

NEWS & CHAT Thursday 18 February 2021

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

There will be no activities in either church building as we continue in national lockdown, including Sunday Worship which will continue online, live-streamed on the CC Facebook page, and text circulated with the weekly News & Chat.

Sunday 21 February – Church Action on Poverty Sunday

Next Sunday - 28 February – Ecumenical (video) service for Fairtrade fortnight which is 22 Feb (next week) to 7 March.

More information next week, but if you want to be looking for activities you can do during Fairtrade fortnight, look here: <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/>

You can also sign up for events during the Fairtrade Online Festival

Friday 5 March, 10.30am – World Day of Prayer – is online this year:

This year's country is Vanuato, an archipelago of 80 islands, 2000 miles east of Australia, and the theme is Build on a Strong Foundation. All over the world, people will be worshipping on the day as usual but in unusual ways. This year's local service will be held via Zoom. **If you wish to take part in this service you will need to register at, www.rayleighbaptist.org.uk/worlddayofprayer/** or by calling Rayleigh Baptist Church Reception on **01268 745730**, Mon-Fri 9am-3pm, as soon as possible, as numbers are restricted. **You can phone into the service. Once you register, you will receive the phone number to call along with the Zoom link.**

OTHER NEWS

There will be a **Christ Church A.G.M. in April**, (if necessary a hybrid of some people at church and some via Zoom OR completely on Zoom) **which will include the election of elders**. Keith and Barbara were co-opted to the eldership in November 2019 and have served one year. They are eligible for re-election to serve a further 2 years. Sue, Joyce and Robert are standing down for one year. Ian and Jean remain serving during 2021. Please prayerfully consider who you can nominate. **If you wish to make a nomination, please contact Jean for a nomination form, which requires a seconder and the signature of the nominee** (electronic forms and signatures will be accepted this year due to the lockdown).

There will be an **informal, Zoom Church Meeting on Sunday 14 March at 11.30am** (more information in a letter which you should receive/have received this week).

Focus Groups (see letter sent to all). All welcome to any. Choose the time that suits you best:

Monday 22 Feb. 7pm (House Group and Faith & Life host)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88602345659?pwd=SDFQVnhzSURDalRld2xoSCTjSIVjZz09>

Passcode: 895370, To phone in - 0203 051 2874

Tuesday 2 March 8pm (Faith & Action host) same Zoom link as above

Wednesday 3 March 1.45pm (Singing for Joy host) same Zoom link as above

If you missed yesterday's **Ash Wednesday** service, joint with the Methodists, and would still like to watch it, you can see it here: https://youtu.be/wfWNwn_-g2E

As in previous years, both churches are taking a **Lent collection for Water Aid's 'Jars of Change' appeal**. You can help vulnerable families cope with the changing climate by giving them a clean water supply. When Cyclone Alia hit Bangladesh, it flooded Mouri's village and contaminated their water source. Families living in coastal Bangladesh are some of the people most vulnerable in the world to our changing climate. All those rain drops of small coins, can add up to a flood of clean water!

The Lent Crisp Challenge is on! Someone has agreed to donate £120 to the Trussell Trust, so I (Naomi) am giving up crisps for Lent. If anyone else would like to support the Trussell Trust that would be wonderful. It is appalling and disgusting that in 2021 so many people in the UK are going hungry.

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/>

Lent House Groups start next Thursday, 25 Feb at 7pm via Zoom.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930156610?pwd=dTNITUZJY2JIRlhb1VWVGdRcW5Sdz09>

Passcode: 112886 Number to phone in: 0203 051 2874

It will be the same link every week.

Open to all at Bridgwater Drive and Christ Church.

If you want to order the booklet for yourself: You can order here:

<https://www.yorkcourses.co.uk/product/caring-for-creation/>

Lenten House Group Sessions 2021 - York Courses 'Caring for Creation'

If you have the booklet, you will see there are other questions than those posted here. In the meetings, we may look at those too if we have time. These meetings start next week. Each week's N&C will have a summary of the following week's topic and questions so you can reflect on them before the meeting.

Week 1 (25th Feb.) The Environment

Read Genesis 1:26-28

"God said, Let us make humankind in our image...let them have *dominion* over the fish..."

Most translations say that humankind has been given 'dominion' over all living things. Dominion suggests 'domination' and even 'exploitation'. Many have argued that the biblical attitude to the environment, based on this reading, has not been good.

I don't think that is the case for the URC, nor for Christ Church, but it is worth reflecting on how this reading has affected Christian views of the environment and caring for it. The Church, in general, has come rather late to the environmental agenda and many churches and church organisations are still only now in the process of divesting of investments in fossil fuels. Some translations, such as *The Message* translate 'dominion' as 'responsibility' which gives a completely different view, one I think we hold, that God has made us responsible for creation, we are accountable to God for the care of the planet.

Questions for individual reflection:

1. Read Psalm 24:1 Do you feel closer to God outside in the garden or countryside, or inside a church?
2. Have any good things come out of your experience of the pandemic? (especially in relation to the environment/nature)

Group Questions for the meeting on Thursday 25 February

1. Related to the Genesis reading. Are we responsible for the world of nature, or in charge of it?
2. Is the teaching and focus of the Church on humans being saved the main reason why the Bible's teaching on the whole of creation has been neglected?
3. Read Isaiah 43:1-2 God is with us, to face the climate (and pandemic) crisis upon us. Do you feel that confidence?
4. Bonus question, if time Is eating animals exploiting them, or is it just what our bodies are designed to do (like other carnivores)? We will discuss vegetarianism next week, so this is specifically about exploitation.

A plant-based burger generates 90% less greenhouse gases, requires 46% less energy, has 99% less impact on water scarcity and 93% less impact on land use than a quarter pound of beef.

Should we all become vegetarian?

'The task of the local church is not just to give Christians opportunity to worship, but to create opportunities for Christians and others to engage in public action.'
Ann Morisy, theologian.

Do you agree?

'For individuals, flying is the most carbon intensive thing you can do. Holiday air travel makes up around 10% of the average UK annual carbon footprint.'
The Week (Oct 2019)

As Christians should we stop flying?

Christ Church, Rayleigh (CC) and the Bridgwater Drive Church (BDC)

DEVOTION

During Lent, there will be no 'devotion' slot. Please use the Lenten House Group material and questions for reflection. As with Advent, I will aim to use Lent resources for the daily online prayer (Facebook).

Ash Wednesday by Malcolm Guite (which fits with our Lent 'environment' theme):

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.

He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.



Last week I said that this year I will try to do something creative every day during Lent – drawing, painting, writing poetry, singing, dancing, sewing, knitting, cooking something new... and **I invited you to join me!** Janet M has taken up the challenge, with a wonderful reminiscence on shopping for food in Rayleigh – *The Decline & Rise of Doorstep Deliveries* which appears in full at the end.

Thank you, Janet. I hope to see some other contributions coming throughout Lent!

TIPS & IDEAS

This week's **#64MillionArtists** Weekly Challenge. Expressing our love isn't just for Valentine's Day! This week we continue to spread the love. And as we learnt in last Sunday's service, there are many kinds of love. **Create a Haiku inspired by LOVE!**

A Haiku is a poem of Japanese origin, consisting of three lines. The first line is five syllables, the second seven syllables, and the third is five syllables. That is just a guide. Go on, have a go, just for fun. Here is my attempt (not with the correct number of syllables) and only indirectly about love!!

**reimagine life
rebuild, support, enhance
creative spirit....
dance!**

GREAT BIG ART EXHIBITION

In case any of you are following this, the **next theme is portraits** which will run for two weeks until Sun 28 Feb. You can see the online gallery of art already submitted here: <https://firstsite.uk/the-great-big-art-exhibition-gallery/>

RESOURCES

A new weekly reflection from St Paul's Cathedral by Revd Winnie Varghese is a Priest at Trinity Church Wall Street in New York City,:

<https://mailchi.mp/4ff6256cf141/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-8236888?e=e30a1f608a>

A collection of Lent resources from JPIT - <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/a-collection-of-lent-resources/>

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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. I am praying 'live' with a short devotion every day, Monday – Friday, on the Rev Naomi Facebook Page, then shared with both church FB pages. Especially this week we pray for all those affected by climate change, and as we consider if we will give anything up for Lent, for people with no food.

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Vacations.** Many of us would have travelled on holiday in 2020, many have hopes to travel on vacation this year. Covid has given us time to consider, it has given our planet a miniscule, little break from our incessant polluting and greed. Please think and carefully when deciding where to take your vacations, locally or far away, and prayerfully weigh the balance of using less fuel against supporting eco-tourism abroad which can help both poor communities and their environment.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Cindy and Les - Sandy's parents

Della

Barbara & Richard

We celebrate:

We have been praying for Alison (Doreen's daughter) and Martin - and especially Martin's sister Helen and her family -

"Thank you for including Helen, Robert and family in the prayer chain- I am pleased to tell you that they are all greatly improved and appear to be well on the way to recovery! An answer to our prayers. Thank you, to the Church family for your thoughts and prayers it was wonderful to know we had your support."

Love from Alison and Martin

Robert D's birthday on 17 February – Congratulations!

And finally, as promised some photos of pancakes! 'Fancy' with unintentional cross and traditional. Perhaps hot crossed pancakes will become a thing!!



The Decline & Rise of Doorstep Deliveries

A Reflection by Janet Mansbridge

Milka man been, Buppa man come. He say 'Hello Curly'.

This early observation of mine, often quoted by my proud Dad, who incidentally called bread 'bup' ever afterwards, referred to the doorstep deliveries available to quite ordinary Rayleigh families in the early 1960s. As well as the milkman & the baker, we were 'waited on' by the grocer & the coal merchant. Door to door salesmen also called at our bungalow in Highfield Crescent & Mum always bought something from their suitcases, probably because many were ex-servicemen, it being less than 20 years since the end of the war. Even when we returned from our 3 years in Australia in 1967, I remember the baker at our door with our loaf, a great wide basket full of interesting goodies on his arm. Of course, we hardly ever had 'bought' cake as Mum baked every Thursday, but we still enjoyed looking! Mr. Boyce, the Grocer, still delivered too & our weekly order arrived in his van when we first lived in Upway.

Shops in Rayleigh were small - some, it seemed, no bigger than a room in a house. *Boyce's* still had tins of loose biscuits tilted at an angle in a row in front of the counter. We were served by either Mr. or Mrs. Boyce, both in white coats. I remember the excitement when they installed a freezer cabinet. Of course, most people then only had a tiny icebox compartment at the top of a small refrigerator. We could just about fit a box of fish fingers, a bag of peas and a small block of icecream into ours. I don't remember ever entering a butcher's at this time - ham, bacon & cheese were all bought at *Boyce's* - but our Sunday joint must have come from somewhere. Mum occasionally shopped at *Fine Fare* in the High Street or *Lipton* in Eastwood Road, both self-service shops that today we would call convenience stores. Mum also bought smoked haddock from the fish monger's situated in front of the dairy next to where *Superdrug* is today. There were several greengrocers along the High Street but Mum favoured *Berry's* on the corner of the arcade. She also bought fruit & Veg in Rayleigh market which she visited routinely every Wednesday morning. This was held next to *Barringtons* on the Hockley Road & the site included an auction room - a mysterious & forbidding place where we children believed that, if we so much as twitched, we could be landed with an unwanted purchase. Several items were bought here by Mum & Dad upon our return from Australia as the cost of bringing back much furniture had been prohibitive.

At this time, most people would have reckoned on spending a large proportion of the family income on food. There were never any special offers or promotions that I recall & in the days before 'sell by' dates nothing was ever 'reduced to clear'. Priorities were always: rent or mortgage, household bills, food & then essential clothing like school shoes. There wasn't a lot else available to buy anyway & certainly no 'high tech' devices - there was a waiting list if you

wanted to have a telephone installed in your home by the GPO & many people made do with a shared line! As the 60s gave way to the 70s the real changes began. The Boyces retired & doorstep deliveries, apart from those from the milkman, came to an end. Supermarkets with a new 'pile 'em high, sell 'em cheap' philosophy began to appear- *Tesco*, *Gateway* &, on the site which is now Rayleigh Lanes Market, a shiny, new *Co-op*. Originally in the High Street near where the *Factory Shop* is now, *Gateway* later moved to a larger site in Eastwood Road. Over time this became home to *Somerfield*, then another *Co-op* and recently a *Marks & Spencer* food hall. There now seemed many more 'things' to spend your money on. The rise of consumerism put pressure on people to fill their homes with gadgets & change their soft furnishings on a regular basis; to pay for holidays & other entertainments and so less of the family budget was spent on food. *Stanwood*, where I had sometimes listened to records in a booth with my Dad on a Saturday, evolved into *Rumbelows* with a whole array of 'white goods'. Also in the High Street was *Vernon Collard*, offering more of the same.

The advent of the out of town retail park meant it was 'all change' again with several businesses moving out of the town centre. Even so, it is still possible to obtain what is needed locally. I was particularly pleased that when our washing machine needed replacing on the eve of the pandemic, I was able to walk down to *The Chase* to view, choose & order the model I wanted. The machine was then delivered & installed before the first 'lockdown' began. Some 60 years down the line it is interesting to note that a wide choice of doorstep deliveries is again available. These days, our 'milkman' can leave a whole range of items, including compost for the garden; our wonderful greengrocer, perhaps in a nod to the past, named *Berries*, brings us a weekly fruit & veg box and, as we have the funds to buy in bulk, toilet rolls, kitchen towel, tea, coffee & other dried goods are ordered from *Traidcraft*. In line with Government instructions, once a week we walk a few yards to our local butcher then on to our convenience store to buy other 'essentials' like a box of fish fingers from the frozen cabinet! Of course, fairly traded goods & those purchased locally are more expensive so once again we are spending a larger proportion of our income on food. Then again, there's not a lot else available to buy in a lockdown!