



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

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

May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020

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Reflecting a change in the weather – tree reflections in a puddle’ - Mark Hayes

In line with the ‘new normal’ this Sunday we will join together for our conference call service together with our WEBS sister churches. Do join our service if you are able. The Meeting ID this Sunday will be 963 1266 9333 and password: 528325

Our minister, Caroline, will continue with a further four weeks’ leave as she continues to care for Paul during his illness. We ask you to continue to pray for them as well as for those ministering to us in Caroline’s absence – Roy, Kurt and Tina.

In the current very difficult circumstances the elders recommend that we defer the next Church Meeting, the AGM and the election of elders to a date to be determined. Meg Nettle and Louise Luke, who are due to stand down as serving elders at the AGM, have generously agreed to continue until such time as the election can take place.

In other news, we wish Mark Hayes well as he embarks upon ministry training – see below.

With VE 75 just a few days away the URC has joined with three other churches to call on our government to respond to the coronavirus crisis with a call for a global ceasefire – see below.

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



## Support a Global Ceasefire – URC call



At the beginning of April 2020, the Joint Public Issues Team of the four partner Churches joined the UN Secretary General’s call for a global ceasefire, to support Governments in responding to the common threat of Coronavirus. Some of the most vulnerable people on the planet live in conflict zones. Whilst the Government handles the urgent priorities of



responding to the effects of the virus at home, the UK also has an important role in building, strengthening and sustaining the global partnerships crucial to combatting this crisis.

## Wash bags for Addenbrookes’ doctors and nurses

Doctors and nurses are washing their own scrubs - last week Jo Ford told us of the need for bags to bring used scrubs home for washing. Abbey Lane responded with enthusiasm to this challenge and within a few days had made 99 bags.



Left is a message from Jo. Well done Abbey Lane!

Jo, John and all their colleagues at Addenbrookes and other hospitals remain in our prayers.

## Christian Aid Week online

The health crisis has caused changes to Christian Aid Week this year which is from **10 to 16 May**.



The charity has built a virtual Christian Aid Week so that people can take part in their on-line communities. Worship will be live-streamed during Christian Aid Week, and the charity will also host a fun daily quiz that can be used to raise funds. Other resources include a recorded sermon from the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, who is Christian Aid’s board chair.

For more information visit [caweek.org/virtualresources](http://caweek.org/virtualresources).

## Mark Hayes to train for ministry

Mark Hayes has been accepted for training for non-stipendiary ministry under the new URC Model 4 training scheme, with a placement at Thaxted.



## 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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Mark's going to be a student again (part time), probably starting in September at Westminster College with a programme of training phased over two years. Subject to completing the training successfully, the intention is that he will then be ordained as Minister at Thaxted URC.

Mark says "Janet and I would like to thank everybody who has supported us in their thoughts and prayers during the application process. This is a new route into ministry for the United Reformed Church. From January next year I expect to be leading worship at Thaxted on two Sundays a month. We both intend to continue attending Abbey Lane when I'm not at Thaxted."

## Church Giving during Lockdown

Our expenses as a Church remain largely unchanged, yet the coronavirus lockdown has significantly impacted our income. Excluding giving by standing order, our average weekly offerings had been running at £200 per week and now are zero.

In addition, we now have no hall letting income, which results in an additional shortfall of around £320 per week.

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

## Joint WEBS Services every Sunday

We are holding combined WEBS services each Sunday at 10.30. You can join and listen to the service directly from your phone by calling one of the of the following numbers. Please be aware – you will be charged by your supplier at your agreed rate:

For landlines, any of:

- 0208 080 6591
- 0208 080 6592
- **0330 088 5830**
- 0203 481 5240
- 0203 481 5237

For mobiles:

- 02034815240 or
- 02080806591

You will be prompted to enter the meeting ID, which is 963-1266-9333 for Sunday May 3, using the numbers on your keypad as directed.

## 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@bopenworld.com

Phone : 01799 521029

## Bible Reflection

John 10: 1-10 (NRSV)

Gill Howe painted these sheep in Henry Moore's garden.

In today's passage we think of Jesus the Good Shepherd, but perhaps these sheep realise he is also the Light of the World.



"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

## A Prayer

*Gracious God,*

*we ask for the gift of discernment.*

*Give us the mind of Christ to know what is right*

*and the character of Christ to do what is right, however reluctantly.*

*May the doing of what is right become a holy habit.*

*as we learn to walk your way*

*and aspire to live the life of Jesus today.*

*Amen.*

The Rev'd Jacky Embrey  
Moderator of Mersey Synod



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## Staycation – Staysafe

with the Tealby-Watson family :

As weeks become months we each see more plans slip by unfulfilled. I feel that that I ought to be able to endure these disappointments set against the context of a global crisis. After all what's a missed Birthday meal or long planned concert or trip to a sports event compared to illness, grief or loss of employment? But it's understandable to be disappointed especially for our younger people who are seeing so much disruption. So we are trying 'to count our blessings' with our family: we are isolating together and so far no-one is ill. Our Easter holiday to Scotland was of course cancelled but we took the chance to explore what's available here at home to do together - board games, books, movies - and to 'visit' four countries in four days with food, music, entertainment & costumes. No travel delays, low cost, great fun – highly recommended. We learnt something new each day, felt creative and made each giggle. Blessings indeed.



Paris comes to the Tealby-Watson family home

Psalm 28:7: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him."

Elfreda

*We invite others to share their own 'travel' experiences with our newsletter in the coming weeks?*

## 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

## Are you a Virgin Media Customer?

Audrey Barton spotted this and suggested others might find it useful.

With the current pandemic preventing any sport taking place, Virgin Media are allowing their customers to 'pause' their subscription payment for BT Sport/Sky Sport.

I discovered this on the website when looking for a way to contact Virgin Media to request a refund/cease of service.

To submit a request you need to click on the Help tab where you will spot a is a banner message on this very topic. By clicking on 'pause', a simple form appears which you can complete and submit.

There have been emails from Virgin, but none of them flag up this facility.



A selection of images shared on our Abbey Lane URC WhatsApp group. Art by Gill Howe



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Dear Friends,

This is a shorter letter this week as Christine and I are taking a staycation this week. Please contact your Church Secretary if you have need of pastoral support.

## Prayer:

*Steadfast God of love, we celebrate your faithfulness to us when we gather for worship with each other, but you are not confined to our meetings together for you come to us in our homes.*

*This we celebrate in the name of the risen Christ, who promises 'I am with you always until time is no more.*

*Alleluia.*

## Mark Hayes

Congratulations to Mark Hayes on being accepted for locally based Non-stipendiary ministry at our Thaxted church. This is a new form of local ministry that is limited to a particular setting. We pray for Mark and Janet as Mark looks forward to commencing both his ministry and the training that will be required through Westminster College.

God bless you all

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## Sunday's Order of Service

Welcome and Call to Worship

Hymn: God is love, his the care – R&S 274 vv 1,2, & 4

Prayer

Bible Reading: John 10: 1 – 10

Puppets

Reflection

Prayers & Lord's Prayer

Hymn: The Lord's my Shepherd – R&S 679

Blessing