

WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



June 2023

Covering Thoughts

*On Easter Day, looking down at the Easter garden from the balcony, it was clear to see that the central flowers formed a heart. It made me recall the final line of a hymn: **from Christ in the story to Christ in the heart**. This is something I have thought about in quiet moments and as I have been painting this abstract. It has a resonance that carries me from the past to the present moment.*

From childhood we have grown to love stories. They fire the imagination, are memorable, cause reflection on the qualities of heroism, introduce moral values and give a mental image to the indescribable and invisible..... and much more.

The Bible stories, familiar and loved by many may however contain difficulties for a newcomer to them. The danger of taking them too literally may be obvious, but differing interpretations need to be considered. Then in the light of the twenty-first century some attitudes and values in the Story may be questioned. Recognizing that the Story is told from a culture and historical period far from our own is important. While one part of the larger Story may remain appealing, another raises many problems.

So the Story may be a way to introduce religious and spiritual values, but it is limited. All of this may be a barrier for some newcomers to our church who may feel that they have outgrown the familiar Story or find parts of it irrelevant today.

It is a great challenge to share the essence of the mysterious experience of the spiritual life. We might try to describe it: enriching, life enhancing, meaningful, fulfilling, mindful, creative in difficulty, accepting of imperfection, affirming and forgiving. We could continue.....but all of these are abstract, and what better way to explain them than to convey them through the telling of a story.

We treasure a Bible full of stories and we follow an inspiring story teller, but we need to bring all this from antiquity into the heart of our community experience today. How might we do this? I think one way could be to search out contemporary stories that exemplify the values we uphold, and of course to share our own.

Christine

Pastoral Letter

We had to wait for nearly an hour and a half for a 280 bus. One could get angry but there is no point. Things come and go and everything changes including bus timetables so why let it bother me? Everything changes and we need to let it go. An awareness of impermanence helps one to take heart and accept things as they are. How will you react next time?

While in Cambridge I used the toilets near the bus station where one must put 20p in a slot. This I did but on leaving someone held the door, so he did not have to pay. I think I was happy for him. How will you react when someone barges in on you?

I noticed an old man picking up cigarette butt ends by the wall of Emmanuel College where my lifetime friend had studied. I had been wishing good thoughts for my friend and now I included the old man. Have you spotted an action that is worthy of consideration?

During a workshop in Cambridge, I had been asked what joy I had experienced that morning. This was difficult -I wanted to say a flower but in fact I mentioned being grateful that I had cleared the moment and thus had satisfaction. For a moment I was not counting what would happen or reflect upon what had happened. How would you answer the question?

During a workshop we were asked to reflect on how we had spoilt the environment. My partner said he divorced after thirty-two years and said perhaps he had not been imaginative enough. This was clearly a sad moment for him. Have you encountered a similar moment?

I was asked what my favourite place is. It had to be the Bodleian Library. I always order books for the top floor. This gives exercise and allows me to admire the stone walls on the way up. What is your favourite place?

The following song was shared during the day, and I share it with you in the hope that you can share it with others:

Dear friends, dear friends,
Let me tell you how I feel –
You have given me such
treasure,
I love you so.
Love, joy, inner peace
Like a summer morning
breeze
Oh, my dear you are so
welcome
I love you so. I love you so.

Richard Bainbridge

~ ~ ~

Prayers

Please remember in your prayers the members of Charles Bennett's pastoral group; Phyllis & Mark Williams, Barbara & Albert Joiner, Bobbie Stormont & Tom Goss, Lynette Peterson & Richard Wood, Frances Simpson, Annie & Dave Crosby-Williams, Elliot & Sebastian, Catheriine & Robert Harding.

Also remember members of the Care for the World Team; Robert Harding, Liz Barry, Ann Bettess, Rob Holdaway, Elaine & Mike Matejtschuk, Ellen Webster.

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Thank you

Joan McShane would like to thank all those who sent kind messages of condolence following the death of her dear husband, Phil. By the time this is published, his funeral will have taken place at Headingley Saint Columba's church on 17th May.

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Coronation Teas - Sunday 7th May

Supporting **Christian Aid**

The day was fine and sunny, enabling a pop-up tea and cake party to take place outside the Mulberry Room, overflowing into Crown Square, in celebration of the previous day's Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. The usual monthly tea party took place inside the URC Hall, suitably decorated for The Coronation Celebration.

Both events were exceptionally well attended, happy occasions and raised an incredible combined total of **£410.51** for **Christian Aid**, whilst the regular monthly indoor tea party was still able to raise an additional **£66.51** for its chosen charity, **The Alzheimer's Society**.



Liz & Tony Barry

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Special First Sunday Tea

The Pastoral Care team and other helpers held an extra special First Sunday Tea in celebration of the Coronation. We laid out extra tables and added jellies, coronation themed cupcakes and coronation quiches to our usual fare. All the tables were filled and the hall was very busy.



It was a jolly, cheerful occasion, with movement back and forth between our Tea in the hall and the Christian Aid Tea in the Mulberry Room and outside. Many members of Wheatley's Not-So-Young Club came along, and we were joined by Linda, the "Community Champion" from Asda Stores. Asda Stores have been supporting the Not-So-Young Club for some years, once with a financial donation for equipment and at other times with cakes and other goodies.

At our First Sunday Teas we usually put out a bowl for donations to the Alzheimers Society. This month we added a big red Christian Aid bucket, so our guests were able to donate to either or neither or both of these causes.



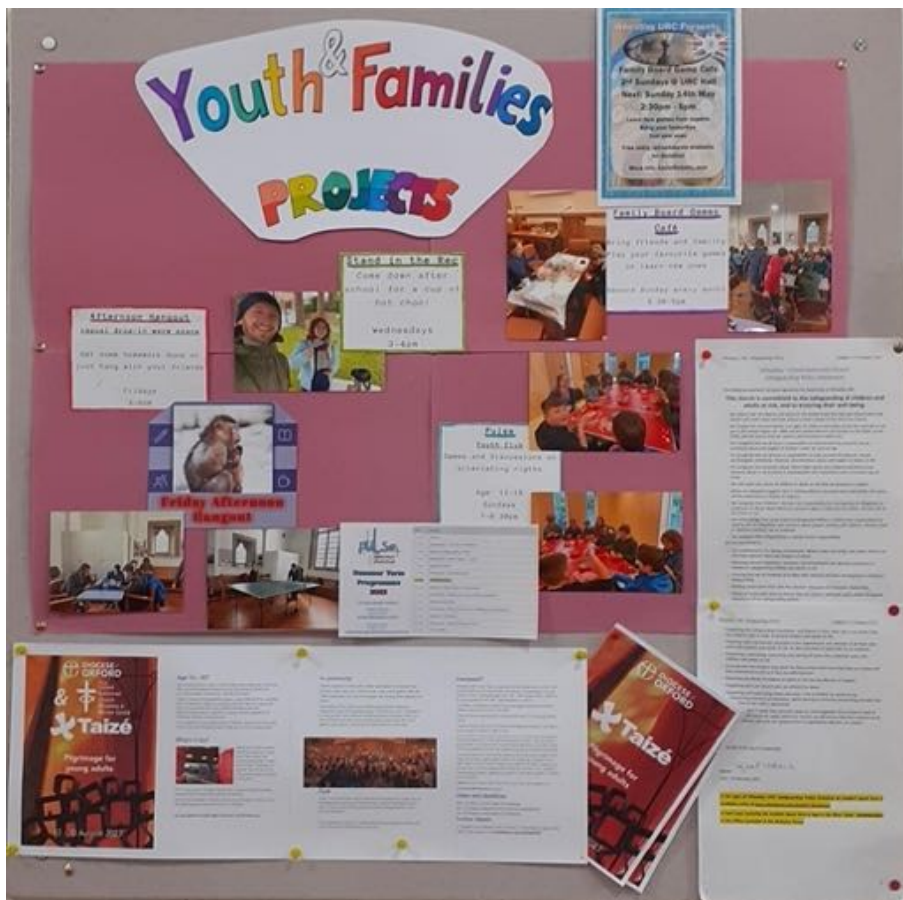
Anne Bettes

~ ~ ~



Easter Garden

see *Covering Thoughts* p2 by Christine



New Noticeboard

There is a new noticeboard in the church hall! You might have already spotted it, but it's now fully equipped with a brand new headline.

We are using the noticeboard to display details about our Youth and Families projects and to show what we have been doing in the different activities.

I will try to refresh it every once in a while, so look out for new pictures!

Elisa Pizzo

Holy Sonnets: Death, be not proud

By John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Mike Matejtschuk



Blended Service Rotas for June 2023

Date	Worship Leader	Vestry	Welcome	Door Steward	Reader	Prayers
4 th	HC Rev Colin Thompson	Malcolm Benson	Elaine Matejtschuk	Tom Goss	Pauline Shelley	Ann Hardiman
11 th	Richard Bainbridge	Moira Watson	Ellen Webster	Anne Bettess	Charles Bennett	Christine Bainbridge
18 th	Ray Stanyon	Robert Harding	Charles Bennett	Allison Towner	Marian Mole	Tom Goss
25 th	Mark Williams	Ann Gajda	Chris Shelley	Liz Barry		

Common Lectionary Readings June 2023

Date	4 th June	11 th June	18 th June	25 th June
First Reading	Isaiah 40: 12-17 & 27-31	Hosea 5: 15 to 6:6	Exodus 19: 2-8a	Jeremiah 20: 7-13
Psalm	Psalm 8	Psalm 5: 7-15	Psalm 100	Psalm 69: 7-10 & 1-18
New Testament	2 Corinthians 13: 11-13	Romans 4: 13-25	Romans 5: 1-8	Romans 6: 1b-11
Gospel	Matthew 28: 16-20	Matthew 9: 9-13 & 18-26	Matthew 9: 35 -10:8	Matthew 10: 24-39

June 4th: Art is a school of attention and, as Simone Weil put it, prayer consists of attention. All great art helps us to see [T.J. Gorringer].

June 11th: Jesus has invited a tax collector into his ramshackle band of travelling companions and then gone to dinner with all of Matthew's mates.

June 18th: In the film 'Freedom Writers' one woman, a teacher, transformed the lives of a helpless community of students that everyone else had given up on. They were encouraged to tell their story.

June 25th: It can be useful to compare and contrast - here there are the two characters of Jeremiah and Pashhur, The Temple Administrator.

Richard Bainbridge

What's On – Dates for your Diaries

Weekly

		Contact
Monday 8:45	Mindfulness Sitting Group	Mark Williams jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com
Thursday 8:45	Mindfulness Sitting Group	Mark Williams jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com
Friday 10am	Table Tennis	Val Farmer val_farmer40@hotmail.com

Monthly

Alternate Mondays	Not So Young Club	Frances Simpson frances_simpson@icloud.com
1st Sunday	Tea, 2.30 – 4pm June 4th	Ann Bettess annsgoog@gmail.com
1st Thursday	Meditation 10 - 10.30am	Liz Barry lizbarry26@gmail.com
1st Thursday	Coffee Morning 10.30am	
2nd Sunday	Family Games Cafe June 11th	Kevin Betts kevin@kbetts.com
2nd Thursday	Memory Cafe June 8th	Laurence Devlin laurencelalanne99@gmail.com
2nd Tuesday	Lunch Club – June 13th	Laurence Devlin
3rd Tuesday	Lunch Club – June 20th	Catherine Harding hardings64@btinternet.com

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Deadline

Tuesday 13th June is the deadline for the July/August Newsletter and June 1st for the AGM Reports. Please send copy to: newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk . Paper copy can be given to Bobbie Stormont. Please type it in Calibri font size 11 & no capitalized headings.

Disclaimer

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

Bonou Update

This update was prompted by a remark made by Robert (Harding) last month after Sunday service. I was showing Rob (Holdaway) one of “Friends of Bonou” leaflets, as Rob and I had had a discussion a few weeks earlier about development in Africa, its rewards, and ... its considerable difficulties! I was telling Rob about how the charity started, what we achieved and how after 14 years of intense grassroots work with the village Elders and with our friend Dominique Hounkonnou a respected development expert, we felt it was time to pass the baton over to the local people. We had always said that we would not stay indefinitely in order to avoid creating a new dependency and also because we had achieved what we set out to achieve i.e. build the training centre for Girls, with a reasonably efficient management structure and a new relationship with local and national authorities.

So when I showed the leaflet to Rob, Robert expressed his surprise and said: “Oh, this is still going on?” to which I answered: “ Oh very much so, we stopped our financial involvement in 2017 but our legacy lives on and the Centre is actually thriving.” That made me think that it might be a good idea to update you all about how the Centre is doing, 20 years exactly after I first set foot in the small village of Bonou, as so many of you had showed an interest in our work and had contributed very generously by giving a monthly contribution, buying beads and bags and coming to many of our fund raising events.



I still receive regular news twice or 3 times a year which is not as frequently as before as both Dominique and Paulin, his trusted assistant, died suddenly, the former in 2020 aged 71, and the latter age 54 two years earlier. These were traumatic events for us but especially of course for the village, the Centre and the NGO that Dominique had created to help the Centre. The transition was not easy to manage, especially in a changing political climate in Benin but in early 2022 the Centre still welcomed its 5th cohort of 25 girls for their 4 year-curriculum.



Dominique had managed to secure enough money from various local and international donors, not only to fund the day-to-day running of the Centre and the salaries of the trainers but also to add to the Centre infrastructure: a new reinforced wall to ensure the security of the girls, seven solar panels allowing the girls to have running water (an amazing luxury in a village setting even if it is cold water!) and a new “préau” (multi-purpose open hall) which gives the girls more space for their activities, sheltered from tropical rains or burning sun. And in 2022, a new activity of hand-loomed weaving was added to the existing curriculum of food processing, tailoring, hairdressing, numeracy and literacy, French, home economics, sport, health awareness, market gardening and basic principles of micro-enterprises management .

Our legacy therefore not only continues but is going from strength to strength. Our goal to help people in Bonou achieve what they wanted to do but could not do on their own while fostering full local ownership of the project, has been achieved so all is well!

Laurence Devlin

Appeal! Falcon School Priority by Mid-June

As you know, a new Grade 7 class has recently been set up and a new teacher has been appointed to lead it but he and his family have had to live in this old caretaker's hut.



Can You Help?

Falcon's next short term priority project (for this cold Zimbabwe winter!) is to erect a new timber 2 bedroom cabin for the teacher ... we are appealing for donations, no matter how small, to help reach the **target cost** of **£1150**. We have already 'collected' half, so **only need another £500!**

Wilbert is leaving for Zimbabwe later in June and his priority is to oversee and support installation of the new accommodation.

Any donations are welcome and greatly appreciated: preferably by direct transfer into the Wheatley URC bank account marked 'Falcon 'in the reference box. Alternatively, cheques (payable to Wheatley URC) or cash can be placed in one of the blue gift aid envelopes you can find in the Church and mark the envelope clearly 'Falcon 'please. If you wish the Church to claim Gift Aid on your donation, please put your name and address on the envelope which can then be left on the plate on the table at the back of the Church.

Please speak to Chris Shelley if you need any further information on making your donation.



These Grade 7 pupils will be so, so grateful. Haven't they grown since we first started supporting the Falcon School ?!



**With Thanks
Your Care For The World Team**

Fear of Endless Days

What prospect this of endless days
While, sitting in a constant haze
Gazing at this topless mound
Of papers lying all around;
Defeated by his old sock drawer
Of him I used so to adore?

No motive, impulse, or even thought.
Brooding over all I ought
To do if only I could stir
My stupid self from out this blur.

Think of all the others who
Have learnt to overcome their stew
Of muddled musings, loneliness,
Chaotic thoughts and hopelessness;
Who've ris'n above their petty fears -
Lost keys, lost minds, and daunting stairs;
To come to terms with present days.
And all unhealthy fears erase.

Why bother with those blighted days...
You're feeling tired, your eyes are glazed,
You crack your shin and slip on wood,
When nothing goes the way it should.

When you break your favourite mug
And there's no-one there to give you a hug...
The wine-rack's bare – nothing there!
But then – surprise – the sun comes out!

And you quite forget what made you shout.

Sybil Beaton

The Role of Safeguarding Coordinator

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to promote the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults, specifically putting preventative measures in place to protect those at risk of, or experiencing physical or emotional abuse, neglect or exploitation. It also requires having effective procedures in place to deal with specific concerns should they arise.

Although we might assume that the risks within our own community are small, history teaches us that abuses have occurred in all denominations and have frequently been ignored or downplayed.

Although the safeguarding coordinator may be seen as overseeing the church's safeguarding work, all church members and workers should be encouraged to play their part by

- Recognising signs or symptoms of potential abuse.
- Knowing how and when to respond to concerns without delay.
- Challenging any abuse of power especially where it may involve someone in a position of trust.
- Managing risks and those who might pose a risk.

There are a number of aspects to safeguarding policy which include DBS checks for individuals in specific roles including ministers, elders , youth workers and those working with vulnerable adults. There are also mandatory training courses organised by Synod which are available both in person or on line for the above individuals and also for volunteer workers with children and adults especially if they have the possibility of developing a close one to one relationship. For all, the church safeguarding policy and ways of avoiding risks or identifying them is on the church website under policy documents.

My role as safeguarding coordinator is:

- To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures and to review them annually.
- To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues.
- To ensure that any allegations or concerns are adequately addressed, where necessary seeking expert advice from synod or social services.
- To ensure that adequate safeguarding training and recruitment practices are in place.

On a personal note, I find there is a difficult balance between rigid adherence to bureaucratic protocols and common sense or the fear that evolving relationships (friendships) may lead to abuse or exploitation.

If there are any issues of concern please let me know. I will respect confidences and hope to offer sound advice.

My contact details are : Malcolm Benson

mkb@doctors.org.uk

Mob 07867634321

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Wise words from a Farmer

Words that soak into the ears are whispered not yelled.

Every path has a few puddles

Remember silence is sometimes the best answer

Don't interfere in something that is not bothering you

Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance

Good judgement comes from experience and a lot of that comes from bad judgement

Letting the cat out of the bag is a lot easier than putting it back in

Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly and leave the rest to God.

contributed by Pat Simpson

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“There is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good humour”

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson

What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled.

Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm.

I lost my job as a stage designer. I left without making a scene.

My friends and I have named our band ‘Duvet.’ It’s a cover band.

Why is it unwise to share your secrets with a clock? Well, time will tell.

Anonymous

~*~



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CHURCH CONTACTS

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Church Secretary: Phyllis Williams
email: secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk

Church website: www.wheatleyurc.org.uk