



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

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

30 May.

Welcome to our weekly newsletter

Sunday Service – 30th May

Worship Online and in Abbey Lane
at 10:30 a.m.

Led by Rev. Roy Fowler

Zoom meeting and Passcode details are listed on the order of service sent separately, or call our Church Contact on 01799 528325 To attend in person please book in advance: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/abbey-lane-sunday-service-at-1030am-30th-may-tickets-156537400579>

If you prefer to watch live on the website please go to <http://saffronwaldenurc.org.uk/services-recordings> where you will also find a recording of the service to YouTube each week available from Sunday afternoon.



Photo by Stephen Rapkin of the entrance to Abbey Lane

Back in Church and still on-line! We were blessed with a sunny day and a good internet connection on Sunday – so people sitting in a well ventilated Abbey Lane

didn't get too cold, and people at home were still able to join our fellowship. It was also a pleasure to welcome Tina Wilson as our worship leader and see how well she is recovering from her broken shoulder. Our Church Secretary **Val Bowtle** writes: How strange it seemed on Sunday to be worshipping live in Church. One of the team asked me to copy the order of service sheet, and my



Tina Wilson pictured from the YouTube video of worship last Sunday, and Meg Reed's flowers



mind went blank! Where was the key for the small room and what was the password for the machine? Thank you

very much to all those involved in enabling worship to take place, particularly Greg and Rhona whose fingernails must be considerably shorter now. You did us proud and we wait patiently and thankfully for you to take the next step on the technology ladder. Social distancing arrangements worked well and we were able to welcome similar numbers from home via Zoom as we did in church. We have had several positive remarks about the YouTube recording too, so it's good to know that our in-church worship and fellowship can now be shared with anyone unable to attend personally, including friends from other churches.

Psalm 9: 1

I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

The Elders photographed by Tina Wilson after the service on Sunday.



Ministers	
Revd Roy Fowler	01279 814 809
Church Secretary	
Val Bowtle	01799 526 271
Vestry Phone & Church Contact	01799 528325

Elders	
John Ford	07969 850 109
Stephen Rapkin	07730 393 603
Karen Start	01799 522 096
Elfreda Tealby-Watson	01799 530 175
Margaret Howell & Meg Nettle	Non-serving Elders offered pastoral care



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Reminders for your Diary

5th June – World Environment Day The United Nations promote this day as the launch of the UN Decade, a 10 year environmental initiative to 'Reimagine, Recreate, Restore'. #GenerationRestoration More information at <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/>

6th June – Rev. Christine Fowler will lead worship at Abbey Lane and this will include the sacrament of Holy Communion: If you are attending face to face please bring your own bread, glasses of wine will be provided in the pews. If you are joining us on-line please have your bread and wine available.

8th June Bible Study - we recently finished Daniel and will start a study of Ephesians on Tuesday 8th June. Details next week. Contact Stephen if interested.

18th July Farewell Service for Rev. Roy Fowler on his retirement. SAVE THE DATE! Worship will be on line via Zoom for WEBS pastorate together. Roy wishes to be able to say farewell to us all. As we are still uncertain with regard to Covid19 restrictions this seems to be the best way for us to 'meet' together with no concerns about numbers or travel arrangements.

25th July Farewell to Tina Wilson Tina is due to start her training for ministry in September. Do join us when she leads worship in Abbey Lane before her summer break before starting at Westminster College.

Back in church – one step at a time Greg Watson

A couple of people asked me on Sunday morning about what's happening about music in church. I thought it would be worth sharing with everyone what I explained at the last Church Meeting. Some of you know I'm a musician and a singer, so I've missed the organ during lockdown and I've missed singing even more. I'm confident we'll have live music back before long, hopefully with the option for us all to sing along in church once government guidance allows.

For the moment we have to bear in mind three things:

- Under current Covid regulations, as a congregation we are not allowed to sing in church
- Half of the people wanting to join Sunday morning worship are doing so from home, including people from other WEBS churches which do not have online worship

- The fantastic new sound and camera set-up in the church (kindly paid for by an anonymous donation) was only just installed when John and Louise Luke moved away in January. There wasn't time for a handover, so John is training me and a few others on 5th June.

That's why we are using recorded music – I can't broadcast a live organ because my current microphone wouldn't cope with the swell of the organ. Last Sunday, by using the simple technology that I have been using previously, we got back into church with some music and shared the service with people at home. It seemed to work OK so I'll do that again, using recorded hymns from the virtual choir plus introits from John Evans or Stephen on the organ or from the Stansted music group. Once John Luke has trained us to operate the new "tech" so we can offer a smooth service in church and a good quality broadcast to people at home, then we should be able to bring live music back.

Meantime, thanks for the many grateful comments – but please save any further questions until after the service this Sunday!



Greg inspecting the new "tech" upstairs

Prayer for Day 30 from the Methodist monthly prayer cycle

Shine upon us, O Lord, with the light that surpasses all other light. Cleanse us with the fire that consumes all other fires and fill us with the love that transforms all other loves: for your own names sake. Amen.

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

Church Family

Our friend in Bolivia, Louis (Martin Woodley's brother) has sent us this message:

Maribel tested positive for Covid this week. She is only showing mild symptoms. Louis tested negative but is in isolation as well and looking after Maribel cooking etc. The Doctor has not detected anything on the lungs but as blood saturation levels are a little low she will have an X ray of the lungs tomorrow. As we know from an earlier newsletter the situation there is troubling due to lack of vaccine and crowded conditions. We are asked to pray for complete healing for Maribel and protection for Louis.



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This week Roy is away so we have no Pastoral Letter. Instead, Stephen Rapkin here puts forward a vision for why we should welcome ‘hybrid’ worship

Streams in the Wasteland: Spreading the Good News with Technology

Why is hybrid important? What are we trying to achieve? Why is it worth waiting?

I think we’d all agree that the church (not just Abbey Lane) is in a state of decline. It is clear from our own church records that we’ve shrunk – in 1951 we had 87 members and 62 adherents.

The pandemic has provided us with an opportunity to do things differently and, just possibly, to sense that there may be more effective ways of ‘being church’. ‘Effective’ – is that the right word? Yes. As a church our mission is to be a faithful people but also to bring the Good News of Jesus to as many as possible – to be ‘effective’. We have a duty set out in Matthew 28:18-20, the ‘Great Commission’.

In our secular society many have busy lives, and many find other things to do on Sunday mornings. These people are not necessarily un-spiritual, but Sunday church attendance is not woven into the fabric of their weekly routine. During the pandemic we’ve made some interesting discoveries. We’ve found that some people ‘attend’ who perhaps couldn’t, or wouldn’t, physically come to church at 10.30 on Sunday mornings – ranging from the very young to the very old, and quite a few in-between.

So, how can we capitalise on what we’ve learnt?

We’ve been given equipment (costing around £3.5k) which will enable us to operate Hybrid Worship. Very soon, worship services and other events in our building can be fully interactive. Worshippers, connected electronically, as well as those inside the building, will be able to participate in, and even lead worship. It is vital that we get all this working really smoothly and effortlessly as we journey through the first few weeks of live worship. If we don’t do this there is a danger that we’ll never get around to using it.

Of course, this sound and video equipment won’t, on its own, get our good message out to more people. But it is a tool to enable us to do things differently. We can do something new without scrapping the old.

Personally, I can’t yet picture the details of how all this will operate. But I do know we are not alone in seeing this as a way forward: noted previously reported in this newsletter Elfreda has been to URC discussions about online discipleship organised by the Walking the Way team, and other local churches are making similar efforts. We need to pray, we need to think, we need to be creative and inventive. We need to take risks. We need to commit effort and resource. We need to have



Walking the Way
- living the life of Jesus today



faith. We need to be positive. We need to encourage those who are working hard to make this happen. We need to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit.

Right now the most important thing is to be patient for a few weeks while the equipment and, most of all, the people who are working hard to get everything up and running really well gain experience. We are still looking for volunteers who are willing to help with this vital new facility.

Our Church must move forward, and, if we’re apprehensive, we should take comfort from the words of the prophet Isaiah (43:19): ‘See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.’

Note: Walking the Way is the national URC programme for sharing and developing daily discipleship
<https://urc.org.uk/our-work/walking-the-way.html>

and from WhatsApp



Gill Howe asks if anyone would like to help Marion Mills complete this work as unfortunately Marion’s hands are no longer able to manage.



Recent works by our talented members! Left, needlework by Meg Nettle and, right, a new watercolour by Gill Howe.





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Sunday 30th May 2021, Trinity 10.30am
At Abbey Lane and online to WEBS pastorate

Worship led by Rev. Roy Fowler

With John Ford & Val Bowtle



Opening music

Recording of Badinerie, by J.S. Bach, played by John Evans

Welcome (John Ford)

Call to Worship (Rev. Roy Fowler)

Hymn: Let All the World (R & S 114)

Prayer

Reading: John 3: 1-17 (Val Bowtle)

All Age Talk

Young people go to Junior Church

(Due to Covid-19 precautions Junior Church will not rejoin the service)

Sermon

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (R & S 663)

Blessing

Hymn: Let all the World

1 Let all the world in every corner sing,
"My God and King!"
The heavens are not too high,
his praise may thither fly;
the earth is not too low,
his praises there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
"My God and King!"

2 Let all the world in every corner sing,
"My God and King!"
The church with psalms must shout:
no door can keep them out.
But, above all, the heart
must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
"My God and King!"

George Herbert CCL Nos: 214400, 214699

Hymn: Love Divine, all loves excelling

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

2 Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3 Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

CCL Nos: 214400, 214699

