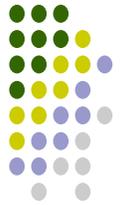


Wendover Free Church July 2020



A blessing used at the end of worship on Sunday 16th June 2019 (and worth repeating in 2020!):

May the name of Jesus be forever on our lips;
May the mission of Jesus be forever in our hands and our feet;
And may the love and power of Jesus be forever in our hearts.



ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Please send in news and details of special celebrations to Christine Wright
candgxwright@msn.com
01296 624084
Next month's deadline will be Monday 20th July.

It is with sadness that we record the deaths of David (Dai) Barling, who died on Friday 8th May, and of Jan French who died on Tuesday 16th June.

We will miss both of these friends who enriched our fellowship so much.

We send our love and condolences to their families and close friends.

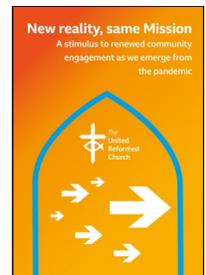
THE COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION



CWM, our focus for Mission Prayers this month, is a world-wide partnership of churches in mission and includes the United Reformed Church (URC) as one partner. CWM brings a global perspective to our thinking about mission. What have partners across the world got to say about the current pandemic?

Collin Cowan, CWM General Secretary says, 'Covid-19 has exposed the undeniable interconnectedness of peoples all across the world; and it has revealed how foolish we have been to allow racism, patriarchy, nationalism and other forms of ideologies of supremacy and prejudice to stand in the way of our relationship with one another. Now in this hour of coronavirus pandemic, we realise how much we need each other and, indeed, how enriching it is to serve and humbling to be served.'

- ◇ The Church of South India is actively involved in relief efforts.
- ◇ In Jamaica, the United Church has hosted *Covid-19: The Economic Fallout and Recovery*, an online public economic forum.
- ◇ The South African President has hosted a national day of prayer, acknowledging the great contribution the faith community is making in the fight against the virus.
- ◇ The URC has released "New Reality, Same Mission", a booklet aimed at stimulating renewed community engagement as we emerge from lockdown.



We pray for our brothers and sisters in churches across the world, as we all seek to respond in our own context with the same news of God's love for everyone.

'The church is open!'

This is how I started the reflection on 'the church in lockdown'



that I prepared for a URC area AGM at the beginning of June. And while looking at some of the effects of lockdown on our churches, I played with the word 'lockdown', suggesting that perhaps what church was like before this pandemic hit us, was more locked down than we are now.

It felt like we were stuck in our ways, doing the same thing over and over again. And was it really doing what it needed to? Was it really working towards achieving our aims? But, since the pandemic, church has moved outside its buildings, we are scattered in the community.

And although it is terribly hard not to be able to see each other and gather, we've been forced to start to think differently. We are connecting through phone calls and worship sheets, through the internet and our devices, and relationships have been strengthened. We are present online and connecting with people who previously couldn't join us. And there are new opportunities for serving the lonely and needy in our communities. Sometimes it is good to get the opportunity to start over - a bit like moving house, or changing job; you get the chance to change things, to

stop things that were unhelpful, to clear out some of that clutter, or to start doing things

that you've longed to do for years.

Over the next couple of weeks we'll be continuing with the 'Frontline' series, exploring where our Frontlines are and how we can be Jesus' disciples there. I think this continues to be relevant, even if our Frontlines change somewhat as lockdown eases off. This series will finish on the 12th July and we'll share communion that Sunday.

After this series we'll be starting a series on prayer. I would like us to explore together some of the biblical wisdom on prayer, because prayer is as important to our spiritual lives as breathing is for our physical bodies. Listening to God, spending time with him, talking to him about our needs and concerns is fundamental for our lives as disciples of Jesus, and yet sometimes we can become bogged down or discouraged as we try to pray. I hope that this series will help us all to take a fresh look at prayer and how it can energise & inspire us. With every blessing during this strange time. Please stay safe and connect with each other.

Grace and peace to you all,

Remco

TOGETHER BUT APART

We hope that everyone is well and are keeping safe, even while rules are being relaxed and some of us are able to reconnect with some of our loved ones. It has been a very strange time and it is not over yet. So let us hang in there and continue to support one another as we continue to be church.

There has been no church meeting since February and as this is an important part of our

life together, a meeting is being planned for Sunday 19th July at 3pm using Zoom. Remco is working on a write-up on what Council has been discussing and some questions for everyone to think about before the meeting. You may have received these details with this newsletter. Please give careful consideration to this and respond as you are able.

The Association of English Cathedrals has shared the following:

A prayer in lockdown

The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked. (John 20.19)

Ever present God, be with us in our isolation,
be close to us in our distancing, be healing in our sickness,
be joy in our sadness, be light in our darkness,
be wisdom in our confusion,
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,
that when the doors reopen

we may with the zeal of Pentecost inhabit our communities
and speak of your goodness to an emerging world.

For Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

