

# **WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER**



**July & August 2025**

# Covering Thoughts

*I was surprised to discover recently that chimpanzees communicate in a very sophisticated way. They drum on tree roots to send messages across great distances. What exciting research that would be to study the rhythms and cadences of these sounds. I wonder if it will ever be possible to understand what they say.*

*The cover painting is of tree roots, and you will identify two trees as the newsletter spans two months! Its title is Rootedness and complements last month's painting Blown Away. As well as celebrating the wonders and surprises in experience it seems important for me to recognize where we come from and what holds us firm when life challenges us. When we are blown away by success remembering our indebtedness to others who have helped us on our way helps us to be humble. In times of danger, ill health, changing circumstances and loss we need to hold tight to the beliefs and values that have proved so supportive in our previous experience.*

*Roots constantly need nourishment. They are living entities sending out hair-like feelers into the soil and conveying nourishment into the robust parts of the root structure and thereby making for a healthy tree. Perhaps it is appropriate to remember this as we move into vacation time when many will be nourished by holidays.*

*Summer heat may slow us down and we can allow ourselves to follow Eckhart Tolle's advice:*

*Look at a tree, a flower, a plant. Let your awareness rest upon it. How still they are, how deeply rooted in Being. Allow nature to teach you stillness.*

*I hope too that we will be nourished by each other, keeping in touch, sharing good news and like the chimpanzees beating out a rhythm that moves us into dance and nourishes us all – down to our roots.*

***Christine Bainbridge***

# Reflection

All of us who live in and around Oxford or Thame are used to being asked how we cope with all the murders. Endeavour, Morse, and Lewis, Midsummer Murders; and now Cara Hunter's DI Adam Fawley and others too!

Crime stories generally start with a murder. The rest of the story is the discovery, unravelling the mystery before the murderer is able to strike again.

But a TV drama released recently, *Code of Silence*, takes a different tack. The crime hasn't yet happened. At the start of the story, the police have discovered that a conspiracy for a major robbery is being hatched. Some of the conspirators have a reputation for violence. It's critical for the police to get the information they need to prevent the robbery. But the conspirators are careful. They meet in public places (like a park or an ice-rink) where they cannot be overheard.

So the police decide to approach a young woman, Alison (played by Rose Ayling-Ellis, *photo*) who works in the police canteen. She is generally ignored and given the dirtiest work such as cleaning the ovens. Alison (just like Rose Ayling-Ellis) has been deaf from birth - her superpower is being able to lip-read. They need her desperately, as their forensic lip-readers are all occupied on other work.



After the team meet her for the first time in their large busy office, they move into a far corner to discuss in low voices whether to go ahead. "She's not trained; can she even do it?" says one. From the other side of the room, she can see what they are saying and interrupts: "I can do it if you tell me what it is." She gets the job. This all happens very early in Episode One, so no spoilers.

It's tense, because the viewer never knows if the gang might suddenly become aware of her. So why does Alison want to take the risk? Because for the first time, she is being taken seriously. She has a talent that's needed. She is being seen.

And this is the driving energy of the plot. Not just because the writing and the acting is good; but because 'being seen' strikes a chord deep within. There's something in the human soul that atrophies when no one sees us. We each have a deep need to be seen.

Over the centuries, people of faith have told of their experience of a being held by a larger presence they call God. This Being is felt to be personal, loving, compassionate, patient, kind and wise; with a love that endures for ever. In prayer and worship and everyday life we may sense this loving presence. But there are also times when want to get close to God, but nothing seems to happen - we can end up trying harder and harder, and wonder what we are doing wrong. Is there a way forward that can help?

Edwina Gately has written an approach to use as a gateway to prayer that might help us let go of trying and instead, to relax. I'll sign off now and leave you with her words.

Be silent.  
Be still.  
Alone. Empty  
Before your God.  
Say nothing.  
Ask nothing.  
Be silent.  
Be still.  
Let your God look upon you.  
That is all.  
God knows.  
God understands.  
God loves you with an enormous love,  
And only wants  
To look upon you  
With that love.  
Quiet.  
Still.  
Be.  
  
Let your God -  
Love you.

**Mark Williams**

~ ~ ~

## Prayers

**Please remember in your prayers all members of Marian Mole's pastoral group:** Laurence & Peter Devlin, Cynthia Mancey, Alice Halliday, Ann & Roger Bettess, Nan Hixon, and Christine & Richard Bainbridge.

**Also remember members of the Worship Ministry Team:** Allison Towner, Laurence Devlin, Robert Harding, Pauline Shelley & Colin Thompson.

~ ~ ~



## SAVE THE DATE

### AN AUTUMN EVENING CONCERT

FRIDAY 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER

Featuring Harpist Becki Luff of “Moonrakers”  
plus other musicians

A fundraising event in aid of  
Falcon School, Zimbabwe and  
Oasis of Peace village, Israel

organised by the Care for the World Ministry Team

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## Dates for Your Diaries

### Weekly

Mon & Thurs 9.00am Mindfulness Sitting Group  
Mark Williams - [jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com)  
Friday 10am Table Tennis  
Val Farmer – [val\\_farmer40@hotmail.com](mailto:val_farmer40@hotmail.com)

### Monthly

Alternate Mondays Not So Young Club  
(14<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> Jul & 11<sup>th</sup> Aug) Frances Simpson – [frances\\_simpson@icloud.com](mailto:frances_simpson@icloud.com)  
First Sunday Teas - 2.30-4pm  
Ann Bettess – [annsgoog@gmail.com](mailto:annsgoog@gmail.com)  
First Thurs. 10am Prayers for the World  
Ann Hardiman – 01865 873485  
First & Third Thurs. Coffee Morning  
10.30am Barbara Joiner – [albarjoiner2@gmail.com](mailto:albarjoiner2@gmail.com)  
Second Thursday 10am Memory Café  
Laurence Devlin – [laurencelalanne99@gmail.com](mailto:laurencelalanne99@gmail.com)  
Second Tuesday Picnic Club  
Val Farmer – [val\\_farmer40@hotmail.com](mailto:val_farmer40@hotmail.com)

# Blended Service Rotas for July 2025

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Worship Leaders</b>	<b>Readers</b>	<b>Intercessors</b>	<b>Vestry Elder</b>	<b>Welcomer/ Door Steward</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Colin Thompson HC	Mike Matejtschuk	Tom Goss	Ann Bettess	Charles Bennett/ Ann Gajda
<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	Richard Bainbridge	Bev Paton	Christine Bainbridge	Ellen Webster	Val Farmer/ Angela Holdaway
<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	Laurence Devlin	Pauline Shelley	Liz Barry	Debi Kidd	Bobbie Stormont/ Rob Holdaway
<b>27<sup>th</sup></b>	Mark Williams			Pauline Shelley	Chris Shelley/ Allison Towner

# Blended Service Rotas for August 2025

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Worship Leaders</b>	<b>Readers</b>	<b>Intercessors</b>	<b>Vestry Elder</b>	<b>Welcomer/ Door Steward</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Colin Thompson HC	Ellen Webster	Ann Bettess	Marian Mole	Ellen Webster/ Tom Goss
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	Richard Bainbridge	Robert Harding	Ellen Webster	Chris Shelley	Ann Bettess/ Barbara Joiner
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	Kate Harford	Angela Holdaway	Barbara Joiner	Debi Kidd	Val Farmer/ Robert Harding
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	Mark Williams			Charles Bennett	Pauline Shelley/ Jen Yeates
<b>31<sup>st</sup></b>	Donald Norwood	Ann Bettess	Robert Harding	Ann Bettess	Marian Mole/ Elaine Matejtschuk

# Tree Hugger



This beautiful and unusual photograph was taken by Graham Bell at Ripon College recently.

# Wheatley URC Jobs List 2025 - 2026

The Jobs List needs to be updated very soon. There are 130! jobs in the current list ranging from housekeeping to safeguarding officer, from minister to gardener, from web administrator to membership of one of the Ministry Teams such as those concerned with pastoral care, finance and maintenance.

Thanks are due to everyone already involved in whatever capacity. These are some of the vacancies identified for the coming year:

1. Elders
2. Hospitality Ministry Team members
3. Worship Ministry Team Members
4. Historic Churches Ride and Stride organiser
5. Rubbish disposal/bins

Do think about offering yourself for one or more of these vacancies as we need them filled so that the church can be run efficiently and caringly.

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## Deadline

15<sup>th</sup> August is the deadline for the September Newsletter. Please send copy to: [newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk). 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.

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# ATLAS

There is a kind of love called maintenance  
Which stores the WD40 and knows when to use it

Which checks the insurance, and doesn't forget  
The milkman; which remembers to plant bulbs;

Which answers letters; which knows the way  
The money goes; which deals with dentists

And Road Fund Tax and meeting trains,  
And postcards to the lonely; which upholds

The permanently rickety elaborate  
Structures of living, which is Atlas.

And maintenance is the sensible side of love,  
Which knows what time and weather are doing  
To my brickwork; insulates my faulty wiring;  
Laughs at my dry rotten jokes; remembers  
My need for gloss and grouting; which keeps  
My suspect edifice upright in air,  
As Atlas did the sky.

By U A Fanthorpe

**A poem with gratitude to the Maintenance Team and Treasurers, who keep us “upright in air.”**

Source - 'Atlas' is from U.A. Fanthorpe's *Selected Poems*, published by Enitharmon Press, [www.enitharmon.co.uk](http://www.enitharmon.co.uk)

**Pauline Shelley**

# Blenheim Palace

My Uncle Harry was a dispatch rider on a motorbike during World War II. He told me, 80 years ago that he travelled between Blenheim Palace and Buckingham Palace, taking secret messages about the state of the war to King George VI. Since then, I have waited to see the marvellous huge house of which he spoke. Yesterday, that dream came true, thanks to my son Nigel and his wife Charlotte.



From the car park, we were taken by transfer vehicle to the grand frontage and entering by a very grand hall with the most beautiful painted ceiling, proceeding along corridors lined by cases with exquisite China, mirrors and statues, coming to withdrawing rooms, all the ceilings showing patterns in gold, and the walls completely covered with very grand pictures.

I was also surprised how low the chairs were, I assume people were smaller in Queen Anne's day. Queen Anne had given the palace as a present to Sir John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, a military man who had proved his worth at the battle of Blenheim in the war of the Spanish succession in the 18th century.

Sir John Churchill and his wife had the original Palace removed and the present one built by the architect John Vanbrugh. Not surprisingly, the money ran out and Queen Anne was not happy with the architect's lavish design, however, despite this, it was finished to an exquisite extremely high standard.

Winston Churchill was born there; he was the grandson of the 7th Duke of Marlborough and spent much of his childhood and later used some leisure time painting in the extensive grounds. There is a room dedicated to his memory with many artefacts and his paintings. There is also a statue of him in front of his easel within the grounds.



Churchill's birth room

I have waited a long time to fulfil my dream, and it was an entertaining, educational, and worthwhile visit.

**Pat Simpson**

# Common Lectionary Readings July 2025

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

Date	6 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>
<b>First Reading</b>	Isaiah 66: 10-4	Deuteronomy 30: 9-14	Genesis 18: 1-10a	Genesis 18: 20-32
<b>Psalm</b>	Psalm 66: 1-9	Psalm 25: 1-10	Psalm 15	Psalm 38
<b>New Test.</b>	Galatians 6: 7-16	Colossians 1: 11	Colossians 1: 15-28	Colossians 2: 6-15
<b>Gospel</b>	Luke 10: 1-11 & 16-20	Luke 10: 25-37	Luke 10: 38-42	Luke 11: 1-13

July 6<sup>th</sup> - Burdens come in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes we feel sad, and our feelings weigh heavy on us.

Jul 13<sup>th</sup> - Perhaps our neighbour turns out to be our enemy and helps us.

July 20<sup>th</sup> - Archbishop Michael Ramsay said, 'God is Christlike and in him is no unChristlikeness at all'.

July 27<sup>th</sup> - Debt relief will mean the difference between life and death.

**Richard Bainbridge**

# Common Lectionary Readings August 2025

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

Date	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	31 <sup>st</sup>
<b>First Reading</b>	Ecclesiastes 1:2 & 12-14 2:18-23	Genesis 15: 1-6	Jeremiah 23: 23-29	Isaiah 58: 9b-14	Proverbs 25: 6-7
<b>Psalm</b>	Psalm 49: 1-2	Psalm 33: 12-22	Psalm 82	Psalm 103: 1-8	Psalm 112
<b>New Test.</b>	Colossians 3: 1-11	Hebrews 11: 1-3 & 8-16	Hebrews 11: 29 12: 2	Hebrews 12: 18-29	Hebrews 13: 1-8 & 15-16
<b>Gospel</b>	Luke 12: 1-11	Luke 12: 32-40	Luke 12: 49-56	Luke 13: 10-7	Luke 14: 7-4

August 3<sup>rd</sup> - One day a son was discussing investments with his father. 'They. are doing OK but they are not what really matters. It is only money.'

August 10<sup>th</sup> - Hebrews was written for people who were in danger of becoming disillusioned with faith because of personal issues.

August 17<sup>th</sup> - One of Manchester's treasures is the oldest surviving fragment of the New Testament, a scrap of papyrus containing verses from John 18.

August 23<sup>rd</sup> - Some people are good at noticing the world around them. Archaeologists have a keen eye for the one stone that is shaped flint.

August 31<sup>st</sup> - A prison chaplain with an interest in labyrinths realised that they could be used to help long-term prisoners with the stress of confinement.

**Richard Bainbridge**

# Brownies

My Wednesday ends with Brownies. And perhaps some of you know about Brownies when you went to the Brownies yourself.

## **What is Brownies and who is it for?**

The Brownies meet every Wednesday from 5.30pm to 7pm in the St Mary's. Brownies are welcoming all girls from age 7 to 10.

During the evening the Brownies work in "sixes" where up to six girls are in one group. In their sixes they have one girl (often the oldest one) who is in charge of register and organising her group, which encourages leadership for girls.

Also, when we give them the activities of the evening, they are free to organize and to design the task for themselves in their "sixes".

In their time in Brownies they can explore their creative side, get out into the great outdoors, learn how to look after themselves, others and the world we live in.

## **What do Brownies wear?**

Brownies are encouraged to wear uniforms (brown and yellow) to show they are part of the Girl Guiding. On their jackets you can find their Badges.

Perhaps you see some of them on Wednesday evenings on their way?

## **What do girls do in Brownies?**

They do fun activities, play games (favourites are Torpedo and farmer farmer) and earn skills building badges. The program is designed to encourage fun whilst developing new skills.



To give you an example of an evening with Brownies. This is from the first June week where we took the Brownies to the Howe.

This is where they decorated pavers and pebbles for the path around the community garden on the Howe.

During this time, they learned different skills like teamwork and sharing but also communication. Moreover, they showed their creativity.

Each of the “sixes” came up with creative and good designs on their stones. All of them had different themes for example insects or fruit.



## What’s after Brownies?

If the girls are too old for Brownies they can move on to the Guides.

It is for girls aged 10-14 and it is a welcoming, fun-filled space where they’ll laugh, learn and expand their horizons.

**Cara Schulz**

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# LETTERS FROM THE FALCON JUNIOR SCHOOL!

## To Everyone at Wheatley URC

Thank you so much for the money that I received for Falcon Junior School for the drilling of a borehole. I already passed the need on to the school and they can't wait for the work to begin as soon as I get to Zimbabwe.

Please pass my thanks to the Wheatley family. I pray that God will continue to bless you for the manner in which you have blessed and changed the life of Falcon community.

I can't wait to get there and start sending you pictures and videos as this work will be going on end June.

**"NDATENDA ZVIKURU" ... I thank you so much!**

Stay blessed.

Rev. Wilbert Sayimani



**Hello .. it's Falcon Junior School Head Teacher here, above we're giving thanks to water!** I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Wheatley URC church .. for your kindness, your support, your generosity means so much to us. What you have done, what you have given us for the provision of the borehole ... it will change our lives, it will change our school, it will change our environment ...we thank you so much for that, may God bless you ... thank you Wheatley URC for changing the life of the school.

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# Final Figures for Christian Aid Week 2025

This year, only four church members from Wheatley URC took up the challenge put out by **Christian Aid**, to make a difference – “*Seven Days. So Many Ways to Make a Difference*”. However, church folk did give generously in support of the two social events that took place and the **Christian Aid** themed Sunday service.

The total raised from sponsorships, direct donations and on-line giving, amounts to at least **£885.00**. There will likely have been some further on-line giving that will not have been noted within this figure. Those who were able to gift aid their donations will have added an additional 25p to every £1 that they donated, possibly raising the total by as much as an additional £100.

A more detailed breakdown of how this total is made up can be provided, on request.

So, finally, a big “thankyou”, on behalf of **Christian Aid** and its partners, to all who contributed their time and talents and gave so generously, once again, to make this excellent result possible.

**Tony Barry**

(Hon. Treasurer, Wheatley **Christian Aid** Group)

(With money collected at St Mary’s, the overall total, this year, will be in excess of £1,400.)



## Collections of Books & Food

Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> July

10.00am to 12noon

URC Hall, Crown Square, Wheatley

On behalf of GAIN (Global Aid Network)

Books to help to learn English

Suitable for Adults and Children

For use in libraries in Nigeria

On behalf of Asylum Welcome, Oxford

**Food:** Rice, Cooking Oil, Milk (UHT),

Tinned Tomatoes, Sweetcorn,

Beans & Fruit, Tinned Fish, Sugar.

**NO MEAT**

**Toiletries:** Body Wash, Sanitary Products,

Toothpaste & Shampoo

Wheatley Refugee Support Group

Further information from [wheatleyrefugeegroup@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleyrefugeegroup@gmail.com)

Thank you for your support



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

### ***CHURCH CONTACTS***

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