

Christ Church seeks to
express the love of Christ
for everyone



The Messenger

Christ Church Barnstaple

Methodist / United Reformed Church
<http://christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk>

September 2020

- ◆ Prayers for September
– see page 4
- ◆ An important message about
worship in church – see page 5



- ◆ Farewell to Robert and Amanda
– see page 7

- ◆ Saint Michael- see page 8
- ◆ Eco Church – see page 10
- ◆ Climate Sunday – see page 14

When I feel alone,
Let me feel You near me ,
Even if only for a moment that
enables me to go on.
Let me hear You say
'Peace be with you '.

Calendar

September 2020

All activities are cancelled or postponed until further notice.

As the church magazine is printed once a month you will find more up to date information on the church website. I strongly recommend that, if you are able to, you have a look there for updates.

Our family matters

Christ Church Family News

While we are not meeting together please look out for each other and let our Church Friends coordinator know of any concerns.

Please keep in your prayers those affected by the flash floods in Barnstaple on Monday. We hope that the damage can be sorted out as quickly as possible.

Singing a new song

This is the title of the latest Methodist 'Connexion' magazine, and as always there are stories about people and churches to encourage and inspire us. Some of you will recently have received your copy of the Summer 2020 issue (also online at www.methodist.org.uk/theconnexion).

One writer is Carolyn Lawrence, this year's vice-president of the Methodist Conference, who comes from Ivybridge (in our District) where her husband Mark is the minister - she talks about her passion for reaching out to those who don't yet know Jesus.

Another article asks the question 'What new journey with your community is God calling you to take?' - reminding us, perhaps, that we must not forget the challenge to build new Community Links here in Barnstaple, and we need to pick up the challenge again!

Marilyn

Calling all "Techies" or wannabe "Techies"

Some of us have been enjoying the weekly circuit services, mainly organised and arranged by Robert Hurley. To continue with these, more help is needed on the technical side. The work needed to produce the service can be split between ministers and lay preachers who are willing to plan and conduct the services, and those who deal with the technical side of things. The techies can do their thing and just stay in the background. If this is your forte or you're trying to improve your technical skills, Don Macalister would be **very** pleased to hear from you.

Message

Dear Friends,

I have written a few times about things that are happening behind the scenes in the last few weeks. Church friends and so many of you are continuing to keep in touch with one another, the Elders, Circuit Leadership Team, Circuit Staff and others are having regular meetings on the internet using Zoom, Tuesday Prayers, and Acts of Worship are being shared through postings and emails. And through the dedicated efforts of Kathy and David and all who contribute, the Messenger continues to be produced and emailed or posted out.

There has been and is a lot still going on, and I haven't mentioned the ongoing practical matters of maintaining the Church building, remembering that the corridors have been newly decorated and grant applications are being made and planning permissions sought for the new buttress and repairs to the front of the church.

There has been a lot going on behind the scenes but when can we reopen the church and get back to worshipping together? The answer to that is that here too things are moving, although carefully. Along with two or three other churches in the Methodist Circuit, Christ Church will be undertaking a Risk Assessment with its resulting action plans as a first step to reopening. It is an important first step and will inform us of just how much we need to do to comply both with Government and Methodist Church requirements and guidelines. Once it is completed we will have a clearer idea of how soon we may be able to reopen for worship and perhaps one or two other activities in the church.

Both the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church have produced excellent resources to help us in this task of producing a Covid-19 Risk Assessment for the church.

A key responsibility for us as a church is to keep one another safe and both I and the Elders feel that responsibility very strongly which is why you will find with this copy of the Messenger a "Self Risk Assessment for Covid-19". It was produced by the United Reformed Church to go to all URC Ministers. Our own Methodist District (and possibly all Methodist Districts) have subsequently sent it to all Methodist Ministers.

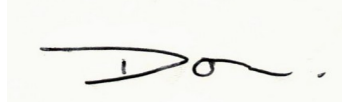
I would encourage you all to complete what is a very simple ten question form which will give you a score which tells you whether the health risk to you of getting Covid-19 is low, medium or high and advises you what to do depending on your result.

You do not need to let anyone else know the result and certainly do not need to send your completed form back to me. It is for your own personal use simply to help and inform you.

As the United Reformed Church has made clear, at the moment completing a church Risk Assessment and doing all we can in the light of it will not produce a completely safe, guaranteed Covid-19 free church. However, it will reduce the risks as much as we possibly can. Being aware of that, it will be up to each one of us, in the light of our own risk assessment, to decide when we feel it is right for us to come back to church.

That is a decision that you, and I, will have to decide for ourselves. The Good News is that wherever we are and whatever we are doing, God is with us and, if we listen carefully, will guide us.

Every blessing, your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'David', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Prayers for September

6th September

O Lord our God, we sometimes tremble as we think of who we are and who you are. Bring us now, in this moment, to know you.
See us as we are, and see our yearning to be more like you.
May we lay aside anything that hinders our journey with you,
and with our friends and neighbours. Amen.

13th September

Forgiving God, more willing to forgive than often we are to confess, help us to see our failings, to see where we fall short, to see where we deceive ourselves, where we close our eyes and ears to the ripples of our wrongdoing. May we breathe in the reality of our actions, the need to change, the depth of our unworthiness. We come before you, seeking forgiveness. (keep silence)
Now let us breathe in the power of your forgiveness, and breathe out the need to live and love in the shadow of your forgiveness of us, that we may forgive as you have forgiven us. Amen.

20th September

In trial and tribulation, God of comfort, be near me.
In loss and devastation, God of grief, grieve with me.
In uncertainty and confusion, God of the way, show me a path.
In want and in need, God of provision, provide for me.
In times of sluggishness and laziness, God of patience, wait for me.
In comfort and in joy, God of love, let me not forget you. Amen

27th September

I'm grateful, Lord God, that you love me and care for me.
I'm grateful that you are interested in me, even me with all my faults and failings. Thank you for sharing my life and my living, for being within my hopes and dreams. Thank you for giving me purpose and meaning. Thank you for showing me how to live a life of goodness and truth, a life of caring and sharing. Thank you for your generosity and abundance even if I fail to see it.
Thank you, God, for being you
and thank you for making me, me. Amen.

On behalf of Revd Don and the elders, I would like to say a very big

Thank you

to all the Church family, especially the Church Friends, for all the love, care, support, prayers and messages that have been given throughout the lockdown.

The pandemic is still not over, but it is your support, love, prayers and care to everyone which has encouraged and given strength to many within our fellowship, especially those who live alone and are often housebound.

So thank you once again, all of you are doing a really wonderful job in supporting all our church family, so please accept the thanks of Don, the elders, and myself for your messages, 'phone calls and the many other ways in which you show and share Christian love and care to everyone.

Love & blessings – Shirley B.

Worship in church

You will have seen the pictures of an elders' meeting, internet style, in the May Messenger. The elders continue to 'meet' to discuss and plan church affairs, and have done so since mid-March when lockdown was first announced. When the government relaxed the rules a little to allow churches to open for individual private prayer, it was a fairly easy decision not to. Both the URC and the Methodist traditions place an emphasis on communal worship – private prayer does not require a church building and we have never opened the building up for this purpose.

Opening up the church for communal worship is a much more difficult decision. There have been hundreds of pages of advice/guidance/legislation about what can and can't be done. Before the church can be opened a full risk assessment must be completed, the water must be tested for legionella, the electric and gas appliances, that have not been used, must be checked. Signs must be put up to indicate oneway systems and distances etc, etc. When all that is done we are told we must wear a face covering and wash our hands on arrival. We are asked to limit our services to 30 minutes if possible and **NO** congregational singing and **NO** socialising before or after the service, just filing out the exit suitably distanced. Only sitting in individual households will be permitted. In general, churches are encouraged, but not instructed, to maintain contact with the clinically vulnerable (which includes even the fit and active over 70s) by means other than meeting together. It therefore seems wrong to ask these people (a large proportion of our congregation) to put themselves at risk to be part of the workforce that will be needed for cleaning and stewarding in order to safely hold services in church.

As this is such a difficult decision, the circuit, via Don's 'Worship at Home' for us, sent out a questionnaire to find out what people felt they wanted or could do. We may be able to report on the results of the questionnaire, and any actions that will follow from it, next month.

Sadly Christ Church Barnstaple will not reopen for worship in the immediate future, though of course we will be reconsidering this decision regularly over the coming days, and open for worship as soon as we feel it is as safe as possible for everyone. We understand that one or two of the chapels in the circuit, with a smaller membership, are hoping to open soon, as they will find it easier to comply with government guidelines. If you would like to attend worship at one of these smaller chapels when they open, please get in touch with them beforehand as they will have limited numbers, which may not allow for too many extras. We will make more details of where, and who to contact, available when appropriate.

If you have any comments or suggestions please get in touch with an elder.

From the Elders at Christ Church



Farewell to Robert and Amanda

One of Robert's aims since becoming our superintendent minister, had been to establish a mid-week circuit service. This he achieved, by Zoom, in his last few weeks in the circuit!

It was therefore most appropriate that in our circuit Zoom service on 30th July, we were able to say a virtual "Farewell" to Robert and Amanda and send them forth to Derbyshire with our good wishes and blessings. Sue Parsley represented us by a carefully timed visit to the manse bearing a Word Art picture of a church made up of their names and some of their many characteristics, which had been collected by Sue Cresswell. There was also a mini cross – stitch cushion of a rainbow and the circuit name, a card and a cheque from the donations given from round the circuit. It was not appropriate to give flowers as their departure was imminent – even earlier than expected. Instead, a bouquet was sent to arrive a couple of days after they had moved in. By that time, some of their home was organised and they expressed their thanks for the lovely flowers which had been delivered.

I'm sure we all wish them well and will pray for them in their new circuit.

EP

Amigurumi in lockdown

Amigurumi is a Japanese word, coming (so I understand) from 'ami' meaning crocheted or knitted and 'kurumi' meaning wrapping. I'd done a bit of crochet years ago – squares for blankets or for cushions – but I'd never heard of 'amigurumi' until, back in April, we came across a pattern for a crocheted 'Hero Bear' in scrubs with a face mask. My friend Maureen and I had great fun making a whole series of bears, who've gone off to different destinations: mostly bears in scrubs, but also a builder, postie and even a chef!

Some months ago the Action for Children support group were looking for knitted caterpillars, for a proposed treasure hunt fundraiser in town – which sadly, couldn't happen this year (maybe next year, we hope). So after the bears, came a crocheted caterpillar (and his partner!). Maybe the next project should be a crocheted nativity – so watch this space!

Marilyn



SAINT MICHAEL

Michael was an archangel, his name means he who is like God. He is considered the chief angel or God's archangel. He is referred to in Daniel 10 v13 and 21 and Daniel 12 v1. Also in Jude 1 v9 and in Revelations. In Daniel he is one of the chief princes of the heavenly host and in the book of Revelation he is the principal fighter of the heavenly battle against the devil (or dragon). He was considered so powerful that praying directly to him could save souls from hell. There is an old Roman liturgy for the dead: May Michael, the standard bearer, lead them into the holy light, which you promised to old Abraham and his seed.

It would appear that his cult first appeared in the East where he was invoked for the healing of the sick. Constantine built a church in his honour near Constantinople. An important vision of Michael at Mount Gargano in SE Italy in the 5th century was instrumental in spreading the cult to the West. Hot springs in Greece and Asia Minor were also attributed to him. His cult was strong in Britain from earliest times with many churches dedicated to him for instance St Michael and All Angels in Torrington. St Michael's Mount in Cornwall was believed to commemorate a vision there in the 8th century.

In Revelations 12 Michael leads a battalion of angels against the forces of evil (or the dragon). Michael and the angels were successful in overcoming evil even though the dragon fought back, he was hurled down to earth and his fallen angels with him. They had all lost their place in heaven.

In art Michael is depicted in at least two ways, sometimes slaying a dragon or evil looking devil and in medieval times weighing the souls, as part of the day of judgement. His most famous shrine is Mont-St Michael in Normandy where a Benedictine Abbey was founded to commemorate an earlier apparition.

His feast day is celebrated on 29th September and is often known as 'St Michael and All Angels' as in 1969 Gabriel and Rafael were included.

From St Michael comes Michaelmas term in universities, it was one of the quarter days for tenants to pay their dues to the landlord. We have michaelmas daisies (asters) which are at their best at the end of September. It was also one of the days when servants were hired.

Music to listen to: Michael Row the Boat Ashore – Pete Seeger (Nothing to do with the Archangel Michael, but its a good tune and may bring back memories for those who remember the 70's

Or for the more traditional, J S Bach Cantata for the Feast of St Michael

Harvest Time

For some years we have supported the Food Bank and the Freedom Centre from our Harvest Festival celebrations. In the absence of the traditional way of bringing gifts to a service at church, please consider an individual donation. Many supermarkets have a collection point.



ANGEL FOOD CAKE SWISS ROLL

For the cake

Generous 2 ounces (65gms) plain flour
5 ounces (300gms) caster sugar
5 large egg whites
1 lemon, grated zest only
1 tablespoon lemon juice
½ tspn cream of tartar
Good pinch of salt



For the lemon curd

5 large free-range eggs
7 ounces (200gms) caster sugar
2 large lemons, juice only (about 3.5 fluid ounces) (100mls)
3 ounces (90gms) cold butter cubed

Method

First make the lemon curd in order for it to cool

- 1 Mix the egg yolks, sugar, lemon juice and zest together in a large basin. Cook over a saucepan of boiling water until mixture thickens, stir regularly until mixture coats the back of a wooden spoon.
- 2 Remove from the heat and add the butter. Pass through a sieve and fill a 12 oz (350gms) jar and seal. Cover the remaining curd and leave to cool.

Swiss Roll

- 1 Pre-heat oven to 180 degrees (fan 160) Gas 4, making sure shelf is in the middle of the oven. Prepare an 11" x 7" (28mm x 18mm) swiss roll tin, sift the flour and a quarter of the sugar into a bowl.
- 2 Whisk egg whites in a large bowl until frothy (about 1 minute)
- 3 Add zest, cream of tartar, juice and salt and whisk until light and fluffy, increase speed and slowly add remaining sugar, to form firm peaks.
- 4 Sprinkle over one third of the flour mixture and gently fold with a metal spoon.
Repeat with remaining sugar, retaining as much air as possible.
- 5 Turn into the prepared tin and bake for approximately 15 minutes. Carefully remove from tin onto a sheet of bakewell paper dusted with caster sugar. I find it helps to put a slightly damp tea towel underneath first. Cut both short ends off, then quickly roll from the short end. Put on a wire rack to cool.
- 6 When cool unroll, spread with cooled lemon curd and cream cheese and re-roll.
Drizzle additional lemon curd on the top and serve with raspberries or blueberries.

Although this cake sounds rather fiddly to make, it is really quite simple and was a great hit as a pudding on a hot evening. I used whipped cream, but it oozed out quite a bit so I decided cream cheese would be better.

Jennifer Allen

Eco Church

As we are sadly not yet able to meet together in our beautiful Church building or start any new Eco Church projects together, I thought I'd write about what some of us have tried to do as individuals. I asked a few friends within the Church family and here's what they told me:

Janet: I've started buying eco-friendly bars of soap and using those instead of plastic bottles of liquid soap. Somehow the crisis has focused my mind on sustainability and waste. We are also cycling much more, partly for fun and partly because we then don't need to take the car out. (We filled up with fuel once in 3 months starting from the 15th March)!! I also realised during lockdown that I don't need half the things I thought I did and even though we had some funny combinations some meal times we ate perfectly healthily from what we had in the store cupboard and freezer and with crops now ready for harvesting in the garden we even have fresh fruit and vegetables on hand now!

Elaine: We walk a lot, leaving the car at home. I am using bamboo kitchen roll (which can be washed and used over and over again). I am also using eco balls in the washing machine.

Ronnie: Since Lockdown we have had fruit and veg boxes which have saved greatly on plastic packaging. We do try to eat less meat. We have one kitchen tap supplying hot and cold water so there is run off when changing from one to the other. I collect this in a jug and either put it in our water butt or simply put it straight on some seedlings. Eff told me an elderly relative did this and I thought it a good idea. We have had two cars for years as we both used them within our jobs. Since getting rid of mine, I've used the bus and bike more - very good for the environment and mentally and physically!

Shirley: When I decided to use a click & collect that was not too bad except that they used long-life carrier bags to put my shopping in, so I took those bags back with me for the next click and collect. The last time I went everything had been packed into flimsy plastic bags and was dumped into my car, I was not allowed to get out, they used 15 bags some of the bags had only one or two items in! So, with a face mask and gloves on I am now doing my own shopping and packing my own bags!!! Also, I use toilet rolls as plant pots for seedlings and cuttings etc.

Anthea: I have spent time trying to see what plastic we can really take to places to make sure that it does not go in landfill or ruin another batch. Trouble is there are no definite guidelines - although I am learning!!! I have now just discovered Tetra Pak Recycling - not plastic but anything! Local schools and community groups collect certain items that to others are unrecyclable in order to raise money through Tetra Pak. Deliveries from the farm were great - no plastic and great local producers! And I even discovered a local soap maker in Westward Ho! Eddie refills her Ecover washing liquid bottles at the garden centre farm shop.

Bear Street Pharmacy opposite the Church offers this too, also shampoo etc (prices per 100ml). Also many other eco products.

Other friends have sent the following:

Milk delivered in glass bottles which are returned.

Use old tuppaware containers, instead of clingfilm, for food left-overs.

Use internet banking as much as possible.

Black plastic flower pots are re-used unless broken.

Drying out egg shells, breaking them up, and keeping them as a slug deterrent.

Using loose tea leaves to avoid plastic in teabags, used tea leaves are thrown round base of roses and other plants.

Making face masks with unwanted fabrics.

Eating more vegan meals.

So what have I been up to? The biggest change is I've stopped eating meat which I thought I would never be able to do, but it has opened up a whole new range of ingredients and recipes and I don't miss it at all. I've tried toothpaste tablets instead of squeeze tubes but I didn't get on too well with them! Please let me know what you've tried and if you would recommend it.

There are lots of things that can now be recycled through local schemes – toothpaste tubes, crisp packets, plastic pens and cat food pouches are just a few I've found. If you want to save yours I'll take them when we all get to meet up again. Maybe you know of others?

Lots of you have expressed big concerns about plastic usage and recycling. Two local charities that are doing great things are:

Plastic Free North Devon www.plasticfreenorthdevon.org

Surfers against Sewage www.sas.org.uk

Liz Seymour

World Decay

By P M A Penney - written in 1980s

They drained each drop of oil from 'neath the ground
Then wondered why
The earth was cracked and dry.
They built refineries and factories,
The smoke rose high
And blotted out the sky.

Old folk were heard to say they could recall
When air was clean
And everything was green.
The sages shook their heads, and promised Doom.
They did not heed,
The world was full of greed.

While on the motorway the car was king
Reigning supreme,
A monster from a dream.
The oil that once gave life had now begun
To bite the hand
That wrenched it from the land.

Weapons were bought and sold throughout the world
To make a war
So men could fight for more.
The old were heard to say
That World Decay
Began the day
The Steam Train passed away.

Good things in difficult times.

We asked you for some positive things that have come out of the last Covid-19 months

“ Getting to chat to **new neighbours** when we went out for the Thursday evening "Clap for carers" - we found we had interests in common and mutual friends!”
Liz

“Devon Carers around the county are making panels for ‘**Quarantine Quilts**’ and I have been fortunate enough to be chosen to make two panels to be included in one of the Quilts. One panel will be a cross stitch picture of wildflowers, depicting some of the wonderful flowers we saw on our country walks during lockdown.
The 2nd panel had to be a word, embroidered, appliqued, however one wishes to do it. My word will be ‘PEACE’ and I shall applique it in white material.
Hopefully both panels will work out well!!”
Elaine

Part of my work returns to the 'new normal'

“Building sites have opened up again with social distancing rules. We have been working on a little office for Holywell School at Tawstock - the only thatched school in the country! I was able to make site visits again- after having my temperature checked and the foreman asking me questions about my health, with our distance kept. Strange not to shake hands when arriving, and to see workers in masks when having to work together. Beautiful blockwork by the way in case you wondered about such things in second picture, this firm has a lot of people who have worked with them since apprentices and they take a real pride in what they do- which not all builders do!

In spite of supply problems over some materials, it looks like they may even be finished for the start of term!”
David





“**Beautiful flowers** growing in the garden”
Marilyn



“On 25th July my second granddaughter, Debbie, married Matt at a church in Kentish Town. The **wedding** had been planned for 23 August but because of Covid-19 it was re-arranged with only 17 guests. It was a very happy occasion as I think the photo of the Allen family shows. A full celebration is being planned for next summer”

Ian

“I've just heard that you're setting up a Good News page in the Messenger. Having just finished listening to **the live stream worship** from Truro Methodist Church, I feel that the sermon is relevant and gives encouragement to what we are planning as the second stage of our Community Links Project. I think it might be an idea to suggest that people might like to listen to that part of the service, if not to all of it. I know that some from our church are already tuning in to Truro at 11 am on Sundays.

Putting "tmc Sunday Praise" into a browser takes you to a whole collection of their 11am services and today's is not there yet, as it's still on their website, but I expect it will be by the time the Messenger gets out. Every blessing”

Eff



Dear Friends
September 2020

A recent request from the Editors for 'good things which have come out of difficult times' set me thinking.

In embracing the new way of meeting these days- via Zoom in case you haven't heard- I was reminded of a meeting in London which I virtually attended. The AGM and meeting of Operation Noah in July is one I don't often go up for these days but the fact I wouldn't have to go further than my study to be re-invigorated and renewed meant I did just that. Operation Noah is a Christian charity started in 2004 working with the Church to inspire action on the climate crisis. We've got used to trios of aims: Operation Noah states that it is- faith motivated, science informed and hope inspired.

As I am writing this just a few days after torrential flash floods here in the Newport side of town means 'Operation Noah' might strike a chord with some of you. The debris which was washed down from Exmoor and ended up in Barnstaple town square by the clock tower was such a sight but I didn't see signs of any ark. Perhaps the journey was just starting?

One item discussed at the July Operation Noah meeting was 'Climate Sunday'. Now I have been asked by several people about these 'special Sundays' in the year. This is a slight digression but to explain:

We Christians often measure our time in worship with a slightly different calendar from those we see produced and on sale around this time of the year. Our calendar is built up around the life of Christ and helps us in our daily walk with Him to understand more about the rhythm of the year. It starts with Advent during December and then moves on through Christ's life with Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and on to celebrate Christ the King around the end of November. Relevant Bible readings and major stories in the Bible are remembered in our worship. The current format was designed and agreed by all the major denominations in 1985. Specially designated dates which enrich our joint life together and help us focus on applying our faith have been added to the list (the last quarter Plan included 6 such Sundays) and during 2008 A Time for Creation from the beginning of September to St Francis Feast Day on 4th October was agreed. Now we don't have to follow these 'specials' when the rest of our Christian friends do but it helps to know what other aspects of our faith might add to our understanding of seeing our joint mission together.

So to 'Climate Sunday' which is suggested for the first Sunday in September and its significance with Operation Noah.

Revd Judith Morris, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Wales, says "Climate Sunday is a crucial opportunity for all churches to take much needed action to address one of the most urgent and pressing issues facing our planet. As stewards of God's creation, it is paramount that we actively engage with climate change and commit to protecting the future for generations to come. We need to make changes before it is too late and we hope that this initiative will galvanize all Christians into action."

You can find other statements from various church leaders but that speaks to me. The earth is not just ours, it includes all that God created. When we are looking at Climate Change we see the need for greenhouse gases to be stabilised at a level we can't mess around with. It's not for us to play God with the climate system yet so often we try to. We need various eco systems to adapt naturally and not put excessive strain on them by our greed. Our flash floods in Barnstaple –were they part of global warming, how far has the sea risen, would you buy a house on the flood plains of some of our coastal towns, what about the ice mass loss and what to say when the earth will be filled with God's glory as waters rising to 'cover the sea'? Do we have a wry smile when we find flowers growing 'out of season'? Will we see Barnstaple Fair cancelled another year?

The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro set out suggested agreements which members took away to discuss with their governments. These then became firm agreements in March 1994 and were signed as a formal UN Framework for all major countries to work with. This year in November 2020 there was supposed to have been the 26th UN Conference in Glasgow and many organisations were working towards this. But, like so many international events this year, thanks to the global pandemic of coronavirus, it has been postponed until 2021.

So even if we hadn't planned on celebrating Creation Climate Sunday at the start of September in a big way (we could in fact use any of the next 52 Sundays if we wanted to) there's an opportunity for us all to look in a little way at what we do. In the last few months Liz Seymour as our Eco Systems Convenor (sorry Liz I am not sure what your actual title is) urged us to make small changes (as well as the big ones) to our lifestyle not just at home but in the Christ Church building.

We could look at a Bible Study series called Tenants of the King which links Bible passages to current world issues. Designed as a small home group study for four weeks or for use by individuals with helpful notes and guidance we could study together what the Bible has to say about the current climate crisis. Does the Bible have anything to say about the flash floods in Barnstaple?

Let's see if we can make a small difference in our understanding of this world which God has created.

Grace and Peace

Sue

Taking a stand

Who is responsible for looking after the earth? Climate change, the consequence of everyday activities by each of us, is having a measurable impact on this precious planet. The projected outcome of carrying on as we are is unthinkable; but that is just what we are doing. Someone else will sort it out... But who?



Governments, businesses, scientists and the media all have their own limitations and priorities rendering them unable, so far, to fix the problem. Where are we Christians in all this? Are we walking by, leaving the safe future of our world in dire need on the other side of the road – or does our faith prompt us to action?

In 1934 the Church took a stand with the Barmen Declaration which rejected Nazism. The lead author, Karl Barth, had guts. He mailed the declaration to Hitler personally. The authors believed that the subordination of the church to the Nazi state was a confessional issue, an issue which touched the very heart of faith, not something that they could politely disagree about.

Operation Noah believes climate change to be a confessional issue of similar magnitude. The Christian charity has recently launched 'Climate change and the purposes of God: a call to the Church' to give the church and all Christians the opportunity to take a stand.

This declaration affirms that God wants a richly abundant earth. It states that now we know the dangers of climate change, repentance is the responsibility of every Church and every believer. It argues that the challenges facing us are not merely economic and scientific but are moral and spiritual as well, and that we must hold our governments and corporations to account.

One of the signatories of the 1934 Barmen Declaration, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, said "The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children." When climate change threatens the wellbeing of our world and all future generations then surely it is time for the church to take a stand – both in word and deed. Operation Noah believes climate change is just such an issue; another moment in history when the church is called to speak out. So our question is to ask whether you agree? Will we just keep quiet and go along with the status quo or will we stand up and be counted? A decision is required of us.

Leaders representing all the main UK denominations have signed 'Climate change and the purposes of God' and a number of Christian organisations working on similar issues have endorsed it including Tearfund, Christian Aid, Progressio, Micah Challenge, Eco Congregations, A Rocha and the European Christian Environmental Network.

Operation Noah is encouraging individuals and church fellowships to read through 'Climate change and the purposes of God' carefully and then, if willing, to decide on what action they wish to take. You can find the full text on Operation Noah's website, where you will also find a wide range of resources to support the document and to help spread the word.

What is Creation Time?

In 1989 the Ecumenical Patriarch suggested that 1 September, the first day of the Eastern Orthodox Church year, should be observed as a day "of protection of the natural environment". Ten years later the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) widened this proposal, urging churches to adopt a Time for Creation stretching from 1 September to the feast of St Francis on 4 October and this was endorsed by the 3rd European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu, Romania in 2007, which recommended that the period "be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change".

Since 2008 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) has compiled a programme of resources to encourage and assist churches to observe Creation Time. These include suggestions on a variety of ways in which churches, groups and individuals could choose to focus on a creation theme at this particular time of the year. Pope Francis made the Catholic Church's warm welcoming of the season official in 2015, using powerful words last year to encourage participation in the ecumenical Season of Creation:

"This is the season for letting our prayer be inspired anew by closeness to nature...to reflect on our lifestyles...for undertaking prophetic actions...directing the planet towards life, not death."

Creation Time 2020

We have known for decades that this time will come. We have been made aware of the rapid extinction of beautiful and unique creatures. Thanks to the honest and disciplined work of climate scientists, we know (unless we fall victim to fake news) right now, that our lifestyle is unsustainable, and our dominant philosophy of 'permanent growth at all cost' carries the seeds of the destruction of the life that God called good.

Over and above the foolish stewardship of land and resources, yet closely allied to it, is the crisis of values, and of spirituality; a twisted and self-deceptive view of 'profit'. The whole Christian family now has an unprecedented opportunity and calling: to bring together mission, justice, stewardship, and study: to bring out of our 'treasure' the determinative priorities and values that are so different from those piloting Creation towards catastrophe. And above all, to take note of, and act on, and trust in, the worth we are given (each and all of us) in Christ. The worth and encouragement we may give to our neighbour, and our fellow creature, in partnership, rather than exploitation. May we cherish and be empowered by the knowledge of our enduring and transforming worth in the sight of God. Even if, until now, we have indeed pursued 'worthless things'.

Best wishes
Sue

Update from Amigos and Kira Farm.

As you may remember, Scovia, our sponsored trainee went back to her village when Kira Farm was closed and Uganda locked down due to Covid 19. She had only been at Kira Farm for three months– for her the unbelievable dream of being given the skills to start a new life now seemingly taken away from her. ...Whilst at home though she and the trainees were teamed up with previous Kira Farm graduates as well as the local community rural Farming Groups wherever possible. This was done so that the trainees would not lose out on developing their newly acquired conservation farming skills, and certainly Scovia, remaining very positive, was and is already making a difference at home.

Unfortunately, the trainees have not yet returned to Kira Farm as had been hoped - but in all this disappointment there is good news. We hear that with the other trainees, Scovia will be able to return for a further year...

An extract from a Kira Farm Trainee sponsorship update,
written by Phil Pugsley and the Team ...

Wow, what a year!

Back in January when our Kira trainees entered Kira Farm Development Centre full of hopes for 2020, who could have imagined that world events could take such a dramatic turn?

Since March we've been hanging onto President Museveni's every word, hoping that Kira Farm might be allowed to open, but there hasn't been anything to suggest that Uganda's schools, universities or vocational training centres will open anytime soon. Therefore, Joshua (co-coordinator of Kira Farm) and Amigos Uganda have taken the difficult decision to keep Kira Farm closed for the rest of 2020, with the aim of starting afresh in January 2021, with the same cohort of trainees. (Covid-19 permitting).

Supporting Trainees – bringing hope, light and practical support.

Scovia's welfare has remained a priority; during lockdown, Most trainees have been supported by Kira Graduates and have been able to join their local Amigos Farming Groups. Joshua has also maintained contact with them via telephone and through extension workers.

Thankfully, the Ugandan travel restrictions have now been lifted a little, allowing Joshua and Yule to set off on their epic annual trip around Uganda to see how well last year's trainees have done back in their communities. (We will look forward to hearing an update on Prossy who we sponsored last year.)

On top of this mammoth task, Josh and Yule are going the extra mile (literally!), visiting all this year's Kira trainees with encouragement and hope, assuring them there is still a place waiting for them at Kira as soon as the government allows it to open again and seeing if they need extra support in the meantime.

Supporting Kira Farm

You'll be pleased to hear that we've managed to keep all of our permanent staff, both in Uganda and the UK, despite losing considerable amounts of revenue.

What's more, Kira Farm's 22 acres are flourishing in spite of the lack of manpower; everyone is pitching in with planting and harvesting, with much needed time to reflect, learn and plan for the future.

Your support this year has enabled Kira Farm to thrive despite the circumstances, so that when Scovia and the other trainees are able to return, the training centre



And then such a surprise and delight. I unexpectedly received a letter from Scovia back home in Gulu – so positive about the future and full of faith...

'Hello my dear friends',

'How are you doing? I hope you are staying in a safe place. Uncle Joshua has told me about how bad the virus is there. I pray that you are doing okay. I have been safe here in Gulu with lots of rain, but the sun keeps coming back. I have had training from friends who were at Kira a year before me. It is really good to learn from them because they know a lot more than I do right now'.

'Good news is that Gulu is now a city. A few weeks ago, the government announced Gulu town as a city. This means more opportunities will open up that when my saloon is ready, I will make loads of hair for people'.

'I have also learnt that we have to get used and find good things from hard times like now and know that God is for us. I am only hoping for the best from this situation and the best for you my friends. Stay safe!'

'Thank you so much and be blessed'. Yours **Scovia**'

will still be the inspirational place of transformation that we all know and love... In the meantime Josh will continue to keep in touch with the trainees as much as possible.

Thank you again for the magnificent support that you give to some of Uganda's most amazing young people.

Together, I guarantee we will bring about transformative and sustainable change!

Youth and Children's Work 2020

If you had access to the June 2020 'Messenger' you would have seen the picture of the colourful, felt bunnies all waiting for new homes and to have adventures. A whole team from Christ Church has been involved in maintaining contact with families, sending the bunnies to their new homes and passing on activity packs for the summer holiday time. Our family are very grateful to all those involved.

My Red Top Bunny

I love my new bunny and like to wear my own red Tshirt so we both have the same colour clothes. My bunny fits comfortably in the pocket of Grandma Maureen's cardigan, so is all set for adventures. One of our adventures is to check the defibrillator on the exterior wall of the church. After we have done that, we wish for the time when it will be Sunday Club and Toddler Praise again.

Then we look at a glass etched picture of the Jesus man and tell the story of how he lived in a hot country with dusty ground. There the people wore slider sandals as my Daddy does in the summer. Jesus had a bowl of water plus a towel and washed the feet of his hot, tired friends before they had a special meal together.

Your challenge, should you choose to accept

(This can be done from the Christ Church car park.)

- a) Where do you see the identical, glass etched pictures of Jesus ?
- b) How many of these pictures of Jesus are there ?

From Isabella

Maureen Thomas
Answers on page 23

News from Christian Aid:



Actually, there is no specific news from the charity or not as we understand it. Essentially the recent letter from Christian Aid is a rather stark but honest one: "Although restrictions are easing and the situation seems to be improving, in this uncertain and fragile world, let's keep looking out for our neighbours near and far.

Some communities face crisis every day. They lack healthcare, clean water, nutritious food or a safe place to call home. Disasters such as Coronavirus compound the crisis they already face."

This season Christian Aid is highlighting the plight of coffee growers in Nicaragua as the farmers producing the coffee crop are in serious difficulties

because of climate change. Coffee is main source of income for many farmers, and 80% the population as a whole depend upon agriculture for their income. Ironically perhaps it is unlikely that the Nicaraguans drink it themselves as it will be exported and therefore too valuable to keep and use themselves.

I hope that a sheet from Christian Aid can be used in your copy of The Messenger, with details of how to give to the charity.

Christian Aid have also produced a Prayer card, which I hope is self-explanatory. Other resources can be found at caid.org.uk/neighbours

Last but not least, Christian Aid will be holding a Global Neighbours service, but more of this later...

With thanks to you, Carolyn and Ronnie.

Prayer

Loving God,

Come now and make us into a global neighbourhood, looking out for each other through struggle and crisis, reaching out to strangers who become sisters and brothers, shape us into a caring community, strengthening each other through every challenge, standing together until justice comes for all. In your name we pray. Amen.

Christian Aid/ Wendy Lloyd

When ordinary neighbours come together they can create lasting change. Keep the spirit of togetherness going, supporting our global neighbours facing crisis at caid.org.uk/neighbours

christian aid

Christian Aid is a registered charity in the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa, India, China, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, USA, UK, and elsewhere. It is a member of the Christian Aid International network. For more information, visit caid.org.uk or contact your local Christian Aid office.

Let's help our global neighbours today!

In times of crisis, love unites us all.

- Pray for our global neighbours facing crisis using the prayer on this card.
- Write a personal greeting or a prayer to your neighbour on the blank card. Simply tear it off and pop your message through their door. Order more copies for your whole community at caid.org.uk/neighbours
- Stand up for our global neighbours by asking the UK Chancellor to champion debt cancellation for the world's poorest countries on the world stage this autumn at caid.org.uk/debtpetition
- Give a gift to support families like Angela's overcome crisis at caid.org.uk/neighbours

Angela lives with her daughters in Nicaragua. Her farm used to provide a good living, but the changing climate means that her coffee harvests are shrinking each year. But Angela's community have united. Together they have set up a local cooperative to share resources and support their livelihoods. They have shifted from coffee production to climate-resilient cocoa. Now Angela has hope for the future. 'The income from the cocoa crop is very important,' she said. 'It means we can buy clothes, medicine and food.'



Cocoa has given Angela's daughters Ariana and Johaira hope for the future.

Weekly Meetings

Monday	7.30pm	Friendship group (2nd & 4th Mondays of each month) contact Rose de la Cour tel 830824
Tuesday	9.30am - 12.00 noon	Coffee morning
	9.30am	Prayer meeting (except the last Tuesday of each month)
	10.30am	Holy Communion ... (last Tuesday of each month)
	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Brownies contact Heather Collins 07803841000
	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Rainbows ... contact Nicola Wilkins
	7.00pm - 8.30pm	Goddess ... tel 07813620615 or 01271377154
Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.00pm	Parents & Toddlers contact Jo Grant 07450582414
Thursday	2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship ...
	7.30pm	Bible Study... contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Friday	10.00am - 12.00 noon	Hobnob coffee morning
	10.30am	Bible Study... contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Saturday		2nd Saturday of each month - circuit event
	8.30am	Men's Breakfast contact Mike Smith tel 345019

All at Christ Church Barnstaple are committed to the following Safeguarding Principles:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse. (Methodist Safeguarding Guidelines, online: www.methodist.org.uk)

Sunday Offertory for July 2020

July	Cash	Envelopes
5th	£0.00	£0.00
12th	£0.00	£0.00
19th	£0.00	£0.00
26th	£0.00	£0.00

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Currently this offertory is £1875.00 per month. *If you are a tax payer* and would like the church to claim back the tax on your giving or if you change your address or other details, please contact Judith Smith on 01271 345019 or speak to a serving elder - Thank you.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
Christ Church seeks to express
the love of Christ for everyone.

*If you are visiting Christ Church today we extend a warm
welcome.*

Please take a Messenger home with our good wishes.

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Westacott
Barnstaple EX32 8QN

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dasmacalister@icloud.com

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Jenny Newman

Alison Cairns

Chris Marshall

Eff Poole

Anthea Coates

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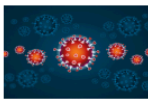
kjeacock@hotmail.com

www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk

Answers to challenge on page 23

a) They are on the double entrance doors and two panels either side of the doors.

b) There are four (4) pictures.



Wearing a face covering while out in public can protect others from the spread of COVID-19



(WE STILL MUST WASH OUR HANDS FREQUENTLY AND KEEP OUR DISTANCE FROM OTHERS)



Our frontline heroes need all the N95 and medical grade masks available.



Jesus said, “Do **not**
let your hearts be
troubled, and do **not**
let them be **afraid**”

John 14:27 (NRSV)



Lord Jesus,
In the midst of a storm,
You said, ‘Peace, be still.’
Bid our anxious fears subside,
Sustain your church in faith, hope and love,
Bring our nation through this tumult,
Grant wisdom to those with heavy responsibilities,
And healing and hope to those who are infected. Amen.

A prayer from Rev Dr John Proctor General Secretary of the United Reformed Church

The world has changed. It cannot go back to how it was,
and in many, many ways, neither should it seek so to do.

The Synod Moderators, 26 June 2020.