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WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



September 2017

Covering Thoughts

OCCASIONAL EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

3 rd Sept.	Sunday	8.00am 2.30 – 4.30pm 7.00 – 9.00pm	Morning Meditation, Foodbank Afternoon Tea Pulse Group Discussion
4 th Sept.	Monday	2.00 – 4.00pm	Not So Young Club
7 th Sept.	Thursday	10.00-12.00 7.15pm	Coffee in the hall church open Elders meet
10 th Sept	Sunday	7.00-9.00	Pulse Group Games URC Hall
12 th Sept.	Tuesday	1.00pm	Lunch Club Two
17 th Sept.	Sunday	11.30am 7.00 – 9.00pm	AGM Church Meeting Pulse Group Discussion 17 Bell Lane.
18 th Sept.	Monday	2.00-4.00pm	Not So Young Club
19 th Sept.	Tuesday	1.00pm	Lunch Club
24 th Sept.	Sunday	7.00-9.00pm	Pulse Group Games in the hall.

WEEKLY EVENTS (NB Youth activities, Choir around the Piano and Wheatley Singers are term-time only)

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
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 10.00 – 12.00.
Hymn Practice	Sunday 9.30-9.45am

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.

Walking in the Swiss mountains this summer I imagined that Jesus might have turned some of my experiences into parables. Here are a selection.

The Butterflies

Notice how the butterflies in all their beauty do not spurn the dog turd or cow pat on which they alight to discover delightful nourishment.

The Marguerite

Is not the seed that takes root and flourishes in the inhospitable rock to be more valued than all those that bloom in the rich mountain pasture?

The Unattractive

Learn from the artist who decorates the rubbish sheds making them places of beauty, so as to find ways to enrich the environment, especially when it is unattractive or barren.

The Bench

The wise person secures the bench to the rock. In the heat of the day it is a place of rest for the weary who are restored by the beautiful view. When sudden storms arise and the mists descend it becomes a place of sanctuary on which to hold fast until the way ahead becomes safe to travel. The foolish one finds a lush sloping meadow in which to site the seat. The legs sink into the soft soil and it is a glorious spot to count the butterflies and enjoy the flowers. But when the clouds mass overhead, thunder roars and the rain floods down, the seat is carried away to fall over the cliff. Great is its fall. Its many pieces are scattered over the ravine.



Christine

Pastoral letter

*“For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven ...”*
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)

At this time of year, the seasons seem to get a bit mixed up. As I write, mid-August, the football season has started, but the West Indies’ team has arrived for a short cricket test series; the weather is (occasionally!) warm and sunny, but the evenings are beginning to shorten noticeably; Christmas catalogues are beginning to appear, but folk are still away on their summer holidays.

It’s all rather confusing! However, by the time you read this, we’ll be just into September, and beginning to look towards Harvest Festival, and to our church AGM, when some new elders will be appointed and start their term of office – a new phase of the year and of our church life will have begun.

As I write, the World Athletics Championships have just finished. The crowds said farewell to two great athletes – Usain Bolt and Mo Farrah. Sad to see them go (though Mo will still be running marathons), but also encouraging to see new talent emerging – well done GB men’s 100 metres relay team, who managed not only to hold on to the baton, but to go on to win the gold medal. “The old order changeth, yielding place to new ...”, as Tennyson put it; “for everything there is a season ...”.

So, it’s sad to leave summer behind, but the turning of the seasons does give us time to draw breath – to give thanks for the good times, or to begin to move on from the bad times for those for whom the summer has held its sadnesses.

*“a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance ...”*(Ecclesiastes 3:4)

Time to draw breath, to take stock. I think that is something of what we can find in that passage from Ecclesiastes. It’s not that times for weeping and laughter, mourning and dancing are in any sense ordained by God, rather that inevitably they happen in life: we celebrated the careers of Usain and Mo, but each ended with a defeat, not a gold medal. The ups – and the downs - don’t last for ever. They have their season, as it were. After an

habits certainly changed. Charles, of course, was always there to provide the liquid refreshment, and could usually be relied on to have more of whatever was supposed to be bad for him. ‘Oh, Charles!’, or ‘Charles Brock!’ was about as far as she would go in response. Just every now and again she would go further. One day, when she was parking the car at a service station somewhere Charles kept telling her what to do. ‘Charles Brock, you are a’ - I waited for a really bad word, as I’d never heard one from her lips (nor did I ever) - ‘You are a pip’. And that was that.

I always felt that Carolyn underestimated her gifts. Or perhaps it was that she was by nature and upbringing modest. Always thinking of others rather than herself, she never pushed herself forward. Somehow, in the middle of all the raucous laughter and the rambunctious (a favourite word of hers) humour, she managed to be both innocent and knowing. These are at best a few impressions of a friendship which lasted for over fifty years. Whenever I think of her, I smile and am grateful. All my memories of her are happy ones and many of them full of laughter. She was a natural life-affirmer, a rare spirit, who radiated grace and joy.

A free public lecture exploring issues around women’s ordination, gender justice and empowerment
Date: 16 September 2017

Location: Dr Williams’s Library, 14 Gordon Square, Bloomsbury, London, WC1H 0AR

Time: 1pm

Speakers:

Athena Peralta (World Council of Churches)

Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth (Guyana Presbyterian Church)

Kirsty Thorpe (United Reformed Church)

The event is being organised by the United Reformed Church and Congregational Federation as part of the celebrations marking 100 years since the ordination of Constance Coltman, the first woman to be ordained into a mainstream British denomination.

Please note spaces are limited, if you wish to attend the public lecture or find out more, please contact Dr Eve Parker on eve.parker@urc.org.uk

Comments are closed.

sometimes say Americans don't understand irony. Carolyn did. Her ripostes were memorable. I recall commenting on one of my colleagues that he was rather set in his ways. Quick as a flash came back the retort 'And you're not?' Game, set and match to Mrs Brock. Other expressions were pure Americana of an earlier age: 'Gee willikers' or, in extreme cases, 'Gee willikers whizz'. In the 1990s I spent two happy vacations travelling with her and Charles in her home state of New Mexico and its neighbour Colorado. We visited Deming, where she grew up, and explored the extraordinary landscapes of that part of the world. We hiked in the Rockies, marvelling at the profusion of wild flowers high up – Carolyn knew all their names. Restaurant options were, however, limited, and after the nth vast plateful of burgers and chips even Charles began to pine for something more delicate. It was in Ouray, Colorado, I think, that we discovered an Italian restaurant and for the first time in many days ate with pleasure. In one of the many diners we patronized, with disturbing slogans like 'God and guns made America great', I learnt something else. Carolyn announced that she would like her pie 'à la mode'. A look of blank incomprehension spread across my face. I was familiar with the expression but it always came with further definition –in the fashion of something or other French. In US parlance, for reasons which entirely baffle me, it means with ice-cream.

Which brings me to Carolyn's skills in the kitchen. She didn't need the latest fancy gadgets but she did believe in good quality ingredients and a healthy, balanced diet. This caused some surprise in 1960s and 70s Wheatley. When I described to Ron and Dora White, of blessed memory, breakfast at the Manse (lots of grains and crunchy stuff) they at once invited me round for a 'proper breakfast'. Crown Road and Ferry Road had tiny kitchens. But out of them came the most delicious fare. Over the years the menus changed, but the food was always wonderful. Carolyn was a natural host and I am sure her gifts in that respect made a major contribution to the ministry she shared with Charles over more than three decades. Parties at the Manse were legendary. I'm not sure the theology of hospitality as a means of mission has been much studied, but Carolyn was an expert practitioner. The only criticism was that she didn't make enough gravy for those of us used to lathering our meat and potatoes. She was fine with proper sauces or what she called the 'natural juices' but dismissive of anything to do with Bisto, a packet of which my brother and I presented to her one day. It's probably still in the cupboard. I learnt a huge amount from her about cooking. She was a fount of knowledge on what was good for us and what wasn't, and my eating

enjoyable holiday, we return to everyday routine, hopefully refreshed and renewed; the difficult times do pass, and hopefully become easier to cope with, though they remain with us in our hearts, part of our experience, part of who we are.

And we can draw from the passage the thought that God has all of life – birth to death and beyond – in his hands. We are in God's hands, under God's care. The passage closes by saying that God "*has made everything suitable for its time.*" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). When we are struggling to cope with everything going wrong at once, this can seem far away from our experience. But these words, and the whole passage, do remind us that we do not struggle alone – God is there, and often as we look back we realise we have felt touched by his presence.

*How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend!
His love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end!*

*'Tis Jesus the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall Guide us safe home,
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come.
[R&S 542]*

May this autumn season be one of fruitfulness in all our lives, a season for laughter and dancing.

Love and prayers,
Pauline

Rev Pauline Main, Interim Minister

Discernment For Elders

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.



AFTERNOON TEA at Wheatley has been published in the monthly magazine called WOMANALIVE!

Frances Simpson wrote the article which included the above photograph and a member asked if it could be published in our own newsletter!

“Our Pastoral Care Ministry Team had been discussing how to help people in the village who were lonely and might enjoy meeting others, so two years ago we decided to trial an afternoon tea on the first Sunday of every month. This proved to be a great success.

We have been loaned and given some bone china tea services which look quite special when laid out. We also serve homemade cakes. On average 24 people come along and we arrange transport for those who would find it difficult to get here without help.

The initial idea was for this to be free of charge, but people have insisted on giving donations which, by common consent, have been forwarded to the Alzheimer's Society.

As part of the church's outreach to the community we also have a monthly coffee morning and run the Not So Young Club on alternate Mondays. Two other teams run lunch clubs on the second and third Tuesdays of the month for people who live alone.”



Carolyn Brock – Reminiscences – Revd Colin Thompson

I met Carolyn and Charles on the first Sunday after I came up to Oxford, in October 1964. My first impression that day is of someone we would now call feisty. She answered back when people said things, in a way ministers' wives were not expected to (my mother was, however, also a notable exception). Charles had recently become Chaplain to Congregationalist students in the university, I was active in CongSoc and a member of the Mansfield College Chapel community. Our organist at home was pretty competent, but listening to Carolyn on the Mansfield instrument, unseen and high above us, was an eye-opener. She was an extraordinarily gifted musician, as many of us also discovered when we sang in choirs she conducted. She introduced us to a wide range of music, much of it unfamiliar, and some of it distinctly modern, and we came to love it. Whenever I hear a piece on the radio or at a concert which I first encountered through Carolyn the memories come flooding back. She worked us hard in choir practices, but there was plenty of laughter, especially in the comments from the back row. ‘Gentlemen and basses’ was a favourite of us tenors. ‘Get out your Schweelincks’ for some reason produced ribald laughter from that quarter (Schweelinck was a Dutch baroque composer), while American musical terminology – quarter-notes, fermatas and the like – puzzled us. There were wonderful services: I shall never forget the Advent Carol Service of 1968, soon after the Russian invasion of what was then Czechoslovakia, with carols by Czech composers and readings from the sermons of the pre-Reformation Reformer, Jan Hus (burned at the stake in 1415).

Over the years I spent a lot of time in the company of the Brocks, both here and in the States. In spring 1965 we joined the CongSoc annual walking holiday in the Lake District. Hiking up Honister Pass and climbing Great Gable, before descending over Stye Head Pass, was a tall order for those of us who had never done such a thing in our lives, which included Carolyn and me. But the Lakes got to our souls and we kept going back, long after the student trips ceased. There were more New Mexican sayings from Carolyn to treasure. Having climbed one peak and descended into a dip, the steep ascent up Mount Sail lay before us. ‘Are you looking forward to going up that?’ I asked her. ‘I’m just dyin’ to slog up that slope’, was her reply. People

**OXFORDSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST – RIDE AND STRIDE
SATURDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2017
10.00 AM TO 6.00 PM**

**YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU
TO
BE A WELCOMER
(Sign up on the list on the noticeboard to sit for an hour)**

OR

**GET ON YOUR BIKE, PUT ON YOUR WALKING BOOTS AND HAVE A FUN
DAY OUT HELPING TO SAVE OUR HISTORIC NATIONAL CHURCHES
FROM FALLING INTO RACK AND RUIN!
(See noticeboard for details)**

Sponsorship forms are available now from TONY BARRY (Phone 872293)

ALTERNATIVELY

**Pay £10 and join me for a circular church to church walk starting from
Wheatley URC at 10.00 and returning in time for tea and cake. Bring your
own packed lunch.**

Dates for your Diary

Discussions after morning worship.

The 'Adult Christian Education Ministry Team' would like to trial this idea during 2017. After morning worship on a number of Sundays you will be invited to join a discussion about the sermon that day. These will take place in the church between 11.30 am and 12.00 noon on **8th October**.

Creative Day United Reformed Church

Awaken your Creativity at our Creative Day on Saturday 25th November 10am – 4pm. When we engage in the arts, we dip into our souls to discover deep pools of wonder, breath-taking gifts of beauty and quiet revelation. As we create, we are invited into playfulness, poignancy and surprise – energies that renew us and revitalize our sense of purpose.

We had a great day last year exploring, experimenting, playing and creating, with a wide variety of quality materials. It was a great opportunity to have fun and feel inspired.

So save the date and come and join us this year. No experience is needed – just a spirit of curiosity and fun. Find out about some of the activities on offer and how to sign up in next months' newsletter.

Magazines wanted to support Creative Day: Out of date magazines with photographs in that you want to get rid of - I would love. It doesn't matter what the subject matter is, it is the images we are wanting so could be general or specialist like National Geographic, photography, cooking, gardening, weekend newspaper mags etc. This is to support one of the activities on our Creative Day in November. If you have any please bring to church and I will gather them up and store them until we need them.
Thank you. Bobbie Stormont

News of the Family

We wish to congratulate Ann & Fred Hardiman on reaching their 55th wedding anniversary in July and also well done to Christine and Richard Bainbridge on their Golden Wedding celebrations in August.

Church Calendar for September 2017.

Everyone is invited to stay for coffee or tea after 10am Sunday services.
Traidcraft stall on occasional Sundays

Date	3 rd Sept.	10 th Sept.	17 th Sept.	24 th Sept.
Service	Morning Service	Morning Service	Morning Service with H.C.	HARVEST Festival with H.C.
Time	10 am	10 am	10 am	10.am
Worship Leader	Laurence Devlin	Richard Bainbridge	Revd. Pauline Main	Revd. Colin Thompson
Vestry Elder	Liz Barry	Phyllis Williams	John Kidd	Charles Bennett
Welcomer	Ellen Webster	Laurence Devlin	Pauline Shelley	Liz Barry
Steward	Barbara Joiner	Angela Holdaway	Tom Goss	Ann Bettess
Reader	Wendy Benson	John Kidd	Ann Hardiman	Zena Knight
Prayers	Tom Goss	Barbara Joiner	Liz Barry	Ann Hardiman
Flowers	Alison Towner	Ann Hardiman	TBA	Harvest Team

Simple Sunday evenings in the style of Taize will take place at 3 Barns Close Holton at 7.30 pm on Sunday September 17th and 24th.

The deadline for the October newsletter is 6pm on Wednesday 13th September. Please send email copy to newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk Paper copy may be handed to Barbara Joiner

Common Lectionary Readings for March 2017

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings.

Date	3 rd Sept.	10 th Sept.	17 th Sept.	24 th Sept.
Old Testament	Jeremiah 15: 15-21	Ezekiel 33: 7-11.	Genesis 50: 15-21.	Jonah 3: 10 to 4: -11.
Psalm	Psalm 26: 1-8	Psalm 119: 33-40.	Psalm 103: 8-13.	Psalm 145: 1-8.
New Testament	Romans 12: 9-21.	Romans 13: 8-14.	Romans 14: 1-12.	Philippians 1: 21-30.
Gospel	Matthew 16: 21-28.	Matthew 18: 15-20.	Matthew 18: 21-35.	Matthew 20: 1-6.

Please remember in your prayers the members of Phyllis William's Pastoral Care List: Sybil Beaton, Laurence & Peter Devlin, Bev Paton & family, Joel & Kit Rasmussen, Revd Colin Thompson.

We also ask you to pray for the members of the Pastoral Care Ministry Team:- Ann Bettess, Jean Boxall, Barbara Joiner, Joan Kidd, Frances Simpson.

Jobs List 2017 - 2018

The jobs which remain vacant are:-

Ministry Teams

Care for the World Convenor, Children and Youth : 1
Finance : 1 Maintenance Convenor

Other Jobs

Cradle Roll :1 Fete Organisers : 2 or 3
PCC Representative : 1 Traidcraft Organiser
Wheatley Area Churches : 1 LEP Enabling Group : 1