

The Corona Chronicles

Fellowship from
WGC URC

August 2020 Edition

Musings from the Manse

Life has continued here as usual. Every day Roger and I take time to walk the dogs down Parkway and further if they are up to it – Ollie always wants to head for the woods but it is a bit far for him – he can sometimes be persuaded that squirrel hunting on the Campus roundabout is a good alternative!

Our walks seem to take longer and longer because there are so many people we have got to know and stop to chat to along our way. Ollie is a very good connector as people come to ask what happened to him and want to know all about his wheels and how he manages. Some people we chat to regularly used to have dogs and love to see them especially Jet who always wants people to pay him attention! We have learned a lot about the gardens from the gardeners – did you know that the wavy hedges in the holocaust Memorial garden represent the trains that took Jewish prisoners to concentrations camps? It has been lovely to see how many people are willing to pass the time of day – at least to say Good Morning as they pass by. The feel of the town centre community is much more friendly although as people get back to their rush and bustle again wonder if this will change? I wonder if you have experienced something similar on your walks, or waiting in a shopping queue? Might you take the chance of speaking to a stranger in a queue? As the Bible tells us we never know if we will find ourselves entertaining angels.

Life in our churches has continued as usual and yet it is not the same and probably never will be. We are at a point of realising we need to reinvent ourselves to keep everyone in our fellowships together even if we are apart and to keep providing for people who have connected with us remotely which has given our worship a much wider reach that it had before.

Reinvention, the dictionary tells us is ‘the practice of embracing change by re-imagining and re- making something so that it manifests new and improved attributes, qualities and results’. In many ways we have been forced into this by our current situation but God can use this time to help us adapt and embrace change in our ways of working, worshiping, reaching out, and caring that might be healthier and do a lot to help us not only survive but thrive.

There is a lot happening in our church buildings at the moment in preparation for re opening. Dates have not yet been decided as I write because we have not had all the responses to the questionnaires yet or reflected on everything that

you have very kindly shared. Inside the buildings things are happening to ensure that when we do open we will be able to open safely so you can have the confidence that whatever you participate in will be organised in the safest way, protecting us all as much as possible from contracting the virus.

We know that some of you in our church families will quite rightly feel it is not appropriate for you to return to worship in person yet because you find yourselves in the higher bracket of the guidance the URC helpfully provided. I want to assure you that all the churches Elders and pastoral teams continue to look for ways to support you in worship at home or in the future, in a church building. It would be helpful for us to know how we can support you. Please contact me or your pastoral contacts to let us know.

One URC minister ably reminded us that in John Chapter 4 Jesus had a conversation with a Samaritan woman about places people worship. The woman told Jesus – ‘Sir I see you are a prophet’ then she asked Jesus why it is that Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship while Samaritans say it is Mount Gerizim where their ancestors worshipped. Jesus replies ‘...the time is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him in that way.’ Did you notice that Jesus doesn’t focus on where we worship but how we worship? How reassuring that is in this continuing time of pandemic that worship in spirit and truth can happen just as authentically in your home or your garden as it can in a church building.

We need each other as much as we ever did, to support and encourage and help each other live Jesus way every day. It is important for us too to support each other in listening to our bodies and to do what is right for us as individuals whether that means joining worship from home or in a church building.

If anyone suggests different remind them what Jesus said - ‘...the time is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.’ The Father is looking to you to worship that way – wherever you are.

That brings me full circle – how reassuring it is to know that even our worship life goes on as usual!

Take care of yourselves and keep safe.

Every blessing Jane

Pastoral Care- (WGC URC) please see separate sheet

Church Support Network

Our Church Support Network set up to cater for our friends who are living alone and in need of help with shopping collecting prescriptions etc. is still operational.

You can access help by calling Joyce on

01710 326829 or 07886392602 if you need assistance.

I will arrange for one of our Volunteers to contact you to make arrangements with you personally.

Call and Chat

Life is still not back to normal with many of us still unable to get together socially in a group. The various clubs and activities we have previously enjoyed in our church are still unable to resume for the foreseeable future and our Sunday Worship, when it returns, will be restricted as Jane explained in her letter.

It seems so long since we have been able to enjoy a chat with each other in a group. **Call and Chat** will enable us to do this in a group with 3 others.

Our Pastoral Elders and Church Friends will be inviting you to join with other members of your church family for a group telephone chat.

You will be approached with an invitation to join in at a set time on a set evening so I hope you will give it a try. It is wonderful to hear more than one voice on the line.

The person who invites you will explain how it works.

It is a free call on your landline for up to one hour. Mobiles may be different depending on your contract.

Chat Line Number to Dial 03332666999

Pin Number to key in when asked 494551

Please keep this **Chat Line Number** and **Pin Number** in a safe place so that you will be ready to give it a try.

Joyce

Up and Coming

Harvest Festival

I am proposing we decorate the Church for Harvest on a Friday and open the Church on the Saturday inviting our congregation and people from our local community to come in to donate non-perishable gifts. This will of course be dependent on the covid 19 guidelines. We can advertise the times we will be open on Social media along with a poster outside church (possibly 10am to 3 pm)

I suggest a Harvest Display with harvest hymns playing and harvest pictures on a loop on the screen. A few socially distanced chairs could be available for those wishing to sit for prayer or for a few minutes of quiet reflection.

To make this a success I will be looking for help to set up on Friday and volunteers to work in pairs for one hour sessions on Saturday to ensure all safety procedures are being observed by visitors.

We can distribute the gifts we receive to The Woman's Refuge, The Food Bank and families / individuals we are aware of who are suffering hardship as a result of the pandemic.

I would be interested to hear your thoughts on this suggestion and, if you are in favour and we decide to go ahead your offers of help.

Christmas Fayre Saturday 28th November

This is the date in the 2020 diary but it will not be possible to hold our traditional Christmas Fayre this year in these uncertain times which is a huge blow to our own fund raising and also our support for the Isabel Hospice. Last year we raised £2376 after expenses and donated £1200 to Isabel Hospice.

Jane suggested we produce a catalogue with items for sale and I have been mulling over the possibilities and how we could make it work. So here I go with my thoughts and suggestions for an alternative Christmas Fund Raiser. We won't be able to achieve last years total but we can hopefully raise something to share with the hospice while keeping our profile in the town centre alive.

My thoughts are as follows so I am asking you all if:-

1) You can make anything to sell?

I am open to suggestions but here are a few ideas to set you thinking.

Shortbread, Cakes, preserves, etc.

Knitted goods or other hand crafted items

Christmas Table Decorations or Door Wreaths

Good quality pre loved items ie Glass ware, ornaments, toys etc

2) Provide a picture, if at all possible, and a selling price for your item for the online catalogue.

Our customers will order and pay online when the order is placed or by cheque in advance if that is not possible and come to collect from the Church car park on the 28th November. We may offer another collection date for food and perishable items closer to Christmas.

Our very own WGC URC Click and Collect

This will mean that anyone making items will know how many orders they will have to fulfil.

I will need help in finding a way to set up a facility for paying online and setting up the website. I think it is crucial that orders are paid when the order is placed to avoid us being left with items on the day. It will also let everyone know the quantities they need to produce.

Ann Meers has agreed to be outside on the 28th with her Garden Stall.

Looking on the positive side if by some chance things have been relaxed by the end of November we could rustle up a few extra stalls for inside at short notice. A Raffle is out of the question but If I get my usual 4ball at WGC Golf Club donated which is worth £120 we could put it on the website with a reserve price and open it up for bids.

We might get other items we could put on which can be open for bids.

We will need to get items online for people to browse ASAP if you agree to give this a go.

I will be interested to hear your thoughts on this idea and to receive any further suggestions. Please let me know if you think we should go ahead and if you can provide items for sale.

Looking forward to being overwhelmed with your responses to my suggestions for Harvest and our Alternative Christmas Fayre.

Joyce



Thank you very much to everyone who has sent cards and messages of congratulations on Ava's birth.

We are so pleased for Tristan and Maria after the sad loss of their twins and hope they enjoy every moment of the adventure they are setting out on together. She truly is a gift from God, the rainbow at the end of the storm.

Thanks again.

Jane and Roger



Car park barrier cards renewal

If you have a car park barrier card, they are due for renewal on September 1st. The renewal charge is £25.00 for the year.

Please renew using either bank transfer or by cheque.

Bank transfer details are:

HSBC

Welwyn Garden City United Reformed Church

Sort Code : 40-46-08

Account Number : 91680595

Reference : Your name

Cheques are payable to : WGC United Reformed Church

Please send your cheque to me at the following address :

Treasurer

WGC United Reformed Church

Church Road

Welwyn Garden City

AL8 6PR

Can you please continue to display the red permit card in your car when you park.

Many thanks

Helen Kaye

The One Good Thing by Laura

I was given a wonderful book entitled **Let in the Light – Facing the Hard Stuff with Hope**, by someone who knows **Hope** is something I hold on to dearly. I particularly enjoyed the recent Message of Hope shared with us by Sharon Sookrah (Harpenden):

God knows the plans to prosper you, and not harm you, to give you hope and a future -(Jeremiah 29:12).

A chapter within this book focuses on the Photosynthesis of Trust – *‘There is no greater source of light than the gift of trusting God’*. One way of deepening our trust is to list what we are grateful for, to simply list the goodness in our lives. When looking for examples of goodness, there is so much good we can discover. Rather than making this a huge task, the author encourages her readers to adopt a practice called *‘The One Good Thing’*.

I have been following this practice since March, the start of lockdown, and having recorded one thing each day, and sometimes more, my list is now very long. Recently I reviewed this list to thank God for the many blessings in my life; my cancer treatment continuing during the pandemic, family time, gratitude for friendships, things I have learnt, my first walks out with my dog Sam a few weeks ago and seeing everywhere abundantly in bloom. However, most interestingly, the majority of good things I have written relate to our Church:

- Enjoying the Sunday YouTube services
- Participating in our Friday Bible Study Group
- Sharing texts, emails, letters with church family and friends
- Lines and Verses from Scripture
- A particular devotional reading
- The Corona Chronicles
- Bear Hugs from our Elders
- Answers to prayer
- Blessings
- Sunshine
- Unexpected cards, gifts and flowers.

I then realised the predominant contact I have had with the outside world during my time of shielding is with our Church family and friends, and it may be the same for you. Seeing this in black and white, shows how much God’s grace plays a huge part in my life, and perhaps yours too?

Now is an opportunity for me to thank everyone for their contribution; for creating our Sunday worship, participation and sharing in Bible Study Group, your time in whatever way it has been given, and especially to Jane and our Elders for all they do, for us all.

During one of our Friday Bible Study groups, someone shared that **Spirituality** is the lonely work of acceptance, which Lockdown has enabled us to come to terms with – the art of being simply content in God’s presence.

Jane reminded us on Sunday 12th July that: **‘that gratitude, gladness and rejoicing are a choice we can make, no matter what our circumstances, tough as that seems’**. So, if you are inclined to do so, maybe start your own list of *‘The One Good Thing’* for you each day.

Laura Fitzgerald

Hello everyone,

I can’t believe that it has already been two months since I wrote my last article for Corona Chronicles.

Previously some of the Community Cafe’ visitors and I were chatting on Zoom, however as we are now able to meet, respecting social distancing regulations, we have been going for walks on a Tuesday morning and more



recently also on a Friday afternoon. Exercise is a natural and effective anti-anxiety treatment and a great way to improve mental health. Under the guidance of Hazel, we have been walking through Sherradspark Woods and also visited the St. Peters Church in Ayot Green. Another member of the group, Keith, showed us a lovely walk in the Commons in WGC. Going forward, we are eager to explore the walk from church to Stanborough Lake, as well as from church to Lemsford. Here are a few pictures of our adventures.



We have two rough sleepers who attend Community Cafe' who were both offered temporary accommodation at the beginning of lockdown. Their health and well being has always been a concern of mine, especially during this time of lockdown, and they have been first and foremost in my prayers. A few weeks ago one of the men was offered permanent accommodation. I prayed that God would help me to organise furniture and other basic needs for his flat. Within days, I had people offering furniture and support. The blessings we received on a daily basis were so humbling that I know none of it would have transpired without God's help. He moved in last Friday (24 July) to a fully furnished flat with everything that he could possibly need to start his life over. God is so good! Praise Him!

Last Friday the other homeless gentleman told me that the Council is now bidding on a flat for him. I trust and believe that God will provide for him too.

Matthew 21:22: " You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it."



God continues to bless those in need who visit the Foodbank. I now collect 3 times a week and provide food donations to several people in the community, as well bags and bags full of donations for the Foodbank.

I started work on 1 August and we are currently looking at ways to phase-in the return of our hall hirers. Each group needs to submit a risk assessment and also sign an updated hall hire agreement, with amendments which are all in line with government regulations. All risk assessments

need to be approved by Cherylle, our H&S Elder.

I am researching ways to further develop mission within our church and would welcome your thoughts. We need growth in the relationships with our local community, spiritual growth of our people and numerical growth of our congregation. How do we achieve this? One of the suggestions I received was

prayer walks. Perhaps praying for our neighbours as we walk past their house or praying for businesses when we go into town. What about a prayer chain?

Matthew 21:22: “You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.”

Please also pray for me, that the grant for my position will be approved, so that I may continue to be blessed to develop Mission at the WGC United Reformed Church. Thank you.

God Bless.

Liz

Some hints and tips to prevent glasses fogging up when wearing a mask
(please note that I have not tried all of these, so if they don't work.....)

- 1. Soap and water** — wash your glasses with soap and water (such as regular washing up liquid), then dry them with a microfibre cloth. This type of cloth typically comes free with each pair of glasses.. Facial tissues may leave lint, which attracts moisture to the lenses. Soap reduces surface tension, preventing fog from sticking to the lenses.
- 2. Shaving foam** — apply a thin layer of shaving cream to the inside of your glasses, then gently wipe it off. The residual shaving cream will protect the lenses from misting up.
- 3. De-misting spray** — you can use a commercial de-misting spray that dries clear. But make sure this is compatible with your lens type or existing coatings on your lens. You can buy demisting spray online.
- 4. Pipe cleaners** — if you make your own cloth mask, add a pipe cleaner to the top seam of your homemade mask and mould that to your nose to bridge the gap.
- 6. Tape** — some health professionals apply a strip of tape that's specially designed for use on skin to the top edge of the mask to close the gap. You can buy micropore tape at the chemist
- 7. Damp tissue** — slightly moistening a tissue, folding it and placing it under the top edge of the mask also does the trick.

Harvest Collection on Sunday 2nd October- Harpenden



The Harvest collection this year will be for The Salvation Army Food Bank.

Due to Covid-19 we will **not** be taking donations of food of any kind but instead we will be taking money donations which we will forward to The Salvation Army for use at their Food Bank.

We would like all donations to be made either by bank transfer or cheque.

If you are making a donation by bank transfer to the church bank account – 20-74-09, a/c 80784877 then please note Harvest in the description.

If you are making a donation by cheque, please make your cheque payable to **Harpenden URC**, with a note on the back that it is for the **Harvest** collection. Please also note Harvest on your envelope if you use one. If you are not able to come to the service, please post cheques to Norman Deas or Sarah Connor.

Whilst we are not taking any donations of food this year we would encourage you as well as making a money donation to also consider putting food donations in the various Supermarket collection points.

Thank you on behalf of The Salvation Army.



Some more answers to Jane's previous questions

How have you kept busy during the lock-down?

- Primarily home schooling, and catching up on things at home

Can you share any good tips?

- The One Good Thing ... write down one memorable thing about each day
- Share books and puzzles (sharing increases light for everyone)
- Do a daily family workout and enjoy family film evenings
- Laugh ... laughter is a source of light and hope
- Help others
- Learn something new every day.

Has anything good come out of CV-19 restrictions for you?

- Slowing down ... taking time to breathe
- A chance to read ... the height of luxury
- Quality family time
- Learnt barber skills
- Learnt to play chess
- Switched to on-line banking

Do you have any greetings to share?

- Erin's 20th birthday on 2nd August
- Mark and I together for 25 years – met May 1995, celebrated our anniversary in June

Do you have any suggestions for our church?

- When back to the new normal, please still send out the weekly services, especially for those unable to attend church (I know I am unable to go each week)

What is important to you at the moment from a spiritual point of view?

- Hope 'May the God of Hope, fill you with joy and peace, as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with Hope, by the Power of the Spirit'
Romans 15
- Daily devotional readings and Christian literature
- Thanking the Lord for my blessings

- Seeing God's goodness and trusting in his goodness
- Exchange of Grace and Meeting in Kindness

What helps you feel most connected with church?

- Sunday services, exchanging letters, texts, emails and phone-calls with church members
- Pastoral connections

What helps you feel most connected with your family?

- Family dinner and film time, daily workouts, and cuddles ... more important than anything

What has been most important to you from our church point of view during lock-down

- Services by YouTube, particularly Easter Service

Seeing Jane, Matthew and those reading bible scripture (reassuring to see faces).

My lock down story

I am lucky enough to live in Woodside House. We have lovely gardens maintained mostly by other residents. When lock down began whilst on my daily exercise walk to through Sherrads Wood I noticed a large hidden patch of waste ground, between the housing scheme and a woodland path, which used to be the old railway line from Welwyn Garden City to Luton and beyond. The barren ground was completely overgrown with brambles and nettles. I saw it as a waste of valuable growing space, so the very next day I wandered round there with a pair of scissors and an old trowel and set to work.

I cut down some brambles. Luckily they cut really well with scissors. Whilst not being a hoarder I have a habit of keeping things in case they become useful, like some thin plywood from behind a shelving unit. Using the plywood I fashioned a few boxes that were lined with cardboard to suppress the weeds and filled them with soil, painstakingly collected from the woods. In the meantime I started growing seeds on my windowsill. A failed project last year left courgette, broad beans, turnips, purple sprouting broccoli and spinach seeds in my kitchen draw. Potatoes sprouting in my fridge got a second chance to life in another

little bed I made from more of the plywood. Some of it was too wide but I found I could cut it easily by scoring it with a Stanley knife and bending it.

The broad beans grew really well on my windowsill so they were planted out. It was my birthday in April, much to my delight I received a pack of multi coloured vegetable seeds through the post from daughter Mandy. Then, I was over the moon when daughter Tara with my son-in law Michael turned up with four little lawn edging fences that Michael deftly turned into another bed. He started digging and discovered the soil inside was of good quality so did not need to be added to, except for 1 bag of compost which he supplied. I was watering with excess water that I saved whilst having to let the tap run before it became hot, until I discovered that a hose pipe behind the community hall reached almost to my secret garden. Realising that I could plant directly into the soil another bed was made, edged with some of the plentiful tree branches, to plant wild flower seeds, swiss chard, wild strawberries and sweet corn. Later on I added a tomato house made from used water bottles.

So this is how I occupied my time during lock down. An added bonus is that my garden is a lovely woodland hideaway that I had a picnic breakfast in every morning in the lovely warm weather.

As things eased off a bit many friends have joined me in my garden one or two at a time, keeping their distance, for a very safe cup of coffee from my flask of hot water. The fact that the harvest did not go so well is another story perhaps for another magazine.

Lock down was a very pleasant time for me
Hazel Thorne



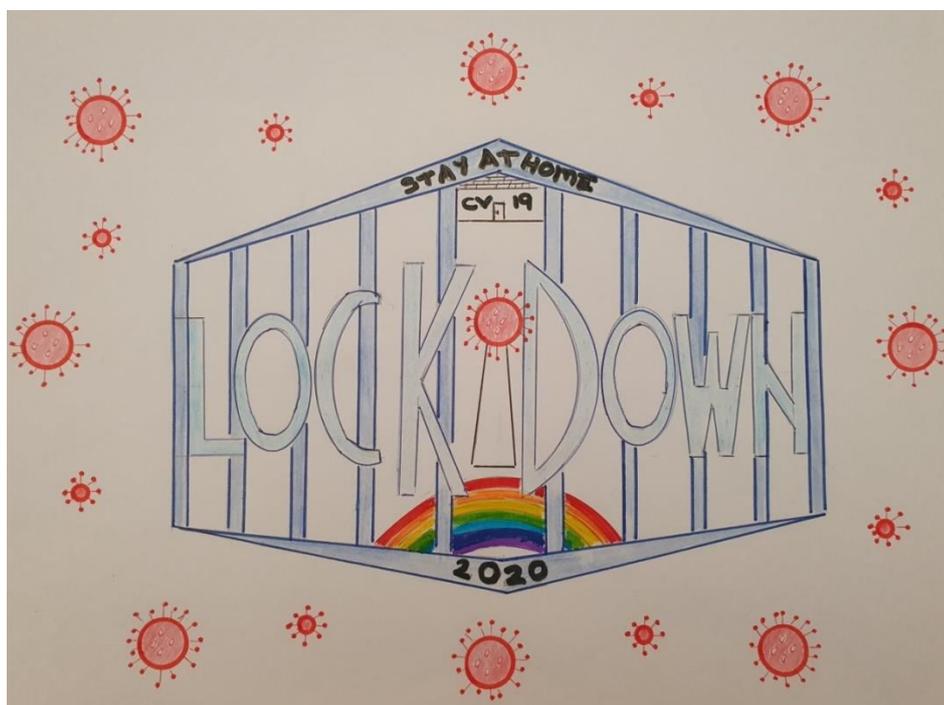
In response to Allison's question of what we have been doing during lockdown, it has given us the perfect opportunity to spend more time on gardening and adding to the plants on our Oxfam plant stall which we set up on our front grass every year in March. John has produced barrowloads of his own compost (as well as spending hours on computer programming!) and plants have also appeared from a number of other obsessive gardeners, including Allen & Helen Kaye. This has resulted in a magnificent response from passers-by out on their daily exercise or those frustrated by the closure of garden centres. Eventually all the gardeners ran out of plants to put out so the table has now returned to its place in the back until next March, having raised an amazing £1600 for the Oxfam Coronavirus Appeal. A great blessing and the perfect opportunity to chat with those passing by. So it's been keeping us both busy during this unprecedented time and we hope that things will gradually return to what might be the "new normal".

We look forward to being able to see you all again soon.

With love to all from Ann & John.

Lockdown 2020 –thoughts and artwork from one of our young people

Having to stay at home was like being in a prison; having to take steps to keep coronavirus out while the NHS cared for the patients.



CHURCH FAMILY CORNER

Hopefully birthdays can now be celebrated without as many restrictions so here's hoping that our birthday friends are able to meet up with friends or family on their special days. Here are the dates I know about for August and September.

Starting with August, first in line is Laura's daughter Erin,(who will be 20 on 2nd !), followed by Mary S. on 3rd, Don B will be 90 on August 4th.,Joyce N. on August 15th, Lucas H. who will be 16 on 16th, Sheila L. on 22nd and John M. on 30th.

In September, I have only 3 birthdays on my list, so for anyone else who would like a mention, please let me know. Aiden R. who will be 6 on 22nd, Ted C. on 24th and Kelly S. on 28th.

We wish all our friends a very Happy Birthday when it arrives and we hope they are able to enjoy their special days.

Now on to some impressive Wedding Anniversary congratulations.

On the 2nd August, 68 years ago David & Olive were married in St. Paul's Church, Leyton in East London. Olive tells me they met at the church Youth Club where she played table tennis while David preferred billiards!

On 15th September, 59 years ago, Barbara and Derek were married in the Anglican church in Cheam, Surrey where Barbara's family lived. Derek tells me that they met at a dance in the hall where dancing classes were held. He didn't tell me whether they won any medals!

During these unprecedented times when we are unable to meet up in church it has been a great blessing to share in the online services and especially for the first time this morning with Zoom, where we could see each other too – isn't modern technology amazing! So at home we continue to remember those who are in need of our prayers at this time, including Laura, waiting for the results of a CT scan, Margaret H. awaiting diagnosis, and others facing health or employment worries and other difficulties. Please pass on any new concerns to Jane, Elders or Church friends so no one gets missed.

Thank you, on behalf of the Pastoral friends Team.

Kids Funny Exam Answers

The children at a Roman Catholic elementary school were asked questions about the Old and New Testaments. The following statements about the Bible were written by children. They have not been corrected.

- The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with the unsympathetic Genitals.
- The Egyptians were all drowned in the desert. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten amendments.
- The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
- The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.
- The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.
- Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark.
- In the first book of the bible, Guinnessis, God got tired of creating the world so he took the Sabbath off.
- Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, but a ball of fire by night.
- Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.
- The epistles were the wives of the apostles.
- One of the opossums was St Matthew who was also a taximan.
- Jesus enunciated the Golden Rules, which says to do one to others before they do one to you. He also explained, a man doth not live by sweat alone.
- Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
- It was a miracle when Jesus rose from the dead and managed to get the tombstone off the entrance.
- The people who followed the lord were called the 12 decibels.
- David was a hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought the Finklesteins, a race of people who lived in Biblical times.
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
- St John the blacksmith dumped water on his head.
- Christians have only one spouse, this is called monotony.
- Samson was a strong man who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah
- St Paul was cavorted to Christianity. He preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.
- Thanks to Mary D for submitting this, I don't think we will be doing any written questions in Sunday School any time soon!!

Family Life

Hello everyone

I hope everyone is keeping well, we are missing seeing the Church family and the children are really missing Sunday school and seeing Jonathan. It feels such a strange time but it's funny how you get used to the new



normal so quickly. I am glad that things have relaxed a bit and we are able to do



some more things now as the beginning was pretty intense working at home and home schooling ! not that much actual school work as getting done 😊 It was a total novelty for the children having so much time off and Aiden kept asking me why there so many doctors around on seeing everyone in their masks, they adapted really quickly and we got used to a routine of going out for long evening walks discovering new places including the Lagoon where we spent weeks visiting watching a swan waiting for her eggs to hatch. They have learnt to enjoy the simple things in life which I think many of us have. Sophies been learning to ride a bike and roller

skate.

Hope we can all get together again in the not too distant future. Claire, Ray, Sophie and Aiden xx



LOVE IN A BOX

Despite the additional precautions that will have to be taken due to Covid19, the Mustard Seed Charity that we have supported for many years will be going ahead with the Shoe Box Appeal again this year. We have been asked to seal the boxes permanently before they are picked up and taken down to Eastbourne as they will not be able to involve as many volunteers as in past years at the warehouse so we will be taking out the donations and sending the money separately.

Otherwise the arrangements are as usual so basically, you can either fill your own shoe box with toys, toiletries, stationery items, sweets etc, and include a donation of £4 to cover the shipping costs, or contact Carole Tucker who can help with collecting together the items to include.

We haven't got the pick up date yet but it is likely to be early in November so we will need to organize collecting the boxes to have them at my house by then.

We are very grateful to Carole who is yet again the driving force behind the project so please support her efforts by joining in if you can.

The children who receive our boxes in time for Christmas are from schools and orphanages in Moldova where volunteers from the Mustard Seed Charity have built up relationships with the teachers and pastors over many years so it is a very worthwhile charity to support.

If you have any questions Carole or I would be very happy to answer them.

Ann Meers (01707 327277) Carole Tucker (01707 880760)

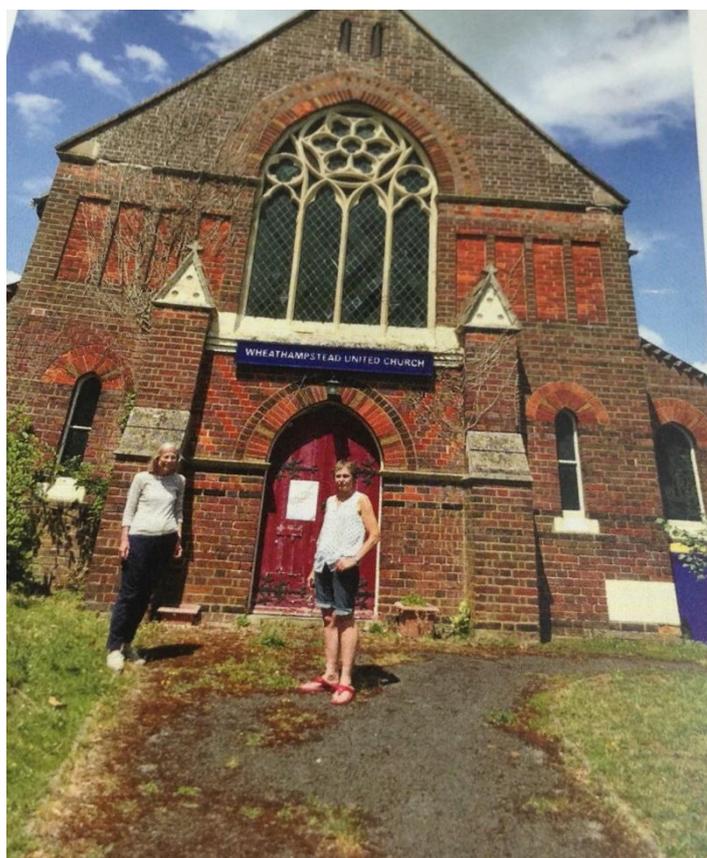
Thank you in anticipation of your support.



‘Superheroes Henry and Mason discover some new artwork in their local park!’

bring church back to life

Community Gym will



Things are changing at Wheathampstead United Church. For some years the building has been empty and the congregation have been holding their services at St Helen's and St Peter's. In the first stage of an exciting new project, the Church will be reopened as a gym, a facility sorely needed in Wheathampstead. There will be opportunities too to run sessions that include a spiritual element, such as Prayers & Pilates and Spiritual Steps.

The gym will be run as a community project and any profits will go to the Church with the aims of rebuilding the

church hall as community meeting rooms and a café and of holding church services on the site again.

The project is being driven by a combination of volunteers drawn from the local community. Jane Deller and Jackie Seller are Elders of the Church, and Jane Weedon is the Minister. Annie Brewster is a County and District Councillor and Owain McKenzie is a Parish Councillor. Julie Bell is chair of Wheathampstead &

District Preservation Society (WDPS) and Richard Brett is chair of Wheathampstead U3A. Carl Fenwick, though he lives in the village, runs a gym in Windsor and his experience will be key to the success of the project.

Some of you may have seen or contributed to the Crowdfunding campaign launched in March. The aim was to raise £5,000 to cover the cost of some essential work, including the reconnection of the electricity. “The support we got from the Wheathampstead community was breathtaking,” Jane Deller told us. “Within no time at all the £5,000 target was reached. We’re tremendously grateful to the 110 supporters who contributed.”

The detailed planning to prepare for the gym is underway but will require more funds. “We are drawing up a fundraising strategy,” explained Jackie. “It will include grant applications and community involvement.”

One of the first things to do is decide on a name for the gym. “We would be very interested in everyone’s thoughts on this,” said Jane. “Ideally the name should describe a gym and also reflect the community and the links with the Church. Facebook followers have already suggested some names and there have been some great ideas, but we’d like everyone in the village to have an opportunity to come up with a suitable name.”

WDPS chair Julie Bell said, “we are delighted that the Victorian church building – dating back to 1876 and a local landmark – will be preserved and put to good use once again.”

Another important priority is to set up a steering committee who will be responsible for overseeing the gym. This will be an exciting opportunity to contribute to the health and well-being of the residents of Wheathampstead. If you think you might be interested or would like to know more, please email **wheathampsteadcommunitygym@gmail.com**

And since then.....

Since the above article was written, these fabulous people have been working on lots of practical aspects towards getting the building ‘habitable’:

- a) A drone was sent above the church to inspect the roof and identify any areas which need attention – fortunately only a few slipped tiles and some guttering needed clearing and clipping.

- b) Some repointing of some patches of brickwork is about to be done
- c) The water supply to the halls building has been reconnected so volunteers and tradesmen working on site have access to toilets and running water.
- d) The front of the church has had a great deal of work done in removing large amounts of plant growth and the gravestones on the bank have been cleaned and some repaired.
- e) The rear of the car park which had been overgrown by several square metres of brambles has been largely cut back – although we have more work to do there!

What's coming up next....

- a) We will be installing two toilets in the area previously used as a vestry at the rear of the church. This will involve bringing water into the church building from the existing access point between the church and halls buildings (a distance of about 3 m)
- b) Electricity reconnection has been booked with UKPN, hopefully for later this month. A local building firm has offered to dig the trench from the church to the pavement for this and will re-instate the driveway once the job is completed. The previous entry point will be used for the cable to enter the building and the new meter will be sited very close to where the old one was. The building firm has electricians who have spent a day in the church testing all the existing electrical appliances, sockets, lights and wiring and we are waiting for their document detailing work that needs to be done.
- c) We have never had a boiler – the church was previously heated by free standing gas heaters. We are exploring the cost of putting in a boiler and using gas as our heating fuel v using wall mounted electrical heaters which we had intended installing. We have obtained some quotes for the electricity and gas usage and this will help us make the decision, along with obtaining quotations for the plumbing/gas work which would be needed.
- d) We know that the church, like most buildings over 100 years old, does not have adequate insulation to make keeping it warm enough for use throughout the week at all 'green'. We have approached a local expert who we are expecting to send us options to consider in the next few weeks.
- e) The existing floor is sound, but there is currently a raised area which we want to remove so that the floor is level. We also know that use of free

weights will require some parts of the floor to have additional support underneath the existing floorboards. We will then be adding an additional layer of some kind of boarding (I am not the expert here!) before the floor is totally covered in a non-slip, rubbery kind of surface suitable for its use as a gym.

f) We are investigating if additional ventilation will need to be put into the building, to adhere to new Covid 19 guidelines.

I feel tired just reading all this!! Well done for all you have achieved and are going to achieve. We look forward to reading more as your journey progresses. Also I am intrigued to see what name you come up with .

Dear Harpenden, Wheathampstead and Welwyn Garden City
United Reformed Church,



We just wanted to say a huge 'thank you' for taking part in Christian Aid Week 2020. It was certainly a Christian Aid Week like no other!

We are so proud of how you put on your creative thinking hats, stepped up to the challenge and fundraised so innovatively during the coronavirus pandemic. We had quizzes with Rowan Williams, vicars shaving their heads, virtual concerts, supporters walking marathons and a sponsored silence to name just a few!

The current total for CAW2020 and the Coronavirus Appeal combined, currently stands at an amazing £4.3 million! This figure has completely smashed our targets and expectations and this is down to you, our faithful supporters.

Our partners who are working in vulnerable communities are already benefitting from your generous donations and are responding to the vital need of hygiene stations, sanitation kits and isolation hospital beds as they continue to fight the coronavirus.

Thank you for your continued support, Christian Aid couldn't continue to deliver vital work across the globe without you.

Blessings,
Tim Jessop
Central Supporter
Engagement Coordinator

Thank you to everyone at Harpenden,
Wheathampstead and WGC URC for taking part
in Christian Aid Week 2020.

We raised an incredible £785!

Donations like these have helped women and
girls living in displacement camps access
essential dignity kits

Gardening update – Courgettes grown from Mr Fothergills Seeds

You may have seen in the news that one batch of courgette seeds distributed a few months ago was tainted and fruit grown from these seeds was very bitter and could cause stomach problems.

Some of the plants distributed to church members came from Mr Fothergills Seeds and we contacted them to check whether we were sent any from the affected batch. They did not keep records of which batches were used in



each mailing but later and after double checking, tasting and testing we were quite sure that we were not sent any problem seeds.

Mr Fothergill (yes there really is a Mr Fothergill) rang to apologise and sent a £50 donation to the church which has gone into the general fund and we have expressed thanks on behalf of the church.

Helen Kaye

Family News from Harpenden

August Birthday wishes go to Elizabeth, Beth, Tom, Phil, Chris, Laura, Tony & Gill. We hope you manage to celebrate in style given the restrictions.

Congratulations to Ray & Mavis who will be celebrating 71 years of marriage. Also to Gill & Tony, not quite so many, but Happy Anniversary none the less!

Margaret Brown is now in a care home in St.Albans following hospitalisation and rehabilitation following her stroke. It is thought that she will eventually move to a care home near Epping to be close to her nephew but not sure when.

Sadly Helen Burke's mother passed away and the funeral was last Monday. Are thoughts are with her and the family at this time.

Gill

Silver Celebrations

It is hard to believe that
3rd September since I
What a journey it has

Word Search

it is 25 years on
was ordained in Lymington.
been!

My abiding memories of that day
were Alan beginning his sermon by
saying 'Jane, I love you! What a
confession! What a time to admit
it!!' and Peter, at the rehearsal
wanting to play 'here we go round
the ordinand' as they practiced the
laying on of hands.

I simply give thanks to God for the
surprising call to ministry, for the
times God, by his grace, has used me
to bless and heal or make a
difference in the lives of others.

When I came to WGC I recall telling
you all that I needed a T shirt that
said ' Please be patient, God
hasn't finished with me yet!' Then
someone bought me a T shirt that said 'Never underestimate a woman of prayer
with a plan.' Whichever holds true God is good and I will be eternally humbled
and grateful for the opportunity of seeing God at work and give God the glory.

Jane



Please enjoy this lovely word search that Jonathan made up for us.

B	T	N	O	A	H	U
J	O	F	D	G	A	H
A	M	I	E	E	P	E
N	M	G	V	N	P	N
E	O	K	I	E	L	I
D	O	P	L	S	E	N
X	R	Q	O	I	S	Q
T	E	M	A	S	K	Z
V	P	S	A	L	M	C

1. He built the arc in the Bible
2. He raised so much money for the NHS that the queen knighted him!
3. We need to use these all the time to stay safe from the virus!
4. The first book in the Bible
5. What did Adam and Eve eat that God forbade them to?
6. Who should we depend on when times are tough?
7. How many fruits of the Holy Spirit are there?
8. Our Church Minister
9. This book was written by King David
10. Stay away from this person!!

Thank you

Timid. Apprehensive. I crossed the threshold
God lead the way and gave me strength.
Weakness hidden by pretence of bold
Gave my disparagement short length

"It's my first time here" I whisper clear,
To the woman standing at the door,
"You're very welcome. Come in my dear.
I'll introduce you to Joyce and more."

On that first day my faith was sealed,
Friends from day one, loved as I met.
My recent trauma gone and healed.
My life's whole purpose refreshed and set.

Since then my life is filled with kindness.
Groups, laughs. friends make merry days.
Dish washed hands, such glad reminders,
That helping and giving with cheerfulness pays.

My soul fulfilled every minute, with love,
Making memories and enjoying my life.
Thankful, that day the Church first received me.
I'm never forgetting what ended my strife.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY UNITED REFORM CHURCH rescued me.
Thank you

ANON

Well my last article was about how bizarre my life had become during lockdown and I thought that this would be true of this article, but it seems not. I'm not sure if that is a good thing as maybe the bizarre is the new normal!

At the end of my last article I used the quote 'Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times. If one only remembers to turn on the light'.

So I thought I would share some of things the light has fallen on for me.

- The feeling when you hit the jackpot of a delivery slot even if it's at 6am.
- Managing to order bread flour and then realising you make truly awful bread. But then remembering that the dough for pizza doesn't actually have to rise and putting cheese on anything in my house is a winner.
- Winning the family group quiz three times in a row, although this was slightly marred by Abi replying to the question "What's the secret to your success?" with "well Mum's old so knows the boring stuff and I know all the interesting stuff".
- Reading library books chosen for you by someone who doesn't know you. Surprisingly 6 out of 8 were great. We won't mention the other two.
- I know understand spatial awareness! Who knew what 2 metres was before now?
- Finally learning not to stab yourself in the eye with your car keys whilst putting on your mask before getting out of the car. This one took awhile, but still no visits to A&E.
- Visiting my son for the first time since lockdown began and being told, as I handed over the Tupperware box, 'I've really missed your potato salad'. Great what am I? Chopped liver?

Anyway, I hope you have enjoyed this little look at my life. Stay safe.

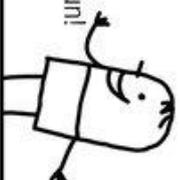
Allison.x



30 Day Lego Play Challenge

www.mykidstime.com

Follow the instructions for each day. The only rules are 1) use your imagination, 2) have fun!



DAY 1

Build a new house

DAY 2

Build a boat that floats

DAY 3

Build a wild animal, e.g. a crocodile

DAY 4

Build a castle fit for a King and Queen

DAY 5

Build an amazing hotel to stay in

DAY 6

Build with your eyes closed for 5 minutes

DAY 7

Build a rainbow

DAY 8

Build anything using exactly 100 LEGO pieces

DAY 9

Build a whale

DAY 10

Build a space ship

DAY 11

Build a birthday cake

DAY 12

Build a pirate ship

DAY 13

Build an airplane

DAY 14

Build your favourite TV show character

DAY 15

Build a model of your room

DAY 16

Build a pyramid

DAY 17

Build a car

DAY 18

Build a robot

DAY 19

Build a village

DAY 20

Build a box with a lid

DAY 21

Build a marble run

DAY 22

Build something on wheels

DAY 23

Build something that makes a noise

DAY 24

Build a pencil holder

DAY 25

Build a picture frame

DAY 26

Build something flat

DAY 27

Build a tower

DAY 28

Build a simple machine

DAY 29

Build an amazing maze

DAY 30

Build a swimming pool

FUN THINGS TO DRAW

1. Draw a cover for your favourite book
2. Draw a fantastical animal
3. Draw an imaginary friend for yourself
4. Design a robot to help you with some tasks
5. Design your coat of arms
6. Draw a short comic
7. Make a drawing in the style of your favourite cartoon
8. Make a zentangle doodle
9. Engineer an amazing treehouse
10. Draw your name in fancy letters
11. Make a picture, using three colours only
12. Draw what happiness looks like to you
13. Draw a dinosaur in modern times
14. Draw yourself if you lived a long time ago
15. Draw an underwater world
16. Draw something you can see right now
17. Go outside and draw something you find there
18. Draw yourself ten years in the future
19. Make a treasure map
20. Design a cool invention
21. Draw a house inhabited by tiny people
22. Make an impromptu squiggle, then turn it into a drawing
23. Draw an animal with superhero abilities
24. Draw your preferred mode of transportation
25. Draw the sky
26. Draw your ideal pet
27. Draw a fairy based on your favourite flower
28. Design a perfect birthday cake
29. Draw your dream travel destination
30. Draw yourself dressed in an extravagant costume
31. Draw an anthropomorphic vehicle
32. Draw an amazing ride in an amusement park
33. Draw life on a different planet
34. Design a new statue for the city/town you live in
35. Draw the most beautiful flower
36. Draw a ship that would take you on a trip around the world
37. Draw a landscape of a magical world
38. Draw the things you would pack for an adventure
39. Draw your friends as a team of superheroes
40. Draw a house of a wizard
41. Draw an animal dressed in historical attire
42. Design a maze and have someone try it out
43. Draw a memory from when you were very small
44. Design a new video game
45. Engineer a bridge that will connect two islands together
46. Draw a castle where you would like to live
47. Draw a tree that bears something unexpected
48. Make a drawing in a cave-art style
49. Draw a logo for a business you would like to start
50. Make a drawing just with dots
51. Make a draw-by-number picture
52. Draw your favourite recipe