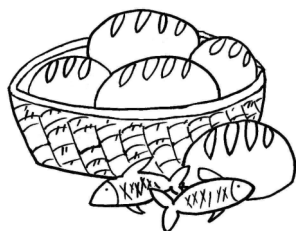


Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT

No. 337

March 2021

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends....

Over the past few years I have become increasingly interested in my family history and have been cooperating with other family members to try and construct our family tree. I recently had a phone conversation with one of my father's cousins who has undertaken some research and whom I haven't previously spoken with. In fact I am not sure I have ever met her.

Whilst we were speaking familiar regrets were expressed, which I have also heard from my father - that when they were younger they didn't take more notice of the exploits of family members who were visiting and more recently they hadn't take the opportunity to seek information from relatives who are now no longer around.

The Gospel writers seek to provide information about Jesus for his followers who didn't know him personally. As time went by, of course, this meant more and more people until there came a time when there was no one left who had physically met Jesus. Sometimes I imagine the Gospel writers raising questions similar to those I and my relatives pose: when did he visit a particular place? Who also was there? What was said? Was this before or after he had been to....?

The Bible, in particular the Gospels but also the New Testament letters, provide us with the information and guidance we need as we seek to be followers of Jesus today. At times it is very clear but often we wish there was more detail and we wish the writers had gone deeper in their research – but maybe, like those of us trying to grasp the intricacies of our family history, they missed opportunities and sometimes recognised the questions they needed to ask after it was too late.

Nevertheless I often wish that I could have met someone who knew Jesus. And then I realise that I have – not just one person but many, many people. The church is full of people who have met Jesus, not physically face-to-face but in their life experiences, prayer life and discipleship. There are people all around us whom we can ask 'what is Jesus like?' or 'what would Jesus want us to do about this?' That is part of what it means to be the church – a group of people who together are working out what it means to follow Jesus based on what we know and have experienced of him. It is also a call to deepen our knowledge and experience of Jesus so that when people ask us 'what is Jesus like?' we are able to give an answer.

Craig Bowman

Our Church Family...2020-2021

Over the past 12 months many families and friends have been affected by the Covid-19, Corona-virus. Some have recovered well, some are still suffering the after-effects.

We ask your prayers for all those around you that have been affected by the virus, either themselves, their family, relatives, close friends and all in the local communities.

We will continue to pray that there is support for all those who are vulnerable as the vaccine is rolled out. Please pray for our communities as we wait for the small but tentative steps forward as the lockdown is lifted.

A big THANK YOU from the Treasurer to everyone who dug deep and was able to give extra during the last year. With little regular income from the offertory plate or from hall lettings, we finished 2020 with a deficit but without your help we would have faced greater losses.



2021 will also be a difficult year, so it's good to know that your gifts from last year will help this year too - during the summer we will reclaim from HMRC an extra 25p for each £ given under the Gift Aid scheme, at no cost to yourselves.

So if you were thinking of being able to give something extra during the current tax year to 5th April, but haven't yet done so, it's not too late!



We are, as always, very grateful for any gifts you feel able to make.

**Supporting a
Local Charity
January - March**

From January 2021 through
to Easter we are raising
money for

Sutton Home Start.

This voluntary organisation is committed to promoting the welfare of families with young children. They help to build strong families in our community.

Home-Start is now planning its the next steps, re-launching training and re-starting home-visiting and groups all dependent on guidelines and how the infection rate changes.

Home-Start Sutton are proud to be part of the new Transform partnership. Transform is a partnership led by Cranstoun, a charity with over 50 years' experience of empowering people to live healthy, safe and happy lives. Transform brings together local organisations, each with unique skills and experience in domestic abuse, allowing us to deliver the best support possible for the Sutton community. Home-Start Sutton will be offering a nurturing programme for domestic abuse survivors with children under five.



Throughout 2020 Home Start Sutton have still provided support to local families.

Weekly telephone or virtual support is still able to be offered. Home-Start Sutton can provide home and community based

services for families, tailored to their individual needs and circumstances.

We ask that you, please, leave your donation (suggestion is £3 per mask) in one of the envelopes provided and pop it in the post box in our porch.

Thank you.

£215
so far

I am happy you take any orders for masks although cannot promise immediate delivery. There will be a few 'special' masks as we get nearer to Easter, and also some jams and marmalade for an extra treat.

Janet

Commitment for **Life**

Prayer Partners resource offers prayers based on 'Life-giving faith, defiant hope, generous love'. The prayers can be used to help people focus on generosity of mind and spirit.

Prayers for our Partners

Suzanne Pearson

Gracious God, creator, provider and sustainer of all things;

we have not taken good care of the wondrous creation that you gave us to oversee.

We have not loved as you commanded, but have allowed selfishness, self-importance, injustices and inequalities to invade our societies leading to climate disruption, social and economic disparities.

Through our actions people all over the globe have been left vulnerable, desolate and open to disease and poverty.

We pray that you will bless the work of organisations such as Christian Aid, Global Justice Now, Fairtrade, Jubilee Debt Campaign and other groups as they seek to respond to global spiritual, moral, social and economic issues to make it a fairer and more equal world.

In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Amen.



March: Prayer for Bangladesh

David Jonathan

Commitment
for **Life**

God, we thank you
for the rich tapestry of the art,
poetry and the cultural heritage
of Bangladesh.

We thank you
that despite being the eighth
most densely populated country,
Bangladesh is assisting Rohingya refugees
and helping them during
the life-confining Covid-19 pandemic.



We pray for Bangladesh's poverty
and environmental crisis,
including groundwater metal contamination
and increased salinity due to human
and industrial greed for profit.

Help us to act responsibly, Lord.

Help us to live simply
so that others in countries
like Bangladesh
can simply live.
Amen.



Junior Church Books

The end of August usually brings a flurry of activity often focused on visits to "Oasis" the Christian bookshop in Wallington when thinking of our young people in Junior Church.

This is in anticipation of the "book presentation" on behalf the Wallington United Reformed Church family expected in September. 2020 didn't do "as usual", so we take this opportunity in Contact to give comment and list of books delivered to the homes of our children and young people to encourage and challenge them along their individual Christian Faith journey.

It's a privilege and pleasure to spend time browsing books to choose for them from what we know are their interests; guided by some illuminating conversations and not forgetting their "tricky" questions on Sunday mornings, a while ago now!

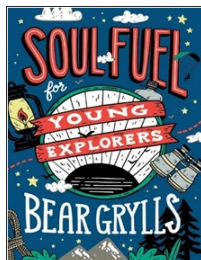
The following books were chosen for our Young People in High School, Sixth form and at College.

"Unquestioned Answers", Author: Jeff Myers. The title leapt out with chapters, each with a title cliché such as *"Just have faith"*, *"It's not my place to judge"* which all too easily may trip off of our tongues! The Author explores the questions; Are these true? and what do they really mean?

"Simply Christian" (why Christianity makes sense) Author: Tom Wright. This is another engaging read with personal stories and biblical perspective from the author engaging discussion in longings for justice, relationships, beauty and how life can be lived differently.

"God's Peace when you can't Sleep" Author: Christina Vinson. A "dip in" book of short reflections and prayers addressing common anxieties to us all.

"The Teenage Prayer Experiment Notebook" Authors: Miranda and Noah Threlfare-Holmes. Each chapter, included a well presented "experiment" activity to try different ways of exploring prayer. Such as making a contemplation bottle, lego prayers, a prayer den! I read most of this one and hope we can use this in church!



With cartoon style illustrations, this addresses issues, common to us all but particularly to young people. Bear Grylls includes his own honest experience of anxiety, fear and the

place his faith has for him with examples,
"the bravest thing to do is talk about our fears to someone
we trust and that includes God."

"My Son the Messiah" Raymond Smith. Book 1 of the Cross- Eyes
Tetrology,

"Amazing Agents of God" Andy Robb

"Paul – a man on a mission" Bob Hartman and Conrad Gempf

"Kingdoms – graphic novel Vol 1" Ed Bud Rogers

For our children of Primary School age the
following were chosen.

"Who is Jesus" Christina Goodings

**50 Juiciest Bible stories & 50 Zappiest Bible
Stories** By Andy Robb. A series with most of the
popular and some not so familiar Bible Stories
presented with lots of humour!

"Bible Birds and Beasties" Leena Lane

"Albert and the Sling -shot" Richard Littledale

"Bible Stories Gone Even More Crazy" Josh
Edwards & Emiliano Migliardo

"Yummy Elijah, the Boy and the amazing famine feast" Bob
Hartman & Emma Hagan

"Awww, Jesus. The Grumblers and the Best Big Hug", Bob
Hartman & Emma Hagan



**"Zzzz Samuel, the night and the curious calling
voice,"** Bob Hartman & Emma Hagan

For our youngest in Creche and Pre-school group.

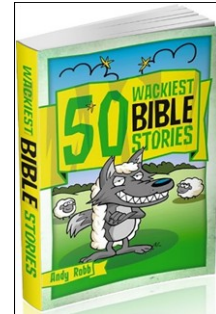
**"The House on the Rock", "The Two Sons" & "The
Rich Farmer"** by Nick Butterworth & Mick Inkpen, These are firm
favourites with plain text and colourful humorous illustrations.
(particularly the expression of a seagull!) Can you guess which book?

"God Bless You and Goodnight" Hannah C. Hall

"God Loves Little Me" Rebecca Elliot

Junior Church leaders,

Sheila, Phil, Jo, Jeanette.



Create a quiet space:

to pause, to allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you.

In this reflection may you feel closer to God, grow in faith and deepen your sense of belonging to God.

Psalm 139: 7-12

'God's Unfailing Care'

- 7 Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
9 If I take the wings of the morning and settle at
the farthest limits of the sea,
10 even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
11 If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',
12 even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.



My father, who was a Methodist local preacher for over forty years, used to tell a (true) story which I never tired of hearing as a lad – partly because of my interest in railways, and partly because it left such an impression upon me.

Dad was an engineer (heating and ventilation) and had an office in Cardiff. He had a friend who used to take the train to London quite frequently and related the following experience to my father:

'One morning I just managed to catch the Paddington express – the Red Dragon, if I remember – at Cardiff General, and it was only after I'd settled into what I thought was an empty compartment, when I noticed a little girl sitting in the corner. She looked about eight or nine years of age and was quite alone. The train was about to depart and – naturally concerned – I leaned across and asked her if there was a grown-up with her.

"Oh, no", she replied simply.

'The next stop was Newport, about fifteen minutes away, and, to my surprise, she made no move to get out. I asked her whether anyone was meeting her, and she shook her head.

"But this is an express," I continued, "and it doesn't stop until it gets to London."

"Yes, I know," she answered. When we moved out of the station, my curiosity again got the better of me, and I asked her,

"Excuse me, but aren't you just a little bit frightened at travelling all alone on such a long journey? In a short while we go through a long tunnel and that can be quite scary!"

"Oh no," she replied with a smile,

"you see, my daddy's the engine-driver!"

Of course, as I grew older, I challenged my father on some of the theological assumptions of the story – true though it may well have been.

How 'alone' is each one of us in life?

Is our journey's end pre-destined?

I remember my father gently explaining to me that if you over-dissected parables you might miss the main point!

In this case, the simple truth, affirmed as long as 3000 years ago by the Psalmist, is that – though we may seem sometimes to be travelling alone, we are never unaccompanied.

Our Father's love never leaves us. His love never smothers or inhibits us, but allows us to grow as individuals into the people He intends for us to be – and we pray that that will be in the image of his Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Father God, remind us of your everlasting love for us;
reassure us of your presence alongside us,
every moment of every day;
grant that we may travel with you, comforted and strengthened.
And may we comfort and strengthen
those with whom we journey. Amen.

Reflection © 2021 Barrie Tabraham.

<https://emmanueleastbourne.org.uk>

*Check out the website for more devotions, and meet this Methodist-URC Local
Ecumenical Partnership Church located in Old Town in Eastbourne*



Sutton Schoolswork

Although we have had absolutely no physical engagement with schools, we still circulate our assembly videos to primaries and thought for the week chats to secondary. We continue to be delighted with the messages of positive support we receive from schools who have been able to utilise these in their week, and we know that this means many more pupils in those particular schools are having some form of Christian input than we would otherwise have delivered.

We have had our second prayer meeting online, and were delighted to have been joined by two visitors from elsewhere in the country who have found our work online and wanted to come along simply to support us.

We obviously still want to get back into the school buildings and engage with people. It appears this will not happen until 8th March at the earliest, but we continue to pray for something extraordinary to happen. Our staff meetings always look forward to prepare for what we think is going to occur.

All schools need our prayer support. Many staff are simply overwhelmed and running on auto-pilot, and we must continue to raise them up and support them.

It is our intention to work with the schools to offer some form of emotional and spiritual support wherever we can. If the schools do go back on the 8th March, that only gives them 3 weeks of the term to go, and there's every possibility schools won't be able to invite us in during that time. Please pray that when we are able to be back in schools we may be able to respond.

Please continue to pray for our Easter lessons. There will be a new presentation, incorporating a video of the Easter story. We all know how important the message of the death and resurrection of our Lord is.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone for your prayerful support. May God keep you safe and strong.

*Simon Ellingham
Director*



Walking together towards Easter is a Lent resource .

The pack invites everyone to

join in with a journey through Lent with opportunities to build connections with Jesus, others as well as within our own church.

There is a 'map' of Lent, 250 stickers, a diary with space to journal and lots of prayers, challenges and activities, as well as a recipe booklet.

It is designed to be handed out or posted to individuals and families to help sustain and inspire them through Lent at this challenging time. The key focus is building connections with God and others.

Saying 'Thank You'

Being thankful is an attitude, a choice we can make whatever our circumstances. It can be a habit to foster during Lent.

Here are some suggestions to help you be more thankful:

Start each day by thanking God for today! This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)

End each day by giving thanks for three things from the day, three things you have appreciated, however small. If you wrote these down each day you would have a record of over 1,000 blessings each year!

Remember to say thank you to everyone who does anything for you today.

Think about the past week, month, year – who would you most like to thank for their support or help?

Make or write a card to send them, expressing thanks.

Give thanks before each meal, drink and snack you have today. Think of all the people who have been involved in growing, packing, transporting, selling and making what you are eating and drinking. Pray for them as you thank God for sustaining you through this food and drink.

There are also connections to the Holy Habits we have been following.

First Sunday of Lent – 21 February Biblical teaching – Jesus in the wilderness. Luke 4:1-13

Second Sunday of Lent – 28 February Serving and gladness and generosity – Jesus and the scroll. Luke 4:16-19

Third Sunday of Lent – 7 March Breaking bread, sharing resources and eating together – feeding of the 5000. Luke 9:12-17

Fourth Sunday of Lent – 14 March – Mothering Sunday Prayer, fellowship, worship – Lord's Prayer. Luke 11:1-4

Fifth Sunday of Lent – 21 March Making more disciples and eating together – Zacchaeus. Luke 19:1-10

Sixth Sunday of Lent – 28 March – Palm Sunday Gladness and generosity and worship – Entering Jerusalem. Luke 19:28-39

Easter Sunday – 4 April Worship – resurrection Luke 24:36-53

Diary Dates			
March			
Sunday	7th	10.30am	Audio Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...
Sunday	14th	10.30am	Audio Morning service
Sunday	21st	10.30am	Audio Morning service
Sunday	28th	10.30am	Audio Morning service
April			
Thursday	1st		Audio Maundy Thursday Service
Friday	2nd		Audio Good Friday 'Happening'
Sunday	4th	10.30am	Easter Day Audio Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...
Sunday	11th	10.30am	Audio Morning service
Sunday	18th	10.30am	Audio Morning service

PLEASE NOTE... Articles for the April 2021 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Monday 24th March** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement. Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail contact@wurc.org.uk

Over the past few months we have had the Puzzle Corner in Contact. Sudoku Answers for February:

Other answers next month.

9	5	3	1	8	6	2	4	7
8	7	6	3	4	2	5	1	9
4	2	1	9	7	5	6	8	3
7	6	5	4	9	1	3	2	8
2	8	9	5	6	3	4	7	1
1	3	4	7	2	8	9	6	5
5	9	7	2	1	4	8	3	6
6	1	2	8	3	9	7	5	4
3	4	8	6	5	7	1	9	2

Puzzle Corner

Genesis Quiz

1) What was Jacob's dream at Bethel?

- ☐ A ladder or stairway was set up on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ☐ An enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance had its head made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.
- ☐ Jacob's sheaf of grain rose and stood upright, while his brothers' sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to it.
- ☐ A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the camp. It struck the tent with such force.

2) Joseph, Jacob's eleventh son and the first born to his favourite wife Rachel, owned the famous coat of many colours. Where did he get it?

- ☐ It was a gift from his mother.
- ☐ It was a gift from his father.
- ☐ He made it from goat skins.
- ☐ He bought it from the Ishmaelites.

3) What was Joseph's dream?

- ☐ A ladder was set up on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ☐ An enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance had its head made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.
- ☐ Joseph's sheaf of grain rose and stood upright, while his brothers' sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to it.
- ☐ A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the camp. It struck the tent with such

4) What did Joseph's brothers do to Joseph?

- ☐ They threw him into a den of lions.
- ☐ They took his coat and sold it to a merchant traveling in a caravan.
- ☐ They sold him into slavery.
- ☐ They took his coat and left him alone in the desert.

5) Under what circumstances was Joseph reunited with his brothers?

- ☐ Joseph's army captured them and put them in prison in Egypt.
- ☐ They went to Egypt to buy food because there was a famine.
- ☐ Their father sent them to return the coat of many colors.
- ☐ They fled to Egypt when their father found out what they had done to Joseph.

Blessings & Woes

ACROSS

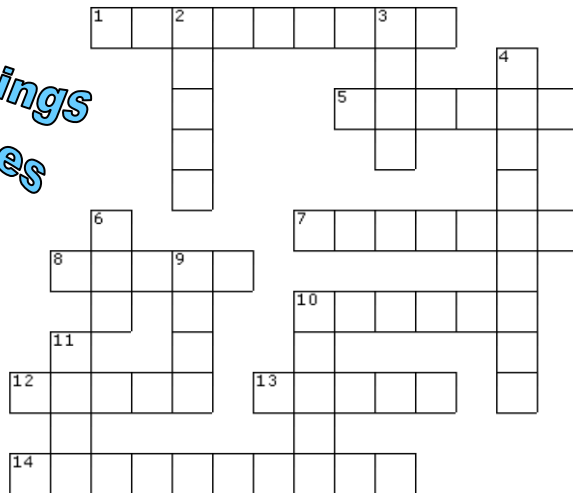
- 1 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be ____
- 5 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be ____
- 7 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the ____ of heaven
- 8 Woe to you who laugh now, for you will ____ and weep
- 10 Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go ____
- 12 Blessed are you who weep now, for you will ____
- 13 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the ____
- 14 Blessed are those who are ____ because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

DOWN

- 2 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown ____
- 3 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of ____ against you because of me
- 4 Woe to you

- when all men speak ____ ____
- ____, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.
- 6 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of ____
- 9 But woe to you who are ____, for you have already received your comfort.

- 10 Blessed are the pure in ____, for they will see God
- 11 Blessed are you when men ____ you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man



			3			6		4
	9			1	7		2	
3		2			6	5	9	
6	3			7			5	8
		4	9		1			
	7			8			4	9
	4	3	1		8			
	6		4	5			8	1
1		8					3	

A sudoku puzzle consists of a 9 by 9 grid. This grid is subdivided into nine 3 x 3 boxes.

Some of the cells in the grid are prefilled with a number between 1 and 9, while many other cells are blank. Your job is to determine the correct number to be entered in each of the empty cells.

The numbers 1 to 9 must appear just once in each row, column, and 3 x 3 box.

EVERY WEEK AT WALLINGTON U.R.C.

Times of Worship

Sunday 10.30am Family Service ...Audio Service on line.

Activities you can find on our Premises

Monday - Friday *9.15am-1.15pm Holmwood Pre – school*

Monday

Tuesday 12.45-3.00pm AA Meeting (in coffee Lounge)

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday 6.45-9.15pm AA Meeting (in Holmwood Hall)

Saturday

**All other activities are
suspended until further notice**