

Welwyn Garden City
United Reformed Church



August & September
Magazine 2019

Dear friends,

Joyce asked me if I would share with you some of the thoughts I had shared with the groups representing all our cluster churches who have been monitoring my gradual return to work. It seemed appropriate to do so in my letter for the magazine this month and to include some of the reflections I had already wanted to share.

I Hear His Whisper...

Rest at my side.

Matthew 11:28-29 The Passion Translation

Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Then come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you'll discover that I'm gentle, humble, easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me.

This inspiring reading dropped into my email in box this week at an appropriate time as I was still mulling over what I had heard from Rev'd Dr Rowan Williams last Friday. I heard him speak at the World Christian Community of Meditators National Conference where he was talking about our need to press pause. In these words, from Matthews gospel – to come to the oasis and rest in God.

Earlier this year I had little choice but to press pause. As a family we had been through one of those times when life throws everything at you including the kitchen sink. On top of everything that happened last year came the busyness of Christmas followed by my mother's death. I didn't realise how emotionally and physically exhausted I was until I caught a nasty virus and related infections and 'Pause' was very definitely pressed for me.

Rowan Williams said (and I paraphrase) that when you press pause all the things you have been screening out come rushing in but pressing pause is a necessary step towards a deeper freedom rather than the frenetic busyness of trying to handle everything and get on top of things.

My time of pressing pause turned out to be a time to allow the grief and emotions of the past few years that had been pushed to one side to emerge, begin to be acknowledged, unravelled, and worked through. I recognised the need to be really honest with myself, care for myself; acknowledge my needs, and try to get the balance right.

It was a relief in many ways to be back to work and at the same time a struggle at first. I felt a bit like a fish out of water! Comfortable in leading worship (although tiring) but meetings and social situations were not so easy. Evening meetings were difficult because I was tired by the evenings and social interaction, that I usually thrive on, can still exhaust me. I need to make the time and space to come to that oasis and I have found refreshment, as Jesus promises.

I am aware that I cannot go back to working the hours I was working last year as it is unsustainable for anyone. Hopefully, in conversation with each church in our cluster, we can ascertain where my time, gifts and energy are best used.

When I return from holiday, I hope to be almost full time again. I will be monitoring my diary carefully to try and assess the amount of energy activities will take to ensure I do not overload myself. I now know how important this is even when I am back to full strength.

I probably discovered the hard way that we all need to ensure that we find a time to press pause. If you find yourself rushed and tense you too need a little time out to be refreshed. Hopefully holidays and day trips during the summer will help with this or consider coming to the meditation group that Robert runs on a Wednesday evening.

We might just keep on ploughing through because we are anxious about what will come up the quietness but don't be afraid, it might feel uncomfortable at first but it may just be the heavy burden that Jesus knows you are carrying and wants you to bring to him.

My family are not as we were. We now are at the year anniversaries of our unborn granddaughters' deaths and I am learning to hold everything lightly before God in hope and trust, accepting that it is never too late for healing. Gods timing is perfect.

Thank you to everyone for the love you have shown me in your care and concern and patience during my time off and gradual return. It has been a tough and humbling time but there have been many gifts and blessings along the way. The Jesus oasis is life giving indeed.

Every blessing Jane

Secretary's Notes

Discipleship has been at the forefront of much we have been hearing about over the last few weeks. We met the candidate for the Discipleship Enabler post for Heartland, listened to an engaging sermon from Fredwyn Hosier of the 72 other disciples Jesus sent out in pairs (Luke 10 v1-11) to prepare the way for his visits to the towns and villages. A daunting task for ordinary people unsure of how they would be received.

Many of us are daunted by the prospect of being disciples for Christ. We are very comfortable sharing our faith with people in Church, Bible Study and friends who share our commitment to Christ but shy away from broaching the subject in our everyday lives. Why? In present day society we are considered by some as freaks, boring people leading boring lives and believing in mumbo jumbo. Is this the reason we shy away from sharing our faith? Perhaps it's a fear of being ridiculed, asked questions we haven't the knowledge or confidence to answer or perhaps the fear of rejection.

Recently I spent a few days with a friend who I hadn't seen for a few years. She shared with me her journey into faith several years ago and her very unusual Baptism by immersion in the local swimming pool as her church didn't have a Baptistry. She also expressed how lovely it was to be able to talk about her faith as she wasn't confident talking in this way to unbelievers. I don't think she is unusual as many of us feel this way including myself for some of the reasons I have listed above.

On a recent pastoral visit to Lady Menzies I met her nephew who had just republished "Thank God it's Monday" by Mark Greene a book about taking your faith into the workplace. I ordered a copy and I am finding it an interesting and inspiring read. Like many in our Church I am retired but this book still speaks volumes of how I can be a disciple in my everyday life from Monday to Saturday by being alert and aware of the people around me in my day to day life. I need to show initiative as Jesus did by meeting people where they are, providing a listening ear and showing them little acts of kindness and love. By listening I can become aware of their needs, gain their trust and may even find an opportunity to share what being a Christian means to me and how it has shaped my life.

I know that I am, as we all are, loved by God who is with us always sharing in our joy and supporting us through difficult times. I also know it is important to have conversations with God in prayer and to listen for his guidance. I trust he will answer my prayers, possibly not in a way I would see as the answer, but in his way which will be the right way. Perhaps we can encourage those we encounter to share with us in prayer or let us pray for them.

Our task is to build relationships based on trust, love, listening and understanding sharing our faith, our own faith story and our belief in prayer when and where we can. The way we behave, lead our lives and respond to situations, not just on a Sunday, should illustrate what being a Christian really is irrespective of what day of the week it is or where we are on that day.

We can share our faith in this way and then leave the outcome of our sharing to God and we may never know the result.

There may be some who will be encouraged to join us at one of our many Church Groups or Church services and feel safe and welcomed by our Church family. It is here we can nurture and encourage them to find a deeper understanding of our Christian Faith.

Mark Greene's message in this book focuses on getting people into the kingdom of God. He states quite clearly that we must not be under the illusion that discipleship is a means of getting people into church on a Sunday. (Bums on Seats)

I think it is important to remember this as we continue to explore different Expressions of Church at WGCURC.

One size doesn't fit all in our present day society.

I hope you might find something in my ramblings to inspire and help you to realise that we can all be disciples for God in our day to day lives. Bless you all and I pray we can feel more confident in the future to take up God's challenge.

Let's all be disciples for Christ from Monday to Saturday wherever we are.

Joyce

Time to say Thank you

Family BBQ

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed towards making our Family BBQ such a success once again this year. To all who donated the wonderful selection of salads and the amazing variety of cakes and desserts. You did us proud.

To those who helped to set up pack away, those who worked so hard in the kitchen dealing with the mountain of dirty plates I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

I am aware it is dangerous singling people out but I would like to offer a special thank you to Liz who worked alongside me on Saturday shopping and preparing for the event until 7pm. She was back with me again at 9am on Sunday ensuring all was under control and ready to serve at 12.15 and worked throughout the day until we left at 4pm with everything cleared away and church left ready for the week ahead.

I am also very grateful to Ian from Tuesday Community Café who worked alongside me from 9am in the kitchen cooking the burgers and sausages ready for him to put on the BBQ to finish off so that people could be served quickly. Well done Ian you are a star.

It was a wonderful Social occasion enjoyed by so many from a variety of groups who meet in our building who still came along in spite of it clashing with the Men's the Wimbledon Final, The British Grand Prix and The Cricket World Cup.

Thanks again for your help and support.

Thursday Club Garden Party

Ann Meers once again invited us to visit her beautiful garden for our Garden Party the last event before we break for the month of August. We all so enjoy this visit and are really grateful to Ann for allowing us to enjoy her wonderful garden. Thanks also to all who donated cakes and goodies, served our 24 members and looked after the washing up.

See you all on the 5th September.

Joyce



“The sun came out in time for the Thursday club garden party.”

Just received the sad news of Evelyn Snelson’s death, Evelyn, died peacefully on Friday 26 July. Many of our older members will remember Evelyn who still kept in touch with us via our magazine which she enjoyed receiving and reading.

After the death of her husband Peter some years ago, Evelyn continued to live in Cambridge but a few months ago she moved to a care home near Brighton, close to where her daughter lived. I believe that both Evelyn and Peter served as Elders at the Free Church in their time and they had both served as missionaries in Africa in their younger years and also latterly in retirement. Evelyn was a founding Trustee of Isabel Hospice along with several other members of the Free Church here in WGC.

Please include the family in your prayers.

Joyce

Up and Coming

Anniversary Service

Sunday 22nd September

Worship shared by Jane Weedon and Fredwyn Hosier

National Prayer Weekend

27th-29th September

Harvest Preparations

On Friday 27th September at 10am we will be decorating the church for the Harvest Weekend. Please come along to help decorate the church for Tim and Wendy's Wedding on Saturday the 28th and our Harvest Celebrations on Sunday the 29th. Please bring with you, if you can, foliage and berries for decoration. We are also grateful for fruit, vegetables and non-perishables suitable for distribution to The Woman's Refuge, Cellar and The Food Bank.

Willing hands are the only qualifications required so please come and help me prepare for this special weekend.

Harvest Sunday 29th September

To be held at WGC where we will be joined by our friends from Harpenden and Wheathampstead. The service will be followed by a Harvest Lunch. We will supply Soup Bread and cheese plus a Childrens' Lunch Selection. Harpenden and Wheathampstead will supply Fruit Pies and cream.

A sign up attendance sheet will be displayed in Church in September for catering purposes.

The church will be set with tables for worship on this special occasion to enable us to all enjoy lunch together in Church amidst the Harvest Décor at the close of worship.

Church Meeting Sunday 27th October

Christmas Fayre

Saturday 23rd November

I know that this seems a long way off but could you please be thinking over the summer months how you could help. Perhaps you would like to run one of the usual stalls/activities or you may have a new idea of your own which you would like to include in this year's fayre.

Could you please let me know as soon as possible how you would like to be involved.

Over the summer you could be collecting or making items for the various stalls and activities.

eg Small Lucky Dip Items, Tombola and Raffle items, Children's Small Prizes, Bottles of wine for the Bottle Stall, Toiletries for men and women and food for Hampers and Home made preserves to name but a few.

Please be aware if you plan to run a stall you will need to put your appeal for items etc. in the next issue of the magazine dead line 18th September.

NB Stall holders are responsible for :-

- Advertising for items for their stall in the next magazine
- Setting up their Stall
- Staffing their stall
- Providing their own float
- Clearing away at the close of the day and disposing of unsold items when necessary.

I will be happy to look after catering on the day but would welcome volunteers to help. I think this covers everything for the moment and I look forward to being swamped by your responses to my various requests. Enjoy your summer break and come back refreshed and ready to take part in our busy autumn schedule.

Love and Prayers, Joyce

Mission Co-ordinator Funding

As a Church and Community, we appreciate the work done by the Mission Co-ordinator. The original grant from Synod was for a part time post only and with our Mission Co-ordinator now working full time, the church has a deficit which is over £16,000 per year to meet the extra cost of this work.

Our Mission Co-ordinator, as you know, is Liz Laing. Some of you may not be aware of all the tasks that Liz carries out on our behalf.

At Tuesday café Liz hosts a variety of people, who come on a regular basis to enjoy the warmth of our hospitality and to meet socially, many of whom are homeless or friendless. There is also a fortnightly group of young, special needs adults, who not only share in the community spirit of the Tuesday cafe, but who also take part in basic craft activities.

Liz has developed a good working relationship with Sainburys, who supply her with food and toilet products for the Food Bank, which we as a church support.

There are also plans to start up a club for people suffering with dementia and there is hope that this will be started in the near future. We believe that there is a great need for this.

Liz also works with other churches in the area and is currently attempting to visit all of them over a period of time, interspersed with worshipping with us on Sunday mornings. To establish a good relationship with all faiths is a vital part to 'loving your neighbour'.

Another major task that Liz has taken on is to visit all of the many clubs and associations, that meet in our building and introduce herself as the first point of call when needed. Fitting these into her daily work schedule is no mean feat as many of the clubs meet in the evenings. Take a look at our diary in the vestibule to get an idea of how well used

our building is. Liz looks after the diary of lettings and manages enquiries about new lettings.

If we wish to retain our Mission Co-ordinator and support our Mission and Outreach work then we need to consider how we meet this deficit. To date we have found this from surplus funds in our finances, but this is not sustainable from now on. To support future grant applications, we as a church need to show our support and agree to pledge extra monies to this work.

In addition, the Synod grant will come to an end in August 2020 and we then need to again seek funding for this post.

Please consider what God's will is in allowing us to retain our full time Mission worker and to give towards this work either on a regular basis or as a one-off donation. Without your help we will have to review this role and we welcome any other suggestions on how we fund the full-time post.

There are donation envelopes and forms being given out with your magazine. If you have any queries then please contact your Elder or myself.

With thanks

Helen Kaye

On behalf of the Elders

Community Outreach

Resolve Night Shelter

One of the charities we support is Resolve. Resolve is a multi-award winning adult drug & alcohol day service provider with street worker and homeless specialist provision based in North & East Herts with services in Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield and Hitchin. Resolve has a Family/Carers Support Service providing support, advice, one-to-one counselling and an evening support group available in Welwyn Garden City.

On 29 June I attended the grand opening of the Resolve Night Shelter in Hatfield. The shelter will provide two meals a day and can only offer accommodation to a rough sleeper once an assessment has been done. The night shelter dedicated their 'Community Cafe' to the late Welwyn Hatfield mayor, Lynne Sparks, and has been named the Sparks Community Cafe'.

It was wonderful to see so much support from local councillors and businesses on the day.

Live Life Project

I recently attended a presentation by Leonie Maddin, a Live Life & Education Team Leader, from Herts Young Homeless.

Live Life is a project for those between 14 – 24 years of age who have experienced homelessness. Once they have joined they can stay with the project until 30. This project allows young people who have experienced loneliness and homelessness to come together. This is a very large project which acts as a platform for getting voices heard. The majority of referrals come via the website. Peer mentoring, funded training and support is offered to vulnerable young people to get them into accommodation and then to take up a tenancy if possible. Unfortunately there are a high number of repeat homelessness cases.

Prayer Request

As Christians we have a duty to pray for those in need, so please add these two projects to your prayer list and let us unite in asking God to help those vulnerable people who are currently experiencing the trauma of homelessness – thank you.

Community Cafe'

I would like to thank all my lovely volunteers who help at the Community Cafe' on a Tuesday. Due to circumstances we often short of helpers, so if you are able to volunteer for 2 hours on a Tuesday, please let me know.

Floor Refurbishment

Please note that the Main Hall, Upper Hall and Lower Hall floors will be refurbished during August. August is usually the best time of the year to do this as most of our regular groups are on holiday.

Plastic Bags

Thank you to everyone who so kindly donated plastic bags, however I have used most of them for the Foodbank donations. If you still have any spare unwanted plastic bags, please leave them in the Foodbank basket at the back of the Main Hall.

Holidays

I would like to wish everyone going on their summer holidays a safe and Blessed journey.

Psalm 139:9-10

⁹ If I ride the wings of the morning,
if I dwell by the farthest oceans,
¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
and your strength will support me.

Thank you for reading - God Bless You All
Liz

TRIP TO SOUTHWOLD

On 4 July The Thursday Club had a planned trip to the seaside.

This year Joyce suggested we went to Southwold in Suffolk as a change from the conventional seaside resort. There were 52 of us altogether and around 10 had walkers. The coach driver put all the walker trolleys in the storage area and owners were issued with a label to avoid any confusion as to whom they belonged (a clever idea from Joyce).

Once all aboard and comfortably seated we were on our way towards the Essex/Suffolk countryside.

We had a good run and arrived around mid-day with sunshine on our side the whole day. We parked close to the pier and went off in our groups to please ourselves. Southwold is famous for its pier and lovely colourful beach huts. The pier is smaller than most traditional piers and was originally built in 1900 as a landing stage for goods shipped up from London Bridge. In 1934 it burned down and was completely restored in 1999. It has a section where you can see some quite eccentric slot machines dating back to the middle of the last century. These are well worth a visit. The other two sections of the pier are quite smart gift shops. The pier railings are marked with brass plaques naming benefactors who contributed to the renovations in 1999.

Writers P D James and George Orwell had both lived in Southwold.

Southwold being quite compact meant that wherever you went either along the promenade or into the small town you would meet up with our fellow travellers which made it a very sociable day. It was lovely to see so many able to get around with their walking trolleys.

Many of us had lunch on or near the pier at the restaurants and some said it was the best fish and chips they'd ever had. We watched small children playing on the beach paddling in the waves and were treated to a visit from a seal who had come adrift from his friends.

After a good afternoon walking and relaxing on the front most of us had an afternoon cuppa and back to the coach for our return journey.

It was a most successful trip and our appreciation is expressed to Joyce Nicolson for organising the whole event and to our driver for a safe journey both ways.

Watch this space for next years event.

Linda



CHURCH FAMILY CORNER

Firstly I send my apologies to Jessica A. whose 11th birthday on 10th July mysteriously disappeared from my list in our last magazine. We hope you enjoyed your day, Jessica. I have also just found out that Jessica's Uncle Matthew (our lovely Elder Matt!) celebrated his 40th birthday on July 24th so we send belated birthday greetings to you both.

Here is our birthday list for August, starting with Mary S. on 3rd, Edie W. on 11th, Joyce N. on 15th, Lucas H, who will be 15 on 16th, Sheila L. on 22nd, Barbara G. who will be 90 on 26th, and John M. on 30th.

Now on to those with birthdays in September. Iris W. on 7th, Aiden R. who will be 5 on 22nd, Zara D. who will be 13 on 22nd, and Ted C. on 24th.

We send birthday greetings to all those celebrating their birthday in these two months and we hope they will enjoy their special days when they arrive.

If you would like a birthday mention on our family page, please let me know!

Now for more congratulations.

Firstly to Marie Machen who became a great grandmother on June 2nd when Kris, her grandson, and Tiffany's first baby, Rory, arrived. We send our best wishes to the new parents and to Marie.

We also send congratulations to Lorraine and Frank's son, Karl, who has gained a place at the very prestigious Rose Bruford International School of Theatre and Performance based in Sidcup, Kent. Well done, Karl!

We also send our love and congratulations to Tim and Wendy, who will be getting married in our church on 28th September. Tim & Wendy have asked me to say that any members of our congregation would be very welcome to attend the Wedding Service at 3pm.

We were very pleased to welcome Jane back to leading some of our Sunday services recently after her absence due to stress and exhaustion and we send our love and prayers to her and Roger as she returns to work.

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Sheila Chamberlin on 24th May. Her funeral service was held in our church and there is a separate article elsewhere in this magazine.

Also it came as a great shock to us all when we heard of the sudden death of Joan Marshall, who had been in church on the Sunday but was found at home on the Tuesday, having suffered a fatal brain haemorrhage. Her funeral was held at Harwood Park on 24th June. We send our heartfelt condolences to her family at this very sad time.

Please remember all those in need of our prayers and pass on any concerns to Jane, the Elders or any of our Pastoral friends so that we ensure that no one gets forgotten.

Thank you, on behalf of our Pastoral Teams.

LOVE IN A BOX

It's not quite that time of year, but.....it soon will be!

We will again be preparing our shoe boxes for this wonderful charity who make sure that deprived children in Eastern Europe will receive a present and the knowledge that someone cares.

If you have not taken part in this project before, please speak to Carol T, Ann M or Jean H. Basically, we fill a shoe box with toys, toiletries, sweets etc, and include a donation of £4 to cover the shipping costs .

What we are asking people to do now, is to start donating things to go in the boxes. You can of course donate a whole box yourself and the leaflets required will be available soon. But if we all donate some individual items too, Carol and her busy elves will make up extra boxes. So, if you can, pop that extra bar of soap or packet of sweets in with your shopping and then let one of the team have it.

Phewww managed to get through that without saying 'Christmas' once!

Many thanks

Allison

Transplant Games: Gold for youngest pancreas recipient

Britain's youngest ever pancreas transplant recipient has won a gold medal at the British Transplant Games. Sophie Washington, 23, from Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, won gold for Wales in the archery. "I still can't quite believe it. So, so happy," she said.



The games in Newport run until Sunday and will see almost 1,000 participants - some as young as three - taking part in 23 sports and events across the city.

Ms Washington received her new pancreas aged 18 in 2014, nine years after a diagnosis of type one diabetes. At 15, she was the only person in the UK living on an intravenous insulin infusion 24 hours a day, seven days a week at home - a situation she lived with for 18 months.

She joined the transplant waiting list in 2012 and said she received a call 18 months later. She said: "My mum got the call, just before midnight. She woke me up asking what I'd like for Christmas and I mumbled 'a new pancreas'.

"There was an overwhelming surge of emotions because while your dream is coming true, you know it's because another family are going through the worst time imaginable."

Unfortunately, the pancreas failed in 2017 but Ms Washington said she would always be grateful for the transplant.

She added: "I wouldn't be alive today without my donor and their family giving their consent. It gave me the time in which new technology and new treatments have caught up to where I need them to be. Ms Washington is not currently on the waiting list but may need another transplant in future and said: "My health is not as bad as it was before the transplant, although I need a wheelchair and I have chronic pain, frequent spasms and non-epileptic seizures."

BBC News Wales

Are you going to the seaside this Summer?

Like me, many of our congregation are comforted by the words of **Footprints**, but do you know where God has planted His footprints? I was unaware until I was introduced to **Psalm 77: v19**:

**Your path led through the sea,
Your way through the mighty waters,
Though your footprints were not seen.**

For some reason I felt compelled to try and interpret this small verse from God's scripture and to share my thoughts with you. Being a complete novice in writing about scripture, I initially felt it was a daunting task. I prayed for guidance and inspiration and the following thoughts were forthcoming.

I have always been in awe of the vast expanse of the seas and oceans, spreading to the horizon, as far as we can see, and further beyond. Picturing myself by the sea reminded me of a line in one of my favourite hymns, '*Lord, the light of Your love is shining*', which is also popular with many of you. In the second verse, we sing about coming to God's awesome presence. *I wondered if that is what I feel by the sea?*

The seaside always refreshes and restores my wellbeing. It lifts my spirit. I feel a sense of calm when I listen to the waves falling or crashing on the shore of sandy or stony beaches. I am often drawn to the sea, as are so many for their annual holiday. *Are we being drawn to God's presence?*

My favourite colour is blue, the wallpaper on my laptop is of a lone runner on a sandy beach with two imposing rock faces just out to sea. *Are these coincidences?*

I always sleep better after a stroll along the coast. The clean, crisp, fresh air having filled my lungs. In the presence of the peaceful, calming and soothing sound of the waves. Water quenches our thirst, hydration being essential to our health. Water is vital for all forms of life.

Whenever I attend a yoga or relaxation class, go for a spa day or therapy treatment, the music in the background always features the ocean waves. *Is God present at these times?*

And water, the strongest natural force on Earth, which covers about 70% of its surface, *is this God reminding us that He is with us?*

What does the seaside mean to you?

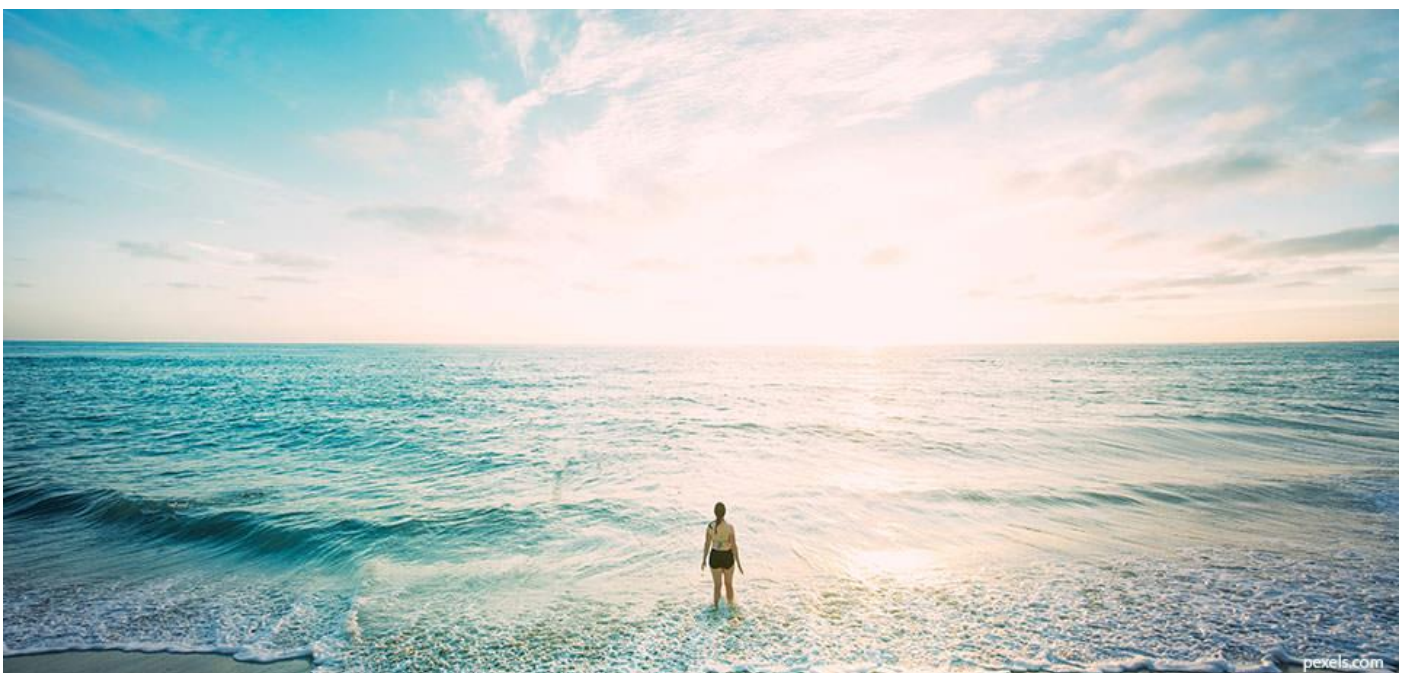
I must attribute this article to Judy and her mother Cilla, two wonderful ladies I have befriended at the Lister MacMillan Cancer Centre. Judy and I were sat in the triage area unknown to one another. Cilla joined Judy and shortly afterwards Cilla was called for a consultation. God's light shone in Judy's eyes and her love for her mother was so very evident, I expressed '*You really love your mother*'. Her response was, '*She belongs to God and is in his safe hands*'. And our Christian fellowship began ...

At our second meeting, Judy shared that she had recently led a church group and had talked about God's footprints and how they are planted in the ocean. Hence, the inspiration for this article.

We know God moves in mysterious ways. He certainly was doing so the day I met Judy and her mum. Judy asked if I was aware of the hymn: '*God moves in a mysterious way*'. I was not, but am now, and close with the first verse.

**God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.**

With love and blessings, Laura xx



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday 29th September

10.30am Service

Please bring along your gifts of

Tinned food, Packet food,

Dry goods

**These will be distributed to the Foodbank, Cellar and the Women's
Refuge**

Lunch will be in the Church Hall after the Service

Soup, bread, cheese and pate

followed by fruit pie and cream

A Children's selection will also be available

Please come and join us and our friends from Harpenden and

Wheathampstead

And lets make it a bumper crop this year



Peace Gathering Sep 21st

International World Day of Peace is celebrated on September 21st every year, as designated by the UN. And various projects run in different parts of the world.

With all the incidents of violence, especially hate-crime, which have been in the news over the past 18 months, we really wanted to do something in WGC to celebrate peaceful community, so Wendy made a suggestion and Welwyn Hatfield Interfaith are partnering with the council to host a Peace Gathering in the town centre on Saturday 21st September – Howardsgate or Howard Centre depending on the weather forecast!

Between 2pm and 4.30pm there will be a tent where you can come and make a pinwheel (like a little windmill) with a peace slogan and add it to the display, and view all those made by everyone else, including some by school children. We hope lots of people will come out to show our solidarity as a diverse community, celebrate how wonderful it is to live in a peaceful society, and express hope for peace to flourish in the UK and wider world. And we are looking to organise some music and dance from 3pm. If anyone would like to volunteer help on the day please get in touch with Wendy, tel 07904 517384.



Thanks to everyone who provided food and help towards the Bbq on July 14th. Around 70 adults and 22 children enjoyed a feast on a pleasant afternoon when the garden was looking great. And many of the children were involved in the Altogether Worship in the morning exploring the story of the good samaritan. How can you help your neighbour? The photo shows our prayers from the worship, and teddies bandaged by the kids...



Thanks for the volunteering

A big thankyou to all our volunteers who help to keep so many aspects of our community life running smoothly. And thanks to the Elders and Liz who have been improving our standards and procedures so we can all keep up with best practice as our Community Hub expands. If anyone else would like to volunteer, or would like to seek help with starting something new, do get in touch.

Here is Helen in the kitchen after a session of Chatter and Tots:



Wendy

Church Membership

We have a number of people who were waiting for Janes return to become Church Members so we are holding two sessions to enable you to discover what membership of the United Reformed Church is all about and for you to discern if this is what God is calling you to at this time.

The sessions will be:

Sunday 18th August 12-1.30 (at the latest) – please bring lunch
Friday 6th September 10-11.30

There will be things for children to do on Sunday 18th to allow parents with children to attend.

There is a leaflet in church for you to complete please so we know who will be attending which session. There is also an option to declare your interest if you cannot make either of these dates.

The next service where we will bring people into membership is October 6th.



Who's who.....

Here we have another member of our congregation, willing to share some of his life with us.

I was born in Crewe and lived there for about 4 years, when as a family, we moved to Kirkham in Lancashire. Kirkham is just a few miles from Blackpool and I always enjoyed having days out there.

In school I obviously had to work at numerous subjects but my all-encompassing passion was Egyptology. My aunt bought me a book all about Egypt with lots of amazing pictures. I was a very popular lad whenever I took the book to school because all of my class mates wanted to see it.

My childhood was not an easy one and I had a strained relationship with my family, always feeling like the black sheep, wanting to go my own way.

In my youth I had a desire to produce music, a phase which last about 5 years, when I could not stop listening to music. An amazing opportunity was offered when I was given the chance to be a volunteer radio presenter with Preston FM. And after some initial training I presented 4 live shows. That was a really good experience.

When I was 14 I left home and went to live with my sister in London. It was great being in the 'Big City'. The furthest South that I had travelled was Birmingham. I jobbed around until old enough to enlist.

Aged 19, I enlisted with the Territorial Army and travelled to Iraq, and was finally discharged in 2007

Jean asked me about my favourite genre in music and reading.

When I was much younger I loved dance music and pop but over the last 10 years I have become interested in rock. My favourite group being the Foo Fighters, an American rock band, with lead singer Dave Grohl.

Most of my reading relies on conspiracy thrillers with Robert Ludlum being top of the list.

When Jean asked where I would most like to live, there was no hesitation in my Reply. I once shared a flat in Preston with a Kiwi called Phil and I found that although English humour has a reputation of not travelling well, in fact Phil and I could always have a good laugh together over the same jokes. So my answer to the question, without a doubt is New Zealand..

When I first turned up at the Welwyn Garden City United Reformed Church I was struggling with my alcohol addiction.

I have now been 'dry' for 18 months and although I didn't appear to be making an effort to turn away from alcohol, I awoke one day and knew that I didn't want to drink anymore. I think there must have been some sort of chemical reaction in my brain overnight that just took away the craving.

I have become more focused on myself, have had jobs and relationships and I am now able to maintain friendships, which I could not do when I was drinking. I am now a changed man.

For 2 years I worked at the Focolare Centre on a voluntary basis and for the last 12 months I have been paid as a part-time caretaker.

Since coming into the URC I have gained not only friendship, but a feeling of belonging to a family. Although I do not often come into the services on a Sunday I am always available to help Joyce or Michael when muscle is required.

Along with the Focolare Centre and the URC my life has improved. They supported me so much during my madness drinking, giving me the friendship that I so needed.

I would like to say 'thank you' to all of you for giving me the opportunity to enjoy the fellowship of the church and for including me into the 'family'.

Shaun Castle

Sheila Chamberlin 1928 – 2019

Sheila was born on 13th November 1928 and grew up in Ettrick Bridge, in the Scottish Borders, where she attended Selkirk High School before moving South to train as a nurse. While in London, she met Peter who had been an RAF pilot during the war, moving on to teacher training afterwards, and they married in 1950, making their first home in Kingston upon Thames where Sheila became a district nurse, doing her rounds on her bicycle! Peter eventually took up the post as head of Rowans School in Welwyn Garden City and their two sons, Peter and Andrew, spent most of their childhood in the town. In the 1970's Sheila became the matron at Sir Frederick Osborn School.

Following Peter's death in 1985, Sheila had to cope alone and began to enjoy travelling the world with her best friend from schooldays, visiting USA, Australia and Asia, while not forgetting to return to her beloved Scotland too.

Sheila was a member of our church for many years and I remember her singing in the church choir, attending the Thursday Club and being their secretary too.

Sheila had four grandsons and Mark gave a very moving tribute to his beloved gran at her funeral. We extend our sincere condolences to Sheila's family on their loss and remember Sheila warmly as part of our church family too.

A precis of the eulogies delivered at Sheila's funeral.

Ann Meers

‘I nearly forgot to say Thank you!’

A line in the Lord’s Prayer asks God to ‘Give us this day our daily bread’. When we say that line, we’re asking God to provide the basic things in life that keep us healthy and happy. It can start with the food we need to eat each day, but for lots of different reasons, not everyone has enough.

So saying thank you for our food is important – we might thank the person who cooked it, and we might go back further and think of the people in the shops where we bought the ingredients, and even trace it right back to the farmers who grew the crops in the first place. One way to show our thanks is to try to buy food that is fairly traded whenever we can.

For children who are old enough, trying talking about this together one meal time, taking each item on the plate and thinking about where it came from and all the people and work that has gone into bringing it to your table.

Saying grace before a meal is a way of saying thank you to God for making the earth and everything in it – all good things come from God, and it’s up to us to use them in the very best and most generous way.

Try singing this grace: One, two, three, four, five, thank you God that I’m alive. Six, seven, eight, nine, ten, thank you God for food. Amen!

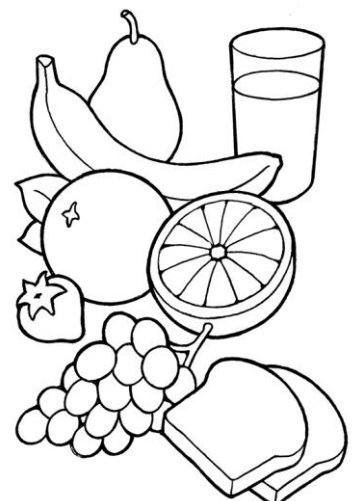
One of the most traditional graces goes like this: “For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful – but did you know the original ‘grace’ goes on to say: ‘and keep us always mindful of the needs of others.’”

Have you ever tried holding hands around the table while saying grace – this reminds us that we are thankful not only for our food, but that we can share it with people we love, as in this prayer:

“Thank you, God, for food, and family, and friends. Amen.

or

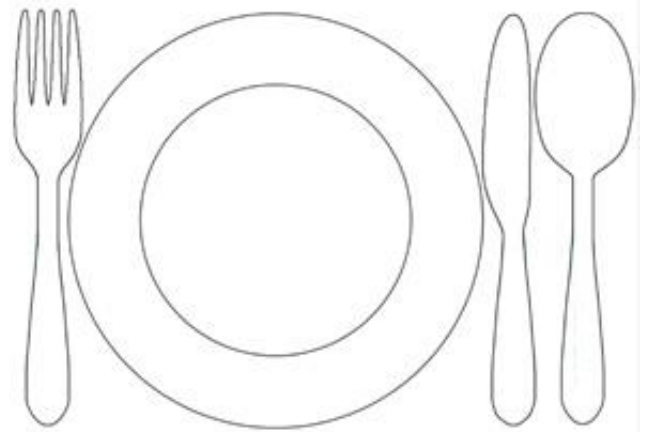
“Thank you, God, for food, and family, and friends,
we remember those who have no food today,
and those who have food, but nobody to share it,
As you have blessed us,
help us be a blessing for others. Amen.



An idea for children

Decorate a 'grace' table mat:

Take a piece of A4 paper, and in the middle draw round a medium sized plate to make a circle, then in that circle draw round a smaller plate. You should have something that looks a little bit like a plate. Then draw a fork outline on the left, and a knife outline on the right, and a spoon above – don't worry about the quality of the artwork!



Now, have some fun decorating your plate with pictures of their favourite food – you can draw pictures yourself, or cut them out of magazines, or use pictures from food packets – and you can even label them if your child is old enough to start learning to read.

Somewhere on your paper, perhaps at the top or in a corner, write 'Thank you God' in big letters and colour it in – this is your thank-you place mat, a reminder of all the good things that God gives us.

Or perhaps something like this if your child is a bit older.



Once you've finished decorating, you can either laminate your artwork, or slip it into one of

those plastic folders and seal up the end with sticky tape. Use your place mat at family meal times as a reminder of your thankfulness for all God's blessings, and particularly for food.

This is such a fun activity, that you can create a new one every so often, with updated favourite foods, and perhaps even write a little 'grace' prayer of your own to go on it?

We would love to see your children's efforts, so if they would like to bring them along one Sunday morning I'm sure Jane would be pleased to show everyone.

What's on in the Church

August/September 2019

Group Name	Day	Time
Welwyn Garden Craft Club (2 nd Mon)	Mon	2pm - 4pm
Strong Zumba	Mon	4.15pm-5.15pm
Men's Games Club	Mon	7pm - 10pm
Hatfield Tai Chi	Mon	7pm - 9pm
Pregnancy Yoga	Mon	7.30pm - 9pm
HomeStart Parent & Toddler Group	Tues	10am - 12noon
Community Coffee Morning	Tues	10am - 12noon
Lunchtime Discussion Group	Tues	12.30pm - 2pm
Slimming World	Tues	3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm
CBT Skills Group	Tues	5.30pm - 7.30pm
Knit and Natter (2 nd & 4 th Wed)	Wed	10am - 12noon
Carers in Herts (3 rd Wed)	Wed	12noon - 2pm
AA Meeting	Wed	12.30pm-1.30pm
Baby Group	Wed	1.30pm - 3.30pm
Zumba	Wed	4.15pm-5.15pm
NHS Carers (1 st Wed)	Wed	6pm - 7.30pm
Somewhere2sing	Wed	7pm-9pm
Christian Meditation	Wed	7.30pm - 8.30pm
Pregnancy Yoga	Wed	7.30pm - 9pm
Chatter & Tots	Thurs	9.30am - 11.15am
Thursday Club Social Group for 50+ (1 st & 3 rd Thurs)	Thurs	2pm - 4pm
Cellar Club - Food for the Homeless & Vulnerable	Thurs	4.15pm - 6.30pm
Slimming World	Thurs	5 - 9pm
WGC Folk Dance Club	Thurs	8pm - 10pm
Trefoil Guild (2 nd Thurs)	Thurs	8pm -10pm
Explore The Bible & Prayer Group	Fri	10am - 11.30am
Start to do Art	Fri	1pm - 2pm
Parent & Tiddlers (2 nd & 4 th Fri)	Fri	2pm - 3.30pm
WelHat Council Dance Class	Fri	6.30pm -7.30pm
Archaeological Society (1 st & 3 rd Fri)	Fri	8pm - 10pm
Slimming World	Sat	7.30-12.30pm
Breakfast Church (1 st & 3 rd Sat)	Sat	10am - 11.30am
Tea Dance (1 st Sat)	Sat	2pm - 4pm
Chiltern West Gallery Quire (2 nd Sat)	Sat	2pm - 5pm
Worship Service	Sun	10.30am - 12noon

CHURCH DIARY AUGUST 2019

Thursday 1 st	4.15-6pm 8pm	Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Saturday 3 rd	2 – 4.30pm	Tea Dance
Sunday 4 th	10.30am	Morning Worship including communion led by Jane
Tuesday 6 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group Lent Course
Wednesday 7 th	1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 8 th	4.15-6pm 8pm	Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Friday 9 th	2pm	Parents & Tiddlers
Sunday 11 th	10.00-10.45am 11.00 – 12 noon	Family Friendly Service led by Wendy Morning Worship led by Derek, Wendy & Janet
Tuesday 13 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group
Wednesday 14 th	10-12 noon 1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Knit n Natter Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 15 th	4.15-6pm 8pm	Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Saturday 17 th	<u>NB. Car Park closed all day for Wedding</u>	Emily Ewer Wedding Reception in Church Hall and Grounds
Sunday 18 th Fellowship Lunch	10.30-11.30am 3.45-5.30pm	Morning Worship led by the Worship Group Breakfast Church Tea
Tuesday 20 th	10-12noon	Community Coffee Morning

	12.30-2pm	Lunchtime Discussion Group
Wednesday 21 st	1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 22 nd	4.15-6pm 8pm	Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Sunday 25 th	10.30am	All Together Morning Worship
Tuesday 27 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group
Wednesday 28 th	10-12 noon 7.30-8.30pm	Knit n Natter Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 29 th	4.15-6pm	Cellar

August dates Jane will be available at WGC (Subject to change)

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 27th

CHURCH DIARY SEPTEMBER 2019

Sunday 1 st	10.30am	Morning Worship including communion led by Jane
Tuesday 3 rd	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group
Wednesday 4 th	1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 5 th	9.30-11.30am 2-4pm 4.15-6pm 8pm	Chatter'n Tots Thursday Club Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Friday 6 th	10 am	Exploring the Bible
Saturday 7 th	2-4pm	Tea Dance
Sunday 8 th	10- 10.45am 11.00–12noon	Family Friendly Service led by Wendy Morning Worship led by Jane
Tuesday 10 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group
Wednesday 11 th	10-12 noon 1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Knit n Natter Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 12 th	9.30-11.30am 4.15-6pm 8pm	Chatter'n Tots Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Friday 13 th	10 am 2pm	Exploring the Bible Parents & Tiddlers
Saturday 14 th	10.00- 11.30am	Breakfast Church
Sunday 15 th Fellowship Lunch	10.30- 11.30am	Morning Worship led by the Worship Group
Tuesday 17 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group

Wednesday 18 th	1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 19 th	9.30-11.30am 2-4pm 4.15-6pm 8pm	Chatter'n Tots Thursday Club Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Friday 20 th	10 am 2pm	Exploring the Bible Parents & Tiddlers
Sunday 22 nd	10.30am	Church Anniversary Service All Together Worship Led by Jane & Fredwyn Hosier
Tuesday 24 th	10-12noon 12.30-2pm 7pm	Community Coffee Morning Lunchtime Discussion Group Elders
Wednesday 25 th	10-12 noon 1.30-3.30pm 7.30-8.30pm	Knit n Natter Baby Group Christian Meditation in Vestry
Thursday 26 th	9.30-11.30am 4.15-6pm 8pm	Chatter'n Tots Cellar Bible Study at Sanjays
Friday 27 th	10 am 2pm	Decorating the Church for Harvest Celebrations Parents & Tiddlers
Saturday 28 th	3pm	Wedding
Sunday 29 th	10.30 am	Harpenden&Wheathampstead/URC to join us for Morning Worship led by Jane at WGC followed by Harvest Lunch

September dates Jane will be available at WGC (Subject to change)

1st, 19th, 20th, 22nd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 29th

