

ESTD 1901

The Recorder

March '22

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



www.redlandparkurc.org

New Brunswick Update

Preachers for 11 am Services

March	April
6th Angus Gregson	3rd Mr Dewyn Tilke
13th Rev. Douglas Burnett (will include Communion and will also be our Gift Day)	10th To be advised
20th Rev. Helena McKinnon	
27th Angus Gregson (Mothering Sunday)	

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

6th March. Joint Southmead Churches Service. This will be held at St Stephens at 3pm. This will be followed by refreshments.

13th March. Gift Day. Because of Covid we held the 2021 event in June. We now want to return to holding this during Lent as has been our practice for many years.

21st March. Prayer, Praise and Bible Study will be held at the church at 7.30pm All are welcome.

23rd March. Church meeting 7.30pm at the church. All are welcome.

5th April. Joint Southmead churches prayer meeting. This will be hosted by New Brunswick at 7.30pm. We focus on praying for the local area, events and schools etc. All are welcome.

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

It has been good to see folk returning to Sunday Worship after being laid low by Covid.

We uphold to God those who need our prayers at this time thinking especially of Carol's brother-in-law who is in hospital undergoing tests.

It was good to see Liz worshipping with us again after her recent fall. But we ask God for His healing touch as she continues to feel not quite 100% back to normal.

We uphold to God those who are not able to worship us at this time for many different reasons. We think of Margaret, Wenda and Susan, Dave. May they feel God's presence near and may they know that we are thinking of them.

Gill and family, Anita and Roger and family. Continue to be in our thoughts and prayers as they continue to mourn the loss of loved ones. May God wrap His loving arms around these folk and all who mourn. May He give them His Peace.

At this time our thoughts and prayers are very much with the people of Ukraine. We pray for those people from Ukraine who are here in our City and have friends and family back in their homeland. They worry for the safety of parents, siblings, and wider family members. We pray that God will comfort them at this difficult and worrying time. We think too of those in Ukraine who are losing homes and are so frightened. Let us also not forget the 'ordinary' people of Russia who may be suffering in different ways due to this conflict. May the Spirit of our loving God be in any talks to resolve this situation and bring Peace to this area. We also think of other places in the world where there is conflict at this time and pray that there too there me resolution to conflict.

On a brighter note we send best wishes to those celebrating a birthday during March. Gill on 12th and Hazel on 18th. May all who will be a year older this month enjoy a Happy Day. We send belated greetings to Ruth who had a birthday during February. We hope you too had a Happy Day.

Vestry Vibes by Douglas Burnett



Dear friends

I am writing this on the morning of Thursday February 24th. Like you this morning I woke up to the news that Russian forces had entered Ukraine. There is a sense of shock and disbelief from everyone. We had thought that within Europe that major invasions of this kind belonged to 1939-45, and that we wouldn't see them again. But maybe such power struggles are just all too commonplace. The question is always about how we respond to them, how we understand them and how we offer something else and better.

The month of March sees us embark of the season of Lent. What we are presented with each and every first Sunday of Lent is the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness by the Devil. Far from being just a story, it is intended by the gospel writers as exemplifying the clash of world. It is the Kingdom of God over and against very worldly understandings of power. Matthew and Luke give us those famous series of temptations (Mark provides a briefer account). This year we are following Luke's gospel and his account of this is Chapter 4. Of particular significance today would seem to be verses 5-8:

5Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. 7If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." 8Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

The movement that Jesus indicates is away from any form of self-centredness and towards God instead. This God-centeredness had been fundamental to Israel's prophets who often took on those who abused power in Israel. Jesus will take the imperative of that God-centeredness to a whole new level when it comes to the cross and Jerusalem. It is, again, the Kingdom of God above and beyond notions of imperial power.

As much as the church has, at times, embraced and accepted notions of imperial power (and regrettably that is very much

the case with the Russian Orthodox Church aligning itself with Putin and Russian nationalism), that prophetic tradition has always been maintained. Archbishop Desmond Tutu is a wonderful example of that in his opposition to the South African Apartheid regime. Prayer and wisdom will be needed to find our way through without further danger and loss of life.

There is this prayer from the Methodist Church:

Holy and Gracious God

We pray for the people of the Ukraine and the people of Russia; for their countries and their leaders.

We pray for all those who are afraid; that your everlasting arms hold them in this time of great fear.

We pray for all those who have the power over life and death; that they will choose for all people life, and life in all its fullness.

We pray for those who choose war; that they will remember that you direct your people to turn our swords into ploughshares and seek for peace.

We pray for leaders on the world stage; that they are inspired by the wisdom and courage of Christ.

Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.

And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.

Lord have mercy.

Amen.

Dougie



We think of **Florence and Lewis Manyika**, who moved house in October. Lewis retired through ill health some time ago but this was much improved after a pacemaker was fitted. Unfortunately, he has had various eye problems since then but we pray that these can be helped and cured.

We pray for **Anna Ambrose** who is having tests at present, and **Peter Ambrose**, recovering from a cataract operation and unable to drive; we send them God's blessings for health and recovery.

We continue to pray for **Andrew Sims** and his family, and for **Jane Beazer** and hers, both undergoing treatment at present; we ask that their treatment will bring them better health.

Mal and Janet Owen are both struggling with ill-health and we think of them and their family.

Please pray for any other members and friends who are recovering from illness or operations; they are in our prayers and thoughts. Dear God, please uphold these friends and surround them in your loving care.

We pray for refugees and asylum seekers everywhere, and ask the government to be compassionate to them all, and to help bring peace to the world. We pray especially for Ukraine today, also for Eritrea, Sudan and Afghanistan at this time. We also pray for countries suffering from natural disasters, including Tonga, and hope that leaders of all the countries will put COP26 pledges into action.

Prayer page:

Shalom

Jesus, stand among us.

Break down the doors of doubt and speak your words of peace.

Speak peace to those who doubt the victory of good:

Families who have tasted the bitterness of tragedy;

Peoples who have never known freedom from the yoke of domination;

Individuals who have received nothing but opposition to their overtures of peace.

Speak peace to those who doubt there is a future for the world:

Arms negotiators who see little or no progress;

Peace women and men who see nothing but futile escalation;

Towns and villages which hear nothing but the stamp of soldiers' feet.

Speak peace to those who doubt they are forgiven:

Those weighed down by guilt of long ago, tormented by vivid memories of anger and hate;

Those who seek escape in drugs and refuge in forgetfulness;

Those families divided over trivial incidents or more deep-seated conflict.

Speak peace to those who doubt you are alive:

Those who have been hurt by Christian narrowness;

Those who are afraid of death;

Those who are surrounded by scepticism;

Those who feel weak and inadequate.

Jesus, Lord and God, by your risen power

Dispel our doubt and fear

And we will be your children of peace.

Amen



Climate Justice issues

Redland Park Declaration on Climate Justice

The Climate Justice Group presented the following to the Elders on 2nd February, which was supported unanimously:

Please read and consider the following prior the Church Meeting on Sunday, 13th March:

The Climate Justice Group would like to make a public declaration of Redland Park's recognition that the world faces a Climate Emergency, and our commitment to respond to that emergency. (This declaration would be on our website, facebook page, notice board and anywhere else it can be seen by our congregation and the general public.)

Proposed statement:

Redland Park URC recognises the climate emergency and is committed to make a coordinated effort to respond, based on our calling to love our neighbours, live justly and steward God's creation.

The reasons why we are convinced that this is important are set out below:

- Global heating is already causing a rise in sea levels, increase in ocean acidity and an increase in extreme weather events and droughts. Tearfund and other NGOs have identified climate change as a contributor to rising hunger globally and in making storms, floods and droughts more severe for people already living in poverty.
- These changes, predicted to become significantly more severe, are to catastrophically affect the lives, health, food and water supplies and economic security of many millions of people, and the fundamental ecosystems on which humans and other life depend.
- There is broad agreement that the next 10 years offer an unrepeatable window of opportunity for action.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us the importance of listening to scientific advice and the fragility of the systems we all depend on daily.

As Christians we have reason to speak out and act in this area:

- We have a mandate to speak truth without fear. This includes the precious interdependence of God's creation, of which we are only a part.
- We are called to show love to our neighbours around the world who are already suffering the effects of climate change, and to act now to reduce catastrophic harm in the future.

We are called to act with hope, the hope we have through Jesus. Our witness of love is a witness to the power and freedom of the gospel.

Pray and Fast for the Climate

Each month the above organisation publishes information about climate change, offering a focus for our prayers. I have included a small excerpt from February and would encourage you to use it in your own personal prayers. The more information and knowledge we have, the more meaningful our prayers can be.

Prayer points – February 2022 “Time to honour our promises” COP 26 President Alok Sharma recently delivered a speech on the ambitions for the UK's COP Presidency. Promises agreed at COP26, he says “at the moment ... are just words on a page. And unless we honour the promises made, to turn the commitments in the Glasgow Climate Pact into action, they will wither on the vine. We will have mitigated no risks. We will have seized no opportunities. Instead, we will have fractured the trust built between nations. And 1.5 degrees will slip from our grasp. So my absolute focus for the UK Presidency year is delivery.”

Sharma sets our four goals: “to ensure that countries reduce emissions, as promised, and go further, to keep 1.5 alive”; “to progress work on adaptation and loss and damage”; “to deliver finance to support these efforts”; and “to push for further action across critical sectors, such as coal, cars and ending deforestation”. But what is striking above all, is the stark choice he offers – reasons for hope contrasted with the dangers of inaction.

He closes: “Like many others, I watched ‘Don't Look Up’. The final line has stayed with me: ‘We really did have everything, didn't we?’ We do have everything. And we must not throw it away. There is no more time to: ‘sit tight and assess’. We must deliver. Together. Now.” We give thanks for the clarity and intensity of this speech and pray for the COP teams in the UK and Egypt. We pray that God will guide both them and all world leaders, so that the nations do indeed turn words into progress – and go further and faster than has already been agreed.

Les Brentley

Church Charities

CHURCH CHARITIES

For two years, our church charities have been Toilet Twinning (overseas) and Caring in Bristol (local). Despite Covid-19 and lockdowns, we have been able to raise funds as follows:

TOILET TWINNING:

Toilet Twinning – 2.3 billion people don't have somewhere safe to go to the toilet, that is 1 in 3 people. Almost 1000 children die every day from preventable diseases linked to sanitation. Every year women and girls spend 97 billion hours finding a place to go to the toilet. The suggestion was made that we raise enough money for the same number of toilets as are in Redland Park Church, £60 per toilet to be twinned. <https://www.toilettwinning.org/>

In 2019 we received £233.00; 2020 = £378.97; 2021 = £168 – a grand total of £779.97 – enough for nearly 13 toilets, when we have ten toilets at Redland Park!

CARING IN BRISTOL:

Caring in Bristol – working with Bristol's homeless community. We are striving to create a society where everyone has a home, has hope and is part of their community. We don't believe that homelessness is a simple issue with a simple solution. That's why we work across a number of projects helping people move away from the streets and preventing people becoming homeless in the first place. <https://caringinbristol.co.uk>

In 2019 we received £332.55; 2020 = £372.21; 2021 = £168.00 – a grand total of £748.51.

Thank you to everyone who has helped fundraise and to all who have contributed. Because of the restrictions of the last two years, we haven't nominated new charities from 2021, but we will do that in the Autumn for 2022 to 2024, so please let me know if you have a local or an overseas charity that you would like to nominate.

Carol Fry

Sign and Sign

Stage One for babies
6-13month at 9.45am and
10.45am starts 11th January.
10 weeks.
Sing and Sign Babes for in-
fants 0-5months at 11.45am
starts 25th January. 8 weeks.

Through music singing and
baby signing, Sing and Sign
teaches babies and families
how to connect and com-
municate before baby can
talk. Sing and Sign classes
are fun and relaxed with a
strong emphasis on learning.

In Stage One for babies
6-13months, you will learn
signs relevant to baby's
routine (milk, eat, change
nappy) and signs for things
that babies are interested
in (animals, places to go,
vehicles).



Sing and Sign Babes are gentle classes, specifically about parent/baby interaction and designed for infants 0-5 months. Using our special ingredients of music and singing, you'll learn how to stimulate baby's brain development and early communication using eye contact, repetition, shared looking, games like peek-a-boo and our lovely Jessie Cat, as well as learn some basic signing. Our friendly and lovely teachers bring all this to you and your baby through music and singing. Click the link for more information or to book. We hold classes all over Bristol so if Redland Park on Tuesday is not right for your family, please look for another day or venue nearby! Booking, social media and all our info: <https://linktr.ee/singandsignbristol> or email katherineamor@singandsign.co.uk

March services at Redland Park URC

10.30am. (At church and online)

6th Rev Dougie Burnett. (including Communion)

13th Rev Mike Peat.

20th Rev Dougie Burnett.

27th Rev Dougie Burnett.

Zoom log in; 732 001 8996; passcode 8cC7Zv

7pm,

13th and 27th.

Zoom log in; 848 3007 5496; passcode 219761

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Elders Meeting.

2nd March at 7.30pm via Zoom

Zoom log in; 732 001 8996; passcode 8cC7Zv

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Church Meeting.

16th March at 7.30pm via Zoom

Zoom log in; 732 001 8996; passcode 8cC7Zv

Keeping up with the vicar Pt 122 Angus Gregson

I'm writing this in the last week of February; next Sunday is the 27th, the last Sunday before Lent. In last month's Recorder piece I wrote: "And then just before Lent we traditionally have the account of the Transfiguration. What do you make of that? Who was it for?" No answer yet.

I remember Tim Hayden asking much the same questions from the pulpit as he fed back to the church during morning worship what we'd been thinking about in the appropriately named Junior Church group, "Searchers". Forty years on, still waiting for a response. Maybe that Luke passage on 20th is a bit of a wake up call.

Cell groups, the 7 o'clock service, New Brunswick's monthly bible study, are great places to share such questions, but they don't include most of the church. If you hear something you don't understand, is it OK to interrupt the sermon with "Could you just explain that a bit more?" Where do we raise our queries?

And on 27th the parable of the prodigal son (prodigal father?). The preacher's nightmare; what is there new to say about a story we know so well? Are we looking out for the lost as desperately as the father was for his son? And what about the elder son who can't cope with the welcome his erstwhile errant brother receives? Their loving father goes out to meet both of them. Whichever brother we are, are we open to receive from our outrageously loving Father, and to embrace our other brother?

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.

March	OT	Psalm (or alt)	Gospel	NT
6th Lent 1	Deut. 26:1-11	91:1-2, 9-16	Luke 4:1-13	Romans 10:8b-13
13th Lent 2	Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18	27	Luke 13:31-35	Philippians 3:17-4:1
20th Lent 3	Isaiah 55:1-9	63:1-8	Luke 13:1-9	1 Corinthians 10:1-1
27th Lent 4	Joshua 5:9-12	32	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	2 Corinthians 5:16-21
3rd Lent 5	Isaiah 43:16-21	126	John 12:1-8	Philippians 3:4b-14

**Deadline for contributions for the
April Recorder is 27 March.**

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