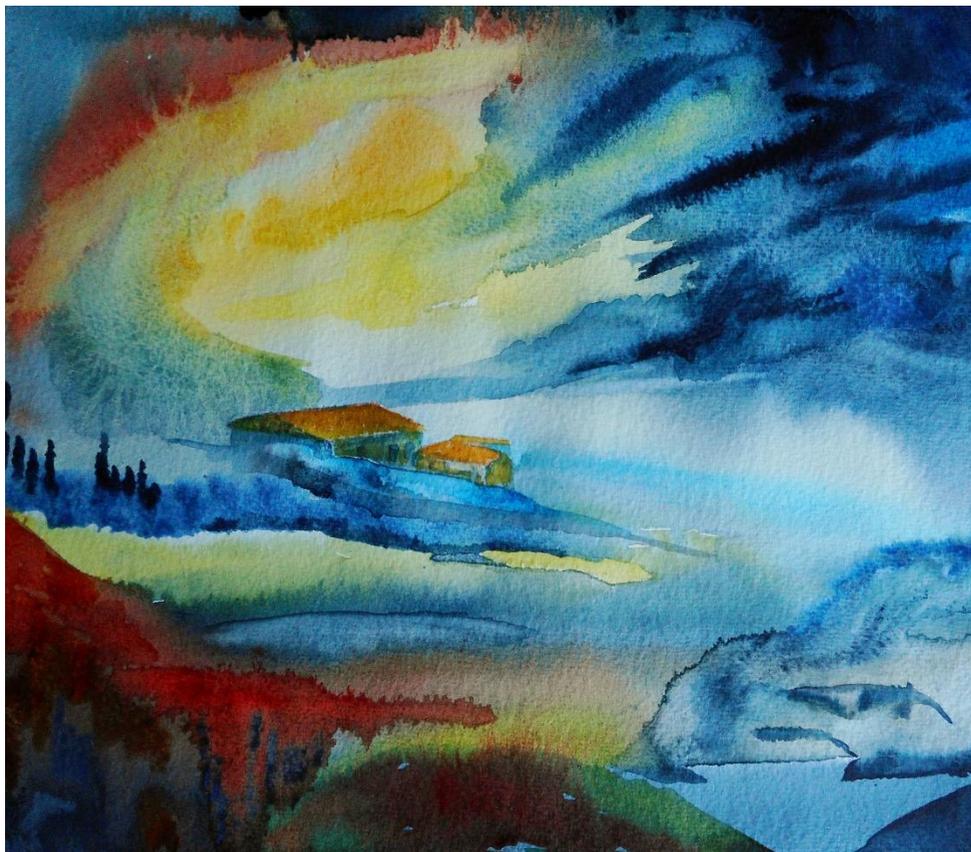


# WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



**March 2021**

# Covering Thoughts

*For the first time I do not know what to write. What can I say on this cold misty morning that prevents me from walking off my lassitude? How can one cheer up another when one's mental and spiritual energy is depleted? So, I resort once more to my painting.*

*During January and February, the focus has been the weather and I began with pencil and charcoal sketches of views from the window and then moved on to old photos. Snow, clouds, stormy skies, windswept landscapes all suited my mood. But then I needed some colour and searched for inspiration. It came in a German expressionist painter called Emil Nolde (1867-1956) whose weather filled landscapes blew my mind away. I searched online for images of his watercolours and have been trying to emulate his skills. It has been extremely difficult. What appears so effortless in his paintings is hard to reproduce but working in brilliant colours has lifted my mood.*

*I began to delve deeper and listened to a lecture about him. What I discovered was disturbing. I knew that his art featured in the Exhibition of Degenerate Art which aimed to ridicule modern artists. I did not know that he had been a member of the National Socialist Party and supported anti-Semitism. Despite his political affiliation all Nolde's work was removed from public galleries and even private collections, and he was banned from painting altogether. He returned to his rural life in Friesland, northern Germany, where he worked on postcard sized paintings in watercolour. These could be quickly hidden away if that fateful knock came on his door. He later called these his unpainted pictures.*

*Sometimes we may be surprised to admire art or music produced by someone whose views and way of life we do not respect. Does this devalue the art they produce? If we dismiss their work because of who they are we leave ourselves open to be judged and rejected. Some of the most tortured and dark souls have produced work of compelling beauty, and the experience of tragedy can be the catalyst for bringing hope and healing to others.*

Christine



# Pastoral Letter

The Covid shutdowns have inevitably resulted in new ways of working and keeping in touch with one another. Some of these may continue in the future. However, it has also focussed attention on what we miss most. It may be holidays and travel, or visits to the theatre or concerts, but for most of us it is being able to meet up with friends and family. Even more specifically it is lack of physical contact with hugs being highest on the list.

Years ago, when I chaired the hospital ethics committee, a request came from the legal department that any physical contact between staff and patients should be limited to that strictly necessary for clinical purposes. There were concerns that 'contact' might be abused or at least misinterpreted and subject to litigation. Clearly any contact needs to be appropriate and sensitive to the other's needs; here I wear my safeguarding hat. Having said that, simply holding the hand of someone dying or in distress may speak louder than words. Similarly, a shoulder to cry on on receipt of bad news or loss, or an embrace to celebrate good news may be equally appropriate and necessary.

The gospels are full of examples of Jesus as a 'toucher'. In Mark 10.16, he welcomes the children as he 'put his arms around them, laid hands on them and blessed them'. Touch was also an integral part of his healing ministry be it the blind whose sight was restored when he touched their eyes (Matt 20.25.) the leper whose leprosy was cured after Jesus touched him (Luke 5.13) or the crowds who came for healing (Matt. 15.30.)

In our churches today, the laying on of hands is both a blessing and symbolic of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

As the epidemic retreats and restrictions gradually withdrawn may we seize the opportunities to greet each other with a welcoming handshake, offer support with an arm to lean on or warmly embrace each other with a hug.

With every blessing (and a virtual hug),  
Malcolm

~\*~\*~

# Prayers

**Please remember in your prayers** the members in Tom Goss's pastoral group, Colin Thompson, Herthe Thompson, Catherine & Robert Harding, John Kidd, Keith & Debi Kidd, Graham Dobson, Jean Boxall and Elaine & Mike Matejtschuk.

**Also remember members of the Worship Ministry Team** Pauline Main, Laurence Devlin, Pauline Shelley, Colin Thompson and Allison Towner.



## Lent - Study groups on Zoom

Last autumn's study groups on the book of Job worked well, so Pauline, Cara and Laurence are organising four studies for Lent:

***Exploring Lenten themes through art.***

Our starting point will be the small devotional book *The Art of Lent: A painting a day from Ash Wednesday* by Sr Wendy Becket, but we shall also use a variety of paintings (and perhaps sculpture!) to explore such themes as *Repentance & Forgiveness; Silence and Contemplation; Peace/Joy/Contentment; Love and Sorrow.*

Dates: Tuesdays 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March, each starting at 7.30pm

## Holy Week “breakfast” Meditations

It will be “bring your own breakfast” again this year, but we are hoping to have a breakfast-time meditation each day during Holy Week. Details to follow.





# FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

To mark Fairtrade Fortnight, The Care for the World Team have, in the past, held an event to promote Fairtrade food or recipes; last year we held a Fairtrade Quiz.

This year Fairtrade Fortnight will run from February 22<sup>nd</sup> - March 7th and we will be giving out Fairtrade Flowers as a bright sign of hope in these difficult times. Our flowers will be coming from the local Co-op in Wheatley, but they are also available online.



6 Reasons why you should buy Fairtrade Flowers.

- Fairtrade flowers have a lower carbon footprint. ...
- Fairtrade flower farms are reducing water usage. ...
- Fairtrade flower farms protect the environment. ...
- Fairtrade is pioneering gender empowerment. ...
- Workers on Fairtrade flower farms are some of the first moving towards a living wage. ...
- Fairtrade flowers are worth it.

Check out this link for more information.

[https://www.google.com/search?q=fairtrade+flowers+facts&rlz=1C5CHFA\\_enGB727GB794&oq=Fairtrade&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j69i59l2j69i60j69i59j69i60.10808j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=fairtrade+flowers+facts&rlz=1C5CHFA_enGB727GB794&oq=Fairtrade&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j69i59l2j69i60j69i59j69i60.10808j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

Liz Barry  
Care for the World

# Falcon School News Update

**‘Thank you so much .... for your commitment to walk with us on this journey to change our lives in Zimbabwe’ (Rev. Wilbert Sayimani, Dec 2020)**

As we write in mid-February, Zimbabwe continues to be in the throes of a deepening economic crisis, exacerbated by a recent spike in COVID-19 cases.

There are now fears that the new, more infectious variant of the coronavirus arrived from South Africa when thousands of Zimbabweans living there returned home for the festive season.

So, Falcon Junior, like other schools there, has been closed since December with the anticipated February re-opening date still to materialise.

Similarly, Reverend Wilbert Sayimani’s plans to travel to Zimbabwe in March have been postponed until April, or later, for the same reason. He is still planning to take 3 additional suitcases with him (with extortionate surcharges per case!) filled with school uniforms, donated by his Bournemouth URC church.

Lauren, our main contact and Falcon ‘anchor’ in Bournemouth, tells us that £20, for example, can buy 2 dresses and a cardigan and two pairs of shorts and two polo shirts.... two complete uniforms for younger pupils! A recent request for even more school uniforms indicates that a few ‘older’ children intend to start when the school re-opens. The new pupil ‘starts’ will still hopefully be - 10 x five years old; 7 x 7 years old; 9 x 9 years old; 9 x 11 years old and 9 x 13-14 years old i.e., 44 new pupils in all!



There is also a continuing need for 'basic' school materials ...coloured crayons, plastic envelopes, and sellotape are always in demand. For some reason sellotape is expensive in Zimbabwe.

Bournemouth URC have also sent paper but it is extremely heavy, although they did send it once in a "barrel" ..i.e. you pay a fixed price for transport by sea and the weight is immaterial.

Wilbert and Lauren are so appreciative of our initial donation and the best way to illustrate that to you is simply to finish by quoting another message Wilbert sent to us:

**'I could never be excited as I was when I looked at your 'magazine'** (i.e., e mail update). I thank you so much for the initial donation you sent to this cause and I am proud to point at what it already has accomplished ...  
... the **classroom block now has floors neatly done**. The **windowpanes, doors and windowsills** are all done with the money that you sent'

And from us, the CFW team, thank you so much Wheatley URC for your continuing Falcon support through this coming year.

### **Walking For Falcon!**

We cannot organise events in support of the Falcon School at the moment, but here is a great idea for an easy (?!) way to fundraise, without waiting until the end of lockdown.

Many of us are trying to have a daily walk, so why not use it to help the Falcon School, by setting yourself a challenge to donate a sum of money for every mile or hour walked each day. You might do this as an individual or as a couple or family.

The funds raised could be paid to our Treasurer, Chris Shelley, at regular intervals, e.g., monthly, in the usual way.

If you have any questions or any other ideas on the 'Walk For Falcon' theme please let someone from the Care for the World team know!

Pauline Main on behalf of Care4World

~\*~

# News from The Alzheimer's Society

Looking back to a previous life in Wheatley URC, we used to enjoy a monthly Sunday Afternoon tea, with pretty china, cakes and chat, aimed particularly at people who live alone. Almost as an unintended by-product we would drip feed donations from our guests to the Alzheimer's Society, thanks to the help of Treasurer Chris Shelley.

Recently we received a special letter of thanks, which gives us news of the Alzheimer's Society under the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are the key paragraphs:

*"At times like this, our support for people affected by dementia is more important than ever. Of the 850,000 people with the condition in the UK, 700,000 fell into the Government-specified vulnerable category which only served to increase the feelings of isolation and loneliness that many people with dementia have reported feeling. Your generous donation at such a difficult time is greatly appreciated and every penny means we can continue to be there for people affected by dementia, wherever they are and whenever they need us.*

*Our top priority has been the wellbeing of our service users which means that we had no choice but to suspend our face-to-face services to keep everyone as safe as possible from COVID 19. In its place, we have ramped up our services over the phone and online so that we can still reach the people who need us and respond to more people than ever before. We had to act quickly to establish a completely new service – 'companion calls'. This involves teams of volunteers proactively telephoning vulnerable people with dementia to chat, check on their wellbeing and, if necessary, refer them to other services like Alzheimer's Society Dementia Connect Support Line. With your help we will put a virtual arm around the shoulders of people with dementia and let them know they are not alone.*

*Thank you so much once again for choosing to support Alzheimer's Society."*

It is good to see that Alzheimer's Society is still active and useful in these difficult times.

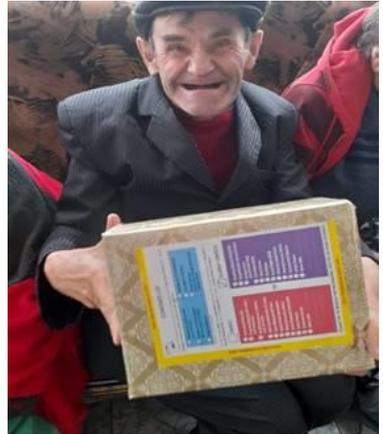
Ann Bettess



# SHOEBOX APPEAL 2020

A message I received:

***“A huge thank you to everyone that took part in our 2020 Family & Shoebox Appeal - we couldn't have done it without you. Normally a total of 20,768 shoeboxes would have been disappointing but we are delighted with the final figure considering the extremely difficult circumstances. We also owe a huge thank you to our lovely area receivers and group organisers who valiantly enabled us to run the Shoebox Appeal - thank you.”***



Thanks to all who participated in 2020. Hopefully, we will continue for Christmas 2021 when purchase of things for the boxes and collections of the finished boxes will be a bit easier!

Laurence Devlin

~\*~

# COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS for March 2021

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

Date	March 7th	March 14th	March 21st	March 28 <sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday
<b>First Reading</b>	Exodus 20: 1-17	Numbers 21: 4-9	Jeremiah 31: 31-34	
<b>Psalm</b>	Psalm 19	Psalm 107: 1-3 and 17-22	Psalm 119: 9-16	Psalm 118: 1-2 and 19-29
<b>New Testament</b>	1 Corinthians 1: 18-25	Ephesians 2: 1-10	Hebrews 5: 5-10	
<b>Gospel</b>	John 2: 13-22	John 3: 14-21	John 12: 20-33	Mark 11: 1-11

**March 7th** We are all thieves who have stolen the self which was meant to be part of God and tried to keep it for ourselves alone. But if we give it up again, we might hear the words Jesus spoke to a penitent thief once: Today you will be with me in paradise.

**March 14th** God says: I am the supreme fire; not deadly, but rather, enkindling every spark of life.

**March 21st** It is the poor, the weak, the marginalized, and defenceless nature that may point to the way of the cross - the unique path to the resurrection.

**March 28th** At the passion of Jesus some jeer, some weep, some pass by. But Pilate wonders.

Richard B



# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm



BUILD ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

Women of the Republic of Vanuatu (located in the South Pacific Ocean) have prepared this year's service. The black and white sandy beaches, coral reefs with coloured fishes, lovely birds, fruits and nuts in the forest, all make the islands a pristine environment but they are vulnerable to frequent tropical storms, earthquakes, cyclones, tsunamis and active volcanoes. Women, men and children of all ages are called to 'Build on a strong foundation' and live in unity, love and peace in the context of ethnic and cultural diversity as in Vanuatu and so many other places around the world.

World Day of Prayer is an international, inter-church organisation which enables us to hear the thoughts of women from all parts of the world; their hopes, concerns and prayers. The preparation for the day is vast. An international committee is based in New York and there are national committees in each participating country. Regional conferences meet to consider the service and then local groups make their plans. Our service in Wheatley and Holton will be on **Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm** via Zoom.

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 170 countries. It begins in Samoa, then as the earth rotates, a great wave of prayer begins to build. It sweeps across the Pacific, touching Fiji and New Zealand. It rolls through Asia, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Bangladesh... The countries of Africa are next and then the Middle East. The wave reaches the shores of Europe as the day dawns there. Across the Atlantic it moves onwards – the Caribbean, all the Americas, and on to the Pacific again until the sun finally sets over American Samoa, where the final service takes place, and a worldwide circle of prayer is complete.

**The Zoom link to our service will be sent out nearer the time.**

For further information and resources, see the WDP website: [wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk)

# Zoom Services Rota for March

Dates	Worship leaders	Readers	Intercessors
7	Pauline	<i>Summertown &amp; Marston</i>	
14	Richard	Ellen Webster	Christine Bainbridge
21	Colin	Moira Watson	Liz Barry
28	Laurence	Phyllis Williams	Robert Harding

~\*~

## Scripture Cake

This recipe has been submitted by Allison Towner.

4.5 cupfuls of 1st King iv. 22 (flour)

1.5 cupfuls of Judges v. 25 (milk)

2 cupfuls of Jeremiah vi .20 (sugar)

2 cupfuls of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel xxx. 12 (raisins)

2 cupfuls of Nahum iii. 12 (figs)

1 cupful of Numbers xvii. 8 (almonds)

2 tblsp 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel xiv. 25 (honey)

6 articles of Jeremiah xvii. 11 (eggs)

A pinch of Leviticus ii. 13 (salt)

2 tsp of Amos iv. 5 Leaven (baking powder)

Season to taste with 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles ix. .9 (spices)

Add (citron)

Follow Solomon's advice for making a good boy Proverbs xxiii. 14 (Beat Well)

AND YOU WILL HAVE A GOOD CAKE!

Let us know if you make it and maybe send in a photo too!

~\*~

# Our Current Noticeboard

## Wayside Pulpit

Here is the latest edition of our outdoor Church Noticeboard from Christine. Through her contribution, often including some of her own original artwork, we hope to reach out to those passing by with art, poems and inspirational thoughts which often come from members of our community.



# Lockdown Photographs

One winter walk collage in Bernwood



Nature's window art



Bobbie Stormont



# Commitment for Life

In appreciation of

Wheatley URC

for the generous donation of £1,010.00  
towards

**Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love**

Commitment for Life is the global justice programme of the United Reformed Church  
working in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now.

Signed:

*[Signature]*

Date:

21.01.2021



[www.urc.org.uk/cfl](http://www.urc.org.uk/cfl)

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## Deadlines

17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 is the deadline for the April Newsletter. Please send copy to:  
[newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk) Paper copy can be given to Debi Kidd.

## Disclaimer

The Editors welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations, but reserve the right to publish or not.

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