared.
We come, and find you,
welcoming us to a feast,
and a future.

Taken from the 2010 Prayer Handbook
'Gathered to the Heart of God'

We don't want to go home!

That was the reaction of children returning to preschool at the end of the first day back after lockdown.

From the start of lockdown on 23rd March, the church, rooms and hall have been empty and unused. Like other groups Holmwood Preschool had to close its doors. In June, preschool was able to re-open to just under half of the children in phase 1 of the government's schedule for early years. More will start towards the end of June while a few have chosen to wait till September to come back.

Lockdown Life

Throughout the time of lockdown preschool staff kept in touch with the families using an online site called Tapestry, which they have been using for a couple of years to share photos and news of the children's achievements and progress. This is a secure way of



sharing and came into its own during the lockdown. Each week, staff uploaded activities and videos of stories. One took children virtually into her garden on regular expeditions to discover the mini-beasts and plants growing there, knowing that some children do not have access to a garden. The aim was to continue the sense of community and purposeful play which the children enjoy

at preschool. Having regular messages from their key-worker and also seeing her face has helped the children to feel connected.

Easing the Lockdown

On 15th June 10 children started back at a new style of preschool which has been able to be done by using Holmwood Hall as the main room, with a smaller group in the preschool room. This way, the children can be in 'bubbles' and do not mix between bubbles.

The other important change is that preschool can use two outside areas, the one attached to the preschool room and also the bricked area outside Holmwood Hall. Outdoor activities are strongly recommended by the official guidelines as there is less chance of spreading the virus in fresh air.

The change in the weather from unadulterated sunshine to frequent downpours was





unfortunate although so far, the children have been out most of the time, even in some light rain one day.

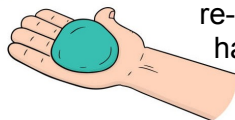
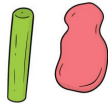
Karen the preschool manager said 'I am so impressed by the way the children are so knowledgeable about the virus. When they finish an activity, they ask to wash their hands.' The routines of hand washing and using hand -sanitisers are firmly embedded and this is the most important way for them to protect themselves.

What we get up to

Karen, and 'the girls ', have worked hard to make the rigorous hygiene routines and restricted movements into a game. They also have added fun into the area outside Holmwood Hall by having baby dinosaurs appear overnight in the privet hedge and now the children



look each day to see what else has appeared there. Board games have been a great hit too and the girls are constantly working to engage the children using toys and equipment which are all cleaned daily, which means, no soft toys, comfy cushions or dressing up clothes. Every child has their personal playdough which has been made in different colours to make it easier to ensure it is not shared (as this is currently a hygiene risk).



The detailed planning which has gone into re-opening is immense and the paramount concern has been the safety of the children and the staff.

The church property group and Diamond Cleaning have been involved in a very supportive way and continue to be vigilant for all aspects of health and safety.

We have had a great start to the re-opening of preschool, but we know that this is just one stage of easing and there will be further changes ahead.

Sheila Cruchley

Chair of Holmwood Preschool Committee



Southern Synod



Southern Synod produced a YouTube service on June 7th. If you missed the service a link can be found on the Southern Synod website under news. Another service is planned for Sunday 19th July at 10.30 am which will be all age and will include Holy Communion.

Some churches may be considering opening for personal prayer because of changes to the rules. But we ask you to think very carefully before considering opening your churches in this way. It is **not a step that should be taken lightly** even if it seems to be the right thing to do. We also understand that it may be possible to open up churches for funerals, but the proposed guidelines are so restrictive that it is questionable as to whether it would be wise or indeed helpful.

Hopefully you might be considering your strategy for when we are allowed to open our churches more generally again.

PLEASE DO NOT RUSH THIS PROCESS.

It is much better to take time and get it right. There is a risk assessment to be completed in writing, signed, dated and kept for future reference. You must advise and take advice from your insurance company, otherwise you may be uninsured.

As we know the situation changes quickly. So please listen out for current Government guidelines and also look at the advice issued by the United Reformed Church which can be found on the main website. We cannot stress enough how important it is to **take time** and ensure proper measures are in place. Many of our churches have already indicated that they will be waiting until they are ready rather than rushing to open. Every church and every congregation is going to be different.

With best wishes,
Bridget and George

Revd Bridget Banks and Revd George Watt

Moderatorial Cover

Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme – lockdown donations

I'm sure you've all heard of Gift Aid – the mechanism for the church to reclaim tax paid on individual giving. But what you might not know is that the church is also able to reclaim tax on unidentified donations given via the offertory bags, as long as an individual donation is less than £30 – so we couldn't claim for any £50 notes we might find in the bag (we did get one once!), but we can claim for almost all loose notes and coins in the bag on a normal Sunday. It's worth over £500 a year to us.



So why am I telling you this now? Because it is possible that some of you are putting aside the money you normally place in the offertory bags and will bring it all along when we are able to worship together. It's also possible that some might be over £30 (I'm always hopeful!) HMRC has recognised that many churches would be disadvantaged by receiving larger amounts all at once and not being able to reclaim tax. It has stated that provided we know any such donation was put aside during the weeks of lockdown, we can ignore the £30 limit. So if you're putting money aside in an envelope please just mark the envelope 'lockdown donations'. No other identification is needed.



Elaine

Coronavirus update

The lockdown conditions are changing as I write this, and almost certainly they will have changed again by the time you read this in Contact! The latest announcement has said that worship services could re-start – but perhaps not as we would recognise them. I thought it would be helpful to share a statement made by The Revd John Proctor, General Secretary of the United Reformed Church (URC), after Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister, announced the easing of an array of lockdown restrictions.

"The Prime Minister spoke today (23 June) about the relaxation of a number of Covid-related restrictions in England, from 4 July. The restoration of church worship, although without singing, is reportedly one of these. Many URC congregations will want to think carefully about how to respond to this possibility. We rejoice when we can worship together. Yet haste could lead to mistakes and danger.

"To help local churches to make proper plans, the Synod Moderators are presently working on careful URC guidance, which we hope to get onto the central URC website within a few days. Whether we can do so may depend on HM Government's own timetable, as they intend to issue detailed guidelines to fill out the announcement made today, and we must be mindful of what we find there.

"So, watch this space. The URC's official guidance, for our churches in England, will be published here. Scotland and Wales, and the small island jurisdictions, have their own governments, regulations and timetables. We must always heed public advice and direction, whether from governments or from local authorities.

“With care, with distance, with gladness, we shall one day be able to worship together. For some of us that day may not be far ahead. But let’s do it responsibly.”

Rest assured, the Elders will continue to strive to find ways to deliver worship as the lockdown eases, mindful though that the safety of all our congregation must be paramount.

Alan

**A thought – provoking report from the
URC entitled ‘New Normal 2020’**

It can be seen at:

(<https://urc.org.uk/images/Communications/New-Normal2020.pdf>).

A long(ish) document, but very well put together ...

It will hopefully help us through the next few months and right into 2021, helping us to find our own ‘New Normal’.

Taking stock, reviewing principles, doing things differently

What’s the ‘new normal’ for us?

Using the building

Worship

Community engagement

Pastoral care

Meetings

Managing external users

We have to think about the journey ahead, and take time to reflect on where we find ourselves NOW.

How might we be able to travel forward?

This is, we pray, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to do things better. Some things, like meeting together, we will be glad to do after the Covid-19 lockdown is lifted, but let us be wise as to when and how and for what purposes we start to meet together again.

Resuming Activities in Shared Physical Space:

questions to help with planning whilst the lockdown phase continues:

Who makes the decision to re-open?

Who should come to church?

How do we plan the use of space?

Are we prepared to deal with trauma?

We might need to identify which things we should give up permanently – or at least for another season – in order to create space, time and energy to do new things, or to do some of our old things differently.

A Prayer of Faith in Times of Trouble

O Lord, sometimes I think you have forgotten me-
When I suffer pain that doesn't go away;
When things appear to get worse instead of better;
When I am alone and no-one seems to care.
It's as if you hide yourself away from me,
And I feel weak, bereft and defeated.

And yet, O Lord, you have been good to me.
All my life you have been beside me.
Through troubles and misfortunes
You have uplifted me.

I rely on your constant love and care.
You will strengthen me and save me.
I will rejoice and be glad.

Isobel Bala

Taken from the 2020 Prayer Handbook
'Prayers from the Heart'

Commitment *Commitment for Life* is a way in
for Life which local congregations are
enabled to participate in actions
for justice around the world.

July

Prayer for Bangladesh

– Rohingya crisis

God who hurts with humanity, we pour out our
hearts to You in grief and disbelief
at the devastating violence
forcing so many people
from their homes.

We hear of villages burned,
families murdered
and people fleeing for their
lives; may they find refuge



as You

soften the hearts of their oppressors. Strengthen
our Christian Aid partners to reach displaced
people in Bangladesh and Myanmar.



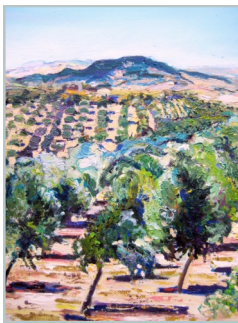
Compassionate God,
who loves all of humanity,
we pray for an end to the violence,
for peace, protection and provision.
In your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen

August

Prayer for Palestine and Israel

Commitment
for **Life**

Gracious God, You promised
Jerusalem as home to many peoples – Jews,
Christians, Muslims. Jerusalem; a place
to dwell with You and one another in
peace. Be with us between Rosh
Hashana's quiet time of repentance and
Yom Kippur's day of shouts and
blessings.



Save us from Apartheid walls and rocket
launches, from uprooted olive groves
and illegal settlements. May Your Spirit
of peace fill Jerusalem and all the lands.

Amen

Moving on... **Into the 21st Century...**

It is now possible to access our magazine

CONTACT

On our website... www.wurc.org.uk

Each Issue will be on our website by 1st of each month.

If you would like to have the 'Contact' magazine sent to
you by e-mail, please let us know at :

contact@wurc.org.uk

And you can, of course, still have a paper copy
if you would prefer.



| |
|--|
| Diary Dates |
| Nothing until the end of August... then... |
| Watch this space... |
| <p>PLEASE NOTE... Articles for the September 2020 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by Wednesday 19th August unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement. Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail jmw321wmj@yahoo.co.uk.</p> |

Sutton Schoolswork continues to communicate with all our schools. I have written to every head-teacher, wishing them peace and safety, and assuring them of the prayers of the faithful of Sutton. Several of them have replied with gratitude, and have expressed their desire to have us back in their buildings as soon as possible. We have produced weekly assembly videos, and been delighted to see the numbers of views steadily building. The first one has been seen over 1,800 times, and the others are all being viewed in turn.



I have also written to every church leader, letting them know of our work, and reminding them that we are still active, and to keep us in the prayers of their own fellowships, so that we are always underpinned by the prayers of the faithful, asking the Spirit to enable us to continue in our work, despite the difficulties.

I always express my gratitude to you all, and this month is no different. We move into the last 6 weeks of the school year very much changed from this time last year. Two new members of our team (Beca and Abby), new commitment from Trusts to finance our projects, new relationships being built up within Sarah's new role, and with Kate and Beca launching their series of PSHE subjects; but everything suddenly put on hold.

Bless you all

Simon Ellingham

Puzzle Corner

A sudoku puzzle consists of a 9 by 9 grid. This grid is subdivided into nine 3 x 3 boxes.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 5 | 9 | 1 | | | 3 |
| 4 | 1 | 9 | | 7 | | 5 | 8 | |
| | | | 8 | | | | 7 | 1 |
| | 5 | | 6 | 3 | | | 2 | |
| | | 2 | | | | 8 | | |
| 2 | 9 | | | 2 | 7 | | 6 | |
| | 3 | | 7 | 1 | | | | 8 |
| | | 1 | | | | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| 7 | | | | 6 | 4 | | 1 | |

Some of the cells in the grid are prefilled with a number between 1 and 9, while many other cells are blank. Your job is to determine the correct number to be entered in each of the empty cells.

The numbers 1 to 9 must appear just once in each **row**.

The numbers 1 to 9 must appear just once in each **column**.

The numbers 1 to 9 must appear once in each **3 x 3 box**.

Sudoku really is an excellent brain game, as it trains logical reasoning and visual perception, among other brain skills.

Can you work out these Anagrams? Each one is a book of the Bible.

1. sew herb
2. money due to 'R'
3. Ben's rum
4. threes
5. Mt. Wheat

23rd Psalm

ACROSS

6 The Lord is my ____

8 I will ____ no evil for you are with me

10 Even though I walk through the valley of the ____ of death

13 You ____ my head with oil

14 Your rod and your staff, they ____ me

DOWN

- 1 Surely ____ and mercy will follow me all the days of my life
- 2 And I will dwell in the house of the Lord ____
- 3 He makes me lie down in green ____
- 4 My ____ overflows.

- 5 He guides me in paths of ____ for his name's sake
- 7 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my ____
- 9 He leads me beside quiet ____
- 11 I shall not be in ____
- 12 He restores my ____

Bible Word-search: What is the Church?

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | E | D | I | R | B | B | R |
| T | E | C | H | O | S | E | N |
| S | A | D | D | S | W | L | E |
| E | A | Y | E | O | S | I | L |
| I | E | I | L | E | M | E | E |
| R | B | L | N | O | M | V | C |
| P | O | L | Y | T | H | E | T |
| F | D | E | V | A | S | R | D |

Believer, Body, Bride,
Chosen, Elect, Follower, Holy,
Priest, Redeemed, Saints,
Saved

EVERY WEEK AT WALLINGTON U.R.C.

Times of Worship

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Sunday | 10.30am | Family Service + Junior Church with crèche facilities Coffee is available after the Service |
|---------------|---------|--|

Mind, Body & Soul

Quiet Time and individual healing
Second Wednesday of each month 1.30pm-2.30pm

Uniformed & Other Organisations

Monday - Friday 9.15am-1.15pm *Holmwood Pre – school
Open until 21st July...and back in September.*

| | | |
|------------------|--|--|
| Monday | 10.00-11.00am 2.00-4.00pm 8.00-10.00pm | Yoga Bananas Art Conundrum Art Group |
| Tuesday | 9.30-11.30am 9.15-1.00pm 1.30-3.30pm 5.00-6.00pm 6.00-7.30pm 8.00-10.00pm 7.30-10.00pm | Tea & Toys Pilates Classes U3A Art group Rainbows Brownies (10th Wallington) Epsom Downs Badminton, Winter(Sept-May) Croydon Orchid Society (every 1st Tues.) |
| Wednesday | 9.00-10.00am 10.15-1.30pm 11.00am-2.30pm 2.00-5.15pm 1.00-3.30pm 6.45-7.55pm 7.00-10.00pm 7.45-10.15pm 6.30-7.30pm 7.30-10.00pm | Tap-Dance Class Pilates Classes Clubs Mumsleeps (mums and baby activities) Second Wed. Group (Knitting & Craft) Pilates Horticultural Society (every 3rd Wed.) W. every 4th Wed) Wallington Chess Club Chess Club |
| Thursday | 9.30-10.40 11.00-12.00pm 2.00-4.00pm 2.00-4.00pm 5.15-6.15pm 7.15-9.45pm | Baby Massage Senior Movers Exercise Ladies' Badminton, Winter(Sept-May) Fallen Angels Drama Pro-Karate Carshalton & Wallington Art Group |
| Friday | 9.30-10.45am 11.00-12.00 6.45-8.30pm | Yoga Baby Massage Guides(8th Wallington) |
| Saturday | 9.00-10.00am 10.00-11.00am 11.30-12.30pm | Pilates Zumba Pro-Karate |

**All other activities are
suspended until further notice**