



The HEATH



June 2020

bitterness selfishness
revenge patience derision
abuse generosity greed
scorn goodwill peace grudge
love care hope
avarice joy forgiveness
malice consideration emnity
hatred goodness loathing
disdain sympathy sneering
contempt kindness animosity
hostility politeness resentment
arrogance self-control prejudice
support

Shine as a light to the world Mt 5:16

News, Views & Comment from the
United Reformed Church, Chadwell Heath

50p

Pentecost 2020

Dear Friends,

'When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place...

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.' (Acts 3)

The Day of Pentecost may have dawned like any other day, but from that day the disciples were never quite the same again.

However God does it, whether quietly or spectacularly, He never leaves us as we were before. In true Pentecost spirit He may appear to be blowing us into new avenues of service. Perhaps our mantra should be, 'Fired up for mission after unmistakable sign.' Have the demands of the control of this Coronavirus breathed new spiritual life into us, and blown us into our world, our country and our immediate neighbourhood with a new sense of Christian witness?

My personal experience has been one which has given me an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Grateful for the many kindnesses that I have received; phone calls, doorstep visits - albeit observing the two metre distance rule, letters and cards, but above all I have felt a deep awareness of being in the thoughts and prayers of many. And looking forward, I have a longing for the time when we have the opportunity to worship together again 'in the same place'. And especially in that place, to give thanks for, and celebrate, the lives of those, who during this time of 'self isolation' have been called to be with their God. May they rest in peace.

Once again, I would like to thank the Elders and Group Leaders for their magnificent efforts in meeting the needs of those who are confined to their homes.

Paul said in his Letter to the Ephesians, 'I pray that, according to the riches of His glory, He may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through His Spirit' (3:16).

Whoever we are, however weak and powerless we may feel, God through His Holy Spirit, is able to take and use us in ways beyond any we can ever imagine. That is the promise Pentecost reminds us of year by year; God's gift of power for living!

I wish you all every blessing in the days ahead.

Yours in Christ, Ann

(Some thoughts were gathered from 'Getting it across' by Nick Fawcett & 'Bible Application' by J.I.Parker)

The Valley of Dry Bones has a future hope

'A dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones. An' I hear the word of the Lord!' – (spiritual song by James Weldon Johnson)

At this time of global pandemic, we live with stark reality of death and life. Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (37:1-14) was given when God's people were in exile in Babylon. They felt dead, being separated from home and God! The vision answers God's question: *'can these bones live?'*

We can also feel cut off from God, facing the loss of job, business, home or health, with churches unable to meet on Sundays. This vision assures us that God has power over death and can breathe new life into what is hopeless.

When Ezekiel is told to *'prophesy to the bones,'* God brings them back to life: the bones come together and are covered with muscles and skin. He then prophesies to the wind, from the four corners of the earth, to bring the bodies alive. The physical bodies are then filled with God's breath to bring new life. The miracle of this story is that God not only makes these bones live, but also brings the life of His Spirit.

The Covid-19 virus robs people of their life by suffocation, so that they can't breathe. Our hope beyond the pandemic is that the gift of God's Spirit will bring new life to our lives, churches and world. Life will certainly look very different in the future, but we can be assured that God is with us and that we are safe in His hands.

'I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.'(vs14)

The Revd Paul Hardingham on future hope - after coronavirus

'I am the true vine'

Jesus the Good Shepherd has been a popular inspiration for artists from the earliest days of Christianity. But this month we focus on another image that has been just as powerful and influential from the first centuries of the Church: Jesus the vine.



We think of grapes and the vine as symbols of the Eucharist and the sacrifice of Jesus, but early artists borrowed their inspiration from Greek and Roman sources with Dionysos (or Bacchus), the god of wine. For pagan believers, wine was a sign of intoxication and renewal of life, and Dionysos was a god who

died and rose again. Under that influence, sculptors would carve vines on Christian tombs as a sign of that promise of new life.

But those artists were also influenced by the vine as an image of the people of Israel in the Old Testament, with God as the vintner tending his vine, as they were influenced by our Lord's own words in St John's Gospel. When Jesus talked of Himself as the vine, He was pointing to two truths.

The first was the connection between the vine and the grapes: it was a symbol for the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers. They are the grapes, because they receive their fruitfulness from Jesus. Without Him, there would be no growth, no maturity, no fruit. 'Whoever remains in Me, with Me in him, bears fruit in plenty.'

The second truth in this image is the wine that can bring life a new taste. Just as Jesus changed water into wine, His whole life was one of transformation – bringing water to the thirsty, sight to the blind, light to those in darkness, forgiveness to the sinner, and eternal life to those burdened by this world and the reality of death. The wine is a symbol of that goodness and flavour, both in creation and in salvation – the wine at the dinner party, and the wine in the chalice in communion. Jesus as the true vine brings that flavour and goodness to us.

Both truths speak out to us from this month's image of Jesus in an icon. In the Orthodox Church the icon is a window into the kingdom of heaven. As we stand and pray before the icon, if we can bridge 'the distance of the heart' (the space between the human eye and the icon), then God can reveal His glory to us. Here we see the face of Jesus in a 16th century icon, which is in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens – the icon of Christ the true vine. He looks out at us, the Gospel book in His lap and His hands outstretched to bless the 12 disciples. The icon illustrates very vividly that metaphor of Jesus when He says that He is the vine and they are the branches. But those hands are also welcoming us to be with the 12: they invite us to offer our lives to live in Jesus.

Anselm Grün, a German Benedictine, tells how one of his fellow monks wondered what a difference there would have been if Jesus had said, 'I am a slimming camomile tea.' But no, He says to us in the Gospel and in the icon, 'I am the true vine': live in Me like my 12 disciples and your lives can be fruitful in my service.





Poems

In the Day of Trouble

There is a God who answers prayer
Who intercedes before the throne
The Son of God who ever cares
Who walks with us, we're not alone.



Though flood and pestilence should come
He sees the path that we now tread
His rod and staff will comfort us
He knows the days that lie ahead.

We trust in Him who knows all things
And lift our prayers to heaven above
Our confidence is all in Him
Encompassed by unfailing love.

By Megan Carter

St Sofa's

We worship at St Sofa's now
Since Covid came to stay
We don't dress up or do our hair
But still we come to pray!

Our Vicar is a clever chap
A Zoom with his IT
And so we sit down ev'ry week
And meet up virtually!

Our Parish Church stands empty
With praise she does not ring;
But still her people gather round
To pray, and praise, and sing!



The virus is a nasty thing
Yet it has helped us see
The church is NOT a building
But folk like you and me!



By Nigel and Carol Beeton



Eileen Gowland

"Such a lovely lady"

19th July 1932 - 13th May 2020



Following a very short period of ill health Eileen Gowland sadly passed away peacefully on 13 May.

Eileen attended Mill Lane Congregational Church as a child with her parents and then in turn took her own children and granddaughter.

In latter years, Eileen attended regularly on a Sunday morning and supported the Church and their events where she felt able to do so, particularly enjoying the treasure hunts and afternoon teas.



Three years ago, because of dementia it was necessary for Eileen to move into a care home. There she made new friends, joined in all the activities and endeared herself to the staff, volunteers and residents families.

Below is the families first tribute at Eileen's funeral last week.

"We know that there will be lots of sadness today but in amongst the sadness for loss there will be happy moments too.

Don't be sad that Eileen died, but be happy that she lived, and laughed and loved.

Smile when you remember her funny little ways, her likes and dislikes, her opinions and talents.

Be glad that you had her in your life for so long and be prepared to be surprised by joy as you consider the very memory of her."

A lovely lady who will be very much missed.

Carol Bland and all of the Family

God in the Sciences

A Scientist Reflects on God's Heart for the Suffering

It's difficult as a scientist to hear information that is fascinating, but which also involves so much suffering for other people. I worked for a time in a leukaemia research lab. We had to let other people's pain drive our research without it crippling our ability to concentrate on our work. But, writing this under lockdown, I have found myself – as a biologically-educated



bystander – avoiding looking into the science of COVID-19 because the reminders of its impact on people's lives are everywhere that I look.

One of the ways I have been managing my own feelings during the pandemic is by digging deeper into what God has revealed to us about His character, letting that fuel my faith, my prayers, and my actions. For more academic types like myself, study – particularly of the Bible – can be one of the primary ways we connect with God and hear from Him. It's not wrong to be comforted by books, so long as the contents turn our eyes upwards and outwards.

First of all, God hears: "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted" (Psalm 34:18a). In Jesus God took on human form, and He showed us His heart for the world. When His friend Lazarus died, He wept (John 11). God is "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3).

Human sin has affected the whole of creation, and I believe this is largely the direct impact of our mismanagement of creation and mistreatment of each other. COVID-19 may well be another animal's friendly virus, pushed by human activity into causing havoc in bodies where it doesn't belong.

But God's world remains good. It is still fruitful, praising Him, as Psalm 19 describes. Even pictures of a deadly virus can seem beautiful – especially to a biologist! These good things are hints of the promised "new heavens and new earth" mentioned in the New Testament. One day "creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay" (Romans 8: 21), and for everyone who follows God, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 21: 4).

Behind the debates about suffering is sometimes the assumption that God doesn't care. My experience is that God does care deeply, and He invites His Church to care for those around them – especially the most vulnerable. He is with us, He hears us and grieves with us, He helps us and promises a better future.

This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Over 6,000 calls in first 48 hours to Daily Hope

A free phone line offering hymns, prayers, and reflections 24 hours a day while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus received more than 6,000 calls in the first 48 hours.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently launched 'Daily Hope' as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes, during the lockdown period.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services in mind.

“We have a duty in these strange and difficult times to find new ways of bringing prayer and worship to people wherever they are, and this is one more way of helping people to connect with God from their own homes.

“This is such a simple idea – planned and launched all within a few short weeks by a small dedicated team – but I pray it will bring real comfort, hope and inspiration to people at this time.”

Callers to the line hear a short greeting from the Archbishop before being able to choose from a range of options, including hymns, prayers, reflections and advice on COVID-19.

Options available include materials also made available digitally by the Church of England's Communications team such as Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer, updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England weekly national online service.

National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast

The National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast was due to take place on 23rd June at Westminster Hall, and to be chaired by Andrew Selous MP. It is an annual recognition of the contribution that Christianity makes to the national life of the UK.

The main speaker was to have been the Revd Les Isaac OBE, founder of Street Pastors and CEO of Ascension Trust. As we go to press, it was uncertain whether it will go ahead online or not. More info at:

<https://www.christiansinparliament.org.uk/prayer-breakfast/>

Planted in the love of the Father

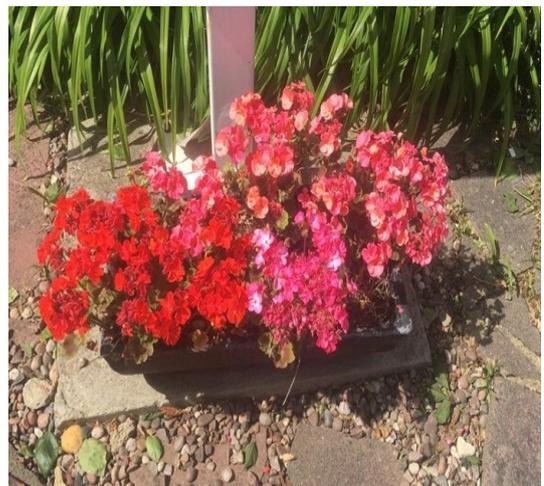
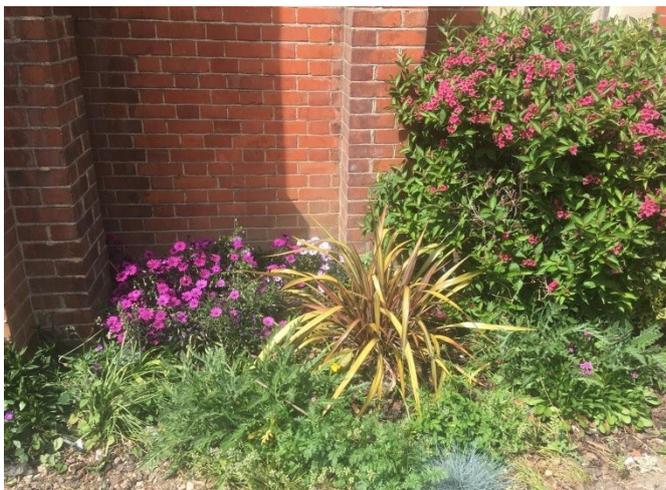
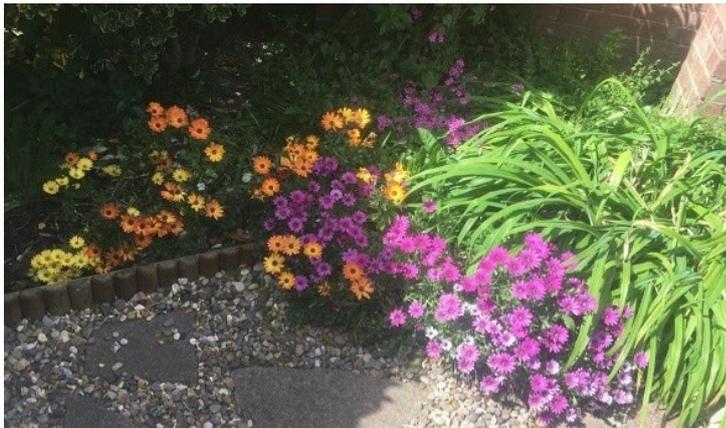
Planted in the love of the Father
You can grow, dear one,
You can grow.

Watered by the spring of the
Spirit
His fruit you'll show,
His fruit you'll show.

And when the sun scorches,
And the thorns threaten,
And the storms around life's
garden blow –
Your roots will hold,
And hold secure,
Because you're planted in the
love of the Father.

By Daphne Kitching

The Church Garden.....



.....Continues to flourish

Beryl

Looking for Hope Amongst the Clutter

Jane Brocklehurst on the value of going through our 'sentimental' stuff...and finding some wonderful memories.

In this strange locked down season, because of the coronavirus pandemic, I've noticed a change in the type of pictures posted on social media. In place of the look-here-at-me selfies are snapshots of buds opening to display the colours of spring.

Such hopeful images counterbalance gloomy statistics in the news media. There are also more memory pictures – this is what I was doing on this day years ago with people I love – I wish we could be together now.

While we're not allowed to make the kind of memories depicted in those pictures, we find comfort in memories we already have.

One thing I've done with this unexpected free time is to organize printed photographs into albums. The photos and the albums have been there for a while, waiting for me to get a round tuit. You remember the old joke? Imagine people finding their round tuits in cupboards and drawers all over the country. How would you use yours? To sow seeds that had not been planted? To read the book gathering dust on a shelf?

What else needs tackling? Now may be an ideal time to face the daunting corner where clutter lurks. Daunting because of what you may disturb among age-old piles of unsorted belongings. Looking squarely at the past may be an unwelcome prospect. It makes us face uncomfortable questions. Projects we may never finish, equipment we cannot use any more, objects of attachment from people we've lost. Isn't that like what we're doing as a nation in these unprecedented times? Issues we have been avoiding are suddenly highlighted through unfamiliar circumstances.

There is much talk about how we're looking forward to getting back to normal on the other side of this international crisis. Some people say they hope things will have changed, that normal will not look the same as it used to, because we have learned valuable lessons about what really matters in life. It's up to us whether or not we rise to the challenge, to reorganize society more fairly, to care more for the environment.

By myself I cannot change the world, but I'm determined to look after the little space that is in my care, not to let it be overwhelmed with needless clutter. Be brave. Use this negative time to make a positive change in your small corner. If you choose to sort it out, I guarantee that amidst all the mess you will find at least one thing, however small, to bring you joy – even if it's just a clean and tidy corner.

Diary/Noticeboard:

Chadwell Heath + Heath & Havering Group of Churches

Foodbank: Thank you for your continued support. We are short of cereals, milk, tinned fruit, sweets, ketchup & pet food. We are very grateful to receive any non-perishable food items, as well as general items e.g. washing powder/liquid, washing up liquid, tin openers – plus all important personal/ female/ toiletries including soap, toothbrushes & toothpaste/toilet rolls & baby nappies, sizes 5/6.

Smile — One Liners

1. What time of day was Adam created?

Just a little before Eve.

2. Who was the fastest runner in the race?

Adam. He was first in the human race.

3. Why are atoms Catholic?

Because they all have mass.

4 Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?

Because Noah was always standing on the deck

5. Why didn't Noah ever go fishing?

He only had two worms.

6. Did Eve ever have a date with Adam?

No — just an apple.

7. Why did the unemployed man get excited while reading his Bible?

He thought he saw a job.

8. Does God love everyone?

Yes, but He prefers 'fruits of the spirit' to 'religious nuts'.

9. Why couldn't Jonah trust the ocean?

He just knew there was something fishy about it.

10. What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?

Absolutely ruthless.

11. The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose.

Mosquitoes come close, though.

12. What's so funny about forbidden fruits?

They create many jams.

21st June Fathers' Day, a time to celebrate male role models

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.

How will you celebrate it this year? If your own father cannot be with you, how about a Zoom meeting?



How do these special days ever get started, anyway? Well, Father's Day began because way back in 1909 there was a woman in Spokane, Washington, named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd. That year she heard a church sermon about the merits of setting aside a day to honour one's mother. Mother's Day was just beginning to gather widespread attention in

the United States at this time. But Sonora Louise Smart Dodd knew that it was her father who had selflessly raised herself and her five siblings by himself after their mother had died in childbirth. So the sermon on mothers gave Sonora Louise the idea to petition for a day to honour fathers, and in particular, her own father, William Jackson Smart.

Sonora Louise soon set about planning the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane in 1910. With support from the Spokane Ministerial Association and the YMCA, her efforts paid off, and a 'Father's Day' was appointed. Sonora Louise had wanted Father's Day to be on the first Sunday in June (since that was her father's birthday), but the city council didn't have time to approve it until later in the month. And so on June 19th, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane.

Gradually, other people in other cities caught on and started celebrating their fathers, too. The rose was selected as the official Father's Day flower. Some people began to wear a white rose to honour a father who was dead, and a red one to honour a father who was living. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day - a permanent, national holiday.

Word Search Clues

Coronavirus has turned our world upside down. But God is still there, and we can call on Him, as Psalm 91 (vs 1-6) reminds us...

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God,
in whom I trust."

³ Surely he will save you
from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.

E	D	W	E	L	L	S	G	S	T	R	I	E
C	E	E	I	F	E	S	R	E	A	D	H	D
N	S	H	E	L	T	E	R	E	F	U	G	E
E	T	A	I	I	V	R	P	S	Y	R	T	A
L	R	W	R	O	O	T	R	R	T	A	D	D
I	O	T	C	R	C	R	A	E	H	M	M	L
T	Y	S	H	A	D	O	W	H	G	P	P	Y
S	S	E	N	L	U	F	H	T	I	A	F	P
E	W	U	E	A	D	E	S	A	M	R	G	L
P	M	I	R	N	R	O	N	E	L	T	R	A
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S	O	T	H	G	I	N	H	G	I	H	E	U
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Dwells
shelter
most
high
shadow
almighty
refuge
fortress
trust
save
snare
deadly
pestilence
cover
feathers
wings
faithfulness
shield
rampart
fear
terror
night
arrow
plague
destroys

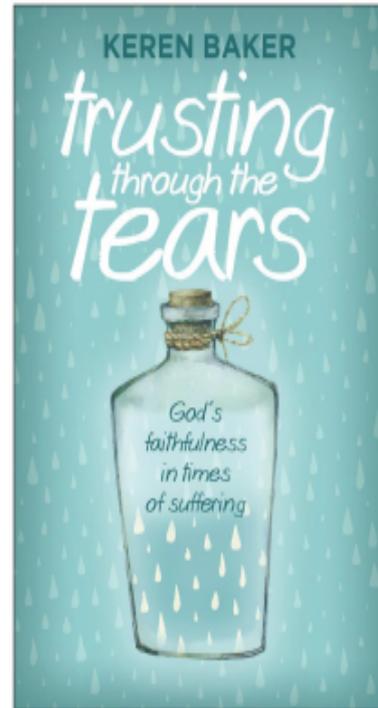


Book Reviews

- God's faithfulness in times of suffering

By Keren Baker, 10ofthose, £5.99

Living a faithful Christian life will always hold the possibility of trouble and difficulty, but how do you cope when the troubles come one after another? A chronic long-term illness, miscarriage, a difficult pregnancy and premature baby, the unexpected death of a little girl, a child suffering with mental illness, all against a background of struggles with finances and so many other things that 'dark times' seems a fearfully inadequate description. It is one thing to read of such things in the life of perhaps a missionary or some great saint, but how does an ordinary family in an ordinary city in the UK cope?



Happy Birthdays in June

Jayda Sullivan 10th, Madeleine Clifford 12th,
Harrison Mayo 13th,
Jonathon Flores-Arias 19th, Richard Lamour 24th





WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES



Foodbank, Thursday 10:00am - 12 noon.

Web site: <http://www.heathandhaveringurc.co.uk/chadwellheath.html>

Chadwell Heath URC is part of the Heath and Havering Group



**Inclusive
Church**



The
**United
Reformed
Church**



Please send any news, information or an article for the Heath to Dianne Crisp.

Email Dianne.crisp@ntlworld.com The deadline is Monday 22 June 2020 for the July/August issue.

Thank you