

# WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



**October 2023**

# *Covering Thoughts*

*In the place that is my own place, whose earth  
I am shaped in and must bear, there is an old tree growing,  
a great sycamore that is a wonderful healer of itself.*

*From The Sycamore by Wendell Berry*

*In autumn it is as if the trees are enjoying a final flourish of foliage before  
the rest of winter sets in. Enjoy!*

*Christine*

# Pastoral Letter

*You shall not omit from your grain-offerings the salt of the covenant with your God; with all your offerings you shall offer salt. Leviticus 2:13*

Last week I received an unbirthday present. Our son had sent me a book just because he thought I would be interested. What a wonderful surprise! It is a substantial book, it even says so in the title – Material World – A substantial Story of our past and future, so I was a little daunted, but it *is* fascinating. The author, Ed Conway, takes each of half-a-dozen raw materials and tells the story of how they have been used throughout our history. So far I've read about Sand – from glass making to silicon chips – and now I'm on to Salt.

There is a lot to say about salt. The lengths even pre-historic peoples went to in order to obtain it and the lengths people today go to on our behalf. The need for salt is about far more than just wanting to enhance the flavour of our food. Salt is essential to our human health, and a little goes a long way. It is powerful stuff.

There is evidence that neolithic people were making salt on the North York Moors on the cliffs near Saltburn, boiling sea water, perhaps with sea coal, to produce salt and using it to preserve food e.g., in cheesemaking. Roman legionaries were partly paid with a ration of salt (the origin of the word *salary*) as being essential for their health. Amongst other uses it can be used as an antiseptic.

So, if salt is essential for human health, it is no surprise that authorities seek to control access to it.

The author talks about how control of salt production has been used to control and subjugate peoples throughout history.

I was shocked to read that the British in India banned the production of salt and insisted Cheshire salt was imported at great cost. I had heard of Ghandi's stand against this tactic being used to suppress local production of cloth but not the non-violent Dandi Salt March in 1930.

So, when we read in Matthew 5:13 that Jesus said "You are the salt of the earth" I wonder if one of the things he was trying to tell us was that though few in number, we are powerful, making a big difference in the world. And that we have

this power whether we like it or not. Just as it is impossible for salt not to be salty, it is impossible for us not to have this power.

So let us be confident in our power for good and our ability to season the world through prayer and action.

Phyllis Williams

~\*~

## Prayers

**Please remember in your prayers friends of our church:** Tanya & Joel Rasmussen, Karen & Gerrie Fourie, Robin & Jennie Gladwin, Cathy & Mike Hogan, Ann Newman, Charles Brock, Frances Fielding, and the Eloffs family.

**Also remember members of the Communications Ministry Team:** Phyllis Williams, Christine Bainbridge, Debi Kidd, Bobbie Stormont, Moira Watson, and Ellen Webster.

~\*~

### Deadline

11<sup>th</sup> October is the deadline for the November Newsletter. Please send copy to: [newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk) Paper copy can be given to Debi Kidd. Please type all contributions 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

~\*~

# Common Lectionary Readings

## October 2023

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>First Reading</b>	Ezekiel 18: 1-4 & 25-32	Isaiah 5: 1-7	Isaiah 25: 1-9	Isaiah 45: 1- 7	Leviticus 19: 1-2 & 15-18
<b>Psalm</b>	Psalm 2: 1-13	Psalm 3: 4b-14	Psalm 23	Psalm 96: 1-9	Psalm 1
<b>New Testament</b>	Philippians 2: 1-13	Philippians 3: 4b-14	Philippians 4: 9	1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10	1 Thessalonians 2: 1-8
<b>Gospel</b>	Matthew 21: 23-32	Matthew 21: 33-46	Matthew 22: 1-14	Matthew 22: 15-22	Matthew 22: 34-46

Oct 1<sup>st</sup> - Orthodoxy means right opinion or belief. Orthopraxis means right action.

Oct 8<sup>th</sup> - Research suggests that it takes on average 66 days to form a habit.

Oct 15<sup>th</sup> - Research has shown that almost all churches think they are more welcoming and inclusive than they actually are.

Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> - Sir Isaac Newton said that in the absence of any other proof, the thumb would alone convince him of God's existence.

Oct 29<sup>th</sup> - What we are asked to do is simple enough: it is to love!

Richard Bainbridge

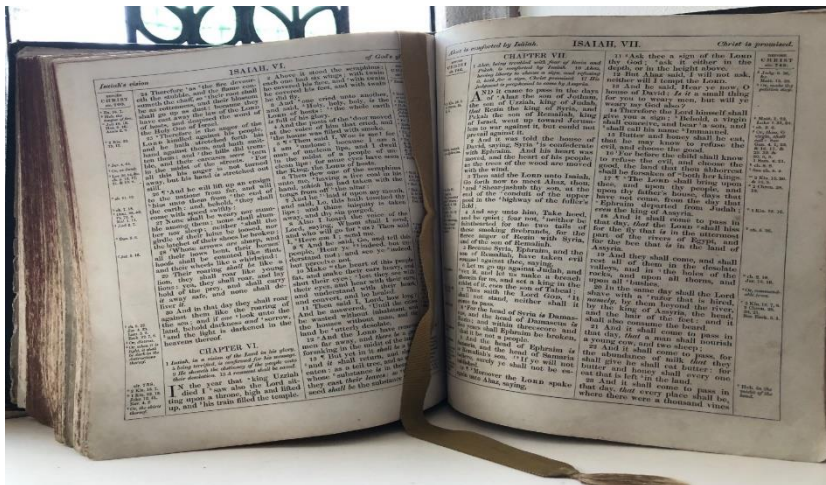
~\*~

# The Pulpit Bible



The very large bible which is on display in the back window of the church has a note inside indicating that it was given in 1873 by W. FAITH for the use of THE WHEATLEY PULPIT. In 'Tanning Barn to Church', William Faith is listed as the pastor of our church from 1869 to 1875 when he then moved to Bicester.

This year the bible is 150 years old.



Allison Towner

# Dates for Your Diaries

## Weekly

Mon & Thurs 8:45am Mindfulness Sitting Group (Mark Williams Tel 876288)  
 Friday 10am Table Tennis (contact Val Farmer)

## Monthly

Alternate Mondays (2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>) Not So Young Club (contact Frances Simpson)  
 First Thursday 10am Prayer and Reflection (contact Liz Barry)  
 First Thursday 10.30am Coffee Morning (contact Barbara Joiner)  
 Second Thursday Memory Café (contact Laurence Devlin)  
 Second Tuesday Lunch Club (contact Laurence Devlin)  
 Third Tuesday Lunch Club (contact Catherine Harding)

# Blended Service Rotas for October 2023

Dates	Worship Leaders	Readers	Intercessors	Vestry Elder	Welcomer/ Door Steward
1 <sup>st</sup>	Colin Thompson Harvest	Ann Bettess	Liz Barry	Pauline Shelley	Chris Shelley/ Barbara Joiner
8 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Bainbridge	Ann Hardiman	Robert Harding	Robert Harding	Moira Watson/ Bobbie Stormont
15 <sup>th</sup>	Mark Williams			Ellen Webster	Malcolm Benson/ Angela Holdaway
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Laurence Devlin	Christine Bainbridge	Ellen Webster	Bev Paton	Ann Gajda/ Ann Hardiman
29 <sup>th</sup>	Sam Richards	Mike Matejtschuk	Marian Mole	Moira Watson	Charles Bennett/ Rob Holdaway

Dates	Organist
1 <sup>st</sup>	Harvest at Sandy Lane Farm
8 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff Clark
15 <sup>th</sup>	Frances Simpson
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Jeff Clark
29 <sup>th</sup>	Frances Simpson

# Falcon School Update!

You may remember in July, whilst visiting Zimbabwe to review Commitment For Life projects, Kevin Snyman (URC Head of Global Justice & Partnerships) also visited the Falcon School with Wilbert.

Kevin met teachers and pupils which left a lasting impression on him, so much so that he felt moved to write to Wheatley URC with this message:

**'My experience of the Falcon Junior school was deeply positive. The school serves this deeply impoverished community in profound ways. (Thought for the Day dealt with education as power this morning, so that is good timing).**

**The school head is a deeply committed and skilled professional and I think your support is incredibly well placed. Well done!'**

Kevin filmed and produced a short video of the school for Wilbert (which was shown at our September Church Meeting) in order to thank us and others who support the Falcon School, as well as taking a few photos of teachers and the everyday life of the school to share with us.







We will hopefully be sharing the focus of future priority projects with you in the near future but, in the meantime, we are in no doubt that everyone associated with the school really appreciates our support.

Thank you again!

Care for the World Team



# An important message from the elders.

**Phyllis will be stepping down from her post as church secretary next year.**

A small group of us have begun to look at this issue, and we reported back to the September church meeting. The following is what was said then.

Firstly, we want to emphasise the vibrant and lively atmosphere of Wheatley URC at the moment, typified by our growing congregation, the number of new members recently, The Falcon School and Mulberry Room projects, memory café, 'Time for God', the list goes on.

This doesn't just happen however, WURC depends on many people playing their part, (have a look at the jobs list!), crucially the elders meet regularly to plan, to coordinate and to ensure the whole operation runs as smoothly as possible. In turn, the elders (and the church) need someone to hold all this together. At next year's AGM Phyllis will be standing down after 5 years in her post as Church Secretary. So here is an opportunity, a challenge, an opening for one or two of us, perhaps, to serve this local congregation as our next secretary.

And whoever steps up to this challenge will not be alone. Ellen has already said that she will continue in her role as 'admin assistant', concentrating on the 'office secretarial' aspects of the job such as taking minutes, filing etc. and being a friend and partner to the Church Secretary. This allows the church secretary to concentrate on the aspects of the role that relate to maintaining an oversight of and supporting every part of this church's work and liaising with other churches in the area and Synod. Phyllis would be very willing to chat about what is involved (without commitment) and to work alongside whoever does take over to help them into the role. Support and training are also available from synod.

(Of course, not all that Phyllis does is as church secretary, for example, running Zoom, and managing our website are definitely not the church secretary's responsibility and Phyllis will continue to manage the church tech.)

Elders believe that there are further opportunities to share this work and that this can best be done in consultation with a prospective church secretary and depending on the skills they bring to the task.

**Please give this some serious thought, and prayer, we cannot continue as we are without a Church secretary or secretariat. We need to be open to ideas on things we might need to change to make this work. This is really important and urgent.**

# First Sunday of the month Teas – October 1<sup>st</sup>

Every month on the First Sunday we hold an afternoon Tea with lots of lovely cakes and nibbles in the URC hall from 2.30 to 4 pm. It is open to everyone and aimed in particular at people in the village who live on their own.

This October the Sunday Tea falls on the same day as Wheatley URC Harvest Festival and Lunch at Sandy Lane Farm. It is going to be a busy day, but I am sure we can squeeze in both events! (Not sure about all that sugar.)

Ann Bettess and the Pastoral Care Team

~\*~

## Want to know more about the URC?

Are you new to the United Reformed Church? Perhaps you are a new member, considering membership or wondering what membership is about? Do you have questions about where the URC comes from, how it functions or what it stands for?

If you would like the opportunity to attend a session or short series of sessions exploring the denomination in an informal setting, please contact Cara to find out more or register your interest: [caratheafey@hotmail.com](mailto:caratheafey@hotmail.com)

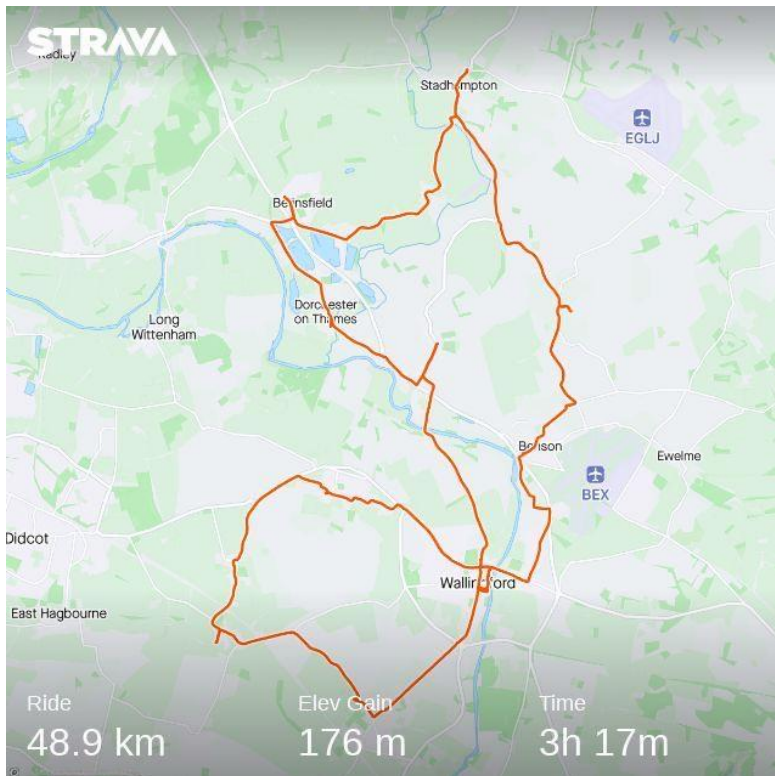
~\*~

# Ride and Stride

Preliminary Results for OHCT "Ride and Stride", Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Thanks Graham and Gordon & Jill for cycling on behalf Wheatley URC in the above fundraising event.

This year, Gordon & Jill cycled about 50 km visiting 25 churches in the Wallingford area and expect to raise £325



Gordon and Jill's route

Graham managed 95 km visited an amazing 36 churches, on his first outing for Ride and Stride and is still counting his sponsorship!



Graham's route

I walked about 5/6 miles between 4 village churches, whilst on holiday in North Cornwall, raising a modest £30 from friends and family.

Thanks to all who supported our riders and strider and thanks to those stalwarts who kept our church open all day to receive the 6 riders and striders who came from other churches to visit us. An update on the total amounts raised will appear in the next edition of this newsletter.

Tony Barry



# Our Dad

This poem was read at Bob's funeral by his son and daughter and is included here for those who were unable to attend the service at the crematorium.

Husband, Dad and Gramps: a most kind and gentle man,  
At the ready to help us out: he'd always have a plan!  
Accountancy was his life-long obsession,  
But we chose different career paths: not his profession.

He'd always greet us with a great big smile,  
Full of generosity and humility all the while.  
Our Dad, our hero, we looked up to him in awe  
Barry, as a child, even wanted the same trainers he wore!

Family get-togethers and holidays were what he cherished most,  
He'd never tire of BBQs and loved to be our host!  
Wine connoisseur and custard lover: these items essential to bestow,  
Whenever they were presented his eyes lit up aglow!

If ever we were in difficulty, he'd be ready to bail us out,  
Always his ambition to ensure we never went without.  
Cycling, swimming, squash, golf, rugby, were many a sporting passion,  
We learnt from the master and became quite skilled, in a fashion!

Such patience, when it came to driving lessons, he taught us so well,  
One of us perhaps a little too early, over-confidence he could tell.  
Collecting us from clubs and parties: nothing was ever too much trouble;  
Or a regular lift to work or football, he'd offer his help at the double.

We were honoured to be his Bridesmaid and Best Man.  
Thereafter life with our new extended family began.  
Years later he returned the favour, in Naphill and Pitlochry,  
Proud father of the Bride, then Groom, our happiness he did see.

"Grumpy Gramps" we used to tease him, but he rarely had a cross word.  
"When can I see you again?" is more likely what we heard!  
A trip to Paris, a splash on a water flume, and on the London Eye he'd go round.  
Grandad duties were his topmost priority for which he was renowned!

Days out and trips to foreign places, the experiences have been endless.  
We even watched his beloved Brentford play, which was tremendous.  
Having relations in America, meant trips across the pond  
Touring different states to meet cousins, of whom he was so fond.

We'd like to recall the good times and keep them in our thoughts.

**Our Dad**, we'll miss you deeply, but are most truly blest;

To have such wonderful memories, as we lay you to rest.

By Rebekah and Barry



***High Street,  
Wheatley, OX33 1UE***

***CHURCH CONTACTS***

*Associate Minister: Revd. Cara Heafey*  
*Email: [caraheafey@hotmail.com](mailto:caraheafey@hotmail.com)*

*Church Secretary: Phyllis Williams*  
*email: [secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk)*

*Church website: [www.wheatleyurc.org.uk](http://www.wheatleyurc.org.uk)*