

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR



# CGW NEWS



May 2021

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Contributions for the **next Newsletter** should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021** to  
[wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com)  
Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601  
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## Sunday Services and Church Activities

Please see page 20 for the arrangements this month.

**There is a Circuit Zoom Service usually at 10:30 each week:**  
(for access to these please contact Rev Keith Underhill)

**Texts for Services at home for each Sunday are posted on the websites.**

**Grove web site** is found from [www.wantab.org.uk](http://www.wantab.org.uk)

**Wantage web site** [www.wantagemethodist.org.uk](http://www.wantagemethodist.org.uk)

**Circuit web site** [www.wantab.org.uk](http://www.wantab.org.uk)

**Circuit YouTube channel**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t\\_ZQt0w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t_ZQt0w)

Each week Wesley's Chapel in London will continue to live-stream worship, adapted for no physical congregation.

Service times: Wednesday 12:45, Thursday 12:45, Sunday 9:45 and 11:00.

All these services will be available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA>

More information about all of this can be found at

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

## From the Manse.....

This year both Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday fall on the same day, 23rd May. At the heart of both are those divine moments when the moving of God's spirit brings a transformational experience from which the message of God's love for all goes forth into the world to dramatic effect.

From the tongues of fire resting on those scared and frightened disciples to John Wesley's warmed heart, the change was profound. The reluctant John Wesley now found he had the assurance he so craved, and those disciples were emboldened to leave the safety of their sanctuary.

As individuals and as churches, Pentecost and Aldersgate remind us of our heritage and history and remind us to continue to allow God's spirit to move in and through us.

Pentecost and Aldersgate are often seen as the birthdays of the church and of the Methodist movement respectively and they give us both time and space to reflect on what it means to be a follower of Jesus today from within a Methodist perspective. We have spoken a lot recently about "A Methodist Way of Life" and it appears that locally as well as further afield, it seems to have unintentionally ruffled some feathers.

I would like to assure you that "A Methodist Way of Life" is not a check list of things that we must do in order to be good followers or Methodists - far from it. Nor are we going to judge or be judged by how we measure up to it. Rather, it is an intentional opportunity to participate in a rhythm and way of life that encourages us all to respond to God's love and, in so doing, to live and express that in the life of the church and of the world.

"A Methodist Way of Life" is not compulsory nor is it mandatory - it simply an invitation and like so much of life and faith it is down to each individual as to how they respond.

Often when we are asked to make promises in church, we respond by saying "with God's help, we will" and in doing so acknowledge who we are and what is being asked of us. The same applies to "A Methodist Way of Life", where it says "as far as we are able, with God's help.... we will" this is not a council of perfection by any means, but rather an attempt to help us in our discipleship.

"A Methodist Way of Life" seeks as far as we are able and with God's help to follow a rhythm that covers "Our Calling".

In worship

- We will **pray** daily.
- We will **worship** with others regularly.
- We will **look and listen for God** in Scripture, and the world.

In learning and caring

- We will **care** for ourselves and those around us.
- We will **learn more** about our faith.
- We will **practise** hospitality and generosity.

In service

- We will **help people** in our communities and beyond.
- We will **care for creation** and all God's gifts.
- We will **challenge** injustice.

In evangelism

- We will **speak** of the love of God.
- We will **live** in a way that draws others to Jesus.
- We will **share** our **faith** with others.

Why is this important? Why is this being seen as such a priority by the Methodist Connexion and our District? The answer is quite simple, in order that we may be a blessing within and beyond God's Church, for the transformation of the world.

I commend "A Methodist Way of Life" to you as we reflect on what it means to be followers of Jesus this Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday.

With love and God Bless

*Keith*

## Northampton District Synod – April 2021

### God in Love Unites Us – Report of the Marriage and Relationships Task Group

This report was sent down by Conference for discussion across the local churches with provisional resolutions for formal debate and recorded voting by the Synods.

This was discussed and debated with great care, openness and sensitivity during Synod on April 24<sup>th</sup>. This was ably facilitated by Rev Helen Cameron, the Chair of the District. We can report that Synod approved the resolutions with majorities in favour ranging between 95% and 80%

Both the discussion and the voting figures will inform the debate and decisions that will take place at this year's Conference, which meets in Birmingham from 24<sup>th</sup> June - 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**Reflect** (Methodists supporting spirituality and retreats) are holding a Reflect online Quiet Morning on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> or Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May. This is to mark Aldersgate Sunday, the day of John Wesley's famous 'warmed heart' experience. The morning reflection will be exploring, through guided meditation Wesley's faith development and the meaning of the warmed heart both for him and for today's disciples. It will be led by Rev Judith Jessop, a Reflect member and Methodist presbyter based in Sheffield.

All are warmly invited. Please see [reflect web-site](#), [www.reflectretreats.co.uk](http://www.reflectretreats.co.uk) for further information or email [chair@reflectretreats.co.uk](mailto:chair@reflectretreats.co.uk) if you would like to attend.

Second, if you have had a look at our website recently, you will see it has been revised and updated. This has been done by Sally Rush, a Reflect member based at Wesley's Chapel, London. Sally would like to receive from Reflect members any poems, articles, and particularly photos, that you can send her. Do get in touch with her at [sally@reflectretreats.co.uk](mailto:sally@reflectretreats.co.uk)

### **Ad hoc Walkers**

The proposed Winter Walkers group didn't get off the ground as we had lockdown (again). As we are currently allowed to walk in groups of six, here goes again. If you would like to have a bit of company on a walk, please email June Grunwald, [jnurdglaw@live.co.uk](mailto:jnurdglaw@live.co.uk), 01235 760488, giving your permission for your email to be shared with other potential walkers. If you don't have an email and like to walk, please give your permission to share your phone number with the rest of the walkers. Add any comments (short walks only, long walks preferred, particular days you are available). I will then share everyone's contact details by email.

### **Cornerstone Coffee Shop**

*John Hogston*

**CORNERSTONE RE-OPENING** – Although we are unable to open the cafe before 17<sup>th</sup> May we will be opening the bookshop a few hours a week from **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April** to enable you to browse and buy books, cards, gifts and Traidcraft items. Opening times will initially be **Wednesday and Friday mornings only** from 10 am - 12noon. Outside these times we will still be monitoring emails and available for click and collect orders. We look forward to welcoming you back.

### **Richard Smith**

Many of you will know Richard & Sheila Smith as long time supporters of Cornerstone, regulars in the cafe and at prayer breakfast. Richard sadly passed away recently.

### **Fighting climate change**

If anyone watched the film 'The boy who harnessed the wind' you will have seen how countries in Africa swing from extreme drought to damaging floods, and if you have not seen the film, imagine how those conditions would affect your garden or allotment!

This year Christian Aid is hoping to raise funds during Christian Aid week to provide communities across Kenya with **a reliable source of water** to enable people to grow their vegetables, keep livestock and protect their families. This has become even more critical as handwashing with soap and water is vital to stay safe against the virus.

Christian Aid is now partnering with Anglican Development Services Eastern to ensure more people have the water they need to live, both now and in the future.

Their work supports building bigger earth dams to harvest more water, growing drought tolerant crops, and demanding that governments prioritise climate justice.

Therefore every gift will help communities battling the worst of this climate crisis and allow families the opportunity to make lasting change for future generations.

Our Wantage Christian Aid committee decided that last year, 2020, would be the final house to house collection for Christian Aid due to the changing ways that people give to charity, and also through the lack of collectors. However, we would still like to hold a collection in our churches and there will be individual fund raising events to support once the restrictions caused by the current pandemic allows them.

Wantage Methodist church opens on May 23<sup>rd</sup> but the envelopes will have been put out during Christian Aid week and will still be there. These will be collected in church, or you can deliver your envelope to our Christian Aid Treasurer, Alison Jestico at 18 Donnington Place, Wantage, OX12 9YE.

Anyone who is not ready to return to church but would like an envelope, please ask Alison Phillips or Carolyn Roche for one which will be delivered to you and arrangements for collection made.

The Oxford branch of Christian Aid has now closed, so please make any cheques to Christian Aid as they now have to go to their central office.

Thank you for reading this, and for looking after our global neighbours as well as we look after each other in our prayers and in our giving.

## Climate Justice for All - COP26

A youth-led campaign calling on the global Methodist family to take climate action in the run up to the UN's COP26 is launched today by a group of workers from Uruguay, Britain, Italy, Zambia and Fiji.

'Climate Justice for All' (CJ4A for short) is a campaign which invites Methodist communities all over the world to engage in the issue of the climate crisis and declare 'we believe in climate justice for all'.

"The message of the campaign, 'we believe in climate justice for all', is so important because as Methodist people we want to remember John Wesley's declaration that God's love was for all and we wanted to make clear that when we seek climate justice it is not just for a small number of individuals but for all." Camila Ferreiro, Uruguayan CJ4A Worker.

"We believe that, for climate justice for all to be a reality, communities on the front lines of the climate crisis need to be equipped with the right resources and there also needs to be fairness through the highest emitters being the most ambitious in reducing their carbon usage to net zero." James Appleby, British CJ4A Worker.

The campaign is asking Methodist communities to do three things in the run up to COP26: **listen, call and commit.**

"First we will listen because as a team we realized that telling our own stories and listening to others was an important tool for learning about and responding to the effects of the climate crisis. Second, we will call because we knew that it was not enough to just talk about climate justice within our Methodist communities but take that message out to our political representatives. Third, we will commit because it ensures that, as communities make personal commitments to enact change within their own contexts, the work of the campaign is sustained after the COP and change is truly embedded in the lives of Methodist communities." Iemaima Vaai, Fijian CJ4A Worker.

As part of the campaign, CJ4A are releasing monthly short films and worship resources to help tell the stories of Methodist communities who are taking action for the planet.

"This campaign is especially exciting because it offers the global Methodist family the chance to take climate action together by listening to and learning from one another about how to best care for the planet that we all share." Irene Abra, Italian CJ4A Worker.

As well as workers from five different countries, CJ4A has a volunteer network from fifteen other countries including Russia, India, Argentina, Zimbabwe and the USA.

"We have a brilliant opportunity to model the kind of global working we wish to see our leaders at COP26 doing." Mollie Pugmire, British CJ4A Worker.

COP26 is the United Nation's annual Climate Change Conference which is set to be held in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021.

The Government's recently published New Plan for Immigration gives details about a long-promised overhaul of the asylum system. The proposals are described as aiming to increase the fairness of the asylum system and deter illegal entry into the UK. However, many of the measures risk creating more injustices in the system which will increase the trauma and pain experienced by asylum seekers attempting to reach safety in the UK. Below, we've outlined some of our concerns, and ways in which you can respond.

### **Who are asylum seekers?**

An asylum seeker is someone awaiting an outcome on their asylum claim in the UK. To be eligible to claim asylum in the UK, you must have left your country and be unable to return due to a serious and well-founded fear of persecution. This could be due to race, religion, nationality, or anything else which puts you at risk because of the social, cultural, religious or political situation in your country. Most asylum seekers are fleeing violence, war or oppressive regimes in their home country. They have often experienced trauma at home, and have also experienced traumatic circumstances on their journey.

A person becomes a refugee when their claim for asylum has been accepted. Refugees are protected under international law.

### **A two-tiered system**

One major proposed change is that the route via which someone arrives in the UK will determine the way a claim for asylum is processed.

If an asylum seeker arrives in the UK via a route recognised by the government, they will be granted immediate indefinite leave to remain. However, for asylum seekers who arrive in the UK via 'irregular' routes (e.g. channel crossings), their application for asylum will be automatically considered inadmissible. If they have travelled through a safe country, or have a connection to a safe country where they could have claimed asylum, the government will expect them to do so. It is important to remember that there is no international rule requiring refugees to claim asylum in the first safe country they arrive in. Neither the 1951 Refugee Convention nor EU law requires a refugee to claim asylum in one country rather than another.

The government proposes to seek rapid removal of these people who have arrived via irregular routes to another safe country. In the meantime, they will be housed in new reception centres. However, if removal from the UK is not possible, their asylum claim will be processed via the normal route. Should their claim be granted, they will be subject to a 'temporary protection status'. This means that, for a period of no longer than 30 months, refugees who have arrived by irregular routes will not have the automatic right to settle in the UK, and they will not have access to public funds (also known as NRPF), which means they will not be able to apply for mainstream welfare benefits or housing. After 30 months, the government will reassess their right to be in the UK, and seek their removal.



The government is also seeking to amend legislation to remove asylum seekers from the UK whilst their claim is being processed or an appeal is pending, to keep the option for offshore processing open.

These are incredibly worrying proposals. They establish a 'two-tier' system for asylum seekers who arrive in the UK via different routes. Some migrants will be offered support, and others denied it.

For those who arrived via an irregular route and have their claim accepted, the conditions for living in the UK will be temporary and unsupported. Life will likely continue to be unstable and unpredictable. With the risk of deportation every 30 months hanging over them, employment may be harder to come by. State support will only be provided when individuals or families are at risk of destitution.

Refugee resettlement is an important part of our response to global crises and conflicts. The government has done a good job of upholding this commitment in recent years. But the government have been vague on commitments to future resettlement, failing to name minimum targets or details of new schemes. Without this assurance, proposals to effectively punish asylum seekers who arrive via irregular routes are even more worrying. Many of those who travel to the UK via so-called 'irregular' routes have a genuine claim for asylum, which isn't reduced by the opportunities they have had to seek asylum in a safe place. Whilst those who transport people to the UK with no consideration for their wellbeing need to be brought to justice, these conditions will not necessarily deter smugglers. Instead, they shift the punishment to asylum seekers.

The Bible calls us to welcome the stranger and recognise the inherent value in every life created by God. The policies set out here would assign value based on how people arrive in the UK, rather than assessing the extent of their need.

By these policies, we are at risk of creating a distinction between the kind of 'strangers' we want to welcome, and those we can choose to reject.

### **Human dignity in the asylum process**

The proposals set out new rules to ensure that all relevant information to an asylum claim is disclosed at the very start of the process. The majority of asylum claims are made within a very short time period after arrival.

The 'one-stop processing' of proposals means that asylum seekers who cannot provide all relevant supporting information and documents at the start of their claim could have this held against them as their claim is processed. If they are found not to have acted in 'good faith' to provide all relevant information, this could impact the credibility of their claim. This could be information relevant to modern slavery, human rights claims and other security claims in their context.

These proposals fail to recognise the complex and often traumatic journeys many asylum seekers have gone through to arrive in the UK, notwithstanding the risk and turmoil of the situations they have fled. They do not take account of the implications of fear, abuse, or trauma. Especially with a drastically underfunded legal aid system, asylum seekers may not have the support and care they need to immediately identify and declare all of the important information which should form

part of their claim. They may not have all of the documents needed for their claim, considering the often abrupt and complicated circumstances for leaving their homeland.

These proposals are at risk of creating a process which does not sympathetically handle the complexities of each person's case. We must have an asylum system which treats people with dignity and compassion, especially when they are vulnerable. These proposals risk creating conditions which do the opposite.

### **Promoting long term flourishing of refugees in the UK**

Currently, more than half of asylum applications are accepted in the UK on initial application or appeal. The treatment of asylum seekers throughout their application process plays a big part in their opportunities to flourish, during their claim and if and when they are granted refugee status further down the line. Currently, asylum seekers who are waiting for their claim to be processed do not have the right to work. Many wait months, and even years, living on very low subsistence pay and barely making ends meet.

Individuals and families are likely to become part of our communities at some stage. Policies which hinder their wellbeing could prove detrimental to their future flourishing, and potential for healthy integration into our communities.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. – Matthew 25: 35-36

The plan contains a number of other proposals which raise genuine concern. While a fair asylum system is essential, a number of the proposals appear to stand in direct contradiction of our biblical imperative to 'welcome the stranger'. As Christians, we are called to treat everyone with the dignity and respect they deserve because of their inherent worth as God-created beings. We are invited to do so in our everyday actions and attitudes, and through the systems which structure our society. These proposals risk creating conditions which contradict this calling. As a Church which seeks to offer sanctuary, witness to God's love and stand for justice, we must speak up for human dignity and flourishing.

### **Consultation**

The UK Government has opened a 6 week consultation on these proposals, which will end on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. They are inviting individual contributions, and collective responses from organisations. **Taking the opportunity to share the importance of creating a system which promotes human dignity and fosters flourishing is an important witness of our belief in the inherent worth of all people, as created by God.**

## **A prayer as I put on my mask:**

Loving God,  
as I prepare to go into the world,  
help me to see the sacrament  
in the wearing of this cloth -  
let it be "an outward sign  
of an inward grace" -  
a tangible and visible way of living  
love for my neighbours,  
as I love myself.

Christ,  
since my lips will be covered,  
uncover my heart,  
that people would see my smile  
in the crinkles around my eyes.  
Since my voice may be muffled,  
help me to speak clearly,  
not only with my words,  
but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,  
As the elastic touches my ears,  
remind me to listen carefully -  
and full of care -  
to all those I meet.  
May this simple piece of cloth be  
shield and banner,  
and each breath that it holds,  
be filled with your love.

In your Name and  
in that love,  
I pray.

May it be so.

May it be so.

(Moderator The United Church of Canada, Rev Richard Bott) with thanks to  
Deacon Jan for offering this to us.

## **Childrey**

### **Doug Legge**

It is with sadness that we have to share the news that Doug died peacefully on 21<sup>st</sup> April after a short stay in the JR.

Doug was well known and well loved by many people within the Church family - always gentle, helpful and cheerful, and it is hard to think of Childrey Methodist Church without Doug's name immediately coming to mind.

We pray for Pat, Vicky, Robin and Becky, and his grandchildren, as well as everyone within the Childrey Church family, and ask for God's love and comfort to surround them all in their loss.

Childrey will be open for Worship on the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays** in the month :

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May**      11:00 am    led by Rev Keith Underhill

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**      11:00 am    led by Ian Sturt

### **Prayers:**

We remember in our prayers :

Pat Legge, Vicky, Robin and Becky, and the Legge family grandchildren,  
Keith & Leonora, David, Barbara, Shirley, Joy Gee, Jean  
and all those unknown to us who are in need of our help.

Christian Love to all.

THE BEST  
OF ALL IS  
GOD  
IS WITH US.

## **Grove**

**Church Anniversary** is on **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** when Rev Martin Smithson is our guest preacher. The service is to be on Zoom and we hope that many of you will be able to join with us for this special occasion. Keith will be sending out the link for the service in due course. Sadly, because of coronavirus restrictions, once again we will not be having a Church lunch together

### **Worship in May – services at Grove**

Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	10:45 am	Ian Sturt
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	10:45 am	Carol Sturt
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10:45 am	Peter Hemmings
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	10:45 am	Rev Keith Underhill

We continue to hold in our **prayers** all those who are in poor health or have other difficulties and problems compounded by the coronavirus situation. Our thoughts and prayers are especially with Eric and Judy and their family. We think of all who have been missing the close contact of their family and special friends during this past year and we are thankful that it is gradually becoming possible to meet up again, albeit outside and for limited times, as restrictions are eased.

Just by way of good news I have heard that Yotam has become a grandfather. They welcomed little George into the family on Tuesday.

**Weekly Wednesday Zoom Coffee** mornings are open to all. They are a good opportunity to keep in touch, find out news, share your thoughts and listen to what other people have to say. If you would like to join us on Wednesday mornings (usually 10.30am) please let Keith know. You will then receive a weekly invitation by email and can join in as and when you are able to. We would like to thank Keith, Ian and Roger for hosting the coffee mornings. They are much appreciated.

**Grove coffee morning fundraising:** The April Saturday coffee morning raised £140 for Freyja's fund, for which we say thank you to all. We are very grateful. It's wonderful that we can do this with technology but look forward to the time we can do it again in person. The **next** one will be on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May** in support of **Christian Aid**. This time the zoom meeting will be hosted by Roger Bett.

**Freyja's Fund.** Judith's cards raised £310. This includes commissions since January and the card sale (£120) at the end of March. So, together with the Saturday Coffee Morning in April, Judith has been able to send a total of £450 for Freyja's Fund to the J.R. Hospital. She would like to thank everyone for their very generous support.

Our new **prayer box** is being used and is proving to be a blessing to the community. We are now praying regularly for those requests both in church and with a small prayer team. Jesus always responded positively to faith and I'm sure he will honour the faith of those who have trusted us with their prayers.

# Wantage

## Morning Worship

We are still expecting to start having services **in chapel** from **Pentecost, May 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Services will commence at 10:30 am. All will be welcome but for the weeks through to June 20<sup>th</sup>, booking would be advisable to ensure we have seating available for all who wish to be there in person. We shall move to relax the distancing rules as the summer progresses in line with any advice we receive.

We have timed the restart so late because:

- May 17<sup>th</sup> is the earliest that HMG guidelines are permitting the relaxing of the rules about the number of people who can meet indoors.
- Circuit Zoom worship has been run from Wantage and it was expected to be easier to maintain this from the manse through the period from Easter to Pentecost.
- There was a need to manage our preaching resources in the circuit.

It is intended to retain the provision of hand sanitation facilities for the indefinite future. The compulsory use of face masks will be reviewed over the summer.

We shall maintain **Zoom** transmission of our services so that they are available to those who, for whatever reason, are unable to join in person. These transmissions will open at 10:15 and it would help those hosting the service if people could **log in before 10:28 please** so that they can be let in before the service starts. If you arrive later you could have to wait for the host to let you in while they deal with the start of worship and the first hymn. We are working to develop a larger technical support team for morning worship.

We promise that we shall continue to provide material for **worship at home** for those who would prefer it. We recognise that not everyone has access to internet facilities and even where they do, do not find Zoom works for them.

**Wantage Annual Church Meeting** was held on Zoom on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April.

- Church Stewards are : June Grunewald, Sue Haithwaite and Gordon Skidmore.
  - Further stewards are being sought and Church Council was given permission to appoint on the Stewards' and Minister's recommendation.
  - Thanks were expressed to Alison Phillips for her service as Church Steward as she stepped down.
- Church Council representatives from the ACM are:
  - Helen Carter, Rodney Tillotson, Diana Gawlas, Rita Lawrence, Michael Skinner, Peter Bainbridge, Jane Kent, Gill Skidmore and Heather Wells.
  - Thanks were expressed to Margaret Fordham for her service as a representative on Church Council at the end of her six year term.
- The world has changed over the gap of 18 months forced on us by CV19. Because of this the Church Stewards are reviewing the jobs that are needed for morning worship and how to do them. We need to find a way to manage

the workload so that either

- we can work with three Church Stewards or
- the Church Stewards' role is more acceptable to prospective stewards.

To this end we are developing the role of a Sunday Steward.

- We plan to explore ways of taking up the challenge of "A Methodist Way of Life".

## **Pastoral**

*Ann Barber*

The reassuring message of Christ's resurrection, filling our hearts with joy and hope, is still echoing in our hearts and minds with our celebration of Easter just a few weeks ago. Now, as we approach Pentecost and prepare again to receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit, all around us we can enjoy the unmissable signs of Springtime in all its beauty. This year on Pentecost Sunday we have an additional celebration; our Church is re-opening for Sunday morning worship. We give thanks for God's care, protection and love which have brought us safely to this point, and we now look forward with hopeful anticipation to the restored opportunities of meeting with our families and friends again.

It is good to be able to offer updates on the wellbeing of the members of our church family for whom we have had deep concern recently. Richard George has been transferred from the JR to Didcot Community Hospital, where he'll receive help in regaining mobility, and preparing eventually to return home. Pam Martin has already achieved that milestone in her recovery from the major surgery she underwent in the JR. One marker of continuing progress is the phasing out of Carers' support, and another is Pam's raised fitness status requiring her to resume washing up duties! Both Richard and Pam are very appreciative of all the messages of encouragement, support and love which they have received from their church friends.

Gill Morton has recently undergone eye surgery for the treatment of glaucoma, and is making good progress as she recovers from that procedure.

We are sorry that one of our more recent members, Margaret Watts, has had spells in hospital and unfortunately is no longer well enough to return to Fleur de Lis. We enjoyed her presence within the church family. Margaret has asked for her love to be passed on to everyone, and we wish her God's blessing in the Care Home at which she will soon be taking up residence.

It was with sadness that we have learned that one of Childrey's most loyal and longstanding members, Doug Legge, died peacefully on 21<sup>st</sup> April after a short stay in the JR. Doug was well known and well loved by many people within our Church family, recognised as a man whose deep Christian faith was reflected in his gentle, cheerful and kind manner, and the warmest of welcomes to services in Childrey Church. Doug's name immediately comes to mind whenever the name of that Church is mentioned, and he served it so well for many years, continuing his family's involvement over several generations. We pray for Pat, Vicky, Robin and Becky, and all of his grandchildren, as well as everyone within the Childrey Church family, and ask for God's love and comfort to surround them all in their loss.

Finally, on a happy note, we're aware that the end of April included a big birthday date for Eileen Rennie! We offer her our congratulations on becoming 80, and our love and warmest good wishes on this special occasion.

**Praying for each other:** In May the people listed below will be included in the prayer time which all of the members of Eileen Rennie's House-group, 'meet' to pray in their individual homes: those on **Sue Haithwaite's list:** Edwina Loftus, Celia Roser, Gloria and Ken Smith Terry Irving, Ann Twyford and Frances De-ath, and on **Julie Horton's list:** Ann and Pete Barber and Liz Underhill.

In addition to the names listed above, those in our church family, who through frailty or ill health can no longer worship with us on Sundays, will also be prayed for by name at Eileen's house-group.

## Prayer list

*Eileen Rennie*

Loving God, for the miracle of life and for your enduring love we praise you. We thank you that amidst all that happens in our daily lives, you are always there for us. We pray that you will guide us in our belief to have the courage to share your love with those we meet. There are so many ways we can share that love with others, a friendly chat, a listening ear, a sharing of our resources and so much more. We pray at this time for India and pray that other countries will look to sharing their resources to help them. We pray for the Elections in May that each one of us will consider carefully our decision as we vote and we pray that those elected will work for the good of our country as a whole. We offer all our prayers in Jesus name. Amen.

Please pray for:

Bethan Grant, Jane, Alan Bunn and family, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright and family, Anne, Betty, Alex and Brian, June Coppock, Alastair Wright and family, Caroline, Adrian, Pauline Hawkins, Charlie Webb, Eric and Judy Thomas and family, Alan Smith, Michael Clegg, Richard, June C., Howard Hill, Gill Morton, all at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors, our Ministers, Deacon, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, YMOSES, kids@church and Street Pastors. Those members of our church family who, through frailty or ill health, can no longer worship with us.

If you or the person/people you have put on the prayer list would still like to be in the June Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May** in order for me to meet the deadline. Telephone: 01235 224284 , e-mail [eileenrennie@icloud.com](mailto:eileenrennie@icloud.com) (Please note change of email address)

## Thank you

Kay, Moray and Lorna Goodwin would like to thank everyone who sent cards and messages following the death of Jack in March. We realise that not many of you knew him, so we are particularly grateful for your kind thoughts and prayers.



## **Tuesday Afternoon House Group**

*Eileen Rennie*

So the month of May dawns on us and we all hope for the cheering rays of the sun and the bountiful beauty appearing around us. That alone will be such a tonic to us all.

Although we are still unsure of when we will be able to meet physically as a group, we do look forward in faith to everything continuing to move forward slowly and cautiously. We have been keeping in touch with each other in many different ways. It is good to chat and pass on news however we can. We continue to unite in prayer each Tuesday in our own homes praying for people and situations locally and globally.

We appear to be moving in the right direction with the help of continuing restrictions and the continuing success of the rollout of the vaccine thus far. It is amazing that at the time of writing over 33 million people in the UK have received their first dose and over 11 million their second dose. We all need to play our part in adhering firmly to the guidelines in the hope that we can then advance to the next stage. We wait to hear confirmation on 17<sup>th</sup> May of the possible easing of further restrictions.

We continue to pray for the current situation and that we will all act responsibly and so look forward in faith. All our NHS Staff and Support Services still need our prayers as they still face overwhelming workloads as they fight to support all in need of additional care in so many ways.

I continue to email the group each Monday with details for our prayer time for the current week when each Tuesday although apart we will unite in prayer at 3:00 pm. Please let us know if there is someone or some situation you would like us to prayer for.

I have asked everyone in the group to consider how they see the future of the group. The Pandemic has certainly given us all a great deal of time for considering what we might do differently in order that we continue on a fruitful faith journey. When we are able to meet again in some form or other in a suitable space we will be able to discuss the ideas.

In the meantime as we get out for a little exercise, we hope that we will meet up with some familiar faces to catch up whilst still socially distancing.

We do all look forward to the time when we can all meet together again. In the meantime pleased be assured that you are all held in prayer.

If you have any queries you can contact me (Eileen Rennie) by telephone on 01235 224284 or e-mail: [eileenrennie@icloud.com](mailto:eileenrennie@icloud.com). Please note new email address.

## **Community Drop In Café**

*Eileen Rennie*

Lots of positive news continues about the roll out of the vaccine with already over 33 million people in the UK having received their first vaccine and over 11 million having received their second dose. That coupled with the return to schools and colleges after their Easter break and the reopening of non retail shops, gyms, Care Homes now allowing limited visits for families to see their loved ones etc, it is indeed

encouraging news. However we still need to be cautious and vigilant as new variants of the Covid 19 still appear to be happening.

This slightly new freedom has given us more time to enjoy the beauty of the Spring world giving us much hope and yet another thing to be truly thankful for. With our continued patience I am sure that we can look forward in faith to the time when we are eventually able to meet together. That will be a day for great rejoicing and more cake!

We are always pleased to be able to keep in touch with some of you through phone calls and also to see you sometimes when we are out for our daily exercise when we can have a socially distanced chat. We know from these contacts that many people are missing the joy of their Monday morning weekly visits. Please be assured that as soon as we have some definite news on re-opening we will be letting you know. You are all held daily in prayer.

When we are able to meet again the donations will be going to Clean Slate, a low cost, long term listening and support service for all victims of abuse and mental illness. Our sincere thanks to our willing volunteers waiting in the wings to be able to resume service again. They too have missed seeing your friendly faces and hearing your news. When normal service is resumed we look forward to welcoming you all back.

For further information contact either Eileen Rennie or June Grunwald.

### **Knit & Chat**

*Carolyn Roche, 01235 764310*



The knitted flowers made a really colourful Easter display outside the church. They have now been taken down and, thanks to June, have found a new home at Framland.

Angel knitting is continuing and I am glad to say that I have at last managed to get some finished. They are always a good thing to do while watching TV in the evening.

For those who would like a slightly larger project, some of us are knitting/crocheting baby blankets for SSNAP (Support for the Sick Newborn and their Parents) at the JR. The blankets need to be approx. 60cm x 80cm and all colours and patterns are welcomed.

Zoom Knit & Chat continues on the first and third Mondays of the month (**3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May**). Please contact Helen if you wish to join in at any time. Contact June G if you wish to join our Facebook group and keep a lookout for photos and news on the church website.

If you need wool, have any other queries or just fancy a chat do please call me.

## Property

The rear boundary wall is now made safe. The south end sections of the wall have been removed and replaced by a substantial fence.

## Users - Weekday in the Hall

It is intended to bring things back into use in a controlled way. The programme for the next few weeks is as follows:

April 29<sup>th</sup> Deep clean of the hall, parlour, kitchen, corridors and toilets.

The hall premises will then be closed to all until:

May 6<sup>th</sup> Local Elections - Hall in use as a Polling Station all day

May 14<sup>th</sup> Community Fridge in the Hall in the afternoon – then weekly until the end of August.

May 25<sup>th</sup> or later Oxfordshire MIND in the morning – then weekly.

May 28<sup>th</sup> or later Mother & Toddler group on the hall in the morning – then weekly.

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> Wantage Music Festival – closed sessions.

July 10<sup>th</sup> Caritas Workshop – day.

We are advising the regular community users to plan on a start in September.

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## Tail Waggers

*Thanks to Rev Tony Buglass on Facebook*

I caught a cold on a carousel. I think there was something going round.

A dandelion: The king of the jungle wearing a cravat.

Sometimes I relax with a large curved knife. That's a scythe of relief.

Did anyone find out what the Knights in White Satin?

I said to the air hostess, "I can't see straight". She said, "Are you intoxicated?" I said, "No, I'm in economy."

Have you seen that TV show where you run over an animal and then get it valued? Antiques Roadkill.

My banjo said to me, "I'm leaving you". I said, "Why?" He said, "Because you're always picking on me."

## DIARY for MAY

Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2:30 pm	Knit & Chat (Zoom)
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Grove Fund Raising Coffee Morning	
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>DEADLINE for JUNE NEWSLETTER</b>	
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup>	2:30 pm	Knit & Chat (Zoom)
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10:30 am	Wantage Morning Worship in Church (also on Zoom)

## Services during May

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10:30 am	Zoom Circuit Service celebrating Grove Church Anniversary led by Rev Keith Underhill with Rev Martin Smithson	
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>09:00 am</b>	Zoom	Circuit Service – Rev Keith Underhill
	10:45 am	Grove	Ian Sturt
	11:00 am	Childrey	Rev Keith Underhill
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Zoom	Circuit Service – Rev Keith Underhill
	10:45 am	Grove	Carol Sturt
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Keith Underhill
	10:45 am	Grove	Peter Hemmings
	11:00 am	Childrey	Ian Sturt
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Helen Carter
	10:45 am	Grove	Rev Keith Underhill