

WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



April 2022

Covering Thoughts

Once we printed photos and filled albums but now we take so many that we simply store them on the computer. Perhaps your skills are such that this has not been a problem, but my photos have been thrown together with no rhyme or reason so that finding anything has been a mammoth task. Discovering how to make folders has been a revelation.....but I am also discovering that it is better to leave the camera at home and simply look.

*Set down the camera.
You can't capture the moment.
You can only be in it.*

*This world, yes, this one,
with the bloody wood on the horizon,
is a wonder of beauty and delight. Be in it.*

*To watch the elegant heron fly
You must let it fly.
Allow and behold.*

*This heaven spangled world,
riddled with the divine,
is always a beginning*

*which you are always leaving
without staying,
but ever in.*

*Waken now. Look. Listen.
This wonder,
be in it.*

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

This month's painting is called Spring Song and as you can see is not dependent on any photo, but I hope that nevertheless it will convey something of the season for you to enjoy.

Christine

Pastoral Letter

Dear friends in Christ

I hope you will understand if I write this month about the war in Ukraine. Perhaps by the time you read this, peace talks will have borne fruit and a ceasefire will be in place. But so many innocent lives have already been lost, such destruction wrought and so much suffering inflicted, that our thoughts turn more naturally to Good Friday than to Easter Sunday. The wounds this war will leave behind will go very deep and they will not heal for a long time. When it is finished, sifting the truth from all the lies and holding to account those who may have perpetrated crimes against humanity will be a difficult and controversial process. Meanwhile, we find ourselves wondering if there isn't an uncanny parallel to what happened in Europe in the 1930s, and how we can face down ruthless dictators without risking nuclear war.

The historian George Santayana famously wrote that those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. But what is it that we should remember? The Italian Renaissance thinker Machiavelli has given his name to the worst kind of political intrigue, but some of the things he wrote are worth pondering. He argued, for example, that when you defeat your enemy, you shouldn't act in a vindictive way afterwards, but show restraint and even generosity, so that they will love rather than hate you. I don't think the Allies at the end of the First World War remembered that when they imposed punitive measures on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles. Equally, we mustn't forget that Russia has twice been invaded from the west, by Napoleon and then Hitler, at unimaginable cost. Figures are disputed, but somewhere around 24 million Russian military and civilian lives were lost on the Eastern Front, far greater than any other country (compare the United Kingdom, with 450,000). History teaches us that Russia feels nervous about the West with some justification, and we need to understand that. That in no way excuses the invasion of a sovereign nation and the bombing of civilian targets, which we rightly condemn. But it needs to be remembered. Nor should we forget the other wars being fought at huge human cost in other parts of the world, like the proxy war in Yemen which has brought untold suffering to so many.

This is the month in which Good Friday reveals the worst of our humanity and Easter Sunday the mysterious power which brings life out of death and hope out of the ruins. There will be a rebuilding of Ukraine and, I hope, an even stronger

commitment to democracy and the rule of law. One day, too, Russia will emerge from the shadows of Putin and his cronies. I am reminded of another famous saying, this time from Martin Luther King, that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice. It may take many years, but slowly and surely, we inch our way towards a more just world. In the midst of all the horror we should celebrate the light of compassion which shines in the hearts of all those who have opened their homes to refugees, comforted and fed them, contributed to appeals for money, medical supplies and other necessities, and driven convoys of aid across Europe. I can't help thinking, too, about the courageous young TV editor with her home-made placard, interrupting the state-controlled news programme to make her views known, who, like other protesters in Russia, faces the possibility of severe punishment for telling the truth. It's hard to believe in resurrection in the face of so much death. But if you find yourself on the side of those whose actions are pinpricks of light amid the overwhelming darkness, you are already walking the Easter road. You believe.

May the peace and the hope of the risen Christ go with you all.

Colin Thompson

Falcon October School News



Things are looking brighter at Falcon!

Thank You!

The current start - of - new - year programme of development at Falcon that Wilbert told us about in January will be in its last stages during Autumn (Spring here in UK!), the main objective being to complete and properly tidy up work on the 2nd classroom block and teachers' accommodation before moving onto any new stages of work.

This includes finishing the ceilings, painting throughout to protect new plaster work and completing toilets installation.

You saw 'trenches' being dug for the new water feed pipes from the bore hole ... it transpires a solar pump is now required to boost the pressure through to the new accommodation.

Three 'teacher families' will then move into the new accommodation and the caretaker will then move into the 'office cupboard area' by the second classroom.

Wheatley URC's latest donation (March) to help complete this work stage was greeted with joy by Wilbert (and Lauren) ... to quote his message to us:

'I want to commend everyone for the support that we have been given so far. The school is already in a far better place than it was before your generous contributions. May the good Lord continue to bless you for that'

Our donation totalled approx £732, made up of your very generous personal donations and substantial gift aid 'return' amount corresponding to our previous Falcon donations

Added to this in coming months will be income from our sale of Falcon preserves (currently £150+) plus a few helpful US Dollars!



NEW STORE TRIAL!

In a first small scale attempt to generate their own funds the Falcon School have set up their own mini-store for the local community, selling a small range of households products including groceries and mosquito coils.

Its early days in the trial but (purchasing products from the local wholesaler) the idea is to save local people the 6 mile journey to the nearest shop by offering a convenient range of 'essentials'.



Hello and thank you Wheatley URC

Thank all once again for your generous support for the Falcon School!

Rob and The Care for The World Team

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## Prayers

**Please remember in your prayers the members and friends who we keep in touch with;** Tanya Rasmussen, Karen & Gerrie Fourie, Robin & Jennie Gladwin, Cathy & Mike Hogan, Ann Newman, Charles Brock, Frances Fielding, Joel Rasmussen and the Eloffs family.

**Also remember members of the Finance Ministry Team;** Chris Shelley, Robert Harding, and Mike Matejtschuk

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Blended Service Rotas for April 2022

Dates	Worship Leaders	Readers	Intercessors	Vestry	Welcomer/Door Steward
3 rd	Colin Thompson - HC	Ann Bettess	Ann Hardiman	Ann Gajda	Robert Harding
10 th	Palm Sunday – St. Mary's				
17 th	Donald Norwood – Easter Sunday	Ann Hardiman	Malcolm Benson		Angela Holdaway
24th	Kate Hartford	Christine Bainbridge	Ann Bettess		Ann Bettess

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## Deadline

April 13<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for the May Newsletter. Please send copy to: [newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk) Paper copy can be given to Debi Kidd. If you type your contribution and send via email, please type it in Calibri font, size 11. Thank you.

## Disclaimer

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

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Common Lectionary Readings April

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings

Date	3rd	10th	17th	24th
First Reading	Isaiah 43: 16-21	Isaiah 50: 4-9a	Acts 10: 34-43	Acts 5: 27-32
Psalm	Psalm 126	Psalm 11: 1-2 & 19-29	Psalm 118: 1-2 & 14-24	Psalm 118: 14-29
New Testament	Philippians 3: 4b-14	Philippians 2: 5-11	1 Corinthians 15: 19-26	Psalm 118: 14-29
Gospel	John 12: 1-8	Luke 1: 28-40	Luke 24: 1-12	John 20: 19-31

April 3rd There is an unhelpful pride in not being vulnerable enough to allow others to give to us.

April 10th The pattern of death and resurrection becomes foundational for Paul's understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

April 17th Easter is not a part of the old accustomed divine order, of the ordered world in which we live, but it is absolutely new. [Martin Niemoller]

April 24th To be a mother is to feel the suffering of all children. [Luz Beatriz Arellano]

Richard Bainbridge

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# Lent

## Lent Lunches in aid of Christian Aid

Noon to 2pm each Saturday in Lent 12th, 19th, 26th March and 2nd and 9th April  
Come and enjoy a simple soup lunch prepared by the churches in Wheatley (Wheatley Area Churches) and bring a donation for Christian Aid.

## Lent Courses

This year we have not prepared our own Lent course but there are some interesting options available. These include:

**1. Online Lent group starting 9 March - Oxford URCs led by Revds Helen Garton and Cara Heafey will lead a joint Lent Group for all the URC churches in the Oxford Group every week on Wednesdays at 8pm on 9, 16, 23 and 30 March and 6, 13 April.**

*Watch for further information as it becomes available.*

**2. Eco Church from A-Rocha** - Get Outside in Lent Finding God in Nature. 6 worksheets to download and follow. Self directed or get together with others. Download a worksheet each week guiding you through Lent. <https://bit.ly/3H36TZO>

**3. Online (Zoom) Lent Course 'Life on the Breadline' - 4 online sessions Thursday evenings 3,10,17, 24 March. Register on Eventbrite at <https://bit.ly/3I9fjQP>** organised by Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church (JPIT).

## Holy Week

Details of morning meditations and Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services can be found on page 15 of this newsletter.

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A Lenten Journey for 2022

*'What would it be like, I wondered, to live with that heightened sensitivity to the lives given for ours?
To consider the tree in the Kleenex,
the algae in the toothpaste,
the oaks in the floor,
the grapes in the wine;
to follow back the thread of life in everything and pay it respect?'*
- Robin Wall Kimmerer in *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Have you ever wondered where your favourite item of clothing has come from? Even who made it and what conditions were they working under?

This year during Lent, I have felt inspired by Robin's book to research, reflect and consider items in my household which enable me to live comfortably. What are they made from and what humans worked so hard to produce them? How has the production impacted the environment?

During Holy Week we will be bringing our research findings to God in meditation, reflection and prayer. The meditations will be held in the Mulberry room on 11th 12th and 13th of April, from 9.00-9.30am followed by coffee.

We invite you to join along with us on this Lenten journey. Your findings will be included in our meditations during Holy Week.

Please speak to Pauline Shelley or Liz Barry for further information.



Cricket changing lives in a land shorn of hope

In Lebanon, close to being a failed state, there is one bright light amid power cuts, riots and food shortages and the enquiry into the massive explosion at Beirut's port in 2019 – and that is **cricket**, which is booming.

Cricket was introduced into Lebanon's refugee camps – as a distraction from the harsh realities of life for children living in them – with the most unforeseen and glorious result. 'Alsama' ('sky' in Arabic) Project by Richard Verity in 2018 now has almost 400 children – mainly Syrian, and more than half of them girls - combining cricket with a secular education they would not otherwise have had.

A report commissioned to assess the impact of the project has found that cricket gives these children 10 benefits: team-work, leadership, an international perspective, body awareness, sportsmanship, strategic thinking, character, enjoyment and the ability to learn and coach. There are even inter-camp matches with all the ingredients of a 'derby' with the added excitement of the camp communities cheering them on.

Of the children enrolled in the Alsama Project almost 70% of those playing cricket also receive an education. A cruel reality is that most of these girls would otherwise be married off by their parents when they reach puberty. Not because their parents don't love them but because they have to feed and clothe their other children. Education gives these girl cricketers an alternative – that of 'living'. Richard Verity's ultimate ambition is to introduce cricket-playing secondary schools to all refugee camps in the Middle East.

In 9 months, children have gone from illiterate to literate and waiting lists are huge. The Director of the MCC Foundation visited Beirut in November 2019 and noted the joy and exuberance that shone out from the children as they kitted out to stand in line to do warm-up drills in readiness for a bowling workshop. In abundance there was talent, discipline, and a determination to learn, to play and be the best, girls alongside boys, camaraderie and hope. The MCC Foundation has offered its support to this transformational project and wants to work with refugees across the world through cricket. So, while Lebanon might be a failed state, it is also an MCC Hub.

The following was written in English, by Maram aged 14, who took part in the project and has lived in Shatila Camp for 5 years.

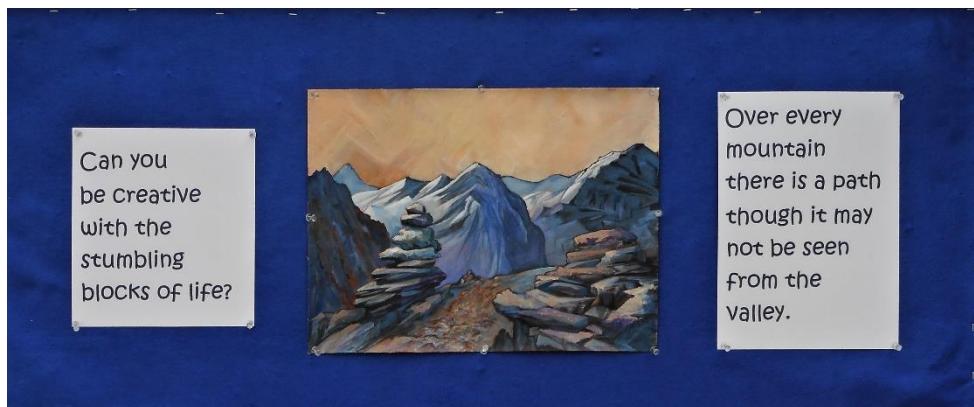
*That bright girl lives in darkness
She is still strong
That girl dares to fly in a land of broken wings
And she is still strong,
That girl is hated by many, but still knows how to love,
And she is strong,
That girl's parents expect her to fail, but she is their success,
And she is strong
That girl is me.....She will stay strong.*

This short article was taken from 'Contact' the newsletter of Southwell Methodist Church in Nottinghamshire.

Robert Harding

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## Our Current Noticeboard



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Fun Bible Trivia Quiz

1. How many words are in the shortest verse in the Bible?
2. Who is the oldest man mentioned in the Bible?
3. What book in the Bible doesn't mention God by name?
4. Who are the five angels mentioned by name in the Bible?
5. What so-called mythological creature is mentioned in the Bible?
6. What is the last word in the Bible?
7. How many wives did King Solomon have?
8. What two men in the Bible never died?
9. Who shut the door of Noah's ark?
10. What street did Judas live on?
11. Which apostle was a tentmaker?
12. How long did Jesus hang on the cross?
13. What were the first spoken words in the Bible?
14. Who was the only female judge of Israel in the Old Testament?
15. What book in the Bible mentions mowed grass?
16. In the Old Testament, what happened to the kids who mocked Elisha's bald head?
17. How tall was the giant, Goliath?
18. What two books of the Bible are named after women?
19. How many days after birth was Jesus officially nameless?
20. What person in the Bible was a fast and furious driver?



No cheating! Answers in next month's edition.

Debi Kidd

Dates for Your Diaries

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|-----------|---|
| 2nd April | Lent Lunch – hosted by OLL and St Barts in URC Hall, donations to Christian Aid |
| 3rd April | Food Bank Sunday
Afternoon Tea – 2.30pm – 4.00pm |
| 9th April | Saturday Lent Lunch - hosted by URC in URC Hall donations to Christian Aid |

URC Easter Services

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|------------|---|
| 10th April | Palm Sunday - URC and St Marys United Service in St Mary's |
| 11th April | Holy Week Morning Meditations: 'God in Creation'
9.00am – 9.30am followed by coffee |
| 12th April | Holy Week Morning Meditations: 'God in Creation'
9.00am – 9.30am followed by coffee |
| 13th April | Holy Week Morning Meditations: 'God in Creation'
9.00am – 9.30am followed by coffee |
| 14th April | Maundy Thursday - URC and St Marys United celebration of the Last Supper (Holy Communion), 7.30pm, in the Wheatley URC. |
| 15th April | Good Friday 9.30 - Stations of the Cross at Our Lady of Lourdes, followed by Good Friday Walk around the village ending at St Mary's for coffee and hot cross buns. |
| 17th April | Easter Sunday - 10am Morning Worship (Holy Communion) - Revd Donald Norwood |

Weekly

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| Monday 8:45am | Mindfulness Sitting Group (contact Mark Williams Tel 876288) |
| Thursday 8:45am | Mindfulness Sitting Group (contact Mark Williams Tel 876288) |
| Friday 10am | Table Tennis (contact Val Farmer) |

Monthly

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|-----------------|---|
| First Monday | Not So Young Club (contact Frances Simpson) |
| First Thursday | Prayer and Reflection 10:00am followed by coffee (contact Liz Barry & Barbara Joiner) |
| Second Thursday | Memory Café (contact Laurence Devlin) |
| Second Tuesday | Lunch Club (contact Laurence Devlin) |
| Third Tuesday | Lunch Club (contact Catherine Harding) |



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CHURCH CONTACTS

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