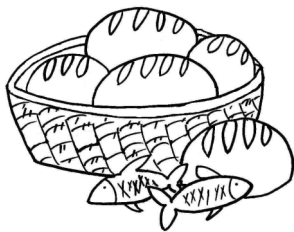


Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT

No. 339

May 2021

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends....

I have been reading a book by Steve Tomkins, the editor of the United Reformed Church's magazine Reform, which was published last year to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower to America. It is entitled The Journey of the Mayflower and in a very good read it tells the story of the lead up to the Mayflower's journey, beginning in 1553 with Queen Mary's violent anti-protestant rule. The struggles of those years are of the utmost significance for us in the dissenting tradition, both Congregational and Presbyterian, and it is sobering to understand what our forebears risked and suffered as they sought reform for the state church, ultimately finding that what they needed to do was separate and form their own church. It is a really well researched book that tells the story of that struggle through many of the participants. Perhaps one drawback is trying to remember who everyone is and what they believe, but that's a minor criticism.

In a pertinent coincidence with our times, one Separatist, Henoch Clapham, who later returned to the Church of England and condemned the fledgling Congregationalism evolving at the time, was jailed in the plague year of 1603 for encouraging people to illegally attend funerals if they had the faith to resist infection. The struggle to find the balance between practising faith and care for others and the community is not a new one.

One of the things that reading this book reinforced for me is just how horrible God's people can be to each other when they are convinced they are right. This can be physical with fines and denying employment, through imprisonment and beatings, to hanging and burning. However it is also the vitriolic language, full of bile, that is used in debate and writings which shocks and which we would never

want to hear in a Church Meeting! It was a refreshing moment when Steve, writing about John Smyth's last days, recounts the Separatist's recognition that his words had been 'biting and bitter, stout and mingled with gall' and he had 'broken the rules of love and charity, which is the superior law'.

I have enjoyed this book, which has been a real page-turner, but it has reminded me that things are never as simple or clear-cut as we like to think or are encouraged to believe. After all the tale that most of us have grown up with, that the Pilgrims on the Mayflower were sailing to America to escape persecution, isn't quite true. By the time of the Mayflower's sailing they had already left England, some of them many years before, and were resident in the Netherlands where they were not being persecuted. Our history is complex both religious and personal. The struggle for freedom that this journey ultimately becomes is not the journey that the dissenters start out upon. It is filled with conflicts and sacrifice and it is messy and doubles back on itself. The path to freedom has not always been plain sailing and it is not a straight line.

Our personal lives, and our journey to understand God and our relation with Christ, are not so different. Sometimes we are totally convinced of our rightness, thinking we know where the future and our future lies, we can use words that hurt or demean others and turn our backs on others who have much to offer us. But life is messy and the path to the future winds and twists and we can realise the truth in others and the gaps in our knowledge and experience. When we recognise that perhaps it helps us to treat others well, seeing in them a child of God, and abiding by the 'rules of love and charity, which is the superior law'.

Craig Bowman

For Our Wider Church Family

Countries around the world are in a state of lockdown to help limit the spread of the Covid infection. In some we hear that the number of new daily confirmed cases begins to decrease, so now governments must decide how to release their populations from quarantine as efficiently as possible without overwhelming their health services.

The virus spread rapidly worldwide, leading the World Health Organization to declare a global pandemic on the 11th of March 2020. Globally, the outbreak spread to 210 countries and territories, with 3,007,194 confirmed cases, 207,265 deaths and 883,298 recovered individuals, by 27th of April 2020.

Containment of the virus was challenging. Some patients requiring intensive care, others had unreported mild symptoms, with as many as 17.9% of infected individuals possibly being asymptomatic.

We ask your prayers for those who are anxious or unwell, whether they are part of a church family, or not, and we remember all those who are housebound or have difficulties at this time.

We pray:

Life is lost: life goes on-
The yearning, the grieving,
The hours unfold, the world keeps turning;
Usual rhythms, mundane necessities,
Everything is changed—
but in the absence there is a presence,
In the hollow emptiness, there is God.

Rachel Poolman
From The Prayer Handbook 2021

If you have any news of the church family to bring us up to date please contact Alan. 020 8274 2136

Or Email: pastoral@wurc.org.uk

Names will only be shared in the version of Contact which goes to our usual fellowship and not put into the version posted on our website.

We remember....

Jack Alder

14th March 1932 - 28th March 2021

Jack Edwin Alder was born on 14th March 1932 at 13, Annadale Road in Greenwich. The extended family included Beatrice and Percy, his older sister by 7 years, Beattie, Jack's maternal grandparents, Edwin and Martha Martin, and their second daughter Doris. A modest, undemonstrative but close and deeply Christian family, Jack's father Percy worked at the Siemens factory at Woolwich dockyard but was better known, and respected, as a lay preacher presiding at services at Rothbury Hall in Woolwich, where the family worshipped twice every Sunday, and where Jack became a Sunday school teacher and Scout Master.

Jack often recalled that his father never went anywhere without his Bible under his arm and although tiny in stature Percy was a huge, mesmerising presence in the pulpit, and at home. His father's reputation made a deep impression on Jack, and you will all no doubt recognise the values he inherited and brought to his own life, and although similarly small in stature, he had a large charismatic aura, a strong religious, moral compass, and confident courage to challenge those who disagreed.

At the age of 7, as the Second World War broke out, Jack was the only member of that large household to be evacuated to Shebbear (pronounced Shevia) in North Devon. He and a similarly aged boy called Dennis, were chosen by Annie and George Metters of Smoky House Farm and there began his next 5 years of life, which he always described as amongst the happiest of his life. He met so many wonderful characters and would never forget attending Lake Chapel at Harvest festival: the aroma of freshly harvested apples, pears, plums, flowers and vegetables of all shapes and colours was overwhelmingly wonderful! Jack's treasured paintings of shire horses pulling the plough, resided in Eversfield for the last 2 years of his life, providing precious reminders of that memorable time.

When Jack returned to Greenwich, aged around 14, he began his 7-year tool making apprenticeship at Siemens and went to evening

classes 3 times a week at Maryon Park School.

Then, aged of 16, at the Friday night dance, Jack partnered a 19-year-old young lady named Ivy Winnifred Babb, who was a regular attendee with her identical twin Vera, both of whom worked at Siemens as typists. Ivy was gradually rechristened affectionately by Jack as Julie, or Jane to his Tarzan! And there began a lifelong love story of soul mates. They discovered that as evacuees, they had been only 10 miles apart in Devon, from where the Babb family originated, and throughout their lives, they often returned to build more memories

They married in November 1952 at Rothbury Hall, Jack aged 20 and Julie 23, and Jack moved into Julie and Vera's home in Woolwich. The girls had been fending for themselves since their parents died. Jack had his National Service delayed to complete his apprenticeship and was then put straight into the armoury because of his skills when he did join the RAF at the age of 21. He thoroughly enjoyed his time here, being fascinated by the ammunition, and aircraft, and had paintings of the Lancaster bomber, Spitfire and Hurricane on his walls ever afterwards. He proudly wore his RAF badge forever more.

Life changed again on his return after National Service as when a proud Jack and Julie welcomed Trevor, their firstborn, in June 1956. Around this time Jack learned of a job vacancy at A.E. Dean on



the Purely Way, Croydon. Jack secured that job as tool maker, where he graduated to foreman and worked very happily there for over 20 years until redundancy when it closed.

The Alder family of 3 moved to Reigate Way, in 1958. Their 'forever home'. The family was completed when in April 1959 Graham, then, as now, known as 'Pop', was born. Life in Reigate Way was an important part of the Alders' lives and friendships made with their neighbours have been strong and enduring.

Graham (Pop) shared his father's love of weaponry and all things mechanical. He recalls choosing one of his father's long bayonet blades and a sword to have play fights with his brother on numerous occasions! He doesn't believe his Dad ever found out about that!

From their arrival in Wallington in 1958, the Alders began attending Wallington Congregational Church, which later became the United Reformed Church. Here they also formed firm, abiding friendships. Jack was an active and deeply reflective listener to all preachers and texts, never afraid to challenge or praise what he heard. Jack and Julie are remembered as being an important part of the church family for over 60 years, reliably present every Sunday, with Jack greeting people, handing out hymn books, contributing to discussions at the monthly meetings and on hand to problem solve where he could. Jack, being so practical, managed the church's heating for many years. "Call in Jack" was a very familiar cry until a few years ago! And of course, the summer fetes, Christmas bazaars and other events would see both Jack and Julie manning a stall and participating.

Jack and Julie's relationship and love was such that they were complete with each other: a little self-sufficient island in the sea of life, and they saw their sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren, and all others, as visiting ships that could sail in and out of their lives with few demands made on them. They enjoyed family gatherings at high days and holidays, and Jack embraced the family Zoom chats during this last year.

Another lifelong love of Jack's was his badminton. He had

played for church clubs since he was 13, for the RAF and at the Woolwich Arsenal. Jack graduated to becoming a coach, and regularly played on a Friday night with a group of what became good friends.

It was Jack's membership of this Badminton club which kick-started another important part of his life: his healing. A good friend of his from the club, Jamie, began speaking of spiritual matters with Jack over dinner with their wives one evening, disclosing that they were both healers. The chat resonated with Jack's beliefs and experiences so much that Jamie became his first teacher.

Jack was introduced to Bettine who was the secretary of the National Federation of Spiritual Healers, of which he became a lifelong member and practitioner. Jack studied with her for around 5 years at which point he felt ready to work independently. And so began his healing of friends and family, for no financial gain, and in Oct 1991, with the Elders blessing, he started the Healing Clinic at the Church on Monday evenings. That increased to Thursday afternoons once he'd retired following a heart attack on the badminton court in 1993.

Jack was also instrumental in helping develop the skills of new healers, and with Julie assisting him; they served their community in this way for around 28 years until Julie's dementia became prohibitive to continue. However, even at Eversfield in the last two years and in poor health himself, Jack continued to offer healing to various carers. The staff there independently and collectively stated how much they loved him, as a friend as much as a resident: his wise and peaceful demeanour, helping new, often fearful, residents. His strength of spirit, some might call stubbornness, staying strong to the end. His beliefs enabled him to confidently do it his way, as is right!

The last 3 years of Julie's life were extremely hard for Jack. As anyone with experience of dementia will recognise, he felt the complex grief of losing the Julie he knew and their precious relationship, whilst caring for the stranger she'd become. He gave up his church, badminton and social life to care for her. So once Julie died in April 2018, sailing away from their island of two, Jack found

himself desolately marooned in his own wilderness.

Always a proudly private man, he could not share her funeral with anyone but close family. Almost immediately his own health took a rapid decline with complications developing in his prostate cancer. Having moved to Eversfield, he began to engage with life and his spiritual beliefs again. He often said how Julie was with him still, that she was waiting for him, and that gave him great comfort.

Everyone who knew him at Wallington URC will remember this 'dapper', lovely gentleman (always with very shiny shoes), with a great deal of affection for a long time.

Returning to our building

It is planned that from Sunday May 23rd we will hold worship again in the church building. This is not yet a return to the pattern of worship and attendance to which we were used until just over a year ago. At this time we will be returning to what we did from September through to December.

Many of us have got used to the requirements for entering shared buildings over the past year and these will still need to be followed. Those who have any Covid-like symptoms, including a high temperature, persistent cough or loss of taste, should not attend even if they have had one or both doses of the vaccine.

There can be no singing, nor close contact and spending extended time indoors in the presence of others is to be discouraged. However, if the government road map timetable has not been altered, by the 23rd of May groups of up to 30 will be allowed to meet outside with suitable precautions in place, so there may be the opportunity to talk with others after the service.

We expect the pattern to be that I will be at Wallington one week and St Andrew's the next. When I am present I will preach the sermon and do some other parts 'live'. When I am at St Andrew's the sermon and other elements will be recorded.

We will continue to offer an audio service for a while yet as we realise it is the only reasonable way that some of the Wallington and St Andrew's fellowships can share in worship. Please remember that, for those who have internet access, the St Andrew's service is now streamed live on Sunday mornings via their You Tube channel. (A link is to be found on the front page of their website.)

The audio service, live service and streamed service all share the same hymns, readings, prayers and sermon.

We shall share more information later in May via the weekly letter and email.

Craig

Saturday 15th May 2021

Sunday May 23rd will see us meeting up again for socially distanced in person worship in the Sanctuary. We also expect some of our external users to start using the premises from June as well.

We would like help to rationalise storage and prepare for reopening by having a big clear up on

Saturday 15th May between 10.30am and 1.00pm

We have a range of exciting activities available for all ages including moving equipment to new sites; checking and rationalising a variety of resources; improving the use of space. There will be things to sort and de-clutter in Mallinson, Coverdale, the corridor cupboard and the 'teddy' cupboard. There will be some outside jobs, and the chance to take things to charity shops or maybe to the tip.



There are also a number of small jobs to complete: light switch cord in the disabled toilet to be replaced, chair joints to be tightened, chair seats to be mended, easing John Williams door, sorting out shelving in ;teddy cupboard.

It would be lovely if as many as possible can attend as it will mean the jobs can be completed quickly and allow more time to meet up with friends (socially distant, of course). We do recognise that not all will be able to come that day but please do let us know if you would be willing to help as not all jobs need to be done on the day.

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.



A Prayer for Fairtrade

Kevin Snyman

Jesus, you prayed that we might forgive all debt: not forgive debt once only, but forgive consistently and relentlessly. That is hard.

We confess that we are trapped utterly by an economics of debt, an economics of death.

We don't know how to operate differently.

We cry for your help: show us another way!

Nevertheless, we can subvert this economics of death starting today through simple acts of reckless generosity.

We can buy Fairtrade. We can choose to pay more.

We can choose to place the needs of farmers and workers above our wants and desires.

Yet even as we foster Fairtrade, we ask that you give us the wisdom and willingness to discover an entirely new economics of life; one that is no longer is predicated on debt.

In Jesus' name we pray for the sake of all life on earth.

Amen.

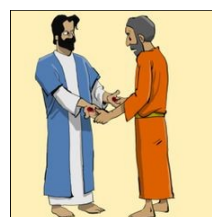


Create a quiet space:

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.

John 20:24-29 'Thomas Can't Believe It'

'*Doubting Thomas*' has become a phrase in the English language and we might well be grateful to Thomas for expressing and representing some of our own doubts. Which of us has never doubted? Not many I suspect, it's a sad part of being human. Even though Jesus rebukes Thomas for his lack of faith, he doesn't dismiss him. In fact, the encounter elicits a profound and personal profession of faith by Thomas: '*My Lord and my God!*'. Jesus drew forth something extremely good from Thomas' doubts, and he can bring something good from our doubts too. We sometimes worry when we question the Church's teaching, but it's healthy to examine what we believe, so that we can come to an adult understanding of our faith. God gave us minds to think and to question; doubting can be an honest step in our faith journey.



When Thomas said, "*Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe*", I've always heard those words as a plea. I think that Thomas wanted Jesus to be alive so much that he dared not believe in case it wasn't true. Whatever was going on in Thomas' heart was put to rights in the meeting with Jesus.

Thomas lacked faith in his brothers and sisters. His independent mindedness refused to accept their word, needing proof to reach his own conclusions for himself. As Christians today we have to rely on the word of others. Thomas, with all the other Apostles, arrived at the conviction that Jesus is supremely trustworthy as a messenger from God; that all he said about God and about himself is true; that therefore his words are the supreme truth, and they are life for us all. Jesus meets us wherever we are on life's journey. He knows that in our walk of faith we face many challenges. In his final words above, it is of us he speaks, and us he blesses: "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.*"



Prayer:

Heavenly Father,
when our faith is weak, grant us wisdom.
When our bodies are weak, grant us strength.
When our journey is long, grant us perseverance.
In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Reflection © 2021 Ann Caffyn.

<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



**The United Reformed Church
is hoping to raise at least
£10,000 for its
'Give Thanks for Your Vaccine'
fundraising campaign,
developed with Christian Aid.**

As more of our family, friends, and neighbours receive their COVID vaccinations, we rejoice and are glad that our loved ones are safe and protected. We give thanks for all the NHS staff and key workers who continue to save lives across the UK.

In the UK, over 33 and a half million people have had their first dose of a corona-virus vaccine and more than 12 and a half million have had two doses. But for the poorest and most vulnerable communities across the world, there is little hope of a vaccine rollout. These are people who already face lack of water, food and basic healthcare.

Christian Aid is already on the ground, helping to keep people safe from corona-virus with practical support, but with donations the charity can do more.

"The URC is deeply concerned about the unfair rollout of Covid vaccines around the world. Once again, the poorest and most vulnerable people are being pushed to the back of the queue, with only two percent of the world's population vaccinated so far - the vast majority of them in the richest countries. We must and can do better."

Although there will be no envelopes for our volunteers to collect this year, to help the charity the [United Reformed Church](#) has joined with the [Christian Aid](#) fundraising to send a gift of thanksgiving to help protect our global neighbours and support families with hygiene kits and safe water, while the vaccine is out of reach.

Christian Aid Week

10th-16th May 2021

**This Christian Aid Week,
will you show your appreciation?**



Support for a Local Charity

From January 2021 through to Easter the mask tree and jam/marmalade was raising money for

Sutton Home Start.

Home-Start Sutton can provide home and community based services for families, tailored to their individual needs and circumstances.



A BIG **Thank You** to everyone for their support as the charity will now receive

£576

From April 6th through to May 28th 2021 all money raised from the masks will go to support.



Janet

If you wish to make a cash donation to Christian Aid it can be left in an envelope, labelled Christian Aid, and put into our post box. This will be added to the total collected. (no cheques please)

Your gift of thanksgiving could provide a family with hygiene kits and safe water, while the vaccine is out of reach.

Looking Back to Easter 2021

Over the Easter weekend we were not meeting in person at the church, but we were able to reach out to people passing by with a lovely Easter Garden, put together by Jeanette Hopkins.



The Good Friday craft also gave some of us a chance to put together our own Easter Gardens.



Thank you Jeanette....

Diary Dates			
May			
Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Audio Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Audio Morning service
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Audio Morning service
Sunday	23rd	10.30am	Morning service.
Sunday	30th	10.30am	Morning service.
June			
Sunday	6th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
Sunday	13th	10.30am	Morning service.

PLEASE NOTE... Articles for the June 2021 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Saturday 22nd May** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement. Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail
jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk.

We have continued with the Puzzle Corner in Contact. Please let us have any appropriate feedback.

Do you enjoy the puzzles?

Sudoku Answers for April:

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

Puzzle Corner



Places in the Bible Word Search



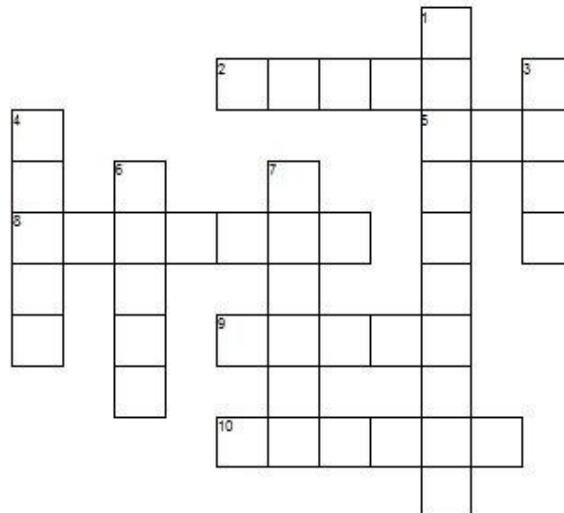
P U M X M P B O D Z H T D Q H
J N A Y K E H Z B N E O B T J
V E M S I C L H T G A N K H J
D C T O I B V A E W V E E A A
O Y Y R D I P T S V E D K R R
V Q E P X O H S O U N E K R B
C J Y S R S S Y H B R K U O C
U Y B R E U L E B A B E Z M J
Z T T M S C S T B D Z T J O B
F U A M E H E L H T E B R G I
V N Z P X I U H Q X C D S X W
E E V M M N M S G Y A D C H M
Y A B A A S H S F N Q E D T Y
Y B I E L I P J B Z O J B O K
C X X V R C Z I S R A E L A C

BABEL
BETHLEHEM
CYPRUS
EDEN

GETHSEMANE
GOMORRAH
HEAVEN
ISRAEL

JERICO
JERUSALEM
JORDAN
SODOM

Noah



ACROSS

- 2 Noah found _____ in the eyes of God
- 5 God sent _____ of every animal to Noah
- 8 A _____ is a symbol of God's promise to never flood the earth again
- 9 The ark had _____ levels
- 10 The ark came to a rest upon the mountains of _____

DOWN

- 1 Noah's grandfather; oldest man in the Bible
- 3 A _____ brought back an olive leaf to Noah
- 4 God made it rain for _____ days and nights
- 6 There were _____ people on the ark
- 7 The ark was made from _____ wood

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

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**