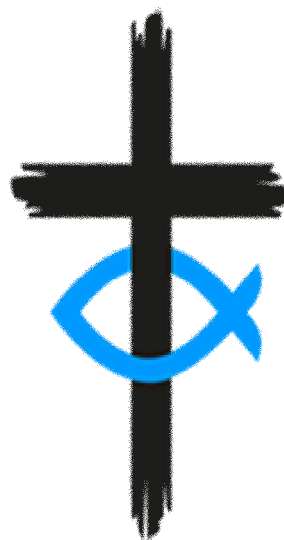


CHURCH NEWS

Swann Lane Cheadle Hulme
STOCKPORT SK8 7HU
www.cheadlehulmeurc.org.uk

Partnership Minister: Rev Dr Marion Tugwood
swannlaneminister@gmail.com



The
United
Reformed
Church

JUNE 2021

Friends,

Wake up!

Remember the story of Jacob, and how God met him in a dream when he was sleeping on the desert floor with a rock for his pillow? The story in Genesis 28 says this: 'When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it."'

I wonder where you find yourself in today, and are you aware of God's presence with you?

It may be a geographical place, the place where you live or work. That may be a beautiful place to be, or it may be a very hard place to be, and you would much prefer to be somewhere else. Either way, God is with you there, for He is everywhere, and there is no place where He is not.

It may be an emotional 'place', as when we say, 'I'm not in a good place right now'. How are you feeling today – up or down? Again, whatever mood you are in, God is with you for He knows us through and through. Having been human, He understands all our fluctuating emotions. He can comfort us right where we are.

It may be a phase of life that you are passing through, a stage on life's journey or a transition as you move from one situation to another. You may be passing through the valley of grief and loneliness, or anxiously waiting for news of a loved one who is ill.

No matter. Wherever you are, you are not alone, for God is with you, whether you can feel His presence or not. By just remembering Him, He just helps...

What is needed is for us to become more aware of God's surrounding presence, to wake up to His closeness as did Jacob.

Lord, wake me up to your abiding presence, even this day.

**Tony Horsfall
Parish Pump**

NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

The challenge facing all of us shortly will be how we come out of lockdown restrictions to face the 'new normal'. It will probably be different for each of us and we must be aware of this.

Our prayers are with any of our church family who are unwell or anxious and for any families who have been bereaved recently. May the love and support of friends and family help them through this difficult time.

For the first time for quite a while, we welcomed visiting preachers to our pulpit last month, albeit via Zoom! Our thanks go to Alison Pope, Linda Rayner and Christopher Whitehead as well as our own Margaret and Bernie.

We know that Isobel Grieve, Philip Oliver, Morag Smith and Sue Altree are celebrating their birthdays in June. Best wishes go to them all as well as to anyone we are not aware.

Our thanks go to those who have kindly donated cash towards the cost of recent postage.

The News Team

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sun 6 JUN - Environment Sunday

Sun 27 JUN - Anniversary and Gift Day

Fri 2 JUL - Postponed Women's World Day of Prayer - service at URC 2 pm

+++++

**BREAKFAST BEFORE
SOUP, SWEET and MEET
FILM NIGHT**

...will each resume soonest

+++++

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Our prayers are asked for... Churches Together in Cheadle Hulme - Pray for those who have not returned to church for various reasons and that we will be able to keep in touch and continue to support them.

w/c 6 Jun: Emmanuel For the minister Christopher Hobbs and the fellowship at Emmanuel especially as they hold a

"Sorrow Service" for those in the community who have been recently bereaved. The service is taking place on **Saturday 12th June** at 3.00pm



w/c 13 Jun: St Andrew's For the minister Christopher Hobbs and the fellowship at St Andrew's as they hold their "Sorrow Service" on **Saturday 19th June** at 3.00pm. And for their witness in the community.

w/c 20 Jun: St Ann's Give thanks for those volunteer catechists in our church who are guiding young people in the way of preparation for their formal reception of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation.

w/c 27 Jun: Grove Lane Baptist For Rev Ruth Gouldbourne and the fellowship at Grove Lane Baptist as they witness in the community. For the youth work and support to the foodbank through the collections on Saturday mornings.

SERIOUS LOCKDOWN ADVICE...

Everyone PLEASE be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home!

I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my tea, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine, because she puts a different spin on EVERYTHING! Certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant!

In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic... told me to just suck it up and the fan was VERY optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything. The front door said I was unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip!!

You might just about guess the curtains told me to "pull myself together!" Still, we will survive!

Anon

OLD AND ALONE & NEEDING HELP...

An old Italian priest lived alone. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was so hard. A member of his church, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. So the old priest wrote a letter to his parishioner and described his predicament:

Dear Vincent, I am feeling pretty sad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days. I remember you in my prayers! Fr Louis

A few days later he received a letter from his parishioner. *Dear Fr Louis, whatever you do, don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried. Thanks for your prayers.* Vinnie

At 4 am the next morning, the local police arrived and dug up the entire area, without finding any bodies. They apologised to the old priest and left. That same day the priest received another letter.

Dear Fr Louis, You can go ahead and plant your tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances. Vinnie

Parish Pump

CHEADLE CLIMATE ACTION

It was agreed by Elders at a recent meeting that, as a Church, along with others in Cheadle Hulme, we would support a poster campaign which is running until November when Britain will host the world Climate Conference (COP26) at which the nations of the world will make crucial decisions on carbon emissions reduction. As host nation, our role is to challenge and inspire the world to commit to policies based on what is scientifically necessary, not what is politically convenient. Commitments announced so far are totally inadequate.

The aim is to engage with our own MP and raise public awareness by a monthly series of posters and flyers, working with local churches and other community organizations to demand rapid and effective action. There is now a poster in the Swann Lane window and there are some A3 posters and A5 leaflets, available on the exit table in Church, which can be displayed in a porch or house window.

Alison Stevens

WAIVE VACCINE PATENTS

The URC General Assembly Moderators joined 450 academics, politicians, charities, faith leaders, and healthcare workers on 10 May to urge the prime minister to waive vaccine patents. In an open letter, organised by Global Justice Now, STOPAIDS, and Just Treatment, the group called on Boris Johnson to "stand on the right side of history".

The letter urged the UK to follow the US example which saw the Biden administration announce on 5 May that it would support a waiver to help scale up global vaccine production to produce safe and effective Covid-19 vaccines for all people, in all countries.

As reported on [Sky News](#), in the letter the group said: "Action is profoundly urgent. New waves of [Covid-19](#) are rising across the globe while epidemiologists warn that new mutations risk leaving current vaccines ineffective.

"Together with sharing vaccine technologies and know-how through the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP), this waiver would allow more producers to get more vaccines made, and help save countless lives and livelihoods. We must learn the painful lessons from a history of unequal access in dealing with diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

"We urge you to now provide the leadership to ensure an end to this global crisis. Defending intellectual property at all costs will not only lead to even more unnecessary loss of lives but is an unprecedented act of collective self-harm.

"Please stand on the right side of history and ensure vaccines are available to everyone, everywhere - a 'People's Vaccine' - by supporting the waiver proposal at the World Trade Organisation and the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool."

URC website



Irene Howat

DoE LEGACY ON MATTERS OF FAITH

Just when we thought the last word had been written about the late Duke of Edinburgh, it emerged that he had a genuine interest in theology. That dashing young naval officer, who became the Queen's dutiful consort and accompanied her to thousands of church services, was someone who listened intently to sermons, thought through what was being said, and then asked questions.

Every Sunday when the royal couple were at Sandringham, a diocesan bishop was invited to preach in the parish church. Afterwards, they were grilled by the Duke who, we are told by one of them, showed that he "wanted to be intellectually and spiritually engaged". That's a polite way of saying he wasn't prepared to swallow what came out of the pulpit if he wasn't convinced by it.

Some Christians are suspicious of people who probe the faith. Should it not be taken on trust? Who are we to question the Almighty? For others, doubt hovers uninvited. Honest doubt won't settle for unbelief but will continue to persevere with its enquiries. The Russian writer and philosopher Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote: "It is not as a child that I believe and confess Jesus Christ. My hosanna is born of a furnace of doubt." Dostoyevsky had lived a turbulent life, both personally and publicly, and wrestled mentally with himself and God. Some people are like that.

Prince Philip had been baptised into the Greek Orthodox Church and was received into the Church of England just before his marriage. He organised much of his own funeral, and if you followed it, you will remember how traditional it was. Many of the prayers were from the 17th Century Book of Common Prayer, the hymns were more ancient than modern, and the Bible readings confidently proclaimed the magnificence of God's Creation and Jesus' teaching about the resurrection. These are basic to Christianity and it was from such a foundation that he was able to explore.

So, if you wake up one morning questioning everything you have believed, take it is a spur to dig deeper and ask questions. Be encouraged by Philip, who shunned a second-hand faith because he wanted to know the truth for himself.

The next time you hear a sermon which you can't understand or disagree with, don't let the preacher get away with it. And if, in your private conversations with God, you find yourself praying, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief,' you won't be the first. See Mark 9, verse 24.

Ven John Barton
Parish Pump

URC & REFUGEES

The United Reformed Church has become a founding member of new campaign coalition Together With Refugees.

The coalition, made up of more than 100 national, local, refugee-led and grassroots groups, calls for a better approach to supporting refugees that is kinder, fairer and more effective, and believes in showing compassion to people fleeing war, persecution or violence. Together With Refugees aims to inspire hope and win deep change in the UK's approach to refugees.

In a statement the coalition said: "This means standing up for people's ability to seek safety in the UK no matter how they came here. It means ensuring people can live in dignity while they wait to hear if they will be granted protection. It means empowering refugees to rebuild their lives and make valuable contributions to their communities. And it means the UK working with other countries to do our bit to help people who are forced to flee their homes."

Inspired by the refugee nation flag, and the colours of a lifebelt, the coalition's orange heart logo symbolises hope and compassion. With the campaign slogan #WhoWeAre, the heart is intended to be adopted widely to show support for refugees while underpinning a sense of unity. They represent that together, as a movement, we are larger than the sum of our parts.

Simeon Mitchell, URC Secretary for Church and Society, added: "At a time when there is such hostility being expressed towards immigrants, and the government is proposing unfair and unworkable reforms to the asylum system, it is important to set out a positive alternative vision of a better approach. How we treat people

seeking refugee protection is about who we are. The Bible exhorts us to show hospitality to strangers. By being part of this campaign, we are saying that we stand alongside those seeking safety and sanctuary in the UK, and want to them to experience respect, fairness and kindness.”

For more information, visit [Together with Refugees](#).

URC website

EXILE AND RETURN: COVID STYLE

Meg Warner on the Israelites' return from exile... and ours!

Yesterday, for my daily hour of exercise, I walked around a nearby park. I have done this so many times in recent months that I didn't expect to see anything I hadn't already seen a hundred times. But I was in for a surprise. I saw hundreds, literally hundreds, of university students sitting in tight groups on the ground, talking and drinking. I was rocked back on my heels. I hadn't seen anything like it for 12 months. Once I had recovered from my shock, I reflected that it was like a sneak preview of a return to the old life, much like the way daffodils, pressing their way out of frozen ground, offer a sneak preview of the return of spring.

The return is coming. Like spring, it seems to be taking forever to get going, but soon, soon we will be returning to our old lives, or something like them, and gatherings of hundreds of people will go back to being ordinary.

I've spent the last months of the lockdown teaching ordination students about the Old Testament. We are all exhausted, but one class has really taken off – a class in which we've explored the Old Testament accounts of the exile. The story of the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC, the Israelites' forced migration to Babylon and their eventual return, has never rung truer to students. That is because what we have experienced over the past year, at the hands of Covid-19, has been a kind of exile. Sure, it hasn't been a geographical exile, but in being stuck inside our homes we've been exiled from our lives as surely as if we'd all been bundled off to a city in Iraq.

If lockdown has been a kind of exile, then what we're preparing for right now is a kind of return, and the biblical accounts may just have some important wisdom to share with us about what that return might be like.

The Israelites looked forward to their return to Jerusalem, just as we are looking forward to ours. In fact, they longed for it. In Babylon, they had been challenged not just to get through the days, but also to remember who they were. They had suffered their first major military defeat, Jerusalem had been violated, and they had been forced to live thousands of miles away from the Temple. The exiles had to come to terms with questions about whether their God was as strong and as faithful as the Babylonian gods, and also about how they could continue visibly to be God's chosen people, without access to daily Temple worship. So they longed to return home...

Meg Warner

*Tutor of Old languages at Northern College
extract from REFORM mag May'21*

MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The S Manchester & Cheshire Missional Partnership of 16 churches is approaching 2 years old/young and the church representatives have called a new young minister. He was then appointed by Synod to work with the steering group to bring mission to all.

Jonnie Hill is a very affable and inspirational Irishman from Donegal and is presently a student from Northern College already on placement in Altrincham & Sale URCs. (so he knows what he's letting himself in for...)

As to his Ordination and Induction, we have no where big enough to hold all 16 church congregations although St Peter's at the University might come close. However, the Steering Group have decided to accept the offer from Wilmslow URC and Rev Dr Kirsty Thorpe to officiate on Sat 17 July 2021 at a time tbc.

Even Wilmslow has a limit so the service will be available via Zoom in a number of the partnership churches (for those who don't Zoom at home) and arrangements are ongoing.

Bernie Stevens

SUDOKU - Every row, column and 3x3 block must contain the numbers 1~9.

Solution later

		5	9		1		8	
2		9	7					
	6			2	5			
		4						
	5		6	3	4		1	
						5		
			5	1			4	
					2	6		7
	2		4		3	9		

© 2013 KrazyDad.com

CASH; NOT WHAT IT WAS

Yes, cash, money, and especially coins have a problem.

You remember a few years ago, the Bank of England and the mint withdrew the tiny hap'ny, sorry halfpenny. The half 'new penny' was indeed very small and though it started as the equivalent of 1.2 old pennies, its value didn't buy anything anymore, not even one sweet for a child. The cost of actually making them wasn't worth it. So it went. Frankly the present penny is now in a similar position and not worth the trouble. Look for it's demise sooner rather than later.

There was a pound note, made of paper of course but that too became unsustainable, too expensive to justify its short paper life. A metal coin substituted it, quickly became the most counterfeited coin ever, and recently replaced by a more secure coin.

Coins originally were worth the metal they were made of, carefully arranged by size and material; bronze, silver, gold. But that long since fell away leaving coins as just a 'symbol', a token of what value the bank would redeem it at.

For many years now, credit (and debit) cards have been rising in popularity, and though not everyone's cup of tea, they have their good points. These are just plastic coins, symbols, tokens with a couple of big advantages.

Firstly, it's very useful that their value can be varied, up to £45 for contactless at the moment. But the overwhelming plus point is they weigh next to nothing! They don't fill wallets and purses. So, the 'plastic money' has it!

And then along came COVID. We needed to handle coin with rubber gloves (and they

were in short supply). Contactless Credit and debit cards were near perfect and came to the rescue. Electronic bank transfers are also rising sharply; I can do one from my home computer. The mint has cancelled most new coins, banks & post-offices don't want them.

Actually, for a few years now, the mint has been relying on collectors for its revenue, producing more and more 'commemorative' coins, up to 10 different £5 specials in a year; an alphabet of 10p coins with the same images 2 years running. A couple of years ago they had to admit that their new £20, £50 and £100 coins(!) would not be redeemed at that face value! A revelation! Aren't they legal tender? What does 'legal tender' mean? Apparently, it only means you can pay your fines in court with it...

Back with the paper money, the £5, £10 and £20 notes have had to be replaced with polythene versions that are more secure. A sign of the times! Security has impacted on the £50 note which is not popular because people don't trust it. The new poly' version out this summer might help that.

Now that banking crisis after pandemic crisis has conspired to close bank branches, the writing is on the wall for cash, certainly for metal and even paper in time. (There are cash cards now for children!)

Bernie Stevens

OUR SERVICES

Our worship in church is subject to the Covid rules and Elders' wish to keep everyone safe, so please understand our plans may change with little notice.

We may sometimes have a speaker and sometimes a simple in-house led service. We usually send a paper based service by email or post for use outside the sanctuary. Video conferencing continues and Leaders /readers may Zoom in or perhaps read in church from one of the three different lecterns.

Duties are performed by a small team on a rota system.

Date	6 JUN	13 JUN	20 JUN	27 JUN
Service	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Communion
Time	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am
Leaders	In House	Sandy Smith	In House	Rev Peter Sharp
Reader	B Platt	M Hardie	H Elsdon	P Grieve
Elder Duty	A Stevens	B Stevens	D Phillips	P Oliver
Notes				ANNIVERSARY & GIFT DAY

CHURCH REGISTERS - none

LECTIONARY FOR JUNE

6 JUN: Genesis 3.8-15; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 4.13-5.1; Mark 3.20-35

13 JUN: Ezekiel 17.22-24; Psalm 92.1-4,12-15; 2 Corinthians 5.6-10(11-13)14-17; Mark 4.26-34

20 JUN: Job 38.1-11; Psalm 107.1-3,23-32; 2 Corinthians 6.1-13; Mark 4.35-41

27 JUN: Solomon 1.13-15; 2.23-24; Lamentations 3.22-33; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8.7-15; Mark 5.21-43

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Late one night the phone rang, and the wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?" "He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?" she asked.

"Well, both really!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"

The Post Card

A post card from you sent to me
Causes me to smile with glee!
I can't have the blues
As I read the news
Of your time with the sun and the sea!

I love how it lands on the mat
So it's there when I hang up my hat;
And no more time passes
Ere I reach for my glasses
And happily read all your chat!

A message by text's not the same.
And Facebook is all just a game.
I know some will say
It's the new modern way,
But the lack of a card? It's a shame!

By Nigel Beeton

Your Sudoku solution...

4	7	5	9	6	1	2	8	3
2	3	9	7	4	8	1	6	5
1	6	8	3	2	5	4	7	9
7	8	4	1	5	9	3	2	6
9	5	2	6	3	4	7	1	8
6	1	3	2	8	7	5	9	4
3	9	7	5	1	6	8	4	2
5	4	1	8	9	2	6	3	7
8	2	6	4	7	3	9	5	1

Last date for JULY copy is 20 June 2021

Published & Printed by Alison & Bernie Stevens
01625 877 180 swannlanebookings@gmail.com swannlanesecretary@gmail.com

©CH URC 2021

Parts may be ©Rootsontheweb or ©Parish Pump or ©REFORM (URC magazine)