

# Welwyn Garden City, Harpenden and Wheathampstead United Reformed Churches Magazine



JUNE & JULY MAGAZINE 2023



Welcome,

As we start a new section and season of the Christian Calendar, we may have the feeling of hope and newness. Pentecost brought about changes and transformation to the people and the church. There will be times of change ahead for us as individuals, as a church and as a cluster.

Jesus kept his promise to the disciples and to the church and to us, when Jesus returned to heaven (on Ascension Day) this event would be followed by a gift of the Holy Spirit coming to strengthen the church and all believers. This may be a time to reflect and a time to think about changes.

Jesus at Easter died, was risen and then ascended back to heave. Then Pentecost came when the Holy Spirit flowed out on believers, this can be read about in the book of Acts. What an amazing God we have. A God that transforms life and events, God is still doing this today. The spirit brings life, hope and boldness.

The vacancy has been fulfilled, prayers have been answered, there will be changes ahead. There may still be some planning and organising to be done. It is a time to move forward as individuals as a church and as cluster together.

We see unity in the trinity, a oneness where each person of God works together. Let us use this example as our benchmark inspiring us to do the same as a church and as a cluster.

The people on the first Pentecost were confused, we may also feel confused at times, have concerns, doubts and worry about moving forward. It is easier with God as our guide leading us in his ways.

On a personal level let us remember 5 members of family and friends and pray for them.

As we celebrate Pentecost let us be open to the work of the spirit, let us be refilled afresh.

Many blessings !

Sharon and the Elders t Harpenden URC



The Book of Proverbs in the Bible sets out to provide divine wisdom to daily life and to provide moral instruction. It's a section easy to find coming after the Psalms, and if you open a Bible halfway through you won't be far from it.

It's not one of those books where you start at the beginning and read through to the end – anyway it's not really a story; instead, it's good to 'pick n mix'. The book was probably written about 1,000 years before Jesus Christ was born; Jewish tradition indicates three authors, the main one being Solomon, he famed for his wisdom.

The layout is a bit random and whilst I have certainly not examined every verse, I have not come across anything (so far) that doesn't still make sense for our age. It contains hundreds of short, simple statements about how to live wisely.

I was brought up in a household where there was a saying for most situations, and after all this time I find it hard to break them, although there is no one here now to reprimand me. I won't repeat them and the more of this article I write, the more I recall them.

But a simple one was 'A place for everything, and everything in its place'. Can you think of a shorter way of saying that?

With the coming of the electronic age, there are warnings that of course aren't in Proverbs.

The BBC Television programme 'Watchdog' covering consumer affairs, often has Matt Allwright saying, 'If it's out of the blue, it's not for you'. Reminding us about cold calls, of which young or old we all have to be careful.

Two others, in a similar vein, come from John Ruskin (a nineteenth century writer on many varied subjects) which were always good for me to remember during my working life:

'There is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider price only are this man's lawful prey.'

The second is: 'It's unwise to pay too much, but it's worse to pay too little. When you pay too much, you lose a little money – that's all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything, because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing it was bought to do. The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot – it can't be done. If you deal with the



lowest bidder, it is well to add something for the risk you run, and if you do that you will have enough to pay for something better.'

I am sure Solomon may have said the above quotes in fewer words.

Philip Read WGC URC

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It has been a very busy April and May for all our churches.

Wheathampstead had the usual Good Friday Procession of Witness followed by the service in the Churchyard with singing accompanied by the Salvation Army band.

We enjoyed a happy Easter Day service at Harpenden, followed a bit later in April, with the Cluster Vacancy Service with so many attending to hear Revd Martyn Neads 'Preach with a View'. We look forward to September when Martyn will be joining to be our Minister for the three churches. The following weekend we had another meeting of the Cluster at our joint service at WGC led by Eddie Boon, followed by a lovely soup and cheese lunch. The afternoon continued with Eddie's 'Picking up the Pieces' talk and discussion.

WUC had a very well attended 'Songs of Praise' afternoon to be repeated on 18 June.

Many people requesting their favourite hymns so all were well known and heartily sung. The only problem was which tune we used for 'Jesus I have Promised'?!

I think all enjoyed the Coronation Service and all the activities around that. On the Sunday morning we celebrated with a very patriotic service with appropriate hymns and decorations.



Now looking forward to a good few summer months, worshipping with our small congregation, visiting Harpenden once a month and our cluster service at the end of June.

Jackie and Jane

## Secretary's Soap Box

### Review of April and May

It has been a busy couple of months for the Cluster and WGC URC but we have been blessed by some amazing outcomes. Thank you all for your prayers and support.

Top of the list was April the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> when we welcomed the Rev. Martyn Needs to preach with a view at WGC and Harpenden and we are delighted he has accepted our invitation to join our Cluster and Heartland. We will be welcoming him as our new Minister to our Cluster in September along with his family. His Induction will be in the afternoon of Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September at WGC URC so please put this date in your diaries.

On behalf of WGC may I take this opportunity to thank Harpenden for hosting the Drop in on the Saturday and the venue for us all to attend for voting on Sunday.

Thank you for your hospitality and the wonderful spread you provided for afternoon tea on both occasions.

Thanks also to Rev Jim Dalgleish for leading us through the vacancy process and his continued help with planning the Induction Service. We would be lost without his knowledge, expertise, and support.

The Cluster now look forward to working with Martyn to help him become familiar with us all and settle into his new role. There will be a great deal of planning and cooperation needed from us all in the months ahead to help make his transition as smooth and seamless as possible.

We moved on from one busy weekend to the following, a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, when we Worship as a Cluster. The Cluster had a long-standing booking with Synod's Mission Developer Eddie Boone. Eddie came to preach and lead a group session in the afternoon following a soup lunch at WGC. I think everyone enjoyed their lunch but sadly not many stayed for the afternoon session which was disappointing.

This was hotly followed by the Coronation Weekend and at WGC we enjoyed a Pre-Coronation Party at our Thursday Club in WGC. We were lucky to have Adam one of our member's Grandsons who works in the Press Office at the Palace to come along and give us an insight into the Coronation preparations

and life at the Palace. Thank you to everyone for their help which made it a special and enjoyable occasion and especially to Adam.



With barely time to draw breath we were into the final preparations for our Spring Fayre one of our events for our **BIG BUILD PROJECT**.

It was freezing cold on the 13<sup>th</sup> May with a biting wind but not to be daunted we soldiered on and to our amazement we raised £895.51 so it was well worth getting chilled to the bone. Thank you everyone for your donations, help on the day and turning out to support the Fair.

Our final May event on the 20<sup>th</sup> May was the WGC Male Voice Choir Concert in aid of Christian Aid

Thank you to Robert for organising the event and to all who helped him on the night I am pleased to report they raised £870.

### **As part of the Big Build Project**

Our Lucky Numbers Draw has had two lucky winners so far in March and April and a 3<sup>rd</sup> will be drawn at the end of May. If you haven't joined it isn't too late so, please speak to Allison to buy your Lucky Numbers. You could win a £20 gift voucher of your choice while helping our fundraising.

We did have a busy Talents Table on Sundays, but it seems to have been forgotten so if you need help with transport, Lawn Cutting or any other tasks

please write it down and place it on the table and hopefully someone will be in touch to offer help.

If successful, all you need to do is donate.

You can also bring items to sell, Homemade cakes are always popular or any surplus veg. or summer bedding at this time of year.

### **Up and Coming in June July**

### **Big Build Project Events**

There is a Sponsorship Event planned with something for all ages on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July

(note change of Date) Details to follow

### **Keeping you in the Picture**

#### **Pastoral Groups**

As we are fortunate to have more elders John Mortimer and I are updating the Pastoral Groups and hope to have the packs complete soon, when we can confirm who is your Elder as inevitably this may have changed. We are still looking for people who would be willing support our Elder's as a Church Friend.

#### **Role of a Church Friend**

A Church Friend will assist their Elder by helping to keep in touch with people in the group, occasionally deliver correspondence and make the Elder aware of anyone in need of a visit by either the Elder or Minister. It isn't a huge commitment but a valuable support for our Elders to ensure everyone in our Church Family is kept informed, cared for, and supported.

**Could this be you?** Please give it some prayerful thought and get in touch if you think you could help.

Finally, if you would prefer a printed copy of the magazine, please let Allison know.

God Bless

Joyce



The Chapel Gym has also had lots going on in the past couple of months. We had a big fundraising project including 'a door for a door' to replace the carefully renovated but very drafty front door with one which looks similar to the original when closed but will hopefully decrease our fuel bills and make the reception area for the gym more comfortable. The outward moving new door also has windows to allow people approaching the door to be seen - a distinct safety advantage! Here are a couple of pics of the inside and outside of the new door.



We also obtained some grant funding to match donations towards the purchase of a defibrillator - very much encouraged in

gyms and helpful for those walking up Brewhouse Hill.

It is attached to the outside of the building round the corner so it doesn't affect the appearance when looking at the front of the building but is clear to see as walking up the hill.



Finally, today Wheathampstead had an active day with a 2km Fun Run and a (more serious) 10km

run. Our gym manager was part of the warm up for the 10km run (and participated) and one of our Trustees took part in the Fun Run as Cora McHearty.



Jane and Jackie



## Coronation Celebrations at the Community Café



### Coronation Celebrations



We always celebrate in style at the Community Café and the Kings Coronation was another special reason for us to decorate the hall and have an array of delectable goodies to eat.

There were even treats for the therapy dogs. Dee's dog, Beanie, enjoying a treat which is nearly the same size as him!



## Community Café Lunch

On 23 May we enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by Ellie and her team, at the Giggling Squid, here in WGC. Ellie mentioned that they wanted to prepare a meal for us as part of giving back to the community

## Thank You Service 25 June @10.30am

Our next 'Thank You Service' is on 25 June. This service gives us an opportunity to share our testimonies of prayers which have been answered. Please contact me on [wgc.urc.community.01@gmail.com](mailto:wgc.urc.community.01@gmail.com) should God place it on your heart, for you to share your experience.

## Songs of Praise Worship Service

Allison and I would like to thank everyone who partook in the Songs of Praise Worship service on 14 May. We thoroughly enjoyed leading the service and hearing all the different reasons behind the chosen hymns.

## Worship Café 14 May

We were very blessed to share Richard Jones's Baptism with him, which Robert performed at our last Worship Café. Richard previously shared his testimony at one of our 'Thank You' services, and is also a Community Café visitor.

## Alpha



We want to start our next online Alpha Course on 31 May. Alpha is for anyone who would like to explore the Christian faith in a fun, no-pressure environment.

Each session includes a short film and a discussion where one can chat through one's thoughts and questions within a small group of people, having conversations about Faith, Life and God.

Should you be interested in joining our Alpha Course, please contact Liz or Wendy on [officewgcurc@gmail.com](mailto:officewgcurc@gmail.com) for further information.

### Dates for your diary:

Alpha Course – 31 May 2023 @ 8pm

Pet Blessing Service – 11 June 2023 @3pm

Thank You Service – 25 June 2023 @10.30am

Time to Remember Tea – 25 June @3pm

Worship Café – 9 July 2023 @3pm

**God Bless**

**Liz**

23<sup>rd</sup> June

## Family Games Evening

6 - 8pm

Come and join in with games  
in the garden

Or if wet

Board games indoors

WGC URC Proudly Presents

## The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe

At our Film night

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 6pm – 8.30pm

Suitable for ages 6+

Please bring an adult with you!

No charge, but donations appreciated.

Contact: Wendy 07904 517384





## Worship activities for families

Saturday Families Church runs fortnightly on Saturday mornings in the main hall, a play and worship session for families with children up to around aged 9. We have plenty of equipment, so we can always get something different out when we are joined by an older child.

Besides the ride-on toys for toddlers, lego, trainset and Octonauts, we usually offer a craft activity like sandart, clay or painting, and often make a picture or model linked to our bible story. And we use the garden when possible. The coffee bar is open until tidy-up



time when we gather for worship. We enjoy singing and dancing to 'If God loves you and you know it, clap your hands' with the tambourine, telling the bible story with pictures and questions, and some lively worship choruses from the 1980s on the big TV, including some songs with actions. During the prayers this week, we dipped our fingers in water and signed crosses on the world beach ball, as a response to hearing how Philip had baptised the Ethiopian official after explaining about Jesus in the chariot on the road to Gaza. The children engage best through pictures and having something to do.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday each month, we hold FamilyWorship in the LH in parallel to adult morning worship. A forty minute service, it follows a traditional structure, but with more visual aids and participation, and everything short and easy to follow in plain English for younger people. And then we relax over some crafts or games. Usually we get some awkward questions and bad jokes to think about from Spiko the Sunday monkey, and a challenge to our bible knowledge in the quiz. And we are learning bible memory verses in sign language with Jenni. This service is not exclusive to families – so if you feel like a change, do come and join in! However, we are keen to keep the critical mass of youngsters which gives the service its atmosphere – so don't all come on the same day and outnumber them!



We also enjoyed an All Age service with the adult congregation on Palm Sunday on the theme of justice. We mentioned Emmeline Pankhurst who founded the suffragette movement, one of the leading campaigners who enabled women over 21 to be granted the vote in 1928. We should also have mentioned Emily Davison who threw herself under the king's horse in June 1913 at the Epsom Derby, and died of her injuries.

Last year we re-named our other Sunday morning sessions as Young People's Church, which is inclusive of everyone from 3 up to age 18 (who wants to join us – they are welcome to stay in church if they prefer). The label of 'Junior Church' doesn't work now lots of our youngsters are ages 10 and over. We currently organise sessions on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month, which include a bible reading and discussion often from the Roots material, alongside some activities or craft, and having fun together. Families seem to be busier than ever, alongside the unpredictability of illnesses, so we never know which youngsters to expect on any week. But over the year, most of them get to know each other, especially if they attend some of our other events. Doing church together, we learn a lot from each other across the ages and ability range, which is a different experience from school where classes are all the same age. We are as inclusive as we feel confident to be, and usually encourage a parent to stay in the session with us if we can't cater well enough for their child. As ever, in church we are about sharing our experiences of faith together, and the Word of God meets us in the conversation and activities besides through reading the bible passage. It's always special to watch one of the older children leading a little one out to play.

All of the above depends on willing volunteers, so if there is anyone else who would like to offer some support, do let Wendy know. Tel 07904 517384

This summer we are hoping to lay on some additional events:

Holiday club morning for ages 5 to 11 June 1<sup>st</sup> 10am til 12.15.

Film night for ages 9+ - starting the Narnia series June 9<sup>th</sup> 6pm til 8.30pm

Family Gamesnight (for parents and children) at 6pm : June 23<sup>rd</sup>, July 21<sup>st</sup> and August 18<sup>th</sup> and September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

RSVP to Wendy for each of these events.

This year's Greenbelt festival is in the grounds of Boughton House at Kettering from Aug 24<sup>th</sup> to August 27<sup>th</sup>, and the URC will again be providing a prominent café. Thousands of people camp (camping spot included in the price of the ticket) or travel in daily for the huge range of music and arts performances, talks and theatre performances. It's good to hear that New Wine is holding a summer worship conference at a big campsite, too, in Kent July 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> and repeated August 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, with Christian worship events, workshops and talks. Both gatherings have strong programmes for children and teens.

Wendy WGC UR



**Sunday 25th June at 3pm**

### **Time to Remember Tea**

We have all lost loved ones whom we like to remember with love and gratitude.

Our "Time to Remember" Tea is an opportunity to do this with friends over tea and cake. It is followed by a short and very moving act of remembrance. Last year's tea was greatly appreciated by all who came. It is NOT just for those who have been recently bereaved. It is for us ALL.

Do come this year!

Robert

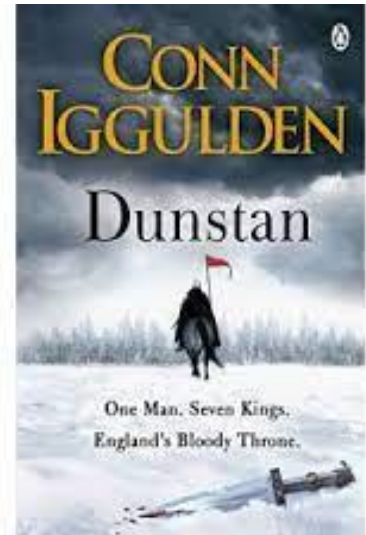
## BOOK REVIEW

### Dunstan by Conn Iggulden

I'm afraid I have been reading more historical novels! Conn Iggulden has an easy way of writing that is very readable and this book covers the period after Alfred the Great and the early years of the church, government and territorial skirmishes in England as it becomes one country. I learned a lot about this period and found the book both interesting and informative.

I really enjoyed it and would recommend it.

Sarah Connor



**Do you enjoy singing familiar hymns and new Worship Songs?**

Come and join us for our



Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 3 pm

Followed by refreshments

In the Chapel Halls on Brewhouse Hill  
Wheathampstead

Please contact Jane Deller on 01582 834130 / 07889 221551 or  
[j\\_deller@btinternet.com](mailto:j_deller@btinternet.com) for further information, or to ask for your  
favourite hymn to be included.

## CHURCH FAMILY CORNER

Lots of birthdays in June, starting with Catherine, Robert H's wife, on 5<sup>th</sup>, followed by Irene S. on 17<sup>th</sup>, Joanna D. on 19<sup>th</sup>, Ryan C. who will be 14, Liz L. on 20<sup>th</sup> and Richard R. on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Even more in July, starting with Michael C. on 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by Tracy on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Norma C. on 8<sup>th</sup>, Jessica A. who will be 15, Brian R. on 11<sup>th</sup>, David J. on 15<sup>th</sup>, Barbara P. on 17<sup>th</sup>, Roger W. on 20<sup>th</sup>, Jenny R. on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Matt R. on 24<sup>th</sup>.

We send our birthday congratulations and best wishes to all these friends and hope they each enjoy a happy day.

We have two Wedding Anniversary congratulations to send, firstly to Joyce and Melvyn Deans on their 59<sup>th</sup> on 27<sup>th</sup>, then to Rosemary and Arthur Taylor on their 51<sup>st</sup> on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

We send our congratulations to Doreen Gray who has recently acquired a sixth great grandchild! Baby Isla was born two months prematurely but Doreen is pleased to tell us that mother and baby are doing well and are now back at home.

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Mike Daniell on April 20<sup>th</sup> and send our heartfelt sympathy to Jean at this very sad time.

We also send our best wishes to Margaret Taylor and Derek Groves, both of whom have suffered falls at home recently but are bouncing back bravely!

We thank God for all His Blessings as we look forward to welcoming our new minister, Martyn, in September. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as they prepare to move from Swanage to Harpenden in August/September.

Ann Meers On behalf of WGC URC Pastoral Teams

## The Good Life

What a lot there is to celebrate - you looking forward to a new minister and for us...all the glitches have been ironed out and there are just finishing touches needed for us to be well and truly open! The skylarks are back (that is the name of the shepherds hut) so the timing is perfect! It just needs a few pots of flowers to make them look more homely and we are ready to go.



One of the last things to be tested was the hot tub which as you can see I took every advantage of once the water was heated. You do need to use that paddle though. I made the mistake of thinking once the water was warm at the top it was all warm and discovered as I got in and quickly sat down, that the bottom half was still cold and the paddle was to stir the water to get an even spread of temperature. After a bit of furious paddling all was well.

It has been a rather hectic two months with a lot to do and in the middle of it all Roger fell in love with a dog called Zoe so she has joined the family. She is a Retriever/Husky cross - not one of their intentional hybrids that are becoming all the rage - or maybe we should start a trend and call her a Huskever! She is 16 months old and is running poor Oscar ragged - but he does enjoy her company. We had her booked in to be spayed according to the information we were given from her previous owner but she first of all had a phantom pregnancy and then on the 2nd occasion came into season so you can imagine the fun and games that has caused. Hopefully third time lucky. All this has interrupted her training but she is calming down now she has made herself at home.



One thing we did discover was that she has a high prey drive and Chanty's chickens lost a few feathers before we raised the stock fence between the garden and the paddock. They survived to tell the tale but were rather indignant at being put back in the run for their safety as they had only just been let out after 6 months in the ruin because of Avian Flu.



Garden work is in full swing and there are a number of project still on the list. Getting the vegetables planted and the planting the guilds under the fruit trees are the more urgent tasks at the moment.

The 'Guilds' are an idea from permaculture that encourages the planting of various herbs, vegetables, flowers and fruits to attract the right insects and repel those that cause harm. Last year we prepared them by creating a circle under the trees edged by bricks and now I am planting the mix of suggested plants. It is also suggested that daffodils are planted around the outside of the drip line of the tree as they repel early insects that can cause harm and attract bees. There are already some aphids on the plum tree so hopefully we will see a difference when they are all in bloom.

This got me thinking about the need to add some protection and encouragement in our own lives. What do we have in our gardens that help when life's pests come along and cause difficulties? Gratitude is one of my favourites. Finding three things to say thank you for every day or an even better suggestion I read and try to do each night is to look back over the day and think of the things that have been good, wholesome, encouraging or have made me smile and to thank God for those blessings before you go to sleep. It makes a difference to my dreams and to how I feel when I wake up in the morning. I was glad to be reminded of this after a winter of infections and injury, this practice and the warmer weather did a lot to rebalance my equilibrium!

A useful asset in our own garden guilds!

Well the garden calls so I must go and get on. If you would like a few days away and want to try out the shepherds hut then you are more than welcome - we are taking bookings! Or if you know anyone who is a keen gardener who would like a week's holiday in exchange for a couple of hours garden work a day please send them in our direction.



I hope you have a lovely summer and look forward to all your news as it is always lovely to hear from you and read all that is going on.

Blessings from sunny Lincolnshire, Jane.

## Contact Details

WGC URC Admin / point of contact	Allison Giles	01707 333326	allisongiles@hotmail.com
Harpenden URC Admin / point of contact	Sarah Connor		shconnor@gmail.com
Wheathampsted Secretary /point of contact	Jackie Seller	01582 832707	jandjseller@gmail.com

Please can I have any articles for the next magazine by the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023.  
Please send by email or contact me by phone for WGC URC & Wheathampstead  
articles. For Harpenden URC articles please contact Sarah Connor Many thanks,  
Allison Giles

I hope you have enjoyed reading this magazine. If you have, please consider  
sending us an article, I'm sure we would enjoy what you have to say. If you  
would like to contribute and are not really sure what, please contact one of the  
people above, who I'm sure could give you some suggestions.

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