



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

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

27 June

Welcome to our weekly newsletter

Sunday Service – 27th June

Celebrating Christian Aid

Worship Online and in Abbey Lane

at 10:30 a.m.

Led by **Elfreda Tealby-Watson**
and **Val Bowtle**



To attend in person please be aware that places will be limited in accordance with social distancing requirements. Face masks are required to be worn inside.

Zoom meeting and Passcode details are listed on the order of service sent separately, or call our Church Contact on 01799 528325

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.

Calls to action: Christian Aid and G7

This Sunday our service will consider the appeal of Christian Aid for Climate Justice, which was the theme of Christian Aid week in May earlier this year. Owing to Covid-19 restrictions and other factors Saffron Walden Churches Together were unable to complete as extensive a collection door-to-door as we had hoped to do. Last year we were in total lockdown and completed neither the door-to-door envelopes nor street bucket collection. In our service in Abbey Lane this Sunday we will therefore be taking a collection for Christian Aid; there will be a bucket for cash or cheques and also envelopes (with gift aid forms) in the pews. If

you are unable to join us at Abbey Lane you can send your donations to Elfreda c/o the Vestry letterbox or alternatively donate online at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

This year the theme of Christian Aid week was 'climate justice', looking at the impact of climate change on poor communities, explaining that 'Extreme weather means people are struggling to survive without a reliable source of water'. Donations will be used to finance community dams or other schemes by which families will be able to withstand both long drought and relentless rainstorms. In this newsletter, Ruth Fothergill looks at the climate crisis from the viewpoint of Fairtrade and the recent G7 talks.

You can find many stories on the Christian Aid website about individuals suffering the impact of climate change, including that of Florence Muthiani. A few years ago, after becoming a widow, she had no water to grow crops. Her children were hungry. She had to walk for hours on a dangerous journey to collect water. Florence could easily have been defeated. But Florence is a fighter, and she shows the women in her farming group that they can be fighters too. Next to her farm, Florence is proud to show us something remarkable – a dam, full of fresh water just a short walk away from her village. It was built by Florence and her community using Christian Aid donations and the help of their partner ADSE. Christian Aid have said that the climate emergency is one of the biggest injustices we face... It hurts us all but people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day.'

Psalm 36: 6

Lord, Your righteousness is towering like the mountains;
Your justice is like the depths of the sea.
People and animals are in your care.



Photo of Florence Muthiani, by Tom Pilston, Christian Aid

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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Love Your Neighbour as Yourself

(Ruth Fothergill, Fairtrade rep)

Alison Jiggins' choice of Fred Kaan's hymn in our service on 13th June 'We utter our cry' reflected well on my thoughts on the G7 summit in Carbis Bay across the same weekend:

*To match all our statements and lofty resolve
With fervent commitment in action involved.*

Whilst this prayer is directed at the church, it neatly sums up the lack of action often seen following resolutions declared at international summits. The Carbis Bay summit ended with the release of a long list of agreed targets but I wish to concentrate on the Climate Crisis and Fairtrade in this piece. The Fairtrade organization is focusing on the difficulties of its Fairtrade partners in relation to global warming through 2021. It states that 'unfair global trading systems mean millions of people on the frontline of the climate emergency do not earn enough to deal with the consequences of climate change and risk losing their livelihoods.'

The G7 summit communique has two sections of relevance to this. The first, Protect Our Planet, commits to limiting further global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees, for net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 and a halving of emissions by 2030. The second, Strengthen our Partnerships, commits to clean and green growth across the world with a focus on ensuring the prosperity of people across the globe, especially the poor.

Prior to the summit the Joint Public Issues Team (Baptist, Methodist, URC, and Church of Scotland) issued an appeal to the UK Government, who hold the Presidency for both G7 and COP26, who meet in Glasgow later in the year. In an open letter they state 'As people of faith, we cannot stand by while world leaders continue to delay action. Delays on phasing out support for fossil fuels and on addressing climate impacts are destroying lives. ...the climate crisis is a present reality for the poorest people.' Boris Johnson has stated that he wishes to see the response to the pandemic as a means of 'Building Back A Better World' but along with many of the other G7 countries is not matching the idea with new cash. 'All Hot Air: UK Commits To Climate Action but not to new funding', is the heading of a Guardian article of 12th June.

It is a fact that the fallout of the Covid pandemic is going to have a heavy financial cost but we are in the G7 because we are one of the richest countries in the world and I feel we cannot use these costs as an excuse to reduce our contributions to those in the world who most need it. In the case of Climate Change, we cannot afford to delay our response.

Reminders for your Diary

3rd July – Bakes and Marmalade at 9.30am, Emson Close Janet and Marion say, "We are holding a cake and marmalade stall in Emson Close, as a fund raiser for the church. We would be very grateful for offers of help making cakes. We will take orders if anyone has a special request, and will try to oblige."

Janet [01799 527388](tel:01799527388) Marion [01799 523289](tel:01799523289)



Reminder!! Cards for sale Gill Howe is making cards £12 per pack of 5 assorted, 50% going to church funds. Designs and colour ways may vary – but one happy purchaser says the cards are really beautiful! (photo left). You can reach Gill on WhatsApp.

28th June – Bettie Kime: Bettie's funeral will be held at 11.00am, at the Baptist Church

4th July – Abbey Lane Service includes Holy Communion led by Rev. Christine Fowler

11th July – Church Meeting: as restrictions have not been lifted this meeting will take place at 12 noon via Zoom to enable all to join, using the regular service meeting details

18th July – Roy's last service: all WEBS by Zoom

Music Focus

Both our hymns this week come from modern composers. Fred Kaan who wrote "Help Us Accept



Each Other" featured in a newsletter earlier in the year. The other hymn "O Lord, All the World" was composed by Patrick Appleford, who studied locally at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was a keen modernizer of church music, founding the 20th Century



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Church Light Music Group with Geoffrey Beaumont. Their editions of new hymn and song collections feature a number of pieces still sung frequently around the world today. Appleford's longer works included his "New English Mass", written at the request of the Liturgical Commission for the new service in contemporary language, published in 1973. You can find a collection of the settings for the "New English Mass" from the Light Music Group on YouTube <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLT1O3SMLsQmUF39-8EF0-ux91toBspkLo>

Eastern Synod Divests from Fossil Fuels In keeping with our focus this week on climate change, it was good to read in the June edition of URC Communications that our own Eastern Synod has joined 35 faith institutions from 11 countries in announcing its divestment from fossil fuels.

URC Communications writes: These commitments highlight the urgent need to divest from fossil fuels and invest in clean alternatives in response to the growing climate crisis. Eleven out of 13 URC Synods have now joined the URC in announcing their divestment from fossil fuels, [as recommended by Mission Council in May 2019](#).

Jeremy Flack, Green Advocate for URC Eastern Synod, said: "In taking this practical step of divesting from fossil fuels, the Synod is demonstrating its desire to follow through on its commitments to reduce our carbon footprint in response to the growing climate crisis. With many of the world's poorest already experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change, despite having done the least to cause it, it is only right that we act now to do all we can to safeguard creation."

The global divestment announcement took place on 17th May, as the UK prepared to host the G7 Summit in June and the UN climate summit (COP26) in Glasgow in November. As governments around the world continue to invest significant sums in economic recovery packages, it is vital that these investments support a just and green recovery from Covid-19.

Yet, as the UN has stated, only 18% of the Covid-19 recovery spending announced by the world's 50 biggest economies in 2020 can be considered green. Faith communities have long been at the forefront of

the global divestment movement and have contributed the single greatest number of commitments. Out of the global total of over 1,300 divestment commitments made to date, more than 450 are from faith institutions."

The decision by Eastern Synod has been welcomed by James Buchanan, Bright Now Campaign Manager at Operation Noah: "We urge governments around the world to follow their lead by ending support for fossil fuels and investing in the clean technologies of the future." Operation Noah is the Christian climate advocacy group behind the idea of Climate Sunday. The group was set up in 2004 to provide a Christian response to the climate crisis. Their work, with all Christian denominations and interfaith, is informed by the latest science on climate change, its causes, impacts and solutions and they state that "God's creation is a gift that we have a duty to care for". <https://operationnoah.org/home/faith-motivated/>

Prayer (Extracts: Karen Campbell 'Never Enough', from 2021 URC Prayer Handbook)

**Ah Lord,
It is so easy to feel overwhelmed and helpless in the face of the world's challenges.
Even our best efforts feel woefully inadequate.**

**And yet, you hear our prayers and petitions.
You hear the voices of the voiceless.
Through you the lowly will be raised up.
Through you the mighty will fall.**

**So let us patiently wait on the Lord.
Let us work tirelessly, impatiently for justice
And let us believe our best efforts are enough for you.
Amen.**

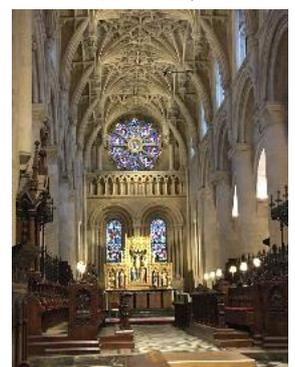
and from WhatsApp...



An amazing close up of a bee (Mary Duxbury)

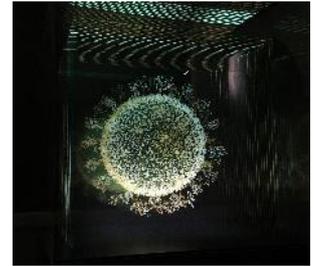


Christchurch, Oxford (Elfreda TW)



ROY'S LETTER, 23rd June 2021

Dear Friends



(Photo Elfreda, Oxford NH Museum)

Ministry often seems like a very domestic matter. As a minister, you tend to interact with people in their home life. The exception to this is chaplaincy when you are often dealing with people in their working life. When I was a hospital chaplain, we were always told that our ministry to the staff was as important as our ministry to the patients. Of course, as a minister you are very aware that church members are also engaged with work or volunteering. But occasionally, you are also aware that church members lives are touched by bigger events in very tangible ways.

My ministry began just before the Falklands Conflict. One of my members had a son who were serving on one of the Royal Navy frigates that were down in the South Atlantic. The conflict became very much more immediate and I listened every day for news of his ship. Fortunately, he came home unscathed. Later, another church member visited a client in the Twin Towers in New York just days before they were attacked on 9/11. The client was one of the people who was killed. There was a direct link. I have been very aware that some of you have been on the frontline of the pandemic in health, social care, education and other ways too. These things certainly give a reality to prayers that otherwise are always in danger of becoming routine.

Faith is always lived out against the background of history. In the Old Testament, the prophets are particularly aware of the outworking of events around them. Jeremiah hears his call at a time when an invasion from the southern Kingdom of Judah is imminent (Jeremiah 1). The unknown prophet of the Exile of God's people in Babylon who words are recorded in Isaiah chapters 40 to 55 prophesies the hope of the end of exile because he has heard that Cyrus, the Persian, will soon overrun Babylonia (Isaiah 55). The ministry of Jesus takes place against the background of the Roman occupation. In 1 Timothy, we are urged to pray for all in authority (I Timothy 2: 1 & 2).

Our personal lives are of value to God. The Gospel of Christ constantly reaffirms the value of every life, and the love of God for all, including you and I. And there are times when the personal is where we must focus our attention. Yet, it is also true, that the great sweep of history is also God's concern. As Christian people we do not retreat into the purely personal. Global pandemics, the growing threat of famine in Africa, climate crisis, the clashes of world powers are also part of us. Whether we pause to pray, we get on and do something, or even through our daily lives we engage with larger issues, we are recognising that God is Lord of all history, and that our faith in God broadens our vision to embrace the whole world.

God be with you all, wherever you are, and in whatever engages you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Roy', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.