



Abbey Lane & Newport United Reformed Church incorporating Saffron Walden Methodist Church

Proclaiming the Gospel – Growing in Faith – Reaching out in Service

May 22nd 2020

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Shadows in the Morning Sun': Mark Hayes. Another of Mark's photos seems to convey allegorical meaning. Our faith means we are never alone.



We asked for submissions for this Newsletter and have not been disappointed. Elfreda talks about the URC's Daily Devotions, Ruth Fothergill remembers Ken Mark and John Evans' writes his regular monthly feature.

Three weeks ago we reported on our Joint Public Issues Team's call for a global ceasefire in the wake of coronavirus. This week we introduce another JPIT initiative – the call for a global debt jubilee.

Sunday's worship: ID: 963 2687 5422, Password 528325. <https://zoom.us/j/96326875422?pwd=ZkdscjB1S3R4ZmNYSmhsUnVySUXlZz09>

URC Calls for Debt Jubilee



Through its participation in the Joint Public Issues Team the URC is calling for a debt jubilee.

Coronavirus is affecting communities around the world. As the pandemic spreads to the poorest countries in the world, fewer resources and funds will mean that the safety nets we've seen at home won't be possible for these communities.

That's why charities and organisations around the world are calling for a debt jubilee for poorer countries. This would mean that debt repayments of poor countries are cancelled during this crisis.

debt jubilee would keep money within countries to be spent on public health and protection, and make sure that they are not hit by a debt crisis in the future. So far, countries in the G20 have offered to put debt payments on hold for some countries. But this just risks delaying a debt crisis that could have devastating effects.

That's why we're calling on Rishi Sunak, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to lead the way in calling for concerted actions by governments, multilateral bodies and private sector creditors to cancel debt payments outright, and to broker a debt relief deal for the poorest countries.

Join with Christian Aid in calling on Rishi Sunak to support a debt jubilee.

Kenneth William Mark

Ken died on 5th May 2020 aged 91 years. I was fortunate to know him for nearly 40 of those years, meeting him after I moved to Saffron Walden and joined the fellowship at Castle St Methodist Church.

Ken was a private man who didn't talk about himself a lot. Married to Wendy, he was a father, grandfather and great grandfather. Some of you will remember one of his sons, Simon, who came to services when staying with Ken.

Ken spent his childhood in Cornwall, giving him a life-long love for the county and he loved to walk the coastal path there. He also spent time in London before moving to this area and setting up his Architectural business in Market Place. He designed the bandstand in Jubilee Gardens.

Ken was a keen gardener, taking over a patch at Saffron Lodge when he moved there more recently. He shared an allotment with his daughter, also Wendy, and his son-in-law who moved to Saffron Walden on their retirement. He had a great talent for and interest in painting, running many classes to share his skill.

Ken became a Methodist local preacher in his 20's and received a certificate for 60 years of service. He had a deep faith and strong Christian principals. He was always keen to put his faith into practice and was active in the Clavering Ecumenical Partnership as well as in the churches he belonged to.

On the closure of Castle St he chose to stick with his Methodist roots and worshipped at Bishop's Stortford. Ken joined us at Abbey Lane in the last few years, wanting a congregation closer to his home. You may remember him as a dapper gentleman who sat towards the back on the left. He was also a member of my House Group.

I have good memories of Ken's contribution to the life of the Church and the Local community. His funeral was on 19th May at 2pm and, although we were unable to attend, we prayed for his family and remembered Ken with affection.

Ruth Fothergill

Directory

Ministers:		Elders:	
Revd Caroline Vodden (On leave)	01799 524416	Mark Hayes	01799 524 944
Revd Roy Fowler	01279 814809	Louise Luke	0777 360 4372
		Meg Nettle	01799 521 029
Church Secretary:		Stephen Rapkin	07730 393 603
John Luke	01799 531938	Karen Start	01799 522 096
		Elfreda Tealby-Watson	01799 530 175



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Music Competitions

Each year, when the BBC Young Musician of the Year comes round, several people are bound to ask me if I saw last night's episode, and what did I think of it. I usually answer that I thought it was absolutely splendid, and that I am full of admiration for the standards achieved, and my reply is totally honest. Yet I have reservations.

While I applaud the winner, my heart breaks for the runners-up. It must be like losing the final of the F.A. Cup. You've won your way through the preliminary rounds, and then you are defeated. Some would say that adult life is like that. Twenty candidates might apply for a job, but only one person gets it. A hard lesson for a teenager to learn.

There is another aspect which worries me. For these youngsters to reach these standards, they must put in a formidable amount of practice, and these hours have to come at the expense of something else. School work? Sport? Sleep? No matter how much natural talent a musician may have there is still the need to commit the music to memory. There is no short cut. Some pieces are so complex and lengthy that it is like memorising the value of pi to ten thousand decimal places. Mind you it helps if there is a tune to latch on to.

At the end of each programme I find it hard to choose a winner, and then I am usually wrong, especially if different instruments (e.g. piano, violin, clarinet) are involved. It's like those cookery competitions. How do you judge roast pork against salmon or risotto?



Enough of this niggling. I resolve to enjoy and wonder at these excellent performances and wish that I could say with the Dodo Bird in Lewis Carroll's 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland', "Everyone has won, and all must have prizes."

Looking forward to a return to Abbey Lane.

John Evans

Bible Reflection: Acts 1:6-11 (NRSV)

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

A Prayer

*When I look at the starry heavens, Lord,
help me to feel small but secure.*

*When I see the green earth,
keep me aware of your presence and
provision.*

In trouble teach me to trust.

Out of healing may I learn hope.

That I may praise you, gladly and gratefully.

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

The Rev'd John Proctor
General Secretary of the URC
member at Downing Place URC, Cambridge

URC Daily Devotions

Studying Genesis as a new world emerges.

The URC Daily Devotions are prepared around 3 months in advance. So I was struck by the strange timing that commentaries written in March had extraordinary relevance being read in May. This is because the texts are examining Genesis with tales of creation, destruction and restarts. Especially moving were the two sections on Noah and the Ark - "After the Deluge" and "The Rainbow Covenant".

"After the Deluge" has echoes of moving out of Lockdown and is especially poignant as the author was writing on 1st March: he comments how strange it is to be writing about this text in the aftermath of terrible flooding. The text is "Come out of the ark... Bring out every kind of living creature to multiply on the earth and be fruitful." How much we now long to come out of lockdown! He also comments on early examples of Covid 19 and compares two weeks' self-isolation with a year in the ark for Noah. "We all need to remember God, just as God remembered Noah in the Ark."

No matter what seems to be going wrong in the world



There are many acts of quiet kindness taking place at the current time, which bring much happiness to the recipient.

Here is one example shared by John and Jenny Evans who were delighted when this bouquet appeared on their doorstep.



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we can hang on the constant that is the love of God, as shown in his remembering Noah and all that followed, including sending Jesus to die for us. We can rejoice in the resurrected Jesus.”.

Looking at “The Rainbow Covenant” the Devotions writer draws analogy with Douglas Adams’ “The Hitchhikers’ Guide to the Galaxy” to look at the Noah story in the context of the climate crisis. He decries using religious justification for denying the reality of climate change and challenges us that it is not just about the changing climate but about the survival of humankind: “as Adams put it ‘will human life make it to the restaurant at the end of the universe?’... for that we all need to contribute to an Ark full of solutions and not just leave it to a few Noahs.” Again, it struck me how appropriate that is when looking at our own responses to Covid 19: we can’t leave it all to others.

Of course, we need the special skills of experts for the medical, logistical and research challenges facing humanity but what can we do to carry on our jobs, voluntary duties, education, self care, friendships, neighbourhood togetherness and local services? These are areas to which even those of us being shielded can still make contributions. We can all try to be Noah in our own way keeping alive all that is precious to us in our lockdown ark ready to step out into the rainbow when it comes.

Elfreda Tealby-Watson

Church Giving during Lockdown

If you would be willing to make freewill offerings by standing order this would help our church immensely in these difficult times. Our church bank account details are:

Account Name: Abbey Lane & Newport URC

Account number: 60100668 Sort Code: 20-74-05

Useful Numbers

Saffron Wholefoods Home delivery of dry goods	01799 526453
Fisher & Woods, Shire Hill Fruit and veg box deliveries	0844 2092666
Elder Street Café Fruit and veg boxes along with bread for click and collect	01799 543598
Fighting Cocks ‘Survive at Home’ boxes	01279 260075 (call 9am-2pm)
Newport NISA – deliveries	01799 541991

Abbey Lane Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request or would like to join the prayer group, please contact Meg by phone or e-mail (details below)

Email : meg.nettle@btopenworld.com

Phone : 01799 521029

To remember...

Please continue to remember the pressing needs of the Uttlesford Food Bank.



Churches Together in Stansted Scrub Hub

Betty Francis and Marion Dyer from Stansted Free Church have set up a group who are sewing scrubs (part of the PPE) for Addenbrookes Hospital. Marion, assisted by husband Mike, is doing all the cutting (250 metres so far!) and a group of 22 sewers, from all churches and none, are making the scrubs.



We have already sent over 50 sets of scrubs to the hospital. Very generous donations to cover the cost of the fabric have poured in, enabling the group to continue as long as there is a need.

If you are a sewer and would like to help, they would be pleased to hear from you. You do not need to be an expert, but you do need to have some experience of dressmaking and have a zig-zag machine or overlocker. You do not have to do any cutting, just straightforward sewing.

If you do not live in Stansted you would need to have your own transport to collect the cut-outs and return the completed scrubs.

Please contact Marion on 01279 814059 email: marion@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk if you can help. Thank you.



No Newsletter would be complete without including at least one of Gill Howe’s paintings.

When posting this picture in our Whats App group she added a line “Obviously he’d left his brother to do the hard work of carrying the bird bath...”

Does this suggest our innocent looking pan piper posing by the bird bath might have some explaining to do?



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Dear Friends



Congratulations and Thank You

People from our churches have been busy sewing for the NHS. At Stansted they have been making scrubs (see a few of the completed sets in the photo). They and Abbey Lane have also made scrubs bags for carrying them to and from the hospital.

Well done everyone!

Serendipity

I went to the village greengrocers last week to buy apples and pears. I took out my card to pay and was told it was a minimum of £5, no cash. How much are the melons? £2. I'll have one. They were delicious – sweet and juicy, and a real change sprinkled with a little ginger. Glad I didn't have any cash.

Has anything similar happened to you to gladden your heart?

The barley and the wheat are growing well in the fields – a sign of promise for the future.

Please join us on **Zoom** for our **service** this week. Many of you will have seen Tina, who is on placement at Abbey Lane at present as part of her training as a URC Lay Preacher. This Sunday she will be leading the whole service on Zoom except the reflection. This means that she will have fulfilled all the requirements to share in leading worship in her placement.

Congratulations, Tina!

Christian Aid Week

Thank you to everyone who supported Christian Aid Week – they report that already over 1 million pounds has been raised: 'All we can say is thank you for the love you have shown to your neighbours near and far in so many remarkable ways.'

Thought for the Week

'I have been crucified with Christ; and it no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.' (Galatians 2: 19b – 20a.)

The season of Easter is drawing to a close when we celebrate that Christ is alive for all time and all places and lives on in the hearts of all who have faith in Christ. And this is re-enforced as we celebrate Ascension Day (Thursday this week) and the ending of Jesus' mysterious appearances to his disciples. We look forward to Pentecost, on the Sunday after next, and the gift of the Holy Spirit that continues to fill us with the new life of Christ.

Like Paul, can we affirm that 'Christ lives in me.' So, I invite you to find a few moments to be still, and quietly affirm that Christ is alive in you. Intentionally slow down and repeat to yourself 'Christ is alive in me.'

And then I invite you to pray with me:

Holy Spirit, live in me that Christ may live within me.

Give me his gifts –

Faith to trust in God whatever befalls me;

Hope to sustain and uplift me;

Love to fill me and flow out from me. Amen.

God bless you all, in grace and peace



WEBS Sunday Service 24th May 2020 – Order of Service

Welcome and call to worship

522

Servant King Irregular

GRAHAM KENDRICK (1950-)
arr. G. BAKER

Hymn: 522 (R&S) – From heaven you came

From heaven you came, helpless babe,
entered our world, your glory veiled;
not to be served, but to serve,
and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
he calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

2 There in the garden of tears,
my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours', he said.
This is our God ...

3 Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.
This is our God ...

4 So let us learn how to serve,
and in our lives enthrone him;
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.
This is our God ...

Graham Kendrick CCL Nos: 214400, 214699, 862106.

Prayer (Opening Prayer) In response to **Loving God** you are invited to respond **We glorify you**

Bible Reading: John 17: 1 - 11

Puppets

Reflection

Prayers & Lord's Prayer (continued overleaf)



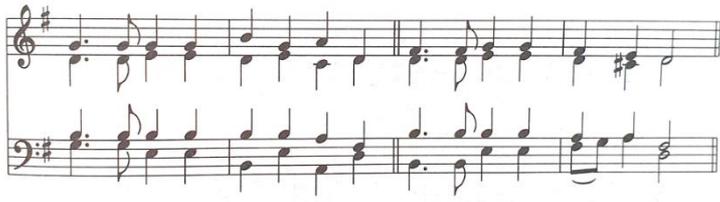
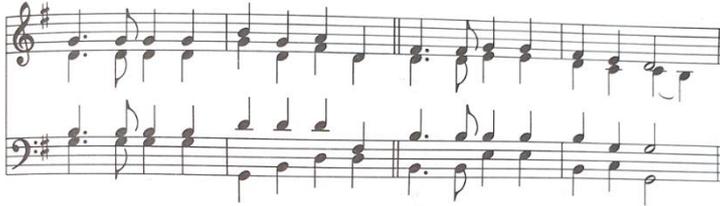
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344

Rhuddlan 87 87 87

Welsh traditional melody



Hymn: 344 (R&S) – God of grace and God of glory

God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
crown thine ancient Church's story;
bring her bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour.

2 Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us,
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the living of these days.

3 Cure thy children's warring madness;
bend our pride to thy control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

4 Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of thy salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving thee whom we adore.

H E Fosdick CCL Nos: 214400, 214699, 862106

Blessing