

WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



May 2021

Covering Thoughts

I was interested to read in our Thought for the Day of the discussion between Joan of Arc and her inquisitors who challenged her about the voices she claimed to hear. They accused her of using her imagination. She retorted “How else would God speak to me if not through my imagination?”

It is so easy to apply either a negative or a positive judgement to imagination, so we must perhaps proceed with caution when we make statements of belief. However we might all agree that imagination provides the rich tapestry of colour to our lives and I make no excuse for providing an imaginary night landscape for this month’s newsletter. As the weather warms we may enjoy the evening air and gaze at the moonlight as it both reveals and hides the surrounding landscape and the night sky. Thomas Merton (1915 – 1968) described one such night, imagining another such night in another time:

*When the full fields begin to smell of sunrise
And the valleys sing in their sleep,
The pilgrim moon pours over the solemn darkness
Her waterfalls of silence,
And then departs, up the long avenue of trees.*

*The stars hide, in the glade, their lights, like tears,
Baying in eastward mysteries of distance,
Where fire flares, somewhere, over a sink of cities.....*

*Wake in the cloisters of the lonely night, my soul, my sister,
Where the apostles gather, who were, one time scattered,
And mourn God’s blood in the place of his betrayal,
And weep with Peter at the triple cock crow.*

Christine



Pastoral Letter

I am writing this in the kitchen while cooking the Sunday tea. It is interesting that I call it tea. For the rest of the week it is supper/dinner. We use words in different ways. Some theologians think that language is central. For some it is all we have. The important thing is what it does to help you live. Language has the ability to move you and certain people like Schweitzer [reverence for life], Tillich [ground and depth of being], Bonhoeffer [religionless Christianity], Brother Roger [parable of community], have the ability to move you and give you motivation to live.

The meal needs a bit of attention. It is a matter of timing. It is good to leave the other rooms of the house and to focus on the task in hand. Living the moment is popular in theology. I go along with this as you know. It can be achieved by simple things, such as watching the water boil [how long ?]

I have just realised that I am not focused. Cooking and writing at the same time is not being focused. Multi-tasking is popular. Do what I say and not what I do. What has this to do with theology? Everything. It is not about orthodoxy but orthopraxy. Living, that is living out what we consider to be of value. Sunday tea is about as good as it gets.

Richard Bainbridge

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Prayers

Please remember in your prayers the members in Phyllis Williams' pastoral group; Jill Cansell, Joel Rasmussen, Jeff Clarke, Jennifer & Hennie Eloffs - Henrik & Joshua, Marion Mole

Also remember members of the Children's Education Team ; Ann Hardiman and Malcolm Benson

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Church Meeting - Thursday 20th May at 7.30pm on Zoom

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Colin Towner

We are most grateful to everyone who has supported us over the last few years of Colin's life. He passed away very peacefully in the excellent nursing home and we are pleased that he is no longer in distress. The notes, cards and messages are very much appreciated and bring great comfort.

Allison, Victoria and Martin

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Christian Aid Week

10-16 May 2021



Tea & Cake / Soup Lunches

Once again we are unable to deliver Christian Aid envelopes this year and realise that the days of the door-to-door collection will now be a thing of the past in Wheatley. But you can **create your own e-envelope** to collect donations from your church, friends or family this Christian Aid Week. Your donations will help Christian Aid tackle the climate crisis that threatens the lives and livelihoods of communities living in Kenya. Follow this link to create your own e-envelope and donate. envelope.christianaid.org.uk

Tea & Cake / Soup Lunches - At a time when many of us are delighting in the possibility of a return to more social contact, we are arranging a series of tea & cake and soup fundraising events. More information will follow.

Liz & Tony Barry

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The Christian Aid Zimbabwe programme is continuing to respond to the changing situation in the country including emergencies like drought and cyclones, adapting to Covid-19 challenges as well as supporting its ongoing work with long-term partners.

Christian Aid partners have been working on a project to help build resilience and earn income in different ways. With unemployment very high for young people, one of the aspects of the project has been giving young people vocational skills to help them earn money and connect with one another.

Chipo Kadogo is 26 and is part of a leatherworking group which received training and help to start a small business. Chipo's community were struggling with youth unemployment leading to early marriage but Chipo feels this opportunity to train in vocational skills has changed things, "the training received from this project has equipped me for life; it is clearly a change from nobody to somebody in my community."

Chipo is now able to make shoes, bags, belts, wallets and other kinds of leather products which she sells as part of a leatherworking group, but she has also learned how to service and repair sewing machines.

Chipo has also learned leadership skills and business management and has become Chairperson of the New Life leatherwork group. As someone who was previously very confrontational, Chipo appreciates the group-work and co-operation training which has allowed her to learn to handle conflict and become a trusted leader.

The income from the enterprise makes a huge difference to all the members, especially now they can afford school fees and uniforms and take part in savings and loans groups.

The message finished by saying; **"Thank you for your support through Commitment for Life, which has helped young people start businesses and become leaders."**

At Wheatley URC we continue to support the general work of 'Commitment for Life' in Zimbabwe, as well as taking on our new partnership with The Falcon School.

Robert Harding on behalf of Care for the World

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Common Lectionary Readings for May 2021

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings

Date	2nd May	9th May	16th May	23rd May	30th May
First Reading	Acts 8: 26-40	Acts 10: 44-48	Acts 1: 15-17 & 21-26	Acts 2: 1-21	Isaiah:6 1-8
Psalm	Psalm 22: 25-31	Psalm 98	Psalm 1	Psalm 104: 24-34 & 35b	Psalm 29
New Testament	1 John 4: 7-21	1 John 5: 1-6	1 John 5: 9-13	Romans 8: 22-27	Romans 8: 12-17
Gospel	John 15: 1-8	John 15: 9-17	John 17: 6-19	John 10: 11-18	John 3: 1-17

May 2nd: Given a choice between Christ and the truth, you should pick the truth because then you end up falling into the arms of Christ. [Simone Weil, 1909-1943]

May 9th: It is the lover not the thinker who really knows. [William McNamara]

May 16th: But behold, miracle of miracles, out of the cracks a light shines. [Choan-Seng Song]

May 23rd: Perhaps the old wine-skins of settled attitudes about the admissible and the inadmissible are being broken by the new wine of the gospel in unanticipated ways.[John Pridmore]

May 30th: The Gospel unites me with Nicodemus who came by night to Jesus. He was in the dark, where I am when I talk about the Trinity. [John Pridmore]

Richard Bainbridge

Zoom Service Rotas for May 2021

Dates	Worship leaders	Readers	Intercessors
2	Rev Pauline Main		Marston/Summertown
9	Richard Bainbridge	Ann Bettess	Bobbie Stormont
16	Rev Colin Thompson	Barbara Joiner	Ellen Webster
23 PENTECOST	Rev Cara Heafey		Marston/Summertown
30	Laurence Devlin	Tom Goss	Ann Bettess

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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.



Falcon News

Back to school finally ...



..... after lockdown!

Children at the Falcon school returned at last, at the end of March, having been away in 'lockdown' since last November. The Rev. Wilbert Sayimani tells us that the children were 'just over the moon' to discover their new classroom block, completed with the help of Wheatley URC and they say 'THANK YOU' !

Long Crendon 'Quiz Walk' - Have Fun For Falcon School

You should by now have received details of how to obtain the instructions 'pack' for this Quiz Walk that Bob & Ellen and Rob & Angela have spent time planning during lockdown, a **really interesting and fun 'adventure' around the charming and historic village of Long Crendon.**

Here's a reminder:

Enjoy a quick springtime 'run-out' over to Long Crendon and enjoy a short walk and mildly challenging quiz, at the same time as knowing **your efforts are also going to a very worthy cause. You may not even answer all the questions** but, no matter, **just have some fun for Falcon!**

Please encourage family and local friends to join in; let them know how to donate and how to acquire the 'quiz pack'. The quiz can be completed in your own time, on any day you choose, and if you are a driver, you may wish to offer a lift to others, Covid regulations permitting.

The quiz pack can be obtained via email or post from Rob Holdaway (holdawayr4a@gmail.com - 01844 202027) **at the same time as you make your donations.** Those **donations should be made** by direct bank transfer where possible, to Wheatley URC, reference 'Falcon Quiz'. If you need the bank details or require further information on making a donation, please contact Chris, our treasurer, either by email or telephone 01865-873908.

Any questions, please feel free to contact Rob (phone number above) or **Ellen** (01844 698267).

Rob Holdaway on behalf of the 'Care For The World Team'

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Deadlines

Monday 17th May 2021 is the deadline for the June Newsletter. Please send copy to: newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk Paper copy can be given to Bobbie Stormont.

Disclaimer

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

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Announcing two very important celebrations

Revd Colin Thompson Golden Jubilee Saturday 26 June

Colin celebrates the Golden Jubilee of his ordination on 19th June 1971 and as a church we want to celebrate this with him on Saturday 26th June with afternoon tea and a special service.

Church Anniversary Tea and Worship Service 11 July

Revd Tanya Rasmussen has accepted an invitation to preach at our Anniversary service. She will do so on Zoom from Hollis, New Hampshire on screen as part of a worship service in the church and optionally in your home. Because of the time difference this service will be at 5pm following an afternoon anniversary tea.

These will both be afternoon services. Details are still to be worked out how to accommodate as many as possible of us in the church buildings but with an option to join in by Zoom.

Please save these dates!

Phyllis Williams

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# Trees For Life

Thank you, Lord, for the tree

My mother planted

Many years ago

A 'Weeping Willow'

Shading us from too much

sunshine

Weeping with us

Listening to our laughter

And being part of memories

Down the years

Thank you, Lord, for the tree

We display

At Christmas-time

With baubles, lights, presents

Celebrating the joys of the Season

Sending a 'Welcome' message

Almost weeping with joy

And helping our hearts' happiness

Down the years

Thank you, Lord, for the tree

Carved to make Your Cross

Many years ago

Growing along with others

Probably un-noticed

Then cut down and shaped

For a purpose it could not know

Chosen to bear Your Son, crucified

Who created it for this

And did not blame it

Or the world that did this to Him

As His love poured out upon us,

Then, and down all the years

Thank you, Lord, for the trees

Whispering, dancing, weeping,

dying

Sharing and shaping our lives

As You always do

And because of your Easter Life

We have hope to rise again

As when a branch is planted

And Your promise, grace, love and

faithfulness

Live forever in us

Down the years

And for all Eternity

***David Herring***



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### **CHURCH CONTACTS**

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