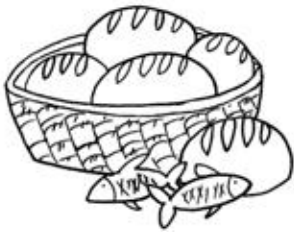


Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT

No. 380
June 2024

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends....

As I write this we have just celebrated Pentecost Sunday. Through the events of that momentous day in Jerusalem the early believers were so changed that they ceased hiding together and began the world-wide mission of the church. They went out into the world, risking persecution and martyrdom, to bear witness to the truth that God had acted in Jesus. The Greek word for truth is *martus*, and is where we get our word "martyr" from.

From then on, by what they said and did, the truth about Jesus spread rapidly through the Roman world and, in time, to the ends of the earth.

It's a remarkable to consider how this small group of mixed individuals were the forerunners of the vast body that is today the church. Who would have thought when they were huddled together behind closed doors in the days after Jesus' death that one day there would be millions of followers like them?

It's remarkable since this incredible spread of the Gospel began not because of carefully orchestrated evangelism and planned missionary activity, but because Peter and the others stood up and bore witness to what they had experienced and what they knew to be true.

That is the essence of all mission, and it is a calling we all have - to bear witness to what we have experienced and know to be true.

Naturally some people are better at speaking about their faith than others, but there are times when we must all open our mouths and trust God's Pentecostal gift - the Holy Spirit - to give us the words when we are hesitant and uncertain.

Many will quite rightly say that it is their actions that bear witness to their faith more than their words, and that is to be applauded and encouraged, for the actions of the first believers also caused others to wonder about the God they believed in and led them to find out more. However that mustn't be used as an excuse for never speaking about our faith, or avoiding situations where we might be called upon to do so. God has given us tongues, and he does give us the right words to speak at the right time.

One last thing about our actions.

It's not only our good actions that bear witness to our faith. Our inaction and our misdeeds can speak even more forcefully and turn people away from the truth about God.

When we fail to do what is right, and when we fail to act for the right, others will notice and question the message we proclaim with our words. When our actions towards others do not reflect the love and the care that we speak about it will drown out any message from our lips. This is so much more the case when our actions towards others in our church and in other churches are less than Christian - when we are concerned only with what is important to us, when we dismiss their concerns and cares as being irrelevant or trivial, when we speak ill of others to their face or behind their backs, and when we fail to treat any one of them as the child of God they are.

I pray that in the weeks and months ahead we will be good witnesses to the truth of Christ and fail to be a witness to the wrong things.

Craig Bowman

Our Wider Community

The month of June:

"The month of June is probably named after Juno, the wife of Jupiter, and queen of the gods. It was held sacred to her, and was thought by the Romans to be the luckiest month for marriage, since Juno was the Goddess of Marriage. Wherever the goddess went she was attended by her messenger Iris (the Rainbow), who journeyed so quickly through the air that she was seldom seen, but after she had passed there was often left in the sky the radiant trail of her highly-coloured robe. Juno is represented as a tall, beautiful woman, wearing a crown and bearing a sceptre in her hand, and often she is shown with a peacock at her side, since that bird was sacred to her.

A story is told of one of her servants, Argus, who had a hundred eyes, only a few of which he closed at a time. Juno set him to watch over a cow which Jupiter wished to steal, for it was really a beautiful girl named Io, whom Jupiter had transformed. Mercury was sent by Jupiter to carry off Io, and by telling long and wearisome stories to Argus at last succeeded in lulling him into so deep a sleep that he closed all his eyes. The god then seized Argus's own sword and cut off his head. Juno was very sad at the loss of her servant, and gathering up his hundred eyes scattered them over the tail of the peacock, her favourite bird."

And a thought for all the gardeners:

*"Roses are red,
Violets are blue;
But they don't get around
Like the dandelions do."*



We ask your prayers for all who are anxious or unwell and those who are housebound or have any difficulties at this time.

[If you have any news of the church family to bring us up to date or that you would like to be included in Contact please let Alan know. Thank you.]

Sunday 12th May

At the start of Christian Aid Week we were pleased to have Phil Hyde take our service and tell us Aline's story.

In Burundi, malnourishment and poverty affect more than 70% of the population, making survival a daily struggle. Jobs and food are hard to come by, and those who have homes often have no electricity or running water.

Aline felt the full force of extreme poverty when an early marriage ended in abuse and violence.

Separated from her six children, she was forced to sleep on the streets of Burundi. No home. No healthcare. No security.

But Aline transformed her life with a little help from Christian Aid.

Hungry, scorned and alone, Aline took her first step towards her new life. She started by participating in a transforming three-day community workshop, funded by Christian Aid.

With a small start-up loan, Aline started trading avocados and peanuts



locally. With her profits, she bought a bicycle so she could transport greater quantities of goods to markets further afield. Eventually, her hard work paid off, and she had earned the money she needed to rent a house.

Once Aline secured a home for herself, her three eldest sons were able to join her.

Today, Aline lives peacefully on her own plot of land in her village. She's baked her own bricks and is building a strong home for her and her children in every sense.

Now Aline can afford food, clothes and essential healthcare for her family. She's also purchased solar panels so her children can do their evening homework by electric light.

Aline can not only look ahead to her children's future now, but her own too. Naturally, Aline wants security as she ages.

In the next five years she hopes to expand her current wholesale business by selling a range of goods, so that one day she can buy a mill. This will provide a source of income without the need to transport heavy goods over long distances.

Aline told us: 'This is not a dream. It is a plan, and I will do it. I am a woman who is an achiever.'



Christian Aid Week was
May 12th to 18th in 2024.

A huge thank you to everyone who
was able to contribute.

We were able to send

£300

to Christian Aid from Wallington URC, so far. Some
people will have contributed directly to Christian Aid as
we could not 'Gift Aid' money paid through the church
account.

Why go to Church?

If you are spiritually **alive**, you're going to love this!

If you are spiritually **dead**, you won't read it.

If you are spiritually **curious**, there is still hope!!

A church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in all that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons... But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the 'Letters to the Editor' column, much to the delight of the editor.

It went on for weeks until someone wrote the clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this.. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing...God is UP to something!
Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!

Create a quiet space:

Create a quiet, peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you. Each morning the United Reformed Church has a reading, reflection and short prayer which helps us to focus on our journeys of Christian discipleship.

Five loaves, two fishes and a compassion-filled heart

Reading Mark 6:30-44

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish." Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.



Reflection

Every session at Stepwise starts with the question: Where did you see God today? I can guarantee you that my answer will either be: the refugee or asylum seeker at the drop-in, or the person attending the Warm Hub, or in my morning walk or weekly wild swimming adventure. I have learnt a long time ago that to deny one's connection with the suffering needs of others is to detach oneself from divine communion.



The praxis of compassion brings us closer to the compassionate heart of God. The word compassion literally means “suffering with”.

The Greek word is far stronger: it means “to be twisted up in the guts with empathetic suffering”. Compassion won’t rest until the suffering of the other person is alleviated. Arch Desmond Tutu said: “It is not enough to keep rescuing drowning people; at some point we have to go upriver to discover who it is who is throwing them in.” In other words, part of showing compassion is addressing the systems that exploit.

Elizabeth Johnson said: “Solidarity with those who suffer, being there with commitment to their flourishing, is the locus of encounter with the living God. Through what is basically a prophetic stance, one shares in the passion of God for the world”.

Although I frequently experience God through people and especially the oppressed, the preferential option for the poor must now include the vulnerable, voiceless, non-human species and the ravaged natural world itself, all of which are kin to humankind. Loving these neighbours as their very selves, committed religious persons develop moral principles, political structures, and lifestyles that promote other creatures’ thriving and halt their exploitation.

Prayer

Compassionate God,
who hears the cry of your oppressed people,
help us see and hear the world through your eyes.
Help us to not detached ourselves
from Divine communion.
Help us to “suffer with”
and not rest until the suffering
are alleviated from oppression.
Give us the wisdom and courage
to go upstream to challenge and transform
the structures that exploit all of your creation.
Amen

By The Revd Daleen den Cate, URC minister working as a Mission Mentor in Lancashire.

Taken from 2020 Prayer Handbook

‘Prayers from the heart’

Edited by Karen Campbell and Ian Fosten

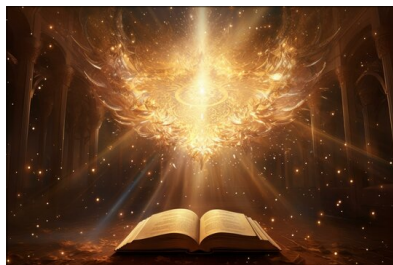
The 2020 Prayer Handbook is made up of a mixture of prayer styles and approaches; some finely crafted material and pieces which would be readily accessible and easily used by a wide range of readers.

Equipping the Church

By Stephen Best

As Paul prayed for the Church of his age
so we pray for ours,
as we find ourselves in very different times.

May we as Christ’s Church be
enlightened;
not for our own sake,
but so we can better understand
our calling.



May we as Christ’s Church be
equipped;
not for our own glory,
but so we can better fulfil our potential.

And may we as Christ’s Church be empowered;
not for our own protection and preservation,
but so we can better risk doing the will
of the one who is both our head and our fullness.



We hope everyone who came to the Art Exhibition enjoyed their visit, and voted for their favourite painting.

If you were able to stay for tea and cake, I am pleased to say we raised just over an amazing

£172

for Action for M.E. *Thank You*



Walk and Talk

Friday mornings.

10 am for walking.

Meet outside the first entrance for walking.

11 am for tea and cake in the Waterfall Cafe at Dobbies if you don't wish to walk.



**Everyone
welcome.**



Diary Dates			
June			
Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Alan Cruchley
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Phil Hyde
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	23rd	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Alan or Phil
Sunday	30th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
July			
Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the July-August 2024 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Tuesday 25th June** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement. Contributions are very

acceptable by e-mail: jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk.

Sudoku Answers for
May:

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

Puzzle Corner

H	T	E	M	P	L	E	H
M	T	Y	R	A	M	P	A
O	E	E	V	L	E	W	T
T	A	V	R	S	G	O	D
H	C	N	O	A	X	I	L
E	H	J	E	L	Z	O	T
R	E	V	O	S	S	A	P
Y	R	E	H	T	A	F	N

Lost & Found: Jesus at the Temple
 Father, God, Joseph, Lost, Love, Mary,
 Mother, Nazareth, Passover, Teacher,
 Temple, Twelve

Abraham's Faith:

Canaan, Eliezer, Faith, Hagar, Isaac,
 Ishmael, Keturah, Lot, Rebekah, Sarah,
 Terah

H	H	C	H	A	R	A	S
A	A	A	A	A	I	R	E
R	R	N	G	S	S	E	L
U	E	A	A	B	H	B	I
T	T	A	R	R	M	E	E
E	C	N	L	A	A	K	Z
K	H	O	A	M	E	A	E
H	T	I	A	F	L	H	R

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

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, column, and 3 x 3 box.

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

EVERY WEEK AT WALLINGTON U.R.C.

Times of Worship

Sunday 10.30am Family Service

Activities you can find on our Premises

Monday - Friday 9.15am-1.15pm *Holmwood Pre – school*

Monday	10.00-11.00am	Yoga
	1.00-2.30pm	Al-Anon
	2.00-4.00pm	Bananas Art
	7.00-8.00pm	Yoga
Tuesday	9.15am-1.20pm	Hartbeeps (mother and baby activities)
	10.00-11.00am	Pilates
	12.30-2.30pm	AA Meeting
	1.40-3.40pm	U3A Art group
	5.00-6.00pm	Rainbows
	6.00-7.30pm	Brownies (10th Wallington)
	8.00-10.00pm	Epsom Downs Badminton, Winter(Sept-May)
Wednesday	10.30-11.30am	Baby Massage
	7.30-10.00pm	Chess Club
Thursday	10.00-11.00am	Pilates
	11.00-12.00noon	Senior Movers Exercise
	1.15-3.15pm	Lace Making
	2.00-4.00pm	Ladies' Badminton, Winter(Sept-April)
	2.00-4.00pm	Fallen Angels Drama
	6.00-7.00pm	Pilates
	7.25-10.00pm	Carshalton & Wallington Art Group
Friday	9.30am-12.30pm	NAS Coffee morning (monthly)
	9.30am-3.00pm	Reading Fairy Sutton
	6.45-8.30pm	Guides(8th Wallington)
Saturday	8.30-9.30am	Fitness
	10.00-12.15pm	Zumba



South London Tamil Church (SLTC)

SLTC invite you to join them for
their Sunday service which starts
at 3pm.

Everyone welcome!