

WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



JULY-AUGUST 2017

COVERING THOUGHTS

What comes to mind when you think of summer? I asked myself this when I began this new abstract called Summer Breeze.

I enjoy looking towards blue hazy horizons with their softness of colours, contrasting blowsy roses and brilliant red geraniums in the garden. Shapes are rounded, trees no longer show the angular patterns of bare branches, or hedges their brutally trimmed sides. Instead fields are softened by growth, meadows lush with buttercups or green barley, and long feathery grasses obscure the road edge.

In the garden there is a feeling of fullness, even over abundance, a lack of control and wildness, as if nature is exerting its power over our ability to tame it.

Growing up in a city the excitement of having a garden has never left me, but I am reminded of the feeling of panic that the summer gave me. Everything seemed out of control, running away from me, and all the cool spaces became so overgrown as to be lost. In the past I would begin a frantic chopping and pruning to regain the shapes and paths of the garden, getting up in the early morning and working into the heat of the day. But now with age and experience I can relax more, knowing that there will be an end to growth and ample time to cope with the abundance. The reclaiming and managing can be done in the quieter months of autumn and winter.

Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is a time for everything. The gift is knowing the appropriate time and acting in harmony with it. We do not have to be busy all the time. Holidays, siestas, teas in the garden, sand in our sandals, resting from our labours; the list of summer pleasures goes on. May we be thankful for all the abundant growth, warm sunshine, nourishing rain, and breeze on a stifling day.

Christine

PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Friends

We are a divided nation. The result of the EU referendum last year showed that, and the recent General Election confirmed it. Politicians of all persuasions would do well to listen to what the electorate has been telling them. When opinion is so split about the way we want to go, they need to rise above slogans and sound-bites, claims and counter-claims, and work together to find solutions to our most pressing needs. I'm not confident that they will, though as I write some voices on all sides are suggesting we need a more inclusive approach to the Brexit negotiations – a coalition which will represent the divergent voices and work for a deal in the national interest which can command maximum support.

Working together when we disagree about major issues is difficult. Compromises have to be made. No one gets everything they want. But the alternative – imposing a policy which alienates too many people – is unwise and likely to prove damaging. We know something about this from our own Christian history. When you read the story of the infant Church in the Acts of the Apostles the grand ideals of the Gospel are constantly being tested by very different interpretations of what they mean in practice. Turn to the Epistles, and they are full of strife in Christian communities, as Paul pleads with his readers to give their primary allegiance to Jesus Christ, not to their conflicting versions of his message. It is hard work. Under stress, we all tend to revert to defending our own patch. 'Charity begins at home', people say (and often stops there, my father would always add).

Working for the common good, trying to transcend the ingrained barriers of race, faith, gender, sexuality etc. requires guts. Every church community is a coalition of different attitudes and beliefs, in matters political, moral and theological. Ours is no exception. But in our tradition, we meet together to debate issues, and every church member has an equal say in making decisions. We tend not to rush into things, which can be frustrating for some. In fact, it's better for Church Meeting to wait when opinion is clearly divided, until a consensus emerges (if it does). While we will often have a firm view on a particular matter, listening to others who think differently can make us more sensitive to other ways of looking at things and in due course we may even change our minds. We call it being open to the Spirit, which is rather better than using religion to bolster our own prejudices.

But working together in community is vital. We are brought together not because we are the same but because, though different, we share a common commitment to the way of Jesus Christ. We worship God and we celebrate

important moments together. We give thanks together for those whose earthly lives are over. We work as best we can to challenge injustice and to support those in need. I can't help but think of the analogy of a choir: different voices, different parts, each essential for the music to be heard, yet united in one purpose. Without practice, it can't happen. Charles Brock's visit last month enabled many of us to express our great gratitude to him and our beloved Carolyn, who was so deeply committed to the building of community, especially through her musical gifts. Those of us who sang in choirs under her direction experienced the hard work and the joys of achieving together what we could never have done on our own. In the larger world of senseless terror, Brexit and minority governments, we can and should take heart from the small but life-giving signs of hope in our midst.

Every blessing to you all

Colin

A NOTE FROM LAURENCE ABOUT HER BIBLOG

You know by now that 12 of us had a wonderful time in Spain exploring and studying some difficult or awkward bits of the Bible, under Colin's inspired guidance. I am sure that some of these texts will figure in some future biblogs but for the moment I just want to inform you that **there will not be any biblog in the next two issues of this newsletter** (July/August combined and September) as after 2 years and 23 issues, I have decided to award myself a three-month sabbatical!

As you may have gathered, each biblog takes me a very long time to prepare as it involves a lot of reading and researching, which of course I absolutely love doing! At the moment, I fully intend to resume writing the next biblog for the October issue but I also feel I need to take stock and reflect on the use of my time and I might want to concentrate a bit more on preaching. So, watch this space!

In the meantime, thanks to those who have generously expressed their support for this endeavour. I really appreciate it.

Laurence

FLOWER ROTA

I am now making a list of those people who have offered to provide flowers for the church on a Sunday in the next year. We would be very pleased to have more volunteers. Someone will always help if required, and a special date can usually be made available if requested. Please contact me if you are interested to join us.

Allison Towner

WHEATLEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

DISCERNMENT PROCESS FOR CHOOSING ELDERS

FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2017

JULY

- At their July meeting, Elders will 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, if appropriate, 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 Secretary 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 **five** serving Elders due to complete their current terms in September 2017, are Liz Barry, Joan Kidd, John Kidd, Laurence Devlin and Phyllis Williams, and in addition Robert's term as secretary is also due to end. We are very grateful for all that they have contributed during their time as elders.

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.

FETE RESULTS 2017

Here are the figures for takings from the various stalls, games etc.

Gate	£189.47
Tombola	£177.20
Books	£43.40
Raffle	£168.00
Cakes	£128.80
Plants	£140.00
Refreshments	£303.90
Ice Cream	£16.70
Putting/Golf	£19.50
Aunt Sally	£22.00
Quoits	£18.00
Velcro Target	£17.00
Whisky Bottle Height	£7.00
Traidcraft (Donation)	£10.00
Not So Young Club (Donation)	£10.00
Net Total	£1,270.97

Many thanks to everyone involved, in whatever way, for this excellent result.

Chris

WHEATLEY AREA CHURCHES

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK COLLECTIONS 2017

Although, at the time of writing there are one or two streets or areas not yet accounted for, it is anticipated that the total collection for Wheatley and Holton will be in the region of **£3,400**, which is a better result than expected but is still £700 down on last year's total. Most of this is due to it not having been possible to resource a door to door collection in Holton, this year, and we were also unable to cover a number of roads in Wheatley. Thanks to all who helped raise this still very creditable total and to those who donated so generously.

Locations that we were unable or struggled to cover properly this year are:

Acremead Road	Littleworth Park Mobile Homes
Beech Road (East)	Littleworth Road
Biscoe Court	London Road (Kings Arms to Asda)
Blenheim Lane	Mill Green new development site.
Cromwell Gate	Old London Road (Fire Station to Farm Shop)
Cullum House	Old Road (From Keydale Rd to Acremead Rd)
Elton Crescent	Park Hill
Fairfax Gate	St Mary's Close
Farm Close Road	Tyndale Place
Gardiner Close	Waterstock Village
Holton Village	Windows Court
Holloway Road	

Anybody who thinks that they may be able to help with any of these places next year (or swap or add to their own collecting areas), please, please, do get in touch.

Liz & Tony Barry
ah.barry@btinternet.com or phone 872293

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR JULY 2017.

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

Traidcraft stall on occasional Sundays.

Date	2 nd July	9 th July	16 th July	23 rd July	30 th July
Service	Morning Service	Morning Service	Morning Service with H.C.	Morning Service	Morning Service
Time	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am
Worship Leader	Laurence Devlin	Richard Bainbridge	Revd. Pauline Main	Rev. Colin Thompson	Mark Williams
Vestry Elder	Chris Shelley	Ann Hardiman	Pauline Shelley	Joan Kidd	Liz Barry
Welcomer	John Kidd	Pauline Shelley	Charles Bennett	Ann Hardiman	Laurence Devlin
Steward	Tom Goss	Christine Bainbridge	Ann Bettess	Bob Webster	Bobbie Stormont
Reader	Chris Shelley	Ellen Webster	Bob Webster	Moira Watson	Richard Wood
Prayers	Ann Hardiman	Robert Harding	Barbara Joiner	Ellen Webster	Ann Bettess
Flowers	Ellen Webster	TBA	Pauline Shelley	Allison Towner	TBA

COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS (leaders may use other readings.)

Date	2 nd July	9 th July	16 th July	23 rd July	30 th July
First Reading	Jeremiah 28. 5-9	Zechariah 9. 9-12	Isiah 55. 10-13	Isiah 44. 6-8	1 Kings 3. 5-12
Psalm	Psalm 89. 1-4, 15-18	Psalm 145. 8-14	Psalm 65. (1-8), 9-13	Psalm 86. 11-17	Psalm 119. 129-136
New Testament	Romans 6. 12-23	Romans 7. 15-25a	Romans 8. 1-11	Romans 8. 12-25	Romans 8. 26-39
Gospel	Matthew 10. 40-42	Matthew 11. 16-19, 25-30	Matthew 13 1-9, 18-23	Matthew 13. 24-30, 36-43	Matthew 13. 31-33, 44-52

Elders' names in **Bold** are on Communion duty

Simple evening worship in the style of Taize at Barns Close in July IF a suitable date can be found.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR AUGUST 2017.

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

Traidcraft stall on occasional Sundays.

Date	6 th Aug	13 th Aug	20 th Aug	27 th Aug	3 rd Sept
Service	Morning Service with H.C.	Morning Service	Morning Service with H.C.	Morning Service	Morning Service
Time	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am
Worship Leader	Rev. Colin Thompson	Richard Bainbridge	Rev. Pauline Main	Lynda Spokes	Laurence Devlin
Vestry Elder	Ellen Webster	Pauline Shelley	Laurence Devlin	Joan Kidd	Liz Barry
Welcomer	Phyllis Williams	John Kidd	Charles Bennett	Ann Hardiman	Ellen Webster
Steward	Zena Knight	Sybil Beaton	Malcolm Benson	Moir Watson	Barbara Joiner
Reader	Christine Bainbridge	Liz Barry	Sybil Beaton	Charles Bennett	Wendy Benson
Prayers	Malcolm Benson	Bob Webster	Richard Wood	Christine Bainbridge	Tom Goss
Flowers	Barbara Joiner	Phyllis Williams	Frances Simpson	Catherine Harding	Allison Towner

COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS (leaders may use other readings.)

Date	6 th Aug	13 th Aug	20 th Aug	27 th Aug	3 rd Sept
First Reading	Isiah 55. 1-5	1 Kings 19. 9-18	Isiah 56. 1, 6-8	Isiah 51. 1-6	Jeremiah 15. 15-21
Psalm	Psalm 145. 8-9, 14-21	Psalm 85. 8-13	Psalm 67	Psalm 138	Psalm 26. 1-8
New Testament	Romans 9. 1-5	Romans 10. 5-15	Romans 11. 1-2a, 29-32	Romans 12. 1-8	Romans 12. 9-21
Gospel	Matthew 14. 13-21	Matthew 14. 22-33	Matthew 15. 10-20, 21-28	Matthew 16: 13-20	Matthew 16. 21-28

Elders' names in **Bold** are on Communion duty

Simple evening worship in the style of Taize at Barns Close, Holton on 20th August and another date if this can be arranged.

OCCASIONAL EVENTS IN JULY- AUGUST 2017

<i>2nd July</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>8.00 am 2.30 to 4.30 pm 7.00 to 9.00 pm</i>	<i>Morning Meditation, Foodbank Afternoon Tea in the Hall Pulse Group Films, 17 Bell Lane</i>
<i>3rd July</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>2.00 to 4.00 pm</i>	<i>Not So Young Club</i>
<i>6th July</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>10.00 am to noon 7.15 pm</i>	<i>Coffee morning Elders Meeting</i>
<i>9th July</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5 pm meet at Hall</i>	<i>Pulse Group, Narrow Boat trip</i>
<i>11th July</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>1.00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch Club Two</i>
<i>16th July</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>7.00 to 9.00 pm</i>	<i>Pulse Group, BBQ, 82 High St</i>
<i>17th July</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>2.00 to 4.00 pm</i>	<i>Not So Young Club</i>
<i>18th July</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>1.00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch Club</i>
<i>25th July</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>2.15 pm</i>	<i>St Mary's Guild</i>
<i>31st July</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>2.00 to 4.00 pm</i>	<i>Not So Young Club</i>
<i>3rd Aug</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>10.00 am to noon</i>	<i>Coffee Morning</i>
<i>6th Aug</i>	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>8.00 am</i>	<i>Morning Meditation, Food Bank</i>
<i>8th Aug</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>1.00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch Club 2</i>
<i>14th Aug</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>2.00 to 4.00 pm</i>	<i>Not So Young Club</i>
<i>15th Aug</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>1.00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch Club</i>

WEEKLY EVENTS

(NB several activities are term-time only)

<i>Brownies & Rainbows (Term time)</i>	<i>Monday 5.30 to 7.00 pm</i>
<i>Choir Around the Piano (Term Time)</i>	<i>Monday 7.30 to 9.00 pm</i>
<i>Carers and Toddlers (Term Time)</i>	<i>Monday 9.30 to 11.30 am</i>
<i>Wheatley Singers (Term Time)</i>	<i>Tuesday 7.10 to 9.00 pm</i>
<i>Pre-School Music Group (Term time)</i>	<i>Wednesday 9.30 am and 10.30 am</i>
<i>Guides (Term time)</i>	<i>Wednesday 7.00 to 8.30 pm</i>
<i>Prayers and Breakfast</i>	<i>Thursday 8.00 am</i>
<i>Mindfulness Sitting Group</i>	<i>Thursday 9.00 to 9.40 am</i>
<i>Brownies & Rainbows (Term Time)</i>	<i>Thursday 5.00 to 6.30 pm</i>
<i>Table Tennis</i>	<i>Friday 10.00 am to 12 noon</i>
<i>Hymn Practice</i>	<i>Sunday 9.30 to 9.45 am</i>

Please remember in your prayers the members on Pauline Shelley's Pastoral Care List: Angela and Rob Holdaway, Phyllis and Mark Williams, Catherine and David Hughes, Lynnette and Richard Wood, Joan and John Kidd.

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.

Deadlines: **Wednesday 16th August 2017** is the deadline for the September Newsletter. Also note that **Annual Reports** should also be submitted by the **16th August**. Please send email copy to newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk or paper copy may be handed to Barbara Joiner.

SCIENCE CORNER Jim Watson

What a Beach!



This picture is an isolated coral atoll in the South Pacific which must be one of the most littered places in the world. Henderson Island is only 6 miles long and about 3,000 miles from a major human settlement. But the beach is covered in litter – mostly plastic. This should be an untouched beach but it must now have one of the highest densities of plastic waste in the world. It is estimated that bits of plastic are washed onto the beach every day, driven by the ocean current: the South Pacific Gyre. The plastic must have come many thousands of miles, from countries around the world.

HOLIDAY CLUB – SUMMARY FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

This year's Fusion summer holiday club will be held from 21st to 24th August at Wheatley Park School, from 09.00 to 14.30 each day, for Primary age children (who have finished Early Years). We have about 150 children, split into 3 age bands and then into groups of about 10, each based in a gazebo with two leaders. We also have a Youth Team of secondary aged children who support the younger children but they also have their own programme running alongside and in the evenings. It is a Christian based club, looking at Bible stories and encouraging the children to live in such a way to support and help each other. There are also crafts, games, music, drama, and a whole lot of fun!

We have a team of 80 to 100 volunteers (DBS checked), of all ages, with or without a Christian faith, with many different skills and interests, who have all found a role they enjoy! Some come for the whole week, others just for an hour or two. If you are able to help us in any way, we'd love to have you on the team! Below is a brief summary of the main roles available. If you would like to join us, please contact me (Val Wolstenholme) and we can talk about it: 01865 876893, 07761 567517 or valwolstenholme@yahoo.co.uk

GROUP LEADER or ASSISTANT – responsible for a group of about 10 children through the week, ensuring they are in the right place at the right time. Lead discussions on the Bible story for the day (material provided), so need enough Bible knowledge to be able to answer questions from the children about Christian issues (or anything!). Also decorate gazebo according to group theme. 08.30 to 15.00 each day. (could just do part of week and job-share!).

CRAFT: help with one of the craft activities for about 10-15 children at a time, for 40 minutes for each age group. Could help with preparation and ideas in advance, or just help on the day. 09.30 to 12.30 approx.

GAMES: run or help run games for each age group in turn, about 50 children at a time for 40 mins. (group leaders would also be there to help!). From 09.30 to 12.30.

LUNCHTIMES: Be in a team of adults who supervise the children in the playground after their packed lunches. From 12.00 to 13.00 approx.

REGISTRATION: Sign the children in when they arrive in the mornings. Based with one gazebo, with 10 to 12 children. From 08.45 to 09.45 approx.

DRAMA/MUSIC: Be part of the drama or music teams. If you'd like to be involved in this, contact us for more details. Some people do this alongside another role.

CRECHE: We run a crèche for the younger children of volunteers. They are often involved with the main club for part of the day for songs, drama, etc if the children are old enough and have some time doing their own thing! Usually 2 adults, plus teenagers if needed.

PARENTS COFFEE TEAM: We will provide coffee and cake for any parent who would like it, after they have dropped off their children. This will be held outside the main club area. If you fancy chatting with people over a coffee, this could be the place for you! From 09.00 to 10.30.

YOUTH TEAM LEADERS: Various roles including craft, media (eg. Photos blog website), a community project. Volunteers needed for daytime (08.30-15.00) and evenings (18.30-20.30). Contact us for more details.

Val Wolstenholme



High Street, Wheatley, OX33 1UE

CHURCH CONTACTS

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