



The
United
Reformed
Church

Nelmes News

God makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth; He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from His storehouses. Psalm 135:7

By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way. Exodus 13:21

God covers the sky with clouds. He supplies the earth with rain and makes the grass grow. Psalm 147:8

"Can you count the clouds or pour out their rain?" Job 38:37

A bright cloud covered them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is My Son and I love him. Listen to him!" Mark 9:7

And while they were watching, Jesus was taken up into a cloud, and was hidden from view. Acts 1:9

May 2018

I am sure that we were all very disturbed by the loss of lives, especially young lives, in the recent spate of apparently senseless killings in the London area.

A few months ago a Jewish friend of mine visited the headquarters of the Salvation Army. She is also a Senior Magistrate and this was an awareness visit, so that she could better understand some of the work done by the SA. At the end of the visit she was given two signed Christian Prayer Books and she kindly forwarded them to me!

When I sat down to prepare this letter, something rather strange but equally wonderful happened: I turned to one of these books and it fell open at a reading from Zechariah 13:1, 4-9

On that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity. On that day the prophets will be ashamed, every one, of their visions when they prophesy; they will not put on a hairy mantle to deceive, but each of them will say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the soil; for the land has been in my possession since my youth. And if any one asks them, what are these wounds on your chest? The answer will be "The wounds I received in the house of my friends."

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is my associate" says the Lord of Hosts. Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones. In the whole land, says the Lord, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive. And I will put this third into the fire, refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, and I will answer them. I will say, "They are my people "; and they will say "The Lord is our God". Come, thou fount of every blessing."

This passage enabled a hymn writer, Robert Robinson, to fill his song with emotional energy, for it tells of a soul - a person - seemingly hanging on to God for dear life!.

Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.

Yes, it might have archaic words, but once we get past this we become acutely aware of how powerful it was.

During his teen years, in the mid 18th century, Robert lived in London and mixed with a terrible gang. A gang actually responsible for the deaths of several young men. At the age of 17 he attended a meeting where the noted evangelist, George Whitefield, was preaching. Robert had intended to heckle and scoff at the preacher and be disruptive. But the reality was that he listened and found himself believing the message that was being preached.

Another verse went like this:

Jesus sought me when a stranger wandering from the fold of God; he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

Robinson went on to become a great preacher and scholar. He changed from scepticism to faith ; from doubting to knowing Christ. This is the answer to all needs. And isn't it our story as well? We know Jesus has saved us, still blesses us, and that the promise of heaven waits for us!

The final verse reads:

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love; here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above. Glory, glory, Jesus saves me, glory, glory to the Lamb.

How miraculous would it be if in London today, some of the gang members causing so much hurt, sadness and wanton destruction could be similarly affected by a love for Christ.



*Lord, teach us to pray with love and understanding;
to try to enter into the real needs that are around us;
to believe that through our prayers, You can heal and bless.
Through Jesus Christ our saviour and Lord. Amen*

Blessings

Ann

News of Friends



At last the weather has become much warmer and it appears we have skipped very quickly from a dull spring to summer. Alas this did not happen quite early enough for our young friends Olivia and Bill who married on 12 April at St Andrew's Church. Olivia has worshipped with us for a couple of years but our building wasn't big enough for her large number of guests. The weather was rather dull but from the photographs I've seen, they had a splendid day and we hope they have a long and happy marriage.

Our church hosted the Heath & Havering Maundy Thursday Supper. We served 37 people with soup, bread, cheese and fruit. Ann Woodhurst led our thoughts in remembering Jesus' Last Supper. We welcomed Easter Day with a breakfast of cereal, bacon and egg and croissants, pain au chocolat - all cooked by Emily & Gareth Marshall-Jones. They also supplied us with Gareth's father to lead our morning Communion Service. It was good to see the Reverend David Marshall-Jones and other members of the family join us.

Several of our friends continue with their own difficulties. Pauline Keen, in particular, is not improving and she has had some setbacks. Vera had hoped for some treatment but was not well enough for it to proceed. As I write this, Dorothee is so unwell she is unable to eat or walk, so the "Emergency Service" was used on 22 April. When I heard this news from Dorothee, I worried whether it would be possible to hold a Service but after just a couple of phone calls it was arranged. Many thanks are due to our ever faithful Elders.

May God's love surround us all.

Ruth McDougall

Don & Jean Evans

19 May



Church Offerings

Envelopes

Loose



1 April [52]	£90.00	£180.00
8 April [1]	£92.00	£134.05
15 April [2]	£72.00	£108.00
22 April [3]	£62.00	£138.60
29 April [4]	£92.00	£139.00
Bank S/O	£313.00	

Thanks

Nelmes Gift Day Many thanks to those who have made donations totalling £1,235. We were also able to claim Gift Aid to the value of £235

Gift Aid received from HMRC I submitted our claim a few days after the end of the last tax-year and it was processed almost immediately. The Church has received a most welcome £4,467.47 from the tax-man. £143.75 of this will, in due course, be passed on to Commitment for Life.

John Hawkins



Christian Aid Week 13 - 19 May

I hope that Nelmes URC will do it's best to support this very worthwhile national appeal. Envelopes for personal contributions will be available from Sunday 6 May. Please return them to the labelled basket that will be at the back of the church until 3 June. Cheques should be made payable to Christian Aid. Please remember to include Gift Aid details if you are able to increase your donation in that way.

Jill Hilton



Anthony Bottone	12 May
May Stewart	26 May
Jill Hilton	27 May
Gareth Marshall-Jones	29 May
Vera Wilson	1 June
June Acampora	2 June
Imogen Marshall-Jones	4 June

EcoChurch News

Those of you who were able to attend the recent Church Meeting will be aware that we are currently trying to 'firm up' on various points in our answers to the EcoChurch Survey, with a view to submitting our application for an award by the end of July. I have already had help on various points from Ruth McDougall, John Hawkins, David Skipp & Jill Hilton – and I'm sure I will be seeking advice from others among you too. Meantime, as Christian Aid Week comes round again this month, let us remember its Climate Change campaign.

The Christian Aid website says:



This is the biggest challenge we face. But together we can restore God's Earth

We hold a vision of a better world, free from poverty and climate change. Where everyone has enough to eat, and can live without fear of their home being destroyed.

But right now, millions of the world's poorest people are feeling the worst impacts of climate change, and experts predict more floods, drought and extreme weather patterns to come. For those living in poverty, this means more hunger, conflict and insecurity, and a more uncertain future for us all.

At the moment, money from government subsidies, investments of churches and pension funds, and our own bank accounts supports the fossil fuel industry and continues to fuel climate change. We need to make the Big Shift away from fossil fuels and into renewable energy so that we can build a cleaner, safer world. And money is key!

At Nelmes, we have already shifted as a Church to 'green' electricity and are moving our Thames North Trust investments to a more 'ethical' fund. Could we do more, either as a Church or as individuals? For example, could we write to our own bank about its investment policies, or make the switch at home to 'green' electricity?

Barbara Sanderson

Church Finances

Our AGM on 22 April approved the 2017 accounts, so they are now in the public domain. Please speak to me if you wish to have a copy of all the documents. Here are some extracts from my letter which accompanied the figures:

The total Cash Funds stand at £26,903, a decrease of about 3% over the year. This is a worrying sign because there was very little capital spending during 2017. The Building Fund required less than £9,000 mainly to cover maintenance costs. However, during the year we identified several jobs that need to be done during 2018.

In December it was confirmed that the stage-floor of Nelmes Hall was infested with woodworm and cannot be used in its present state. We are considering various options to resolve this problem but one thing is certain – we will need to spend a considerable amount of additional money. Hall bookings have continued to be buoyant and income from this source increased by 4%. A functioning stage area may well attract more hirers.

Personal giving (Offertories, Gift Day & Gift Aid) during 2017 decreased by 9%. The response to our annual Gift Day (down by 38%) was particularly disappointing. All the same, we do have some very generous people in our congregation, particularly those who make offerings on a regular basis even when they are unable to attend Sunday Worship.

We are small in number and sensitive to changes in circumstances. If you did not adjust the amount and/or frequency of your giving during the past 12 months, please consider doing so in 2018. Nelmes URC's agreed contribution to the Ministry & Mission Fund is nearly £300 every week – that's £12 each for a congregation of 25. We all greatly value our fellowship at Nelmes; please prayerfully consider whether your offering is a true reflection of that value.

John Hawkins

Julian of Norwich

A voice from a distant cell

Many years ago, studying English literature at university, I was intrigued to be introduced to the work of Julian of Norwich. She was writing at the end of the 14th century, when our modern English language was slowly emerging from its origins in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English.

Our lecturer was mainly concerned with her importance in the history of the language (she was the first woman, and the first significant writer, to write in English). But I was more intrigued by the ideas she was expressing. She was an anchoress – someone who had committed herself to a life of solitude, giving herself to prayer and fasting. St Julian's, Norwich was the church where she had her 'cell'.



Her masterpiece, *Revelations of Divine Love*, reveals a mystic of such depth and insight that today up and down Britain there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of 'Julian Groups' who meet regularly to study her writings and try to put them into practice.

She is honoured this month (8th) in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, but although she is held in high regard by many Roman Catholics, her own Church has never felt able to recognise her as a 'saint'. This is probably because – over 600 years ago! – she spoke of God as embracing both male and female qualities. *Revelations* is an account of the visions she received in her tiny room, which thousands of pilgrims visit every year.

Her most famous saying, quoted by T S Eliot in one of his poems, is 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' – words that have brought comfort and strength to many a soul in distress.

Canon David Winter

John & Charles Wesley

Let's Sing a Hymn

Later this month the Church calendar celebrates the lives of John and Charles Wesley. John's great gift to the Christian cause was the little matter of founding the world-wide movement known as Methodism. His brother Charles had an equally profound impact through his hymns. He actually wrote over 6000, most of which aren't sung nowadays, but among the ones we do still sing are all-time favourites – 'Love divine, all loves excelling', 'O for a thousand tongues to sing'. 'Jesu lover of my soul', 'Hark the herald angels sing' – and scores more.

40 years ago almost everybody knew quite a lot of hymns, but sadly that's no longer true. Traditional hymns aren't usually sung at school assemblies, not even in church schools, and while the audience for 'Songs of Praise' on BBC TV is substantial, most of those watching are over 50.

With only about ten per cent of the population even irregular church-goers there is inevitably a lack of familiarity with hymns of any kind. Christmas carols are an exception, as is 'Jerusalem' and 'Amazing Grace', because they are frequently heard outside church.

Singing hymns is a wonderful experience at its best – just ask a Welsh rugby crowd singing 'Bread of heaven'! It seems a pity to lose it.

It's not a bad idea to take ten minutes and think what is your favourite hymn, and why – ancient or modern doesn't matter. Then try singing it in the bath or under the shower – a very purifying experience.

Canon David Winter



The Editor needs items for June Nelves News by 20 May.

Email to nelves.urb.treasurer@gmail.com

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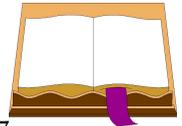
Vending machines for the homeless

Vending machines that can provide essentials such as water, sandwiches, and warm socks 24 hours a day to rough sleepers, are to be installed in several cities in the UK. After installing its first machine in Nottingham, the charity, Action Hunger, has had requests from charities and shelters wanting to set ones up in Manchester, London and Brighton.

The machines are accessible only by a key card, which is handed out to known homeless people in the community. There is a limit on each card of three items a day. The machines are regularly stocked by volunteers, and many of the items are given by organisations that seek to redistribute unwanted foods and reduce food waste. The vending machines dispense water, fruit, energy bars, crisps, chocolate, sandwiches, sanitary and hygiene products, socks and books. They are accessible 24 hours a day.

Sunday Readings

6 May	Ps 98	Jn 15:9-17	1 Jn 5:1-61
13 May	Ps 1	Jn 17:6-19	1 Jn 5:9-13
20 May	Ezek 37:1-14	Jn 15:26-27; 16:4b-15	Rom 8:22-27
27 May	Is 6:1-8	Jn 3:1-17	Rom 8:12-17
3 June	1 Sam3:1-10	Mk 2:23-3:6	2 Cor 4:5-12

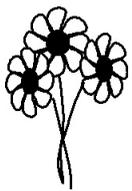


Flower Rota

Jill Bannock	6 May
Keith Finch	13 May
May Stewart	20 May
Jean Winters	27 May
Pauline Keen	3 June

Sunday Coffee

Magdalen & Barry Smith
Jean & Don Evans
Barbara Ashworth
Stella & Alan Acott
Eva Clark



This month's worship leaders

Dorothee Bührma is a URC Minister in the Heath & Havering Group.

Keith Finch is an Elder of our Church.

Chris Pearson is a Methodist local preacher on the Romford Circuit.

David Skipp is the Property Development Worker for Thames North Synod.

Make a note in your diary



- May 6 11.15 am Morning Worship: Revd David Skipp
- 13 Christian Aid Week
- 11.15 am Family Worship: Revd Dorothee Bührma
Food Bank Collection
- 6.30 pm Evening Communion at Upminster Trinity URC
- W 16 7.30 pm Elders Meeting
- 20 11.15 am Morning Worship for Pentecost: Mr Chris Pearson
- 27 11.15 am Worship with Communion: Mr Keith Finch
- Jun 3 11.15 am Morning Worship: Mr Tim Banks
- 5 9.45 am First Tuesday Prayers:
- 10 11.15 am Family Worship: Revd Dorothee Bührma
Food Bank Collection
- 6.30 pm Evening Communion at Chadwell Heath URC
- 17 11.15 am Morning Worship: Mr Barry Smith
- 20 7.30 pm Elders Meeting
- 24 11.15 am Worship with Communion: Revd Dorothee Bührma
- July 1 11.15 am Morning Worship: Mr Andy Campbell
- Tu 3 9.45 am First Tuesday Prayers: Moreen Cross
- 8 11.15 am Family Worship: Revd Ann Woodhurst
Food Bank Collection
- 4.00 pm H & H Anniversary Tea,
AGM & Communion at Romford URC
- Sat 14 3.00 pm Nelmes Strawberry Tea
- 15 11.15 am Morning Worship: Mr David Fowler



Nelmes United Reformed Church

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Sunday Worship

11.15 am Morning Worship & Junior Church

Coffee is served from 10.30 am to 11.00 am

Meetings in the Halls

* during school terms

Nelmes Pre-School*	Weekdays	08:00 - 15:00
Bridge Club	Monday	12:30 - 16:00
Zumba Fitness	Tuesday	19:30 - 21:00
Pilates	Wednesday	10:00 - 11:00
	Wednesday	19:00 - 20:00
Nelmes WI	2 nd Wednesday	13:30 - 16:30
Produb Fitness	Wednesday	17:00 - 18:00
Bridge Club	Thursday	13:00 - 16:00
Beavers, Cubs, Scouts	Friday	16:30 - 21:30
Dancing School*	Saturday	09:30 - 12:00
Woodcarvers' Group	2 nd Saturday	10:30 - 14:30

Nelmes URC is part of the Heath & Havering group of Churches

www.heathandhaveringurc.co.uk