

ESTD 1901

The Recorder

November'20

News and views from Redland Park &
New Brunswick United Reformed Churches



www.redlandparkurc.org

New Brunswick Update

PREACHERS FOR 11 AM SERVICES

November

1st Angus Gregson	22nd Rev D. Burnett (This service may include communion)
8th Delwyn Tilke - Remembrance Sunday. Service will commence at 10.50 am	29th Brenda Munden
15th Les Fry	December 6th Angus Gregson

As in previous years we have decided to have our 'Christmas Tin' in which we can put any loose change in the weeks leading up to Christmas. The tin will be on the back table each week as from next Sunday (8th). The contents will be donated to a worthy cause. To be decided or split between a couple of causes. If you have any suggestions as to who we might support this year please let us know.

We are sorry to hear that Ivy remains in hospital awaiting a decision on the next phase of her recovery. We assure her of our thoughts and prayers.

Julie's husband, Pete, has had his operation rescheduled for next Thursday (5th). We pray that all will go well. We send our best wishes to Julie during this worrying time. She spends her love to all and is looking forward to sharing with us again soon.

We uphold Alison (from Horfield) in our prayers as she awaits a cataract operation which hopefully will happen later in the month. At present she is having to 'self isolate' for two weeks prior to the surgery.

Hazel (also from Horfield) is in hospital after a fall. She has damaged her knee and may have to have an operation. We uphold her in prayer asking God to lay His healing hands on her.

We also uphold all those known to us, family, friends and neighbours who are struggling as we continue to live in very different times. May our loving Lord minister to each as they need. May these folk know, too, that we are there for them.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Friday 13th November. We are hoping to be part of a Tear Fund Quiz. Listen out for further details in the 'notices' in the coming weeks. But put the date in your diary!

We send Happy Birthday wishes to Natalie (1st) Zac (3rd) Liz (5th). Enjoy your special days.

Vestry Vibes

by Douglas Burnett



Dear friends,

As I write we are very much in the midst of the second wave of Covid-19. While Wales has gone into a short lockdown of two weeks to act as a "circuit breaker" of two weeks, other parts of the country have gone into "Teir 3" measures which also massively restrict aspects of life and social gatherings. For us in Bristol at this time we are still in Teir 1.

As we look ahead to Christmas we are already accepting that much of our Christmas celebrations will have to be on-line. For 2020 it will be strange trying to talk about Christmas and celebration in the same sentence. The immediate reaction is that there will not be that much to celebrate. That will be true. But it is also true at the same time that we can still celebrate the action of God in Jesus Christ, even in the darkest of times. It is about hope. Hope defies what can be some harsh worldly realities:

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" v.5

That verse, of course, is part of John 1.1-14. Hope defying everyday harsh realities seem to be central to John 1, which features in every Christmas Carol Service. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it." This is a cosmic statement, as part of a majestic series of cosmic statements, that characterise those opening verses 1-5. All of those come before the point when John then focuses in on what it means to talk about the Word made Flesh. Suddenly, from the cosmic, the text focuses in on the particular and specific in verse 6:

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John."

You don't get much more specific than that! Suddenly you get the feeling that the cosmic is linked with our own particular world. It might be our own particular and everyday world, but in that world we can also see God's glory (verse 14). It is a matter of how you look at things.

I love that reading every time. It sends shivers up and down my spine. This is one of the readings that I want read when it finally comes to my own funeral. I know that sounds a bit bleak, but in faith that ending will also be a new beginning.

Of course, with all of this I realise that I am writing already about Christmas and we are not there yet. It is not December. It is only November. Am I wishing 2020 away? Well, maybe! Before we get to Christmas we have got to get through Remembrance and then all those difficult and challenging Advent texts. Getting through those is always a bit tough. But then that is all about life as it is, and it is all about waiting for something more and something better.

The date of Christmas was established by the observation that at that time of the year that the darkest and shortest days had passed, and the light was returning. That linked in with something quite fundamental in the human spirit and psyche. It is looking for something so much better than current realities. I think that that would be our prayer for what happens next in the world. Our faith says that the glory of God is there, despite appearances.

We hope that you will find something of that in the weeks ahead. The Carol Service this year will be a hybrid format. So, in church and on-line. There will still be that opportunity to sing our faith and to know that what has been real for us in years gone by is still real for the years ahead. If you are watching on-line, why not invite a friend to link in and share the experience with you? I suspect that many will do so this year who have not done so before. We will all want to know something about the light in the darkness.

Dougie

Redland Park People



Please pray for all our members and friends, and those known to us, who need our prayers at this time, whether through mental or physical health issues, financial problems, conflict, or family matters.

We pray for **Michael Kearley**, recovering from a hip operation; we hope all goes well.

We think of **Vimbai Fedrick's** mother-in-law who lives in Exeter; she is nearing the end of life and being cared for by her family.

Please pray for **Bryan Jenkins**, whose wife, son and sister-in-law have all died this year, and funerals are very restricted so it is difficult to grieve with your family.

Our cell group have been praying for the family of **Ian Baker**, who died within six weeks of a terminal diagnosis, for the family of **Sophie Connolly**, only 24 when

she died, and from our prayer box for **Mercedes** to find a safe new home, for **Iris and Billie** both with a cancer diagnosis, and for **Leah** who asks for forgiveness.

We pray for the refugees who have suffered so badly already, and were then displaced from the Moria camp when it was destroyed by fire; for all those who have been affected by the coronavirus and those who have suffered financially with the economy badly hit; for those living in conflict zones and for those trying to bring peace; and for those made homeless or in substandard housing as we go into the winter.

Please come to the next church quiz

There will be another church quiz on Friday 13 December (lucky for some!) at 7.30pm. This one will be in aid of Tear Fund, a charity supported by New Brunswick Church, and the questions will be provided by them. Donations please to Redland Park bank account 40-14-13 80690341 with Tear Fund as the reference. Andrew Hayden is kindly hosting again with Redland Park's zoom account, so details will be sent out then.

Prayer page:

"All I ask of you is this: act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God"
Micah 6:8

God, we hear the prophet's call to justice, peace and action.

We invite you to pierce our complacency, fire our hearts and strengthen our wills.

This world is hurting, broken and wounded.

Use our feet to stride towards justice.

Use our hands to bring about healing.

Use our mouths to preach Good News.

Use our gifts to usher in peace, equity, reconciliation and love.

Dear God, acting justly is not easy. Yet this is what you ask of us.

In your mercy, O God, hear our prayer. Amen



Please pray for:

- Richard and Emma, after the death of Enid, wife and mother.
- Ruth and David after their father, Walter's death.
- Brian Jenkins after recent bereavements.
- Michael Kearley as he recovers from surgery.
- Larry's mother.
- Teame and Teblez
- Malcolm and Christine.
- Alison, daughter of Brian and Wendy, as she undergoes heart surgery.
- Pat recovering from hip surgery
- The family of Sophie Connolly
- All who have not been able to join us in our zoom church services.
- Marlene and her family
- Refugees and asylum seekers.
- All living in food poverty.
- The anxious and depressed
- All whose appointments and treatments have been delayed by the pandemic.
- All NHS workers and care workers
- Volunteers and good neighbours.

God, we live in uncertain times but you are the same yesterday, today and forever. Be near to each one of your children and carry them through their time of suffering. Amen

Retirement of David Hayden as Synod Trust Investment Officer.

After 28 years service, David has now retired from his role as Synod Trust Officer.

During this time, David has served with professionalism and determination – not only through the ‘good times’ for investment, but also during periods of inflation of up to 10% (today’s figure is about 2.5%) and at least three periods of serious financial turmoil. It would have been very easy to give up at any of these difficult times.

The Reverend Ruth Whitehead, as Moderator of the Synod, has said of David, *“I have valued David’s patience in explaining financial matters to those without his expertise. It has always been clear to me that David’s work for the Synod has brought together both his financial acumen and his deep Christian faith. I will miss his ready smile.”*

The Reverend Dick Gray, Synod Treasurer, has written of David’s service as follows *David has been a stalwart of the Trust for 28 years, serving as a Trust Officer looking after the church investments and the calculation of the Ministry and Mission Fund (MMF) “fair shares” for the churches in the Synod.*

He has been a helpful colleague and has risen to many challenges particularly about possible changes to the way MMF is calculated. He has taken seriously the need to raise sufficient funds to meet the costs of the ministers and CRCWs serving in the Synod. It is a tribute to his work that we have only a very few churches who do not fulfil their obligations to MMF, and we have nearly always met the financial targets set for our contributions.

His work with the church investments has given him contact with many churches and he has responded well to the needs of churches, and encouraging churches to use more Ethical funds, which have certainly born fruit as we see the stock market falling, whilst our Ethical Investments are doing significantly better than the market as a whole.

We shall miss his considered input and we give thanks for his service to church and Synod.

Redland Park URC is proud to recognise formally David’s loyal and professional service to the Church over this time.

Dougie Burnett | John Neugebauer

Redland Park Church Calendar

Dates for November 2020

Sun 8th 10.40am Morning Worship led by Rev. Dougie Burnett
 12.30pm Korean Worship
 7.00pm Evening Worship led by members

Fri 13th 7.30pm Quiz in aid of Tearfund (via Zoom)

Sun 15th 10.40am Morning Worship led by Rev. Dougie Burnett
 12.30am Korean Worship

Sun 22nd 10.40am Morning Worship led by Rev. Ken Marsh
 12.30pm Korean Worship
 7.00pm Evening Worship led by members

Sun 29th 10.40am Morning Worship led by Rev. Dougie Burnett
 12.30pm Korean Worship

December 2020

Wed 2nd 7.30pm Elders Meeting

Sun 6th 10.40am Morning Worship with Virtual Communion
 Led by Rev. Dougie Burnett
 12.30pm Korean Worship



PRESENT

The Minister and 25 members were present. Apologies for absence had been received from 4 members.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING

All matters were covered by agenda items.

CHURCH IN SOCIETY

Carol Fry reported that the latest quiz had raised £50. The next quiz would be held in October.

Christmas items from the Traidcraft stall could be obtained by contacting Carol.

FINANCE AND PROPERTY

John Neugebauer expected the books to be reasonably healthy at year-end due to increased giving and reduced expenditure. He also did not expect to take up the offers of personal loans this year. On the other hand, the outlook for 2021 was quite uncertain.

He also reported, with thanks, a generous legacy left by Ernest Gudgeon which will be held on deposit until a decision is made regarding its use, likely to be in Spring next year. John confirmed that neither Ernest nor his son had stipulated any particular purpose for the legacy.

MINISTERIAL MATTERS

Dougie had organised a video conference call with our URC Synod moderator, the officers (moderator, secretary and clerk) of the Seoul Presbytery of the Church of Korea (SPCK), Bohyun and Daniel Kim (representing the BKC) and John Neugebauer (SCM chair) regarding the proposed partnership between our Synod and the SPCK. It had been a very positive meeting. Despite the complications created for all by Covid-19, the intention was to press on with establishing a formal link by mid-2021, leaving two years to solidify arrangements before the existing funding of the BKC ran out.

The soup run had been suspended due to the logistical issues posed by Covid-19. A letter of explanation would be sent to the churches elaborating on the reasons. In the meantime, St. Mungo's was providing food for the homeless. Similarly, the night shelter would not be run in early 2021.

Christmas Through the Keyhole had also been cancelled, and Christmas services would be different this year due to Covid-19; details were yet to be worked out.

It was confirmed that Junior Church would remain online for now; Les Fry had written an article for the Recorder.

Helena McKinnon was getting the music group together under the tutelage of Megan Brand with a view to contributing to Sunday worship.

CHURCH RE-OPENING

Andrew Hayden confirmed that worship would resume in the church the following Sunday, 27th September. It would also be live-streamed via Zoom for those unable to attend. Places were still available for all of the first three services, and bookings could be made by contacting Andrew. Thanks were expressed to the tech. team, especially Andy Grand who had taken the lead in purchasing, installing and testing the live-streaming equipment.

WALKING THE WAY

The writing of Mark's gospel was almost complete and included a number of creative submissions. Nick and Lucy Pollard would bring all the submissions together to form a single display. The BKC were doing likewise with a Korean version.

SECRETARIAL MATTERS

None.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

News of member was shared.

A.O.B.

None.

The meeting closed by sharing the Grace.

Next meeting will be held on Sunday 15th November at 11.45am (subject to confirmation)

WHY NOT ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS ITEMS FROM TRAIDCRAFT THIS YEAR and help small farmers and producers in the developing world?

Hopefully, we can all celebrate Christmas again, the birth of our Lord, even though we will all be socially distancing, wearing masks, using sanitisers, etc. Maybe this year we won't be able to have all the family round, or go to a party, or do the usual things that we usually do in addition, but Christmas cards can let people know that you are thinking of them and why not order some from Traidcraft?

Have a look at their website and choose the ones you would like to send this year; there is a great selection. You can order them yourself if you wish, or order them through me then you don't pay postage <https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/>

There are lots of other interesting goods in the Traidcraft catalogue too – from toilet rolls and tissues, kitchen liquids, chocolate and sweets of all sorts, biscuits, cake, teas and coffees.

What about a hamper for a friend or mum? Bamboo socks or shampoo bars for the eco-activist in the family? Christmas paper, decorations, lovely woollen goods and even face masks.

<https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk>

Carol Fry



Here are the Lectionary readings for November and the first Sunday in December, by which time we'll be into Advent. A new church year, and a new gospel to focus on - this time, Mark. But before that we complete the series of readings from Matthew 22 - 25.

2020 has certainly been a challenging year, but our readings through November are even more of a challenge. The Lectionary misses out all of Matthew 24 (have you ever heard a sermon based on any of it?) when the disciples ask "what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (24:3) The rest of the chapter is Jesus' response. But that's important because chapter 25 begins "At that time..."; that's the context for what follows. That last reading in Matthew 25 is a perpetual challenge. And just when we thought we've done enough to be a sheep, the reading from Isaiah 64 certainly puts our "good works" in perspective - look at v6!

The young church in Thessalonica was facing a challenge too - not Covid, but persecution, and a worry about being ready for Christ's return. But in amongst all this challenge there are tremendous words of hope as Paul encourages them (and us), comforts us, and (crucially) urges us "to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory". There's a verse to live by and be strengthened by in Covid times. In any time.

Many preachers use the lectionary readings as a basis for their preaching. The suggestion is to read them sometime in the week before Sunday worship so that if they are the ones used, it might help you get a bit more from the sermon.

Nov	OT	Psalm	Gospel	NT
1st	Micah 3:5-12	43	Matthew 23:1-12	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13
8th	Amos 5:18-24	70	Matthew 25:1-13	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
15th	Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18	90:1-12	Matthew 25:14-30	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
22nd	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	95:1-7a	Matthew 25:31-46	Ephesians 1:15-23
29th Advent 1	Isaiah 64:1-9	80:1-7, 17-19	Mark 13:24-37	1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Dec 6th Advent 2	Isaiah 40:1-11	85:1-2, 8-13	Mark 1:1-8	2 Peter 3:8-15

The situation in Zimbabwe is extremely difficult right now.

In August the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) in a pastoral letter described the situation as, "a multi-layered crisis of the convergence of economic collapse, deepening poverty, food insecurity, corruption and human rights abuses among other crises."

Government corruption, and ongoing restrictions and suffering led to protests from the Zimbabwean people. The government has responded with lamentable disregard for alternative voices. Their heavy-handed response has been characterised by arbitrary arrests and violence against activists or those related or connected to them. Journalists have been abducted and tortured as ransom for those in hiding.

The statement from the ZCBC and other faith leaders and groups in Zimbabwe caused recriminations from the government. Zimbabwe's context remains complex and precarious. The recent attacks on all who have voiced concern over injustices, corruption and violence, including the church, has simply reinforced the reality that coexistence, tolerance and accountability remains contentious issues in the country.

Christian Aid Zimbabwe works with several faith-based organisations including the Catholic Church through a partnership with Silveira House, a Catholic Jesuit institution and stands in solidarity with the Bishops. Christian Aid Zimbabwe is supportive of statements issued by fellow church umbrella organisations that is the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) (EFZ), who are its partners. Christian Aid's CEO, Amanda Khozi Mukwashi sent a letter of solidarity.

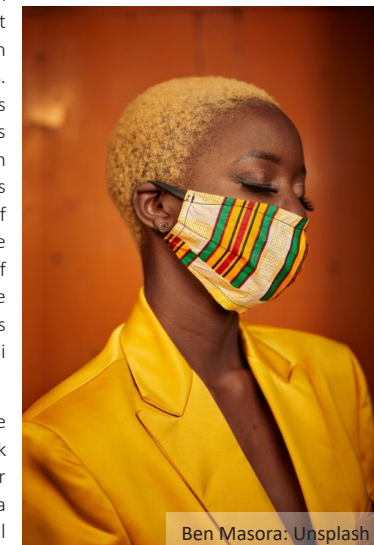
The Christian Aid Zimbabwe team are continuing to speak out for justice and support our partners while treading a careful line as an international NGO, mindful that our partners rely on our ability to operate within the country.

COVID-19 Response

In Zimbabwe, we continue to ensure that 15,000 people have enough water to wash their hands regularly. We are also supporting communities in Mudzi and Mutoko whose livelihoods have been impacted by Covid-19.

Thanks to the support from lovely **Commitment for Life** congregations just like yours, we are able to

provide food hampers for around 5,400 people. Thank you.



Ben Masora: Unsplash

Global Justice Now (GJN)

Debt is too often a mechanism of control imposed on the poor by the rich. COVID-19 has torn away the claims that the system work for the most vulnerable in the world.

GJN is calling for the immediate [cancellation of huge swathes of debt](#) in the global south, along with a wealth tax to stabilise and improve health services. Add your voice to this call!

Deadline for contributions for the
December / January Recorder is 29th November.

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