

## NEWS & CHAT - Thursday 13 August 2020

Welcome to the joint weekly newsletter of Christ Church and the Bridgwater Drive Church.

**Sunday 16 August**, 10am service – we will be using the service prepared by the URC. I will present it on Facebook, including the final hymn sung by the Zoom Singing Group! If you don't do Facebook or you want to listen to better music (as a member of the Zoom Singing Group, I think I can say that!) please listen to the audio version here: <https://soundcloud.com/andy-braunston/urc-daily-devotion-worship-16th-august-2020> I'll post that link on Facebook and the church websites too.

**A reminder that Holiday Club – The Great Bread Bake** using material from Synod, is still available online for all of August, in case you missed it.

**A reminder** that Naomi still has poetry books available and Helen still has cloths – both sold in aid of church funds.

**House Groups** – our next 'in person' House Group at Christ Church will be on **Monday 24 August** at 3pm. The next Zoom session will be on the same day at 7pm. The link will be sent out nearer the time.

**Singing for Joy** will not take place on 19 or 26 August as Sandy is away.

**Tuesday Church, 10.30am EVERY Tuesday** at the Bridgwater Drive Church, for a time of prayer and reflection, led by the Minister

**Thursday Church, 10.30am EVERY Thursday** at Christ Church. This week - **13 August – Needles & Natter**. Next week, **20 August – Taize**.

**From 8 August, the government has made the wearing of face coverings mandatory in places of worship, so we will have to wear them for all group meetings from that date. I will wear a visor when leading sessions so that the harder of hearing can see my mouth.**

**CHILDREN'S SPACE** – see attached **Children's & Families News** this is a bumper issue to cover Sandy's two-week holiday.

### DEVOTION

This week's News & Chat seems to have quite an environment-oriented flavour, so I'd like to share a Daily Devotion from the United Church of Christ (UCC) by Kaji Douša

*You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly.  
The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain,  
for so you have ordained it. - Psalm 65:9 (NIV)*

With a deep sigh, I watched as he walked away, having left a beautiful pot of what was described as a hearty bush – “You really can't kill it, trust me” – and some resilient flowers in the perfect spot. “Just so long as you check it every day and give it water if the soil is dry. Especially in the hotter months.” I sighed because I hate killing things. But plants, evidence of God's wondrous Creation, really should tremble in my presence. I appreciate them, but I cannot care for them reliably. What with work and meetings and other things, the problem of the plant is that, unlike, say, my dog, it will not bark to remind me to fill her bowl or stand at the door to prompt a walk. Plants sit silently in their majesty requiring attention without demand until, sometimes, it may seem too late. Just last night I noticed that the bush in the pot, the one I couldn't kill, looked forlorn. Only two days earlier I'd watered it, marvelling at how well it thrived. Now, after a day with of unforgiving heat, the leaves seemed ... crisped. It would be a mistake to assume that the plants in my care are God's to water. I have a responsibility. God has given me the “streams full of water.” My job is to tap into the source for the sake of that which is depending on me.

There are people of faith in this world claiming that God will take care of Creation without human participation. That the earth will be just fine, and our responsibility is only to remember this. That our care of Creation requires no hose, no attention, just an incantation and a trust that God will do more than God

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promised. That approach is not faith, it is hubris. God's care was never meant to inspire carelessness in us.

Forgive us, O God, for our cringing of your planet. As our world turns, may we turn towards more faithful care of all that you've entrusted to us. Amen.

In the news this week – the ice around Antarctica is melting at a record rate



## **ECO-CHURCH & THE ENVIRONMENT**

The Faith in Action Group commend to you the Ideas for Reducing Plastic use from A Rocha, the Christian environmental organisation. Here is the next section to consider:

**TRANSPORT:** One of the main inputs of primary microplastics into the marine environment comes from synthetic car tyres which wear down and release fragments.

- Walk whenever possible
- Use public transport to reduce the number of vehicles on the road
- Choose longer-lasting natural rubber tyres for your car and bicycle

**ONLINE:** Engage your local and global community in the problem of plastic pollution.

- Support campaigns to prevent plastic pollution in the oceans by adding your signature
- Get informed
- Share the information with your friends on social media

- Check out A Rocha's work to reduce microplastic pollution and consider supporting them
- Download apps that can help you make those lifestyle changes.

## REMEMBER: REFUSE, REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!

### TIPS & IDEAS

A couple of weeks ago, I invited people to write their own psalm or response to a psalm and Elizabeth has written this:

#### PSALM 2 by Elizabeth Pryor

Oh Lord, what a truly wonderful thing your creation is. How everything is so cleverly interlinked that if one part is removed, no matter how small, the rest of creation becomes unbalanced and has to re-adjust itself and as more parts are removed, the more extreme nature becomes – whether it is weather patterns and strengths, or infestations of insects and diseases which affect plants, trees, animals and humans through close contact and overcrowding. We have become so reliant on antibiotics, chemicals and pesticides to enable us to carry on without regard of caring for creation, we have now met our match with coronavirus. But, we can learn from this to do things in a more caring and respectful way.

We are finding that social distancing is helping prevent the spread, if not actually getting rid of the disease. Oh Lord, we are certainly having to learn patience as well and re-style our lives. It can only be a good thing that we are noticing and appreciating your creation and people more. You told the people of the Old Testament what would result if they didn't follow your ways of how to live, those ways of hygiene are still what helps us today. If we don't follow them we spread diseases.

There were prophets in the Old Testament, today we have scientists, they have been warning us for years about climate change and the environment, but we don't listen any more than people did to the prophets.

We drown out your creation without a thought as to what we are really doing.  
Please let us see sense at last and all pull together worldwide to overcome this disease and not allow it back in.

It's a tough thing to live through but your creation is shining through for us all to see, hear, smell, touch and taste. Nothing beats your creation and its amazing world. Amen!



### RESOURCES

Thank you to Wendy for telling me about this lovely audio story (only 4 minutes) from children's author Michael Morpurgo. Sorry it is an internet link, but if you know of someone not online who might like to hear it, perhaps you could play it over the phone to them: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7f7xyc>

**You may like to sign this Open Letter to the Home Secretary** asking that the UK provide safe refuge to refugees and migrants: <https://speakout.38degrees.org.uk/campaigns/open-letter-priti-patel-migrants>





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**You may also want to make a donation to help the people of Beirut and Lebanon.** Many charities have appeals. Make sure to choose one that bypasses the government, for example the Red Cross:

<https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/beirut-emergency-appeal?>

I am not particularly promoting this one versus any other charity, but it does seem to be avoiding any government involvement (the Lebanese government is famously corrupt and has now completely resigned).



## PRAYER CORNER

I invite all of you to set aside time daily to pray for our churches and members but also for the whole nation and world, in particular at the moment the people of Beirut and all those trying to help them. I am praying 'live' with a short devotion every day, Monday – Friday, on the Rev Naomi Facebook Page

### Particular prayer requests this week:

Chris, a neighbour of Judy C  
Audrey  
Grace and Phil  
Street Pastors  
Bar n Bus  
Budiriro



### We give thanks for:

Liz thanks you for your prayer, support and donations to Hopeworx during the Pandemic. The REC Foodbank has closed. This means Hopeworx may well have to expand/work harder to fill the gap. We have no details as yet, but please keep Liz and Hopeworx in your prayers.

**Last Minute News** – Before lockdown we (CC) started our Water Aid Jars of Change Lent Appeal. Those coins have been kept safely at church ever since! Since it does not look like we will get back to 'normal' for a while, the Elders have decided we should send the money to Water Aid. SO, **if you still have money at home for that appeal, could you please bring it to a Thursday meeting, send it with someone who comes on a Thursday, or contact a church friend to see if they can collect it. We will send whatever we have by 31 August and then end this year's appeal. THANK YOU!**