

CH URC NEWS

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



Partnership Ministers:
Dr Marion Tugwood Jonnie Hill Kate Gray
swannlaneminister@gmail.com

MAY 2022

FRIENDS

The Ascension

This month at Ascension Day, we remember Jesus ascending to 'God's right hand' (1 Peter 3:22). It's a somewhat neglected Christian festival, taking place on a Thursday, 40 days after Easter. However, this phrase is used in three different contexts in the New Testament.

Sitting at God's right hand

Jesus occupies a position of power and authority at the centre of the universe, 'exalted to the right hand of God' (Acts 2:33). This position was secured by His death and resurrection, enabling us to experience the life of heaven, including eternal life, forgiveness, healing and the power to transform lives and communities. Is this our expectation and experience?

Standing at God's right hand

Our experience of heaven is only partial because of the presence of suffering and disappointment in our lives. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, saw Jesus 'standing at the right hand of God' (Acts 7:56), when being stoned to death. Do we see that Jesus is on the throne and has a purpose for our lives, even when we are going through setbacks and difficulties? As a result of Stephen's death, the church grew and the apostle Paul was impacted. Where do we see the fruit of the suffering in our lives?

Praying at God's right hand

Finally, we are told that Jesus is 'interceding for us' at God's right hand (Romans 8:34 & Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is on our side at the heart of the universe and fully knows our needs when praying for us. He is for us, even when we feel defeated by the wrong things in our lives. How does this help us now?

So where has Jesus gone? Because He is in heaven, the Ascension opens up the possibility that we can experience the life of heaven, both now and in eternity.

Canon Paul Hardingham
~Internet

NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

Our thoughts are with those in our fellowship and friends who are finding life a struggle physically, those who are burdened with anxieties and those who mourn. We think especially of the family of Jean Mirams whose funeral Bernie conducted on 25 APR at Stockport crematorium and our prayers are with Hugh, Barbara, Fraser, Janet, sister Barbara and all their families at this difficult time.

We were well supported by our in-house worship leaders, Sandy and Bernie, and visiting preachers over the Easter period. On Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we opened up Zoom at Church in order to be involved when our Partnership ministers, Rev Jonnie Hill and Rev Marion Tugwood led worship from Altrincham and Bramhall. On Easter Sunday we were pleased to welcome back Rev Peter Sharp and services in April were finalised by Prof Chris Whitehead from Bramhall on 24 April. Thank you all for your leadership and support.

We wish Vera Lees all the very best after her recent 'house move' - her previous landline number has now been connected. Otherwise, if you would like details of her new address, please contact Alison.

Our best wishes go to everyone who will be celebrating their birthday in May.

The News Team

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COFFEE MORNING
Saturday 7 MAY

in aid of **Lifeshare**

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CHURCHES TOGETHER

At the March Elders' meeting, it was decided that we would join in with other churches in Cheadle Hulme to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in June whilst our own Church celebrations this year would concentrate on the URC 50th birthday in October. All Saints are making plans for the Jubilee and we will look to support them at that time and I believe that something is being planned on Swann Lane which we could also support once more details are known.

Alison Stevens



LINK TO HOPE SHOEBOXES 2022

In order to continue momentum before the autumn, during May, we are looking to concentrate on soap/flannel, shampoo, razors, toothpaste & toothbrushes, small scissors. The benefactors of our shoe boxes is the corner of Europe faced with war. Thank you.

Bernie Stevens

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

The highlight of the month was a talk with music and poetry given by Elva on "Spring". We all enjoyed it very much and look forward to another talk later in the year. Thanks go to Elva and Anne and also to Mary's granddaughter for baking us some delicious cookies.

We also passed a leisurely afternoon watching "Quartet", it's the quietest meeting we have ever had! We are hoping to see Vera back soon after her move to Dutton Court and a bout of Covid. We are still meeting every Wednesday at 1.30 at Mavis's.

Carole Davies

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15 – 21 MAY

Once again this year, there will be no House to House **collection** of Christian Aid envelopes but they will be delivered in the same way as usual (so I will be asking for volunteers!), and each envelope will have details of how to donate electronically or the address of the nearest Church in Cheadle Hulme where envelopes can be dropped off if people prefer to do it that way.

The sponsored walk will be held in Lyme Park on **Saturday 28 May** and I will be looking for sponsors in due course.

If you would like any more information about Christian Aid Week or you can help in any way just have a word with me.

Sandy Smith

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THE FUTURE

DEAR FRIENDS, At the recent church meeting, I reported on an Elders meeting that had looked at the future for Cheadle Hulme URC, including the things that we are good at, the things we'd like to see in the next few years and what resources we might need. We also thought about the "rule of seven" (not a new Covid measure!) – research in the late 1990's that shows a person needs to make seven quality contacts with the church (it's people, not the building) before they will consider attending a service of worship – and what that means for all contacts with others.

That is an ongoing conversation, and there is the need for prayer so that together – elders and church meeting – we can discern what God is saying. I introduced the following Prayer Pointers.

There are seven, so if you would like to, you can pray around one each day of the week. Of course, it is up to you how you go about it, but it is important that we are all part of the prayer life of the church, especially as we navigate our way out of the pandemic.

1. Seek God's guidance for the future - what should the church focus on? What do we hold on to, what do we give up?
2. Pray for each other, for members of the congregation and their journey of faith
3. Pray for inspiration for the elders meeting – that the Holy Spirit will be in their discussions and in the ideas that they bring to the church meeting
4. Pray for courage to invite people – to both social events and to worship.
5. Pray for opportunities to develop relationships with people who use the premises so that they feel they are part of the church family, so that they feel that they can come along to worship – particularly around festivals – Harvest, Christmas, Easter
6. Pray for opportunities to join in with local initiatives – what is going on in Cheadle Hulme? What are the local issues that we might get involved with?
7. Pray for relationships with other churches in Cheadle Hulme – Don has laid some firm foundations for closer working with the other Christians in our area, the clergy are meeting regularly

and there are all sorts of possibilities for sharing in events and worship.

Don't fret about the age profile of CHURC or perceived low numbers – God hasn't finished with us yet! And God doesn't mind if our prayers are not "polished" – just pray as you feel, in your head or out loud, in a quiet time or on your morning walk, at the same time each day or just as you remember – all are acceptable to God.

Here is a prayer to start us off.....

Living God,

We thank you for the life and witness of Cheadle Hulme URC, for all the people who have brought us to this time and this place. We thank you for good buildings to share with the community and ask that you would show us how to make the best use of our resources.

We thank you for our current elders and pray that you will bless them with wisdom and that ability to discern your will and your way for the next steps in work for your Kingdom. We thank you for members of the congregation and pray for one another; the people we know well and the ones we don't. We pray that together we will be good witnesses to the Good News of Jesus alive in the world. Help us to be willing to invite our friends and neighbours to social events and to worship.

We thank you for opportunities to work with others; those who hire our premises, those who are active in the local area and the other Christians in Cheadle Hulme. Show us how to make the most of the possibilities that come our way.

Living God, enthuse and inspire us to be your people, we pray in Jesus name and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev Marion Tugwood

PARTNERSHIP

The steering group is now catching up on 'normal' business following organising the call and acceptance to the ministerial team of Rev Kurauone Mutimwii. We will be considering financial and our constitution matters.

Bernie

EDITORIAL

Emerging from the shadows of the pandemic, we are faced daily with the news of war in Europe with its humanitarian catastrophe. But many other crisis around the world continue whose news has been overshadowed. World trade and supply line problems seem secondary but ultimately will impact most especially in developing countries.

Whilst we could see the pandemic at least eased the climate problem a little, one cannot say the same of the selfish actions of a couple of hundred Russian elites for political purposes. More dead Russian soldiers than even Ukrainian civilians is quite an achievement, but even they will not be happy with the present outcome... which might in their frustration lead to the unthinkable... food for thought.

We pray most earnestly that the situation stabilises, that the killing ceases and families can be reunited.

Bernie Stevens

The Refugee

All that I was, I no longer am
All that I have, I hold in my hand
My home, my love, my world are all gone
One among thousands, I shuffle along.

Only last week I knew who I was
All that has gone, and only because
Someone in a land a long way away
Turned life into hell one terrible day.

He started a war, his heart icy cold
He rained down his hell on the young and the old
I ran for my life for I had no choice
And nobody heard the fear in my voice.

Everything's gone, and all that is 'me'
Summed up in a word – the word 'refugee'.
I have no control, no say in my fate
Just one in a crowd, I stand and I wait.

Waiting for what? The future's unclear,
For armed men have taken all that I held dear
Along with my hopes, and all I had planned
All swept away by the tanks in my land.

One thing alone puts a smile on my face
A far nicer stranger has come to this place;
A bed for the night? A cup of hot tea?
And - best of all - someone who sees me as me.

By Nigel Beeton

JEAN MARGARET MIRAMS

Born on 17 September 1930 in Llandaff, Cardiff, Jean would often stay with friends or relatives including her grandparents and her uncle.

In 1938, the family moved to Rubery in Birmingham where she went to a private 'Dame School' and later Lawrence's College in Birmingham. In the last year of the war, having witnessed bombings in Birmingham, Jean would practice drilling with the Air Training Corps on the college rooftop preparing for entry to the RAF.

In their teens, Jean and her sister Barbara joined the St Agnes Church youth club where they were prominent soloists, appearing in many G&S type productions. They were both also in the Queensbridge Operatic Society which is still based in Kings Heath to this day.

Jean's first job was for an optician followed by work at a City Stockbrokers where she gained respect in what was very much a 'man's world'. Her final post was with the CEGB, choosing to give it up when she married Don, became a mother and moved to Solihull.

In the early sixties, they moved to Cheadle Hulme and with her close friend, Win Harris, Jean was a supporter of the Players Dramatic Society for many years.

Like many of the wartime generation Jean was independent and good at sewing, knitting, gardening, decorating and learnt how to cook on a budget. She was also a very able car driver and having last driven this January, she achieved a totally accident-free driving history.

Jean went to Keep Fit and Art classes for some years and loved her singing in the Church choir until in later years.

I remember happy holidays in Anglesey and the Isle of Arran, crazy Christmases, playing games late into the night – scrabble, Pit, monopoly – listening to vinyl 45's and always a warm welcome with an invitation to stay at No5.

Jean Mirams - friend, daughter, sister, grandmother, great grandmother, niece, aunt, great aunt, mother and mother-in-law.

**Taken from eulogy
by Chris Hunter (nephew)**

SUDOKU

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

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HUMOUR

Parking space

Angus had a meeting and couldn't find a parking place. So, he said "Lord, take pity on me and I will go to church every Sunday and give up whisky."

Miraculously, a parking place appeared but Angus looked up saying, "Never mind. I found one."

Not expecting this

A young minister took his wife to maternity expecting a long labour. He rang at lunchtime but wrongly got the cricket club: "I brought my wife to your place earlier. Is there any news?"

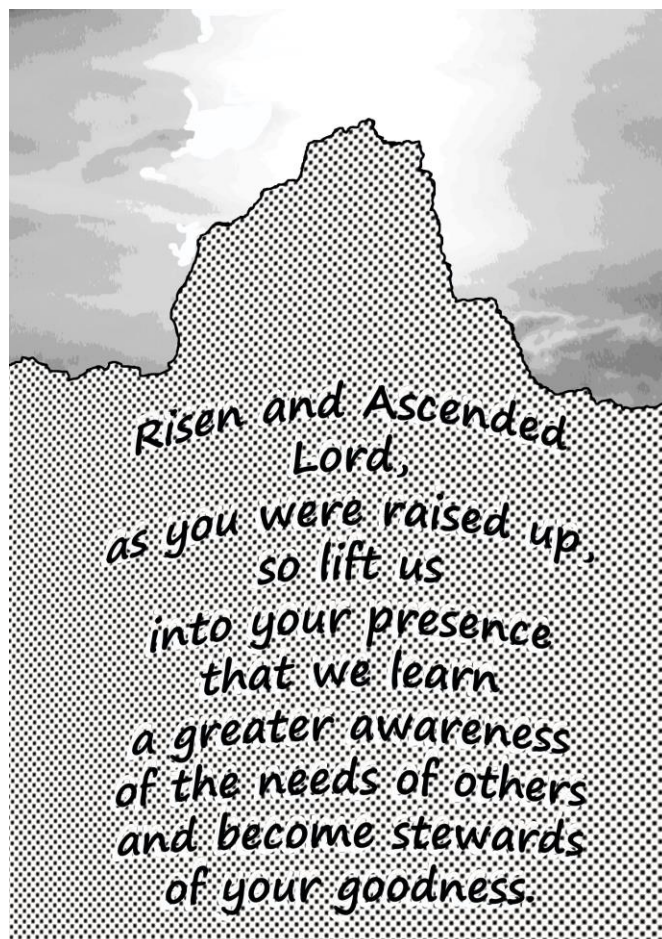
He was surprised to be told: "Yes, there's 4 out and the last two were ducks."

Parish Pump

ASCENSION DAY

The Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, also called Ascension Day, Ascension Thursday, or sometimes Holy Thursday, commemorates the Christian belief of the bodily Ascension of Jesus into heaven. It is one of the ecumenical (i.e., universally celebrated) feasts of Christian churches, ranking with the feasts of the Passion, of Easter, and Pentecost. Following the account of Acts 1:3 that the risen Jesus appeared for 40 days prior to his Ascension. Ascension Day is traditionally celebrated on a Thursday, the fortieth day of Easter ; although some Christian denominations have moved the observance to the following Sunday.

Bernie Stevens



JOIN THE FAMILY

What does MEMBERSHIP in the URC mean?

Being a church member means joining the family of Christians, a community of people believing in God. Being part of this family encourages us in our faith working together to show God's love and mercy to the world.

The URC **welcomes all** to attend its worship and other activities, and all who attend are part of the community and life of the church. Becoming a member of the URC, **includes you in its decision-making**.

Who can become a member?

Our membership is diverse. Drawn from all parts of society, membership is open to anyone who wants to follow Jesus Christ.

If you are baptised, you will be asked to acknowledge your faith in God and Jesus Christ. If you have not been baptised previously, we will include an act of baptism. The local church will prepare you for this so that you understand the promises you are making and then will welcome you.

'Memberships' and 'baptisms' are transferable between churches and between denominations.

What are the origins of the URC?

The United Reformed Church is a Christian Trinitarian church (Father, Son & Holy Ghost) whose theological roots are Calvinist and is part of the reform movement throughout the world.

The URC resulted from a union of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales in 1972, with the Re-formed Association of Churches of Christ in 1981, and with the Congregational Union of Scotland in 2000.

The URC believes strongly in our unity with other Christians and seeks to bring all Christians together, called Ecumenism.

What are the aims and goals of the URC?

The URC strives to be a hospitable and **inclusive** church where all, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or social class are warmly welcomed into the life of the Church, its worship and pastoral care.

The URC supports movements and charities working for justice and peace, including Fairtrade, Christian Aid (through its [Commitment for Life](#) programme) and in partnership with the Council for World Mission.

Local congregations support these and other organisations, including homeless shelters, food banks, environmental and other community programmes at local and national levels.

The URC seeks to glorify God through worship, prayer, Christian friendship and Bible study. It also explores how best to serve God locally, regionally and nationally.

How is the URC run?

Acknowledging Christ as the head of the Church, the URC makes its decisions corporately when its members meet formally in councils. There are three different levels of decision making in the URC. These consist of the local Church Meeting, the Synod, which brings together representatives of local churches in a geographical area, and the General Assembly, representing the whole of the Church in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Leadership and pastoral care in a church are generally shared by ministers and elders who are elected by church members. The congregations hold Church Meetings which are usually open to all, though only members may vote. Prayerful discussion takes place before important decisions.

What are my responsibilities as a member?

Members are encouraged to share in the life of the local church. Most do this by participating in weekly worship, attending Church Meetings, contributing financially to the work of the church, and taking part in its activities.

If you feel you might want to become a member of a local church, and would like to know more, have a word with the minister, an elder or another member, who will be only too happy to advise you and guide you.

If you would like to be a part of shaping the continuing life of the United Reformed Church, we warmly welcome you.

URC website

SERVICES

Elders' wish to keep everyone safe, so please wear masks (especially for singing) and understand our plans may change with little notice.

We may sometimes have a speaker and sometimes a simple in-house led service. Video conferencing continues and Leaders or readers may Zoom in or speak in church, from one of the 3 lecterns.

Duties are performed by a small team on a rota. Please check the board for swaps.

Date	1 MAY	8 MAY	15 MAY	22 MAY	29 MAY
	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am
	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Communion	Morning Worship
Leader	Sandy Smith	Glyn Elsden/ Alison Stevens	Prof Chris Whitehead	Margaret Dexter-Brown	Bernie Stevens
Duty Elder	D Phillips	S Smith	B Stevens	Smith/Phillips	P Oliver
Door Duty					
Reader	J Hodson	M Hardie	M Morton	H Elsden	TBC
Flowers	Fellowship Circle	M Smithers	H Elsden	TBC	M Morton
Coffee	D Green	C Davies	M Hardie	H Elsden	M Morton
Notes				Holy Communion	

CHURCH REGISTERS - FUNERAL

JEAN MARGARET MIRAMS, who died on 24 March 2022 aged 91 yrs, at Stockport Crematorium on Mon 25 April 2022

LECTIONARY FOR MAY 22

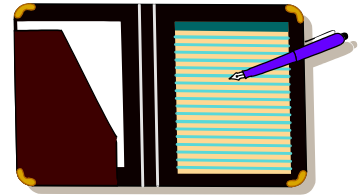
1 MAY: Acts 9.1-6,(7-20); Psalm 30; Revelation 5.11-14; John 21.1-19
 8 MAY: Acts 9.36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7.9-17; John 10.22-30
 15 MAY: Acts 11.1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21.1-6; John 13.31-35
 22 MAY: Acts 16.9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21.10,21.22-22.5; John 5.1-9
 29 MAY: Acts 16.16-34; Psalm 97; Revelation 22.12-14,16-17,20-21; John 17.20-26

SUDOKU - answers

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

CALENDAR

.....to the best of the editor's knowledge, unless you know better.....



MAY

Fri	01	2 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat	02		
Mon	02		
Tues	03		
Wed	04		
Thu	05	7.30 pm	Worship Group meeting (Zoom)
Fri	06	2 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat	07	10 am ~ noon	COFFEE MORNING in aid of Lifeshare
Mon	09		
Tues	10		
Wed	11	1.30 ~ 3.00 pm	Fellowship Circle – 5 Swann Grove
Thu	12		
Fri	13	2 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat	14		
Sun	15	CHRISTIAN AID WEEK BEGINS	
Mon	16		
Tues	17	11 am Elders' meeting	7 pm CTCH meeting – St Ann's
Wed	18	1.30 ~ 3.00 pm	Fellowship Circle – 5 Swann Grove
Thu	19		7.30 pm Partnership Steering Group
meeting			
Fri	20	2 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat	21	CHRISTIAN AID WEEK ENDS	
Mon	23		
Tues	24		
Wed	25	1.30 ~ 3.00 pm	Fellowship Circle – 5 Swann Grove
Thu	26		
Fri	27	2 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat	28	CHRISTIAN AID WALK in Lyme Park	
Mon	30		
Tues	31		

Last date for JUNE copy is 15 MAY 2022

Published & Printed by Alison & Bernie Stevens 01625 877180
 swannlanesecretary@gmail.com swannlanebookings@gmail.com

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