

CHURCH NEWS

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SEPTEMBER 2020

Friends,

What's in your hand?

September is usually the time when we get back to our normal routines after the summer break. With the current coronavirus pandemic, it's very different this year! However, it is still a good time to consider how God can use us to make a real difference in our workplace, school, family, friends and community. He equips us with everything we need to make His love known.

When God gave Moses the job of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, He asked the question, '*What is in your hand?*' (Exodus 4:2). Moses was holding his staff, which represented his livelihood (what he was good at); his resources (his flock represented his wealth) and his security (which God was asking him to lay down). God asks the same question of us: *What has God given you?* Our gifts, temperament, experience, relationships, mind, education can be used in the work God has given us to do. How will we use them to make a difference in the places where He calls us to serve Him?

John Ortberg, in his book *It All Goes Back in the Box*, speaks of Johnny, a 19 year old with Downs syndrome. He worked at a supermarket checkout putting people's items into bags. To encourage his customers, he decided to put a *thought for the day* into the bags. Every night his dad would help him to prepare the slips of paper and he would put the thoughts into the bags saying, '*I hope it helps you have a good day. Thanks for coming here.*' A month later the store manager noticed that Johnny's line at the checkout was three times longer than anyone else's! People wanted Johnny's thought for the day. He wasn't just filling bags with groceries, he was filling lives with hope!

What has God given *you* that will help and encourage others?

Canon Paul Hardingham
Parish Pump

NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

In the past, the front page of the September magazine has read thus:

Back to school and daily life

Yes! But not quite as usual. Most of us have become used to the restrictions but we must be mindful of all those who find this daily life very difficult and lonely.

We remember the sick and anxious people among our congregation and friends and their families. We pray for those who have ill health and who are denied the comfort of those they love. May God give them strength to cope and their carers the love and patience to look after them.

Best wishes go to Hilary and Godfrey Jackson who have recently celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary.

Thanks go to the NW Synod's global link partners, the Chaayi Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, for their very generous gift of 10,000 face masks, which cements the relationship with another Reform Church. The Synod has now distributed some face masks to each Church for their use and ours are in the foyer with the cleaning station.

We know that September birthdays will be celebrated by Geoff Thompson, Vernon Elliott, Bernie Stevens and Vera Lees and best wishes go to them and, of course, to anybody else who will be celebrating (like our secretary in late Aug). Happy birthday all!

Thank you again to those who have made donations towards both the running costs of the Newsletter and weekly postage.

The News Team

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Every Saturday morning, 10.30 ~ noon, a COFFEE MORNING. You can dial in on your phone or tablet to talk & listen OR join with video if you have the 'ZOOM' app. The phone number is **880 4446 8056** and the password is **185 236**.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

There are still collection points for Chelwood Foodbank in the car parks at Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church and Grove Lane Baptist Church each Tuesday and Saturday respectively, from 11~12 noon.



We are asked to pray for:..

6 Sep St Andrew's (Cof E)

Rev Christopher Hobbs and the fellowship as they make decisions to open the Church and continue to use social media opportunities to bring the fellowship together .

13 Sep: Churches Together in Cheadle Hulme.

Education Sunday. Give thanks that learning and working has taken place in different ways whilst staff and children have been away from schools, colleges and universities. On returning, pray for a safe working and learning environment.

St Ann's RC Church ...The deepening of our spiritual lives .Let us be happy with the gifts God has given us and not covet what is not rightfully ours . . deliver us from jealousy and help us to see our own shortcomings.

20 Sept: Society of Friends . . I a y representative Susan Clark and the fellowship at The Society of Friends in Cheadle Hulme.

27 Sep: Chelwood Baptist Pray for the leaders and the fellowship at Chelwood Baptist. Give thanks for the generous support from donations to the Foodbank at Chelwood and for the collection points at Cheadle Hulme Methodist and Grove Lane Baptist Churches.

LECTIONARY FOR SEPTEMBER:

6 SEP: Ezekiel 33.7-11; Psalm 119.33-40; Romans 13.8-14; Matthew 18.15-20

13 SEP: Genesis 50.15-21; Psalm 103.(1-7),8-13; Romans 14.1-12; Matthew 18.21-35

20 SEP: Jonah 3.10-4.11; Psalm 145.1-8; Philippians 1.21-30; Matthew 20.1-16

27 SEP: Ezekiel 18.1-4,25-32; Psalm 25.1-9; Philippians 2.1-13; Matthew 21.23-32

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 BREAKFAST BEFORE
 SOUP, SWEET and MEET
 FILM NIGHT
 ...will resume as soon as we dare.
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SHOEBOXES

Time waits for no-one and its September already! I am thinking that we should start to gather together what we all have so that there is still time for last minute additions during OCT. Delivery to eastern Europe starts first week in November. **During SEPTEMBER, could you please arrange for your gifts to get to church;** either by bringing them on a Wednesday morning (I'll be at church 10.30-11.30), or by phoning me. Next month, I want to be in a position to say we still need this or that.

FAMILY

Colouring pad (A5)	Pencils /crayons
Rubber /sharpener	Small toys
Soft toys (CE mark)	Tool /tape measure
Scarf (lightweight)	Shampoo (300mL)
Tool /tape measure	Scarf (lightweight)
Calculator (solar powered)	Brush and comb
Other gifts	

ELDERLY (unisex)

Reading glasses /magnifier	Work gloves
Mug /wooden spoon	Socks /tights
Sensory item (lavender bag)	Pen /paper
Hot water bottle	Windup radio
Shampoo (300mL)	Safety razors
Scissors /nail clippers	Other gifts

Bernie Stevens

The story of ... ABIDE WITH ME

One of the most famous hymns in the world came out of Brixham, near Torbay, Devon, in 1847.

In those days it was a poor, obscure fishing village, and the vicar was the Rev Henry Francis Lyte. It was a discouraging place to be a pastor, but Henry felt that God wanted him there, and so he stayed, though it was lonely work, and he suffered constant ill health.

By the time he was 54, Henry had contracted tuberculosis and asthma, and he and his family knew he was dying. It would have been so easy for him to look back on his life and feel a complete failure. What had he ever much accomplished? And yet – and yet – Henry knew that in life it is not worldly success that matters, but how much we respond to Jesus Christ, and how much we follow Him.

In September of 1847 Henry was preparing to travel to the south of France, as was the custom for people with tuberculosis at that time. One day before he left, he read the story in the gospel of Luke about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were met by Jesus on the day of His resurrection, and they invited Him to stay with them because it was getting late. "Abide with us", they said "for it is towards evening."

"Abide with us - for it is toward evening." These words struck a chord with Henry, who knew that it was getting 'towards evening' in his life. So, he sat down and wrote this hymn as a prayer to God – *(the following are just some of the verses)*

Abide with me

*Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
 The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
 When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
 Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
 Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
 Change and decay in all around I see;
 O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

*I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
 Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy
 victory?
 I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.*

Shortly after Henry wrote that hymn, he preached his last sermon. He was so ill he practically crawled into the pulpit to do so. A few weeks later, in France, he died, and so never knew that his hymn would go on to become greatly loved the world over.

Parish Pump

THANK YOU

Thank you very much for your giving each week, or month. The offertory goes to pay the utility bills, the repairs, maintenance and cleaning costs, the licenses and a hundred other sundry needs (like this magazine). It also pays our share of the Ministry and Mission Fund of the United Reformed Church.

The M&M Fund goes through the Synod to pay ministers' stipends, including several church related community workers and the odd special category minister. It also pays for all training costs for those who serve the church, ordained and lay, and the central admin costs too.

The church also uses it to organise our outreach, our mission, our community work but except for the odd special case, it does **not** go to donations, to charities, to disasters. That is extra, collected and accounted separately.

Our church had 4 (now 5) main charities that we commit to and support ahead of others - the Mae Gone orphanage, Lifeshare for homeless, Francis House for children, Traidcraft Exchange and, most recently, Mary's Meals in Africa and Eastern Europe.

Saturday Coffee Mornings have been our regular way of collecting for not only these charities but others, each of which has a champion in the congregation who every year stands up and digs us in the ribs to remind us or organises an event to collect for it. Christian Aid has Sandy and Morag, I do Leprosy and the British Legion, Heather does for Epilepsy UK, Tom and Philip take the donations to Chelwood food bank, and several others pop up throughout the year. This year has been difficult for us but worse for all charities, with no sponsored walks allowed etc.

And thank you for the retiring collection when famines or earthquakes strike. Whether or not the DEC meets to make a special plea, we will usually have flagged it up. The few we don't support financially, we still pray for and remember in our thoughts.

Thank you too, to those of us who use their skills for us, for our church or for the church or community at large. Most recently, Sandy and Morag treated all three outside doors to many layers of primer and varnish. Every year Mavis organises jumble sales, and Mo Morton's team do the gardening...

We are a relatively small church but we like to think that we punch above our weight in the Christian climate of UK. The URC is a joint founder of the JPIT - the Joint Public Issues Team - a group acting as our conscience and putting it in writing in a newsletter every month.

The Moderators are always there too, signing a letter from all churches to the Prime Minister about poverty, refugees or some other injustice.

Bernie

The oldest profession?

A surgeon, an architect and a politician were arguing as to whose profession was the oldest. Said the surgeon: "Eve was made from Adam's rib, and that surely was a surgical operation."

"Maybe," admitted the architect, "but prior to that, order was created out of chaos, and that was an architectural job."

"But," the politician pointed out in triumph, "somebody had to have created the chaos in the first place!"

Who is where?

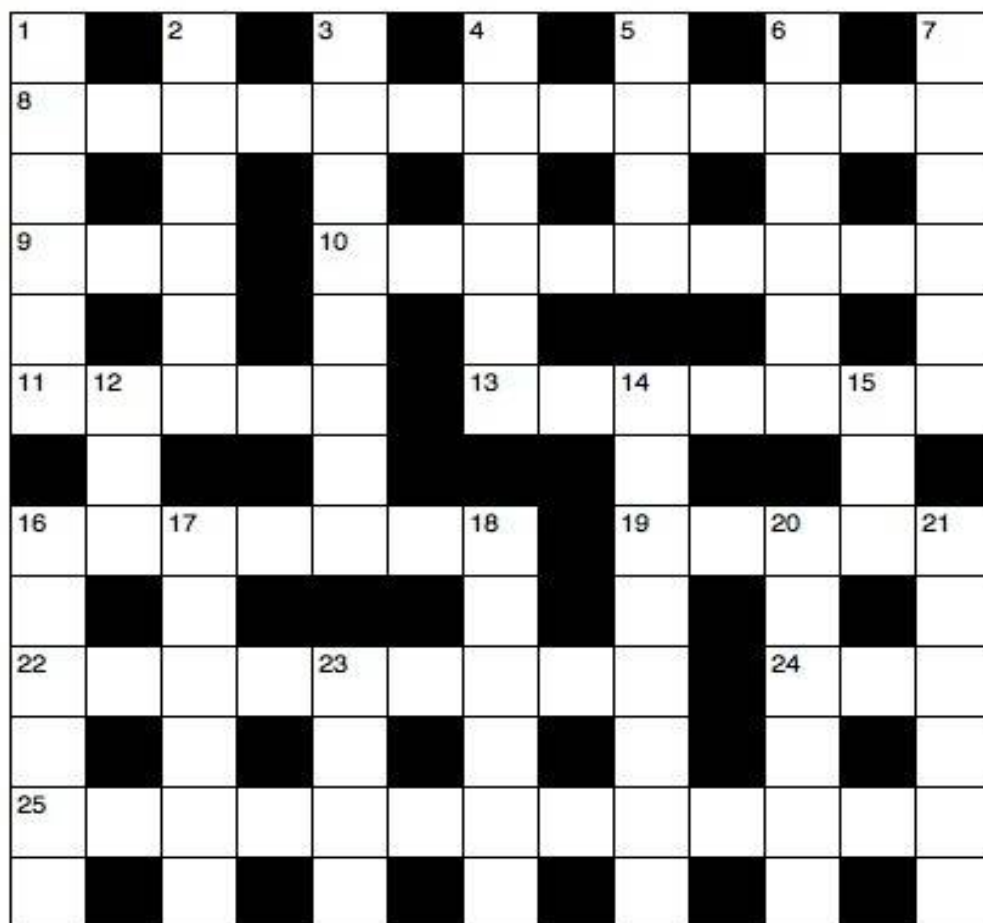
A man was very sick. Doctors feared the worst. As he lay at home, he suddenly looked up and said weakly: "Is my wife here?" His wife replied, "Yes, dear, I'm here, next to you."

The man whispered: "Are my children here?" "Yes, Daddy, we are all here," said the children.

"Are my brother and sister also here?" And they say, "Yes, we are all here..."

The man sat up and cried, "Then why in the world is the light on in the kitchen?"

Parish Pump



Down

CROSSWORD CLUES

Across

- 8 Where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)
 9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14-17) (3)
 10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4) 11 'Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have —' (Malachi 1:3) (5)
 13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)
 16 'Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger' (John 8:6) (7)
 19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)
 22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)
 24 and 2 Down 'Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the —' (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)
 25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

- 1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)
 2 See 24 Across
 3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)
 4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)
 5 The Bible's shortest verse: 'Jesus —' (John 11:35) (4)
 6 'Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?' (Isaiah 49:15) (6)
 7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)
 12 'Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem' (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)
 14 Second city of Cyprus (8)
 15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)
 16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)
 17 Braved (anag.) (6)
 18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)
 20 'Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight' (Isaiah 5:21) (6)
 21 'Neither — nor depth... will be able to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (6)
 23 What Jesus shed in 5 Down (4)

OUR CHURCH IN SWANN LANE

These last six months since March we have not used our buildings, for services or hire. This due to the advent of a global health emergency, the Covid-19 pandemic.

Even so. We have sent out a reflective prayer sheet every week. We have sent out an informative letter every week. We have distributed an audio URC service by Andy Braunston every week. We have kept up with the usual magazine, even producing an extra one in AUG.

Where 2 or 3 are gathered...

Never-the-less. We started Quiet Prayers in the sanctuary on a JUL Sunday. We have each week printed the Lectionary to keep up with the Christian cycle. We have used the Internet for Elders, for Management and for Worship group to continue to meet, using ZOOM video conferencing software. We have started a virtual Coffee Time on a Saturday over the telephone. We have now in Aug changed Sunday morning to Prayer Time by ZOOMing each week into the sanctuary with prayers from homes.

The church is the people, not the building.

Soon, we will add in some reflective music.
Soon, we will include a reading or two from the Lectionary.
Soon, we will ZOOM in with an address.
Soon, we will have all the parts of a service.

We still have many members shielding.

Soon, we will negotiate and plan precautions to re-open the halls. Soon too, we may welcome back the first of our user groups. Soon, we may get back to a new normal.

Bernie Stevens

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 8, Kiriath Jearim. 9, Toe. 10, Ill at ease. 11, Hated. 13, Miletus. 16, Started. 19, Micah. 22, Leviticus. 24, Eli. 25, Mary and Joseph.

DOWN: 1, Sketch. 2, Priest. 3, Samizdat. 4, Shalom. 5, Wept. 6, Breast. 7, Embers. 12, Art. 14, Limassol. 15, UNA. 16, Salome. 17, Adverb. 18, Decade. 20, Clever. 21, Height. 23, Tear.

DAISES ARE SILVER

*Daisies are our silver
Buttercups our gold
This is all the treasure
We can have or hold
Raindrops are our diamonds
And the morning dew
While for shining sapphires
We've the speedwell blue
These shall be our emeralds
Leaves so new and green
Roses make the reddest
Rubies ever seen*

*God, who gave these treasures
To your children small
Teach us how to love them all
Make us bright as silver
Make us good as gold
Warm as summer roses
Let our hearts unfold
Gay as leaves in April
Clear as drops of dew
God, who made the speedwell
Keep us true to you.*

Jan Struther (1931)

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CHURCH REGISTERS - NONE

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