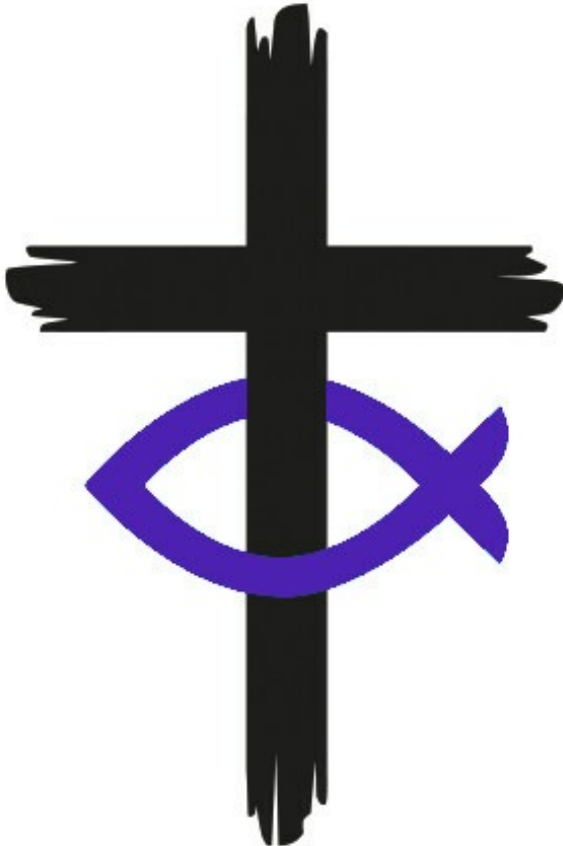


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# The Recorder

May '24

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



## Vestry Vibes by Dougie Burnett

Dear friends,

From Easter we move into Pentecost. What I love about that period from Lent into Easter, and then beyond Easter onto Pentecost is that sense of real-time action and events that it also conveys. We follow the drama of Jesus travelling up to Jerusalem. There is the intensity of Holy Week itself. Being able to attend our local Churches Together devotions gave further experience of what those few days must have been like. Thereby we also live through the events of that first Holy Week. We then experience that amazing yet also confusing joy of Easter Sunday. Alleluia!



After all of that we follow through the various post-resurrection appearances whereby Jesus gives the disciples, soon to be the apostles, insights and pointers as to what happens next. There is the Ascension. Then there is Pentecost and that particular experience of the Holy Spirit which empowers them to live out what then becomes the mission of the church.

As I say, it feels very much like real-time action and I love this extended storyline. I am not sure that it has ever been fully developed as a film, but in the right hands it could be amazing. Of course, most dramas about Jesus life typically finish with the resurrection. The musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* doesn't even get as far as the resurrection. It actually stops at the cross. Powerful in many ways, but also it misses the point. What I love is the way in which Luke continues the story beyond his gospel by writing his "sequel" which is the Book of Acts. What Luke does there is to tell the story of the mission of the church. That sense of going out and beyond is a very distinctive feature of the Christian faith and Christian theology. It is not a case of "we might go out there!" It is much more the case of "We shall go out there, because this is all about our sense of God."

For some reason that sounds to me as a little bit like those famous opening words of the original Star Trek series, “To boldly go where no one has gone before!” But that is what it is like we have sensed that you have got something amazing to share. It is a bit scary, but it is of the essence. Somehow getting out there seems even more daunting in a very secular society and also post-pandemic. But maybe it is no less daunting for the early church who were a tiny minority in an otherwise very pagan society, and a largely undocumented world. What gets us out there is that sense of empowerment that comes from knowing God. Let’s do it.

To Pentecost and beyond!

Dougie

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### **Our new moderator**

The SW Province of the URC finally has a new Moderator. He is Revd David Downing.

After a career in banking, David trained at Westminster College, Cambridge, and has had pastoral charge of local churches since his ordination in 1999.



He currently serves as minister of Maidenhead and Marlow URCs, along with Bracknell and Windsor.

I hope to include a fuller piece about him in the next Recorder, but you can read more on the URC website under “latest news”.

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### **Pause for thought**

As I type this (22<sup>nd</sup> April) the death toll in Gaza from Israeli strikes since 7<sup>th</sup> October is 34 637, which is just over 1.65% of the population. This includes an estimated more than 14 500 children.

The equivalent percentage, if this had happened in the UK, is a death toll of over 1.12 **million** including 470 000 children. What would we do if something caused this loss of life in the UK?

## Worship details

### ... at Redland Park

**Sunday morning worship** at 10.30 a.m. (at Redland Park and on Zoom)

May 5<sup>th</sup> Rev Helena McKinnon, including Communion

12<sup>th</sup> Rev Dougie Burnett

Pentecost 19<sup>th</sup> Rev Dougie Burnett - joint service with the  
Bristol Korean Church

26<sup>th</sup> Angus Gregson (*not a Rev*)

Zoom log in: 732 001 8996 passcode 8cC7Zv

**Sunday evening worship** at 7 p.m. via Zoom

May 12<sup>th</sup> Rivers of justice - climate justice, a deeper dive

26<sup>th</sup> Rivers of justice - racial justice

Zoom log in: 815 4053 7777 passcode 087103

**Cell groups** – both via Zoom

Mondays at 8 p.m.

Zoom log in: 831 5113 5751 passcode 508239

Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m.

Zoom log in: 312 983 3387 passcode 795550

### ... and at New Brunswick

May 5<sup>th</sup> Rev Stephen Newell

12<sup>th</sup> Rev Helena Mckinnon

19<sup>th</sup> Angus Gregson (*not a Rev*)

26<sup>th</sup> Rev Douglas Burnett

## Other key dates in May

### Redland Park

- Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Elders' meeting at 7.30 p.m. - hybrid "live" and via Zoom - same Zoom log in details as for worship.
- Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Church meeting at 11.50, after worship

### New Brunswick

- Tue 7<sup>th</sup> Monthly Joint Southmead Churches Prayer meeting. This month hosted by St Stephens. Commencing at 7.30 p.m.
- Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Alison Kinnersey is arranging a Quiz and Cake afternoon at New Brunswick from 3-5 p.m. For more details, email Brenda at [brendamarydrake@gmail.com](mailto:brendamarydrake@gmail.com)
- Sat 25<sup>th</sup> The monthly Craft and Pre-loved Fair at the Greenway Centre from 12-3 p.m.
- Thu 30<sup>th</sup> Church AGM which will commence at 7.30 p.m.
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### **EVERYDAY PLASTIC: 52 ways to reduce your plastic** **(a month at a time)** *continued for May:*

13. Save soft fruit punnets. Reuse them as seed trays, or use cardboard toilet roll tubes, for planting seedlings instead of small plastic pots.
14. Buy in bulk. Find a refill shop where you can refill your own pots and jars with dried goods. Shopping in refill shops is often more cost effective.
15. Use the free Refill app. Use it to find nearby places to refill your water bottle, coffee cup or lunch box, and find plastic-free shopping options.
16. Find like-minded people. Local community groups can connect you with amazing projects. Look for Plastic Free Communities, Refill Schemes or local Greenpeace groups.
17. Pick your own. Visit a pick-your-own farm, bring a pot and harvest your own berries to avoid plastic punnets.
18. Scrap shampoo bottles. Opt for solid shampoo bars that come without any plastic packaging. If shampoo bars aren't for you, save your empty bottles and refill them instead.

## People news

### ... from Redland Park

**Audrey Bryant** has settled in to Westbury Gardens for the time being and is getting better slowly. She is hoping to get home eventually, but in the meantime we wish her a good recovery.

**Teame Mebrahtu** officially received his OBE on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at Windsor Castle. All three daughters and one grand-daughter were there for the ceremony and we send our congratulations and best wishes.

We pray for all our friends and members who are enduring illness over these winter months, and hope that Spring and good health will return soon. We think of **Peter** and **Anna Ambrose**, as well as **Terry King** and pray for better health for all of them. It was good to see **Viv Hayden** back in church again.

**Jane Beazer** is still undergoing treatment and we wish her well; her daughter **Suzie Atkins** is also suffering some serious health problems at present and we send God's blessing and healing on them both.

**Anna Sims** has not been well but is now making a good recovery, if slow; we send our best wishes.

Many of you will remember **Mal Owen**. Mal died from the cancer he'd had for the last five years at the beginning of April. We pray for God's comfort for Janet and the "boys" - Glyn, Will, Tom and Dafyd.

We pray for all our Junior Church as they went back to school after the Easter holidays, and especially if exams are coming up.

### ...from New Brunswick

**David F** has now returned home after his recent spell in RUH. He is now receiving treatment having had the test results. We pray that the medication will help him be more comfortable. We pray, too, that the care package that has been put into place will enable him to remain in his home for the foreseeable future.

**Jen S** is still in need of our prayers. Jen, too, has now returned home after her recent stay in BRI. However because of mobility and access problems it does mean that once in her home she is somewhat housebound. Let us pray that some sort of ramp can be put in place sooner rather than later.

Our thoughts and prayers are very much with **Elizabeth** P's family as they come to terms with her passing. We too will miss Elizabeth who was such a lady of faith. May her family and friends know God's comfort at this time. It was wonderful to celebrate her life (and her choice of hymns) with her family at a service in NB in April.

We also think of those of our fellowship who have not been as well as they would like during the past weeks. We uphold Elaine, Angie, Becky, Liz and Gill in prayer each are in need of God's healing.

There are other situations in the wider world that we uphold to God in prayer:

Wars and unrest in all parts of the world. We ask God to speak to the hearts of the leaders of the world who are engaged in such activity. Putting peace into their hearts which will mean nations can live in harmony with each other.

There are those, not only in the wider world, but also locally who are struggling with financial problems. Those who haven't enough money to feed their children. We pray that through agencies and other means help will be available to all who need it.

All these situations and many others we bring to God as we ask them through His Beloved Son Jesus.

### **CELEBRATIONS!**

May seems to be a quiet month for birthdays within our fellowship! However if there are families who have something to celebrate during May, we pray that whatever the occasion it will be a happy and blessed time

### **... and to both churches**

A huge thank you from me to all the people from both churches who gave me lifts to and from Lent worship/ church services/bible study evenings/Elders' meetings (and to all the many other people who offered lifts but which I didn't take up) while I was a bit less mobile recently. You are wonderful.

*Angus*



# **What's been happening?**

## **An ecumenical journey through Holy Week**

It is always good to be able to share key moments of our Christian story with friends from across the traditions. The Passion of our Lord is one such, and to walk the path to Calvary together felt particularly powerful this year.

On Monday we were invited to share hospitality at Cotham Parish Church under the heading of 'Retreat at Bethany'. Here we began by serving each other dainty portions of middle-eastern type food and drink, reminding us of God's abundant generosity. Then we heard again the story of Jesus' anointing by Mary at the house of Lazarus as she poured precious and costly perfume on his feet, in preparation of his burial. Time allowed for us to consider God's amazing outpouring of love in Jesus' own self-offering of himself.

On Tuesday we gathered at the University Chaplaincy, where we were challenged to think about the various scenarios in which the religious establishment set out to trap Jesus with trick questions.

Then we were invited to explore areas of our own lives where we may have been similarly compromised. Challenging stuff.

On Wednesday, at Tyndale Baptist, we entered the darkness and heard again how the powers that be in Jerusalem, the Pharisees and Sadducees planned and plotted Jesus' downfall behind closed doors and how Judas became complicit in the transaction.

'And it was night' was the theme chosen as the drama of Judas' betrayal unfolded. There was time for us to recall our own 'dark' moments in the silence of the sanctuary.

Maundy Thursday brought us to our own church at Redland Park. Here, we recalled the events surrounding the last supper, as we sat at tables, prepared and made ready for us to share the bread and wine together. We heard the narrative of desertion as twelve candles were extinguished in turn, anticipating the tragic outcome of what was to follow.

Good Friday brought us to Victoria Methodist where we listened once more to the narrative of the last hours leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.



The mood was still and reflective as contemporary stories of conflict, desolation and torment were deftly woven into the liturgy, reminding us that even today we still cry 'Crucify'. The music and stillness created a contemplative setting for our own thoughts.

We left in silence, having been given a hot cross bun to take home.

A big thank you to all those involved in the careful preparation of these services: it is a timely reminder to us all of how fortunate we are to have such a collaborative and enterprising local Churches Together Group.

*Helena Mckinnon*

## **Easter Sunday at New Brunswick**

It's a bit of a tradition at NB that when we celebrate communion on Easter Sunday, we use a hot cross bun for the "bread".

It not only seems topical, but more importantly, we celebrate that at Easter the power of death, signified by the cross, is broken. And we share in that.



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## **Church Action on Poverty**

The Tuesday Cell Group led the Service at Redland Park on the first Sunday in April using material and resources provided by Church Action on Poverty.



Church Action on Poverty works with the real experts on poverty; those people who live with poverty on a daily basis. There is a belief that solutions to poverty will only work if they are rooted in the knowledge and expertise of those who understand it best.

The Speaking Truth to Power programme was launched in 2022 supporting people with first hand experience of poverty to become more effective advocates for change. We heard the story of Ashleigh who had experienced time in prison, a period of homelessness and being sectioned under the Mental Health Act. Ashleigh was born and lived in London and walked past Westminster many times but had never felt that those who worked there would listen to her or value her opinion.

Through the Speaking Truth to Power programme and the support of Church Action on Poverty, Ashleigh was invited to meet with a group of MPs in Westminster and she found being an equal partner in the conversation was so powerful. Ashleigh is now a community activist encouraging others to work together for the change that is needed and to make sure their voice is heard.

Church Action on Poverty encourages us all to turn our dreams of a better, kinder world into concrete realities. It challenges us to listen to those gripped by poverty and to speak out for a society where all can reclaim their dignity, agency and power.

Following the Service in April, we were able to send £160 plus the associated Gift Aid to Church Action on Poverty to help them with their work. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Service and for the donations received.

*Jane Penrose*

You can find out more about Church Action on poverty at <https://www.church-poverty.org.uk/>

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*During the service, this poem was read...*

**The New Bristol** *(adapted from a poem by Doug Gay)*

I saw a vision – it was last Thursday at eleven o'clock in the morning:

I was standing on Brandon Hill, looking down over the city;  
and the cold blue winter sky broke open above my head  
and the Spirit of God breathed on my eyes  
and my eyes were opened.

I saw Bristol, the holy city, coming down out of heaven;  
shining like a rare jewel, sparkling like 'clear water in the eye of the sun';  
and all the sickness was gone from the city,  
there were no more suburbs and schemes;  
no difference between Clifton and Knowle West.

I saw the Avon running with the water of life,  
as bright as crystal,  
as clear as glass,  
the children of Bristol swimming in it  
And the Spirit showed me the tree of life  
growing on The Downs.

I looked out and there were no more homeless people,  
no more women working the streets,  
no more needles up the closes,  
HIV and AIDS were things of the past,  
there were no more racist attacks,  
no more gay bashing,  
no more rapists,  
no more stabbings,  
no more Protestants and Muslims,  
because there was no more hate!

And I saw women walking safe at nights,  
saw the men were full of passion and gentleness,  
that none of the children were ever abused,  
because the people's lives were full of justice and of joy.

I saw an old woman throw back her head  
and laugh like a young girl;  
and when the sky closed back, her laughter rang in my head  
for days and days  
and would not go away.

This is what I saw, looking over the Harbourside,  
Looking up from the city of death;  
And I knew then that there would be a day of resurrection,  
And I believe that there will be a day of resurrection.

## Redland Park and the BKC at Barton Camp - a few reflections

We were lucky it was such a beautiful day and I was struck by how naturally and happily the congregations of the BKC and Redland Park integrated throughout. It was a real coming together, sharing activities, food and conversation.



We were blessed to have members with such skills leading the various activities. For myself, I very much enjoyed the walk up to Crooks Peak in the morning, ably led by Alison, sharing delicious lunch with some members of the BKC upon return. In the afternoon I attended Lucy's watercolour workshop, feeling more than slightly nervous because, like many people, I was convinced I could neither draw nor paint. With great teaching skills and passion, Lucy made me believe that anything is possible and maybe I was wrong!

Sadly I didn't get to Chloe's fabrics workshop myself, though I since learned that it also had been a great success!

What with egg painting and rolling, swimming in the heated pool (well, watching others!) and the chance to chat with people I don't always have the chance to on a Sunday morning, it was a hugely successful day in what is a wonderful resource.

Thank you to all who organised, led and took part.

*Les Brentley*



*Bread making - apparently*







## Redland Park URC Organ

As part of its refurbishment programme, the Bristol Beacon is the beneficiary of funding from the J&M Britton Trust, to help reinstall the organ there in 2025. A portion of this funding is specifically allocated to education, to encourage and enable young people to learn about, and learn to play, the organ. This has translated into funding for a series of organ workshops for young people, and up to four bursaries for talented young keyboard players to take organ lessons.

The first Beacon Organ Workshop for young people took place at Redland Park Church (RPC) on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April, from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. There were 13 young people attending, both boys and girls, aged from 11-16 years. They were, we understand, all already having piano/keyboard lessons. There were also 20 or so sanctioned 'onlookers', who were mainly parents or younger siblings. Richard Pedlar and I were both there from RP. The children sat on raised staging tiers in an open-'V' shape facing the organ keyboard so that they could all see the keyboard, stops and pedals. They also were able to move out of the chairs for participant-demonstration of organ pipe length, and some of them individually to play their own piano pieces on the organ.



The workshop was organised by Laurie Stewart of Bristol Beacon, and run by Claire Alsop, who is assistant organist at St. Mary Redcliffe, and working with Bristol Beacon in music education. She was able to pitch the workshop at the right level for the children. She started with information about organs in general, with a brief history, and explaining how they make sounds, then demonstrating the sounds made by the different stops. To illustrate the pipes she had a 32ft length of cord, which she asked the children to hold up and down the centre aisle of the church, with a child placed strategically at 4ft, 8ft, 16ft and 32ft holding up an appropriately labelled card.

After some more chat and demonstration, and before a 10 min. break, Claire played to them arguably the most famous of organ pieces, Bach's *Toccatà and Fugue in D minor*. She made the organ sound wonderful,

which really brought home that what we have at RP is a treasure, not just for RP, but for Bristol as a whole.

After the break, Claire invited four or so young people at a time, to sit on the organ stool together, to read a very simple sight-readable note-constructed piece, with each child playing on a different manual (including the pedals), in order to show the different combinations possible, and the effects of the different sounds. She then invited any of the young people who wished to, to play a piano piece of their own choice on one of the organ manuals (keyboards), either by heart, or from music they had brought with them, while she added either pedal notes or a second line on one of the other manuals. This illustrated for them the range of possibilities as to how an organ can add more harmony (or discord), colour and interest, which is not so possible from a single keyboard.

The children included several accomplished pianists; and all seemed to enjoy very much the experience of learning about and playing on the organ. A second workshop is planned at All Saints Church, Pembroke Rd. at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. If this first introductory workshop is anything to go by, then it can be hoped that by the Beacon running these, and the linked scholarships for lessons, that at least some of the children may become part of a next generation of organists in their own right.

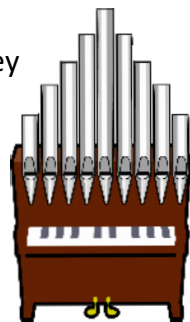
For Redland Park, we don't know what plans the Beacon will have after the workshops, (including after a third anticipated workshop at St. Mary Redcliffe), but hopefully it is something that we could look at again with the Beacon, perhaps in 2025, even with the planned commissioning of the Bristol Beacon organ sometime in that next year. However, the first workshop here at RP was certainly felt to be a success and very well worthwhile. The workshop showed also why it is important that the means be found to promote and maintain the organ here now, and in the long-term, as a fine instrument for music-making and expression, and for the benefit of a wider community in Bristol. The challenge now is to identify appropriate interested parties, perhaps to become partners in setting up the required funding strategies to achieve this.

*Peter Lunt (for Redland Park Organ Group)*

## More about the organ

Redland Park's third 2024 Organ Concert was given by Ashley Marshfield, the Director of Music at King's School, Bruton. Ashley's Programme was very cleverly worked out and showed the versatility of the Organ.

Ashley and the Concert were elegantly introduced by Lucy Pollard, who pointed out that the last occasion Ashley had played at Redland Park was for her wedding.



Ashley's programme started with a very short, dramatic piece *Fanfares and Dances* by the modern composer and choral conductor Paul Spicer. It was less than 2 minutes long but was so enjoyable it seemed to be over before it started. Then a restful, quiet piece by Felix Mendelssohn showing how the organ copes so well with quiet thoughtful music.

Ashley's next choice was the famous *Suite Gothique* by the French composer, Léon Boëllmann, a piece relished by all organists. Yes, towards the end of the final movement we heard the Full Organ in all its splendour, but by that time we had been treated to a huge variety of quiet sounds.

Ashley pulled off a very successful change of mood with *A Song of Sunshine* by the blind organist and composer Alfred Hollins. Beautiful quiet music with a wealth of organ sounds pointing up the beauty of Hollins' composition. The quiet, intense music continued with Amy Beach's *Prelude on an Old Folk Tune*. Amy Beach's music has been almost forgotten; her many and varied compositions are well worth looking out for.

Finally, there was Bach, his *Prelude and Fugue in B minor*. It is a wonderful piece and Ashley played it so that all the all the contrapuntal lines of Bach's music were clearly heard – a superb performance.

Ashley's concert was completely enjoyable. The audience of about 80 were very fortunate to hear him playing the Redland Park Organ.

The next concert is on June 22<sup>nd</sup> when Claire Hobbs is playing - not to be missed!

*John Turner*



## What's coming up?

### CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Yes, it that time of year again! Christian Aid Week is from 11-18<sup>th</sup> May this year, so we have some envelopes for delivery around Redland Park, and we would be very grateful for volunteers to deliver.



We also have the Christian Aid Fair on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May, so if you are decluttering books, bric-a-brac, etc, or have green fingers and can pot up some plants for sale, that will be good too. We would also appreciate help on the day – we will be setting up from 9.00 a.m. and the Fair usually starts when passers-by begin to get interested - about 10.30 - 1.00.

*Carol Fry*

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### CONCERT in aid of JOY OF LEARNING

On **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June** at 3p.m., the Amalthea Ensemble will be putting on a concert in aid of the charity *Joy of Learning* at Redland Park URC, and they'd love for you to come along! The ensemble is made up of cellist Alice Cheer and flautist Meg Diamond, joined by pianist and organist John Cheer and violist Eleanor Chapman. Come along for an afternoon of varied organ works and chamber music, a short presentation about the charity and a Ugandan Craft Stall, and help us to change the lives of children now living all over Uganda through *Joy of Learning*.

*Joy of Learning* (charity no: 1194700) was set up in 2021 to support children who have been resettled with members of their extended families after living at Sanyu Babies' Home in Uganda. The Home cares for orphaned and abandoned children aged from 1 day to 4 years old, with the primary aim of resettling the children with family members or, where that is not possible, finding them a local foster family.

*Joy of Learning* seeks to enable reunited children and their siblings to attend school by finding Educational Sponsors to support each child's education. As well as this, *Joy of Learning* makes sure that each family's basic needs are met by providing food, clothing, hygiene products and medical support where needed. Joy of Learning is a unique charity and the families it supports live all over Uganda.

## Weathering droughts and building resilience

Commitment  
for **Life**

Judgemore Kowo lives with his wife and two young children in Moyosvi village, Mutoko.

His family struggled to pay basic expenses because of persistent crop failure and diseased livestock. One challenge is a dire lack of water at the homestead. 'We have no boreholes in this area, and we barely have enough water to drink, let alone give to our animals and crops.' says Judgemore. Christian Aid's BRACK programme has helped their problems in a different light and realise that the solutions are in their hands.

One of the most important tools for Judgemore was disaster risk reduction. We learnt that to cope with drought and other challenges, we need to plan ahead. We have learnt to analyse our situation and identify the major risks that we could face then we come up with solutions and put them in place to reduce the impacts of potential problems.'

Judgemore laughs and says 'It was as if, in the past we were sitting under a huge rock that was about to fall on our heads but we were doing nothing to prevent it!'



*One of the water harvesting pits they've dug in their field.*

Judgemore has been trained as a lead farmer and has put on a number of demonstrations at his homestead including mulching, water-harvesting pits, conservation agriculture, and growing a wide range of different crop varieties. He uses these to teach other farmers in his group. And he's received a Boer goat buck which has provided a successful income for the family.

Another benefit from the project has been how it has improved the family diet. Judgemore says, 'We learned about the importance of good nutrition, especially for children. This has motivated us to consume a wide range of different foods including wild foods. We make healthy drinks for the children and do a lot of food processing and value addition to make sure that we have a variety of good food sources all year round. Because of the increased range of livestock that we are keeping including goats and chickens, we are able to eat more meat and eggs than we used to.'

Judgemore says the project has initiated a total transformation in the community. People are collectively analysing their futures and looking at the community on a broad scale. We are proud of ourselves... poverty is being reduced and our families are happier and healthier.'

Thank you for all of your support through Commitment for Life which is helping farmers to weather the climate crisis.

*RP particularly supports Commitment for Life's work in Zimbabwe  
Thanks to Myra Jones for providing this CfL update.*

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**Commitment for Life** also has a focus on Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. William Bell, Christian Aid's Head of Middle East Policy and Advocacy, recently visited the region.

"No one is safe," he says. "The violence is affecting everyone, civilians and humanitarians alike." The devastation in Gaza is mortifying. The speed and scale of bombing and killing of children and women in such a small and concentrated area is unprecedented. Most people in our congregations and around the world believe that our political leaders are failing the Palestinian people. Not only has Palestine suffered under extreme levels of violence for over 75 years, now the International Court of Justice has found 'plausible evidence' of a genocide committed against Gazans. Gaza has become a killing field.

Dr Hassan runs the chronic disease centre for our Commitment for Life local partner Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS). Speaking from Gaza, Dr Hassan explains: "I have lived through many wars in Gaza. But this war is not the same. We have lost a lot of doctors, nurses, and hospital staff. Many healthcare workers have been killed by bombs and rockets hitting their homes. They are bombing crowded places, bakeries, hospitals, and homes. They are bombing everywhere."

We can feel so very helpless, but we can still make a difference. We absolutely need to pray because ultimately this is a spiritual issue. We can lobby our MPs to insist on a full and unconditional ceasefire. We have also been giving. Commitment for Life donated £50 000 to our local partners to provide hot meals to displaced people, unable to return home.

## KNOW YOUR ELDER

*A column where we get to know a little more about our Elders.*

**Brenda Drake** at New Brunswick

### **Where did you grow up?**

I am a Bristolian born and bred. I was born in Southmead Hospital in the August of 1950 and brought home to the house I still live in! My school days were spent firstly at Embleton Road School (now Little Mead), moving on to Pen Park Girls' School which is now an estate of houses.



### **A memory from your youth?**

There are so many memories to share but I suppose one of the most memorable was the winter of 1962/63. It started to snow on Boxing Day and the following day we had to dig ourselves out of the house. The snow had been blizzard like during the night, leading to drifts halfway up the front and back doors. The snow lasted for weeks and I recall walking to Pen Park School through 'banks of snow' where people banked the snow up on the sides of the pavements. Just allowing enough space on the paths to allow people to walk safely to the shops etc. I don't ever recall during the months that the snow lay 'deep and crisp and evenish' any of the local schools closing!

### **Who/what led me to faith in Christ?**

Although my Dad was not a church goer this could not be said to be the same for my Mum. I remember her teaching me my first chorus (*Jesus bids a shine with a pure clear light*). I recall attending St Stephen's church Sunday School which was held in the (now demolished) White Hall. I have vivid memories of making a Font from plasticine! But I must admit I don't remember being taught anything about the stories in the Bible. The focus seemed to be more about the building, the significance of things like the font, altar, candle sticks etc! Some Sunday evenings my Mum would take me along to the evening service. Here I learnt lots of the responses used during these services. So I think I can still recite the Apostles Creed and the *Nunc Dimittis*. So I suppose, really Jesus and faith have always been part of my life.

### **Why did I start worshipping at New Brunswick?**

I was invited by my friend Marion to go with her to Sunday School, which was held on a Sunday afternoon. St Stephen's met in the morning! I went along with her and somehow it seemed more interesting. Francis was my Sunday School Teacher (need I say more?!) and so from the age of 10 years New Brunswick has been my spiritual home. Of course there were a number of folk who were instrumental in my journey who encouraged and nurtured me: Mrs Bull, Mrs Mckears and Maisie Fowler are just a few.

### **Something good about living in Bristol**

There are so many good things about living in Bristol it is hard to choose just one. The wide open spaces such as the Downs and Blaise Castle. The blessing of having so many hospitals on our doorstep. Many folk have to travel from Cornwall and the like to receive life saving treatment, we have them within a bus ride. Then of course we are culturally fortunate with places like the Hippodrome, Bristol Old Vic, and many other such venues to enjoy all sorts of shows, plays and concerts.

### **Something you value about New Brunswick?**

The things I value about NB are the friendship, support, encouragement, love and prayers. The fact that we work as a team. We are all there for each other in the good times and in the not so good times. I know there are folk I can ring for support and advice both on personal things and also church affairs.

### **Anything else to add?**

I have been involved in Girls' Brigade since the age of around 16. In those days the Company had around 30 plus girls coming each week. So I was asked to go along and prepare squash and biscuits during the evening. This also included being responsible for the weekly 'tuck shop'. The rest (as they say) is history. But what a blessing this involvement has been. Not only having the privilege of passing on life skills to the girls but on a personal level making lifelong friendships throughout the organisation. If it had not been for Covid we would have celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday as a Company so perhaps we can look forward to having a celebration for our 75<sup>th</sup> !

## A Rocha's "Easy Eco Tips for MAY

Say "No to the Mow" (if you're lucky enough to have a garden). Mowing your lawn less, and letting parts of it grow long, saves you time and helps give nature a home. If you want to make an even bigger impact for wildlife, don't mow your lawn or a section of it all until August to help even more animals.



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### What is the greatest danger to Elders at Redland Park?

Most of this piece was written six months ago after Les Fry got knocked off his bike, breaking his elbow. It was going into November's *Recorder* but then the situation in Gaza kicked off and I wrote about that instead.

What's happening in Gaza is still appalling but my experiences (*Editor's privileges*) over the last couple of months have brought this piece back to the surface.

The Highway Code – have you looked at it since the new version came out in Jan 2022? - requires motorists to leave **at least** 1.5 m when overtaking a cyclist. What does that look like? It's difficult for a driver because the whole of your vehicle separates you from the cyclist so it looks to you like you're missing them by miles. After Les's accident, and much more acutely in the last couple of weeks, since I've got back on my bike, I've been watching cars (mostly) overtaking bikes. What does leaving **at least** 1.5 m look like? And it simplifies to this:

- if the bike is close to the kerb, **at least half your car** needs to be in the next lane out;
- if the cyclist is further out, e.g. they're passing parked cars, **the whole of your car** needs to be in the next lane.

And these observations are for fairly wide roads. Or there's the option which rarely seems to be considered: why not wait a few seconds until there is actually plenty of space to overtake safely?

What is the greatest danger to Elders at Redland Park?

Car drivers, it seems.

## Keeping up with the vicar, part 144

Here are the Lectionary readings for May. At the end of April, we heard Jesus saying “I have other sheep that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them together too, when they hear my voice’.” We had Philip meeting the Ethiopian, a complete outsider – a foreigner and a eunuch (eek!) – and finding the good news about Jesus was for him too.

And we begin his month with Peter being given the firm message (from God) that the Gentiles are also included in God’s family. All building up to the day of Pentecost when people from all over hear the gospel in their own languages and respond to it.

How do we reach out to those around our buildings, to those who don’t know they have a shepherd, that they too are part of his flock? In the Isaiah passage, God asks “Whom shall I send?” The same question is asked in the great hymn that begins, “I, the Lord of sea and sky.” God asks (us): “Who will bear my light to them?”

How are we going to respond?

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.

Angus

	<b>OT*</b>	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>Gospel</b>	<b>NT</b>
May 5 <sup>th</sup>	Acts 10:44-48	98	John 15:9-17	1 John 5:1-6
12 <sup>th</sup>	Acts 1:15-17,21-26	1	John 17:6-19	1 John 5:9-13
19 <sup>th</sup>	Acts 2:1-21	104:24-35	John 15:26-27, & 16:4b-15	Rom 8:22-27
Pentecost				
26 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 6:1-8	29	John 3:1-17	Rom 8:12-17
Trinity Sunday				

*\*Between Easter and Pentecost the Old Testament reading is replaced by one from Acts. Back to the OT on 26<sup>th</sup>.*

Deadline for contributions for the  
March *Recorder* is **15<sup>th</sup> May**.

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