

# WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



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**MAY 2016**

# Covering Thoughts

This month's painting of a stone circle on the Orkneys is done from memory and is painted over the original which was completed soon after our visit seven years ago. Repainting this was an enriching experience as it gave me opportunity to reflect again on the mystery and antiquity of this remote beautiful island with its people.

Memory is a fascinating thing. Bringing a past experience into the present moment and choosing to relive it and to reflect upon it can be very valuable. Then what you have gained from it can be applied to the present and enrich the way you live.

Memory is also a difficult thing. Sometimes it lets us down and frustrates us. We search for objects or words and get cross with ourselves when we cannot bring them to mind. Then we find that there are things we wish we could forget – the angry words or spiteful actions we have given or received – that chip that remains firmly and heavily on our shoulder.

I would love to find a way for us to help each other let go of damaging memories. Sharing them in confidence with a friend is a beginning, but how do we move on? We all can think of times when we listen to someone's unhappy or angry memories for the umpteenth time and just wish we could help them to let go.

It is difficult to erase a bad memory when we have allowed ourselves to harbour it, but easier to deal with something at the time. Every day we need to consider the consequences of our words and actions, not only on others but also on ourselves. We can learn from those who have the gift of being able to disagree or point out an injustice with calmness and good humour. But I also think that if we train our minds to recall the best in our past experiences, and to share the good and the uplifting with others we will be more contented people. Paul wrote to the Philippians: whatever is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Christine

## OCCASIONAL EVENTS- May

1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday	8.00am 2.30-4.30pm	Prayer Breakfast & Food Bank Sunday Afternoon Tea URC Hall
5 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	10.00am-12.00	Coffee and chat in the hall & church open
10th	Tuesday	1.00pm	Lunch Club Two
15th	Sunday		CHRISTIAN AID WEEK BEGINS
17 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	1.00pm	Lunch Club 01844 215513
19 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	10.30-12.00	Coffee Morning for Christian Aid in Wormingham village hall
21 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday		CHRISTIAN AID WEEK ENDS.
30 <sup>TH</sup>	Monday	2.30-5.00pm	Church Fete in Dr Flury's Garden

## WEEKLY EVENTS

Brownies & Rainbows (Term time)	Monday 5.30pm to 7pm
Choir Around the Piano (Term Time)	Monday 7.30pm to 9 pm
Carers and Toddlers (Term Time)	Monday 9.30am to 11.30am
Wheatley Singers (Term Time)	Tuesday 7.10pm to 9pm
Pre-School Music Group (Term time)	Wednesday 9.30am and 10.30 am
Guides (Term time)	Wednesday 7pm to 8.30pm
Prayers and Breakfast	Thursday 8.00am
Mindfulness Sitting Group	Thursday 9.00am to 9.40am
Brownies & Rainbows (Term Time)	Thursday 5pm to 6.30pm
Table Tennis	Friday 10.30am to 12noon
Hymn Practice	Sunday 9.30-9.45am
Pulse Youth Club	Sunday 7.00-900pm

**Disclaimer:** The editors of this newsletter welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations but reserve the right to publish or not, and to edit.

## Pastoral letter



## BANK HOLIDAY FETE

**Dr Flury's Garden  
116, Church Road, Wheatley  
2pm**

*Stalls: Cakes, Plants, Books, Bric-a-Brac & more  
Games & Activities: Aunt Sally, Tombola, Raffles & more  
Music, Teas & Ice cream*

**Wheatley United Reformed Church  
Journeying  
WheatleyURC.org.uk**

As always the news seems to be full of sensational, headline grabbing issues, chosen by newspaper or television news editors to get our attention. As I write this, the main stories involve the so called 'Panama Papers', David Cameron's investments and tax affairs and who was Justin Welby's father? By the time you are reading this, the news that we are fed will have moved on no doubt.

When I was asked if I had seen the front page of The Observer one Sunday, I was reminded how much the news is fed to us. Spread across the front page was all the detail of our Prime Minister's tax affairs. (He was the PM then, and probably still is!). Tucked away in one little corner, so as you would hardly notice, was an item about Burundi. Are we aware of the level of violence against the civilian population there? Did we know that approximately 230,000 people have been displaced in the last year? Did we know that another president is clinging to power at any cost? There are, of course, countless other stories which are never or hardly ever brought to our attention.

The point I wish to make is not about the press; people just doing their job, selling the news they think most people want to hear. What I want to ask myself, and you if you wish, is how much of an effort do I put into discovering the news that those with political power and influence don't wish me to hear? Not only that, how should I react to it?

As church secretary I receive all sorts. Very recently a pack arrived in the post from 'Global Justice Now', but significantly sponsored by, among others: Christian Aid, Jubilee Debt Campaign, One World Week, Trade Justice Movement, World Justice and Peace and our own Commitment for Life. A significant group I hope you will agree.

This pack was about TTIP, 'The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership'. Ever heard of it? Know what it might mean or do? I am very far from being an expert, but these charities and campaigning groups believe that if this TTIP agreement goes ahead, then all poorer countries will be at an even greater disadvantage in the global market-place than they are already. You might like to find out more, easily done on the internet.

**In the Autumn I am hoping we can hold three Bible study sessions related to this topic. I will let you have dates as soon as we have them.**

To finish, here is a prayer written by Sue Cooper for CAFOD:

*God of Compassion,*

*You look down on the global marketplace and see the scales tipped by subsidies and tariffs. The unsold milk in Jamaica draining away wasted.*

*The maize in Mexico rotting on the stalk. And while the rich feast on the proceeds of their sales, the poor count the cost of free trade.*

*God of Justice, call us to account. Inspire us, so that we may cast off our complacency and apathy, and joining hands with people home and abroad, we may make a stand for justice and righteousness, for all who dwell on the earth. Amen.*

Robert.

**Wheatley United Reformed Church  
Discernment Process for choosing Elders  
Church Newsletter May 2016**

**Introduction**

The fundamental body by which we in the URC govern ourselves is the Church Meeting. All members of the church are entitled to attend and vote at Church Meeting.

As was the case in the earliest days of the church, we choose some of our number to work on our behalf, ensuring worship is held regularly and properly, providing pastoral care to members of the church meeting and friends of the church, and taking care of the resources of the church (money, building and so on).

These people we call Elders and we believe their role is sufficiently important in the life of the church, to hold them in that esteem which we recognise by using a process of 'ordination'.

**How we choose our Elders is important**

The process, which is designed to encourage all of us to take part, will be the same as last year and focuses on discernment and a sense of call.

The whole Church community has been challenged to consider whether they have the gifts, talents and skills to enable them to fulfil the role of Elder and all are encouraged and given time to take part in the discernment process.

**The process for 2016 is as follows:**

**MAY**

- During the month of May, the congregation will be invited to consider prayerfully who they think God may be calling to the role of



**Christian Aid Week**

During May our church will be collecting from house-to-house as part of Christian Aid Week.

We will be delivering envelopes in our local community and we really need people to join us.

**Would you be able to spare a few hours of your time?**

**We desperately need more collectors please.**

Jesus calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Christian Aid week is one way our church puts this into practice, reaching to our local neighbours.

Together we achieve incredible things. Along with 20,000 other churches, we raised more than £11 million last year, making sure some of the world's poorest people have enough to eat and a safe place to live.

With your support we could help more people like Morsheda, of whom we shall hear more, living at the mercy of flooding in Bangladesh.

**Let us know if you can join us: Pauline & Chris Shelley, Liz & Tony Barry.**



**Coffee morning**



**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May from 10.30 – 12.00noon**

**At Worminghall Village Hall**

**Meet a friend for a chat and visit the available stalls**

## Gift Aid Scheme

Many of you are aware of (and use) the Gift Aid Scheme, for your regular giving to the Church.

Under this scheme, the Church can claim from the Tax Authorities, 25p for every £1 given. This forms a significant part of our annual income .

The main regulation for this scheme, is that the person making the donations, must pay at least an equivalent sum in personal tax during any particular tax year, to the amount being claimed on all gift aided giving. (e.g. Total donations- £500; the claim under gift aid will be £125. You must therefore pay at least £125 in tax during any particular tax year).

I would mention, however, that anyone using this scheme must let me know if they are concerned that their annual tax paid will not cover the amount that the Church can claim on their giving.

Under current ruling, any excess claim under the Gift Aid scheme, can result in the Tax Authorities reclaiming the difference from the individual concerned.

If you would like to know more about giving under this scheme, or have any questions, please speak to me.

**Chris Shelley**

**7 – 30 May 2016**

**AMAZING ART IN WONDERFUL PLACES AT 400 VENUES ACROSS OXFORDSHIRE THROUGHOUT MAY**

**PAINTINGS, CERAMICS, SCULPTURE,  
JEWELLERY AND MUCH MORE**

**PICK UP A CATALOGUE FOR ALL DETAILS OR SEE**

**[www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org)**

**Jackie Birchall and Christine Bainbridge are exhibiting in Holton  
and hope that you will visit them when they are open**

**May 14 until May 22,**

**11am – 5pm (11am - 7pm Thursday)**

**Paintings, refreshments and art activities for families at  
Christine's, 3 Barns Close**

**Stained glass in lovely garden at Jackie's, Ambrose Cottage**

Elder for the next three years. Any who worship with us are part of this process, and they may convey their suggestions by speaking to the Minister or a current serving Elder, or by completing a nomination slip. This slip does not need the signature of the person being nominated; they are anonymous, and individuals may put forward their own names if they wish. The only criterion is that the person named must be a member of Wheatley URC.

### **JUNE**

- The deadline for nominations will be the beginning of June. At the June Elders' Meeting, the names will be shared and time will be spent reflecting on individual gifts and talents and where these might fit with the needs and mission of the Eldership. For the time being, the names will not be publicised. Elders will hold these names in prayer during this month whilst all church members and friends will be asked to pray for the process of discernment.
- The Church Secretaries will contact all those nominated early in the month and ask them to prayerfully consider their call. When approached, they will be told of their discerned gifts, talents and experiences. It is recognised that many of us share our gifts and talents in a number of ways through our home and work life, and through voluntary work outside the church. Some may feel they cannot take on the role of Elder at this time. However, it is important that anyone who has been identified by this discernment process has time to reflect on whether they are indeed being called to the role of Elder. In time for the July Elders Meeting, they will be asked whether they are willing for their names to go forward.

### **JULY**

- At their July meeting, Elders will then prayerfully consider the names brought forward, and will, with God's help, discern a number of people who they feel are being called at this time.
- The list of names of those discerned to have a call, and who are willing to stand, will be brought to the July Church Meeting. During the months of July and August, each Elder will contact those in their pastoral group to ask them for any thoughts they may have. In this way the whole church will share in the prayerful discernment of our Elders over the summer.

## **SEPTEMBER**

- At their September meeting, Elders will once again prayerfully reflect on the list of names. Using a simple ranking system, Elders will then indicate who they believe are being called. In our experience, it will be clear at this time that a number of names will rise to the top of the list. The Minister or Church Secretaries will then speak to those who are discerned not to be called at this time.
- At the Annual Church Meeting in September members will be invited to consider the names of those whose call to Eldership has been discerned, and, after an opportunity for prayerful reflection, to approve them.

The two serving Elders due to complete their current terms in September 2016, are Ann Bettess and Malcolm Benson. We are very grateful for all that they have contributed during their time as elders and in Malcolm's case as Church Secretary as well.

## **Elders' Development Day in the NW of Wessex Synod**

for current elders, non-serving elders and anyone interested in becoming an elder.

Venue: at Marsh Gibbon URC, Tomkins Lane, Marsh Gibbon, Bicester, OX27 0EX

Time: 10am – 2pm

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2016 – Prayer, Spirituality and Worship.

The information plus a poster to download is available on the Synod website: <http://wessexsynod.urc.org.uk/>

Bookings to Ruth Heine at the address above.

Please note that the information is posted on the Synod website [www.urcwessex.org.uk](http://www.urcwessex.org.uk).

## **EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN MAY**

**Art Weeks from 7<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>.**

**Christian Aid Week collections 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**Christian Aid Coffee Morning in Worminghall on 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**"No bi-blog this month ... because I missed the deadline!** Or rather I got muddled in my dates and thought the deadline was one week later than it was! Please accept my sincere apologies for this. Instead, I would like to share with you a poem by Judy Dinnen written in 2002 following a trip to East Africa which captures really well and very simply the essence of such trips in remote African regions and fits our yearly theme of "journeying". It is called

### **"I am a traveller on the earth"**

I am a traveller on the earth, wandering, exploring, foot after foot over bamboo leaves, brown earth, broken plank.

I am a traveller on the earth, swimming and diving, searching for coral.

I am a traveller on the earth bumping and jolting along earthen airstrip through rut and dip.

I am a traveller on the earth stepping and balancing over roots and branches along broken bridge over puddle and storm drain.

I am a traveller on the earth smelling and tasting seduced by pepper, mangostani and cinnamon sipping tamarind juice with lemon slice.

I am a traveller on the earth, feeling and burning, warm air caresses my skin, hot sun burns my back, the night air buzzes with life.

I am a traveller on the earth, sheltering and waiting, through storm and heat, through mud and rain, in darkness and in sunshine.

I am a traveller on the earth, giving and taking, praying and hoping, seeing pleading eyes and outstretched hands, unfinished buildings and donkey carts.

I am a traveller on the earth, listening and learning, to refugees' stories, grieving parents, the man with AIDS.

I am a traveller on the earth sharing, rejoicing, a new-born child, a music scholarship.

I am a traveller on the earth listening and learning through smiles and greetings.

Christian Aid remains our main focus for May, **Christian Aid Week being 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> May**, this year. You will see separate entries elsewhere in the magazines about this from your church representatives, but I cannot emphasize enough the need for new street collectors from the churches in all our villages, as many of the folk who have so generously given of their time in this worthy endeavour over many years, due to the onset of old age or other personal reasons have either had to reduce the number of roads that they can cover or reluctantly give up altogether. We do need younger fit folk to come forward to help share the workload, please. **If you feel you can help, please do let me or your Church's Christian Aid Rep or priest know, as soon as possible.**

#### **Christian Aid Reps.**

St Mary's – Angela Morrison (876625),

Wheatley URC – Chris or Pauline Shelley (873908),

Our Lady of Lourdes – Mike or Susie McIlvenna (874017).

Wheatley Community Ch'ch – Gordon Ewbank (873326) or David Evans (873592).

For Holton, Waterperry, Waterstock and Tiddington/Albury – Rev Michael Grantham

**At 10.00 am on 15<sup>th</sup> May – Pentecost Sunday, there will be a joint LEP service at St Mary's**, for the congregations of St Mary's, The URC and St Bartholomew's Holton and its sister churches. Any other folk from whatever denomination or none would also be most welcome to attend. There will be coffee, biscuits and chat after, to be followed by a **Food Share Lunch at the Merry Bells** with the congregation of the Wheatley Community Church, after which **Wheatley Area Churches AGM** will take place.

Good wishes to you all for a lovely summer, wherever it may take you and in the immortal words of the late Alistair Cooke, "*if you have been, thank you for listening*", over the last two years!

Tony Barry.

#### **Autumn Harvest – a message from Sustainable Wheatley**

For a long time Sustainable Wheatley (the group which runs the Swap Shops) has wanted to do something to prevent the waste of fruit left to rot on trees in this village.

Last autumn we launched an initiative to gather and distribute surplus fruit around Wheatley and even had a go at pressing and pasteurising our own fruit juice. We had huge fun, learned a lot, and plan to do even more in the future.

This year we have been entrusted with a long term loan of equipment needed to press fruit and pasteurise the juice. That means it will be possible to hold a "Juiceday" when Wheatley residents can bring their own fruit for juicing and bottling.

So now the call goes out for help in the following ways:

**Trees for picking** – such as apples, pears, quince: if you need help in picking your fruit trees, please let us know. You can keep the fruit, or share it with us.

**Hands for picking** – for a few hours in the sunshine.

**Help with fruit distribution** - last year we gave some to schools and playgroups, a nursing home, the WI, and put some out in boxes along the High Street. Do you know of other groups who could use the fruit?

**Bottles for juicing** – screw-top wine bottles, preferably with labels removed.

**Help with cider making** – that's Tim Blightman's idea.

**Help with planning** – can you help with ideas, energy or organisation?

If you can help in any way, would you get in touch now, by email to [admin@wheatleycag.org](mailto:admin@wheatleycag.org), or speak to me,

Ann Bettess.

## Church Calendar May 2016

**Everyone is invited to stay for coffee or tea after 10am Sunday services.**

**Traidcraft stall on occasional Sundays.**

Date	1 <sup>st</sup> May	8 <sup>th</sup> May	15 <sup>th</sup> May	22 <sup>nd</sup> May	29 <sup>th</sup> May
Service	<b>Morning Service with H.C.</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>	<b>LEP at St. Marys' with H.C.</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
Time	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10am
Worship Leader	<b>Revd. Mark Williams</b>	Richard Bainbridge		Revd. Colin Thompson	Richard Bittleston
Vestry Elder	<b>Phyllis Williams</b>	John Kidd		Ann Hardiman	Joan Kidd
Welcomer	<b>Joan Kidd</b>	Liz Barry		Ann Bettess	Phyllis Williams
Steward	Elizabeth Walkey	Joel Rasmussen		Bobby Stormont	Barbara Joiner
Reader	Sybil Beaton	Christine Bainbridge	Wendy Benson	Charles Bennett	Ann Bettess
Prayers	Ann Bettess	Richard Wood		Bob Webster	Joel Rasmussen
Flowers	Ann Hardiman	Catherine Harding		Wendy Benson	TBA

*Elders on Communion Duty are shown in bold letters.*

*There is a crèche on the first four Sundays of the month.*

**News of the Family** We are delighted to hear that Annie Williams and Dave Crosby have decided to get married. We wish them every happiness in their future together.

We are sorry to hear that Ellen Webster's Mum, Hazel Hull and Doris Sinfield are not too well at the moment.

**The deadline for the June newsletter is 6pm on Sunday 22nd May. Please send email copy to [newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk) or paper copy to Barbara Joiner.**

## Common Lectionary Readings April 2016

**Note: leaders may choose to use other readings.**

Date	1 <sup>st</sup> May	8 <sup>th</sup> May	15 <sup>th</sup> May	22 <sup>nd</sup> May	29 <sup>th</sup> May
Old Testament	No Reading	No Reading	No Reading	Proverbs: 8:1-4, 22-31.	1Kings 8: 22-33,41-43.
New Testament	Acts. 16: 9-15. Revelation 21: 10, 22-22:5	Acts.16: 16-34 Revelation 22: 12-14, 16-17, 20-21.	Acts.2:1-21. Romans 8: 14- 17.	Romans 5: 1-5.	Galatians 1: 1-12.
Psalm	Psalm:67.	Psalm: 97.	Psalm: 104. 24-34,35b.	Psalm 8:	Psalm 96: 1-9.
Gospel	John 14:23-29.	John 17: 20-26.	John 14: 8-17.	John 16: 12 -15.	Luke 7: 1-10.

**There will be no Simple Sunday evening worship in May.**

**Please remember in your prayers the members of Phyllis Williams' pastoral group:** Tanya and Joel Rasmussen & family, Wendy & Robert Bailey, Sybil Beaton and Bev Paton & family.

We also ask you to pray for the Hospitality Ministry Team: Catherine Harding, Liz Barry, Angela Holdaway, Joan Kidd, Barbara Joiner, Allison Towner, Moira Watson and Ellen Webster.

### WHEATLEY AREA CHURCHES (WAC) CHAIRMAN'S BLOG FOR MAY 2016

As I start this, I realise that this is probably my last blog as Chair (thank goodness, I hear you cheer!), as I shall be handing over the reins at the AGM on 15<sup>th</sup> May for the next two years to St Bartholomew's and the capable hands of Edna Ackroyd. I hope you may have found my monthly ramblings of some use in understanding better, the ecumenical efforts of Wheatley Area Churches within the community.

I reported on Lent and Easter activities last month, but I just need to add that the final total that we were able to send to **Christian Aid from the Lent Soup Lunches was £618.01**, well in excess of the £500 that I had predicted. Thank you everyone for your generosity.