The Magazine

May
2020

Wallasey Village Church

The United Reformed Church in Wallasey Village

Letter from Jeff

Church Unleashed

As I write this letter I should have been on holiday in Harrogate for Spring Harvest 2020. The theme this year was 'The Church Unleashed' and focused on how the church came into being following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and then how the church set itself up and operated. It seems a little ironic that the reason I was not able to attend was because of the lockdown and rather than being 'Unleashed' it appears that the reality of the church today is that it is very much 'leashed' and unable to follow its usual practices.

It is a fact that the largest group of volunteers in this country come from within the Christian community, so what happens when the venues for much of this activity close?

As we look at our closed church buildings it would be easy to think that somehow 'church' has been suspended, but what I have experienced during this lockdown is that the church does what it always has done; it adapts to the situation. I saw a cartoon recently of a conversation between God and the devil. The Devil laughs and says to God 'look at how I've used this virus to close all your churches.' But God responds, 'on the contrary, I've just opened one in every home.' It seems to me that rather than being 'leashed' we are becoming a 'Church unleashed'.

I see people volunteering to shop for others, collect vital medicines for others, keeping in touch over the phone or from a distance, just making sure people are ok, and I know that people are having conversations

with others that they wouldn't normally have had if church buildings had been open. Another adaptation is that our online worship has enabled those who were housebound before the lockdown to join in fellowship in a way they couldn't before.

The challenge will come as lockdown ends; are we just going to go back to doing church as we did before or are we going to continue to be the 'Church unleashed'

We can use this time of isolation to look at how the early church set itself up and operated, and we can ask ourselves the question: what does it mean for us to be the 'Church unleashed today? You'll find how the early church operated in Acts chapters 1-12.

Every one of us has an opportunity to be part of the 'Church unleashed' either though action or prayer. And, even in lockdown, we can respond to Jesus' 'Great Command' to love one another as He loves us, and his Great Commission' to 'go out' and be Church remembering that Jesus is with us every step of the way.

Let's pray for a renewal of the Holy Spirit in our lives that we may keep supporting one another and keep praying for one another and keep sharing God's blessing with one another.

Every blessing. *Jeff*

A Symbol of Hope

It's so lovely that a Biblical symbol of light colour and hope can be seen in so many windows of the homes in our community. Many of them have been proudly completed by children..
The rainbow speaks of God's Covenant or promise with His people and of His love and concern for the whole of His creation. Furthermore, it reminds us that God is always in control, and always keeps His promises. You will remember it was the Lord Jesus who gave to us, His people, another wonderful promise: "I am with you always, even unto the end of the age". For many years it has been my experience and sincere belief that the Lord always has the best instore for us. The present crisis has reminded me of some tremendous words from the hymn: "In heavenly love abiding"

"Green pastures are before me,
Which yet I have not seen.
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,
Where the dark clouds have been.
My hope I cannot measure,
My path to love is free
My Saviour has my treasure
And He will walk with me.

May God bless you as you walk in His company towards "The bright skies that will soon be over you.

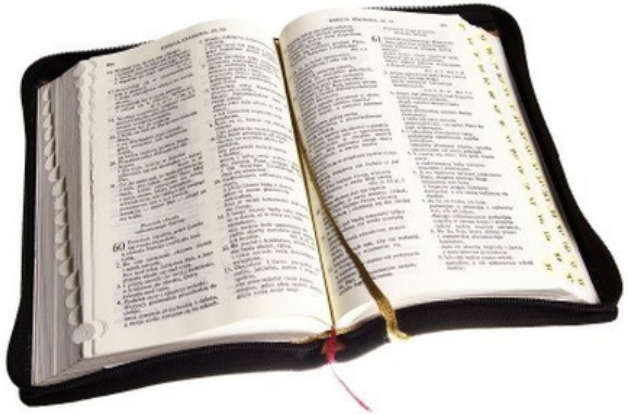
Thanks to Ron Taylor for this piece

Read! Read! Read!

In connection with the coronavirus, the World Health Organisation's advice to every country was "Test, test, test" and we are beginning to understand the relevance of this advice.

Perhaps the distribution of over 700 *Quick and Easy Read Bibles"* was to help us through this difficult time.. You see the more we read our Bibles then the greater will be our relationship with our Heavenly Father and our understanding of His love and purpose for our lives.

I was heartened recently after a telephone conversation with my sister Pat, who said: "I'm reading my Bible and loving it, I'm telling everyone what a wonderful book it is"



Trussell Trust—Food Bank

As the coronavirus outbreak develops, it can be difficult to know where to turn for support. We want to help you find the information you need and answer your questions so that you understand your options and what you can do. If you have any questions we haven't answered here, please let us know via email or social media so we can help you.

Q: What's going on at food banks right now? Are they running out of donations? Are they closing?

Food banks are working hard to continue supporting their communities safely. Many have changed how they operate and are looking at new, innovative ways to distribute food to people in financial crisis safely during this time. We're working closely with each and every food bank in our network to make sure that wherever possible they can continue to support people in crisis in their local communities.

As the pandemic unfolds in the UK, our main priority is ensuring the safety of everyone who comes to a food bank. It's hard for us to say exactly how the outbreak will develop, and each food bank will be affected differently. Food banks are running low on certain items so we really encourage you to support your local food bank if you're able to by donating supplies.

Some might be changing their opening hours or the way they operate and some have had to close their physical premises. You can find your local food bank's website using our map www.trusselltrust.org/find-a-foodbank and see what's happening in your area.

Q: All my local referral agencies have closed – what do I do?

Contact your local food bank for advice on what to do next if your local referral agency is closed or you can't get in touch with them. Many referral agencies will have changed their ways of working in order to provide services safely during this time, and your local food bank will be aware of these changes and be able to help you get in touch with the right people. Find your local food bank here: www.trusselltrust.org/find-a-foodbank.

Q: How can I help food banks?

You can donate food, support us financially, volunteer, or support the Trussell Trust online to raise awareness of what needs to happen now. We're doing everything we can to support the food banks in our network and continuing our work to create a future where food banks are no longer needed. Any support you can offer makes a real difference. Find out more about how you can help here: www.trusselltrust.org/coronavirus-food-banks/get-involved.

https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/wirral/

People News

Thank you

Margaret and David want to thank all who have contributed to their ongoing "social isolation" becoming so easily managed. Our family, friends, neighbours and congregation have all combined to encourage us to know we remain part of a vibrant and caring community.

Thanks for enabling a pair of "vulnerable over-80's" to join in Sunday worship, receive shopping, prayer requests and keep safe and healthy. At an early stage of the current "lock down" in the "Best Choice" shop adjacent to church, where we were purchasing essential supplies, a complete stranger noticed we were not wearing gloves. Without a word, after paying for her own shopping, she brought back from her car and pressed into our hands a fistful of surgical gloves!

We've received so many kindnesses from you all and we thank God for all His provision, including the recent long spell of beautiful Spring weather!

31st May - Whit Sunday—Pentecost

Due to current restrictions, we are unable to meet for worship and our usual weekly activities. However, we have produced some online worship and a weekly 'Favourite Hymns' item as a way of keeping connected .

We do hope you can join in with us – The services are on the church website:

www.wallaseyvillageurc.org.uk

Fellowship and community are important to us and this is one way we can keep together even in isolation. Our prayer for you and those you love is that you keep safe and well and that God's blessing will rest upon you.

Jeff would like more hymns to be sent to him, each with a short reason why it is a favourite.

Thank you

Elders would like to acknowledge the huge amount of extra work that Jeff is undertaking to use the technology and bring us these services. We thank him on behalf of the church. The services are much appreciated by many people from our church and from others. They bring God's word to us at a time when it is very much needed.

Prayers for Spring by Heather Barr.

(from Crosswalk.com)

There is so much to be seen and heard in this season of Spring. If we quiet ourselves before the Lord, and if we ask Him to open our eyes and our ears, He will teach us and show us things in this season that will give us fresh revelation from heaven. If we look and listen, the Lord will show us what He is doing in the earth today.

Prayer for Renewal and Fresh Beginnings

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." (Isaiah 43:18-19)

Father God, thank you for a fresh start today. Thank you for the reminder of "renewal" that spring represents to us in the earth. You "spring forth" a new thing! I am excited and expectant of your goodness in this spring season. Thank you, Father! Prepare me for all the new and wonderful things you have for my life. Help me to let go of the old things that hold me back, the things that do not bring me life, the things that keep me living in the past. I will cling to my new identity in Christ! Help me to keep "springing forward" in my journey with you!

Prayer for New Growth and Flourishing

"March winds and April showers bring May flowers."(Old English Proverb)

Father God, I thank you for the "March winds and April showers that bring May flowers." Father, You know what is necessary to prepare me for what You have in store for my life. Help me to receive what You have for me. Prepare me as You prepare the seeds. Grow me

strong, nourish and protect me with Your truth so that I can break through the dirt, sprouting into a healthy "flower" that radiates Your glory in the earth.

Pray for a Renewed and Open Heart

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

Father God, draw me close to Your heart. I open up my heart to You, and I invite You to search my heart and renew my spirit. Bring me into alignment with your Spirit. Thank you for the work you do in me. Teach me your ways, Father. Reveal to me any area that I am not in agreement with your Word. I pray for a deep revelation and understanding of your truth. I trust you, Father, and I love that I can open my heart up to you. I know that your love is an unconditional, everlasting love.

Prayers for Spring by Heather Barr.

(from Crosswalk.com) -continued

Pray to Grow in Strength and Hope

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

God, I praise You! Your seeds of righteousness and praise have been planted in the earth. May I be like a "sprout" in your garden, sprouting up in hope, as I grow in you. Fortify me with the strength as I "burst forth" into who I have been created to be in you. I will praise and honour you, God! May my life bring you glory!

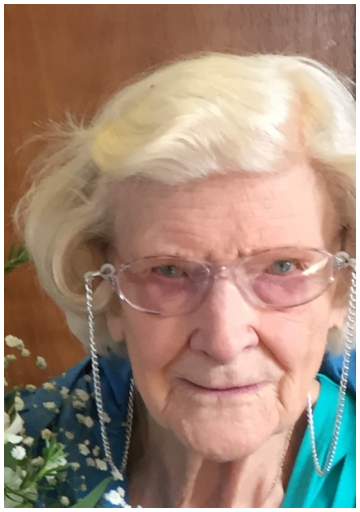
Pray to Delight in His New Story for You

"Now, if anyone is in Christ, he has become an entirely new creation. All that is related to the old order has vanished. Behold, everything is fresh and new." (2Corinthians 5:17)

Jesus, thank you for making me new! You raise me to life, and then you invite me on a grand adventure with you! You redeem my life as I follow you. Jesus, you restore my future! Thank you for never leaving my side as we walk this journey hand in hand. Help me to keep taking steps forward with you.

Mona Thompson

It is with great sorrow that we share the news that Mona Thompson passed away suddenly on Tuesday morning



Please remember Ken and the family in prayer at what will be a difficult time made worse due to the current restrictions.

Funeral details will follow when known .

Please note:

There is currently a limit to the number of mourners attending a funeral, many of whom could be elderly and vulnerable, to no more than 15 mourners until further notice.

Prayer for the work of Christian Aid

We pray that the poorest in our world, who are most likely to be hit hardest by the pandemic, will not suffer further due to the social isolation and lock down policies of the wealthier nations.

10—16th May

Dear supporters.

As all of our thoughts are on the Covid-19 situation, we wanted to share an update on Christian Aid's response. We value our volunteers enormously and want to ensure you all keep safe when fundraising for Christian Aid Week. The health and safety of our community, including loyal supporters like you, is of the utmost importance to us, and we are monitoring the situation on a daily basis.

Advice for Christian Aid Week

Many of you will have been planning house-to-house collections and events. Under the current circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and delivery-only collections should not go ahead. In particular, along with many churches, events such as Big Brekkies or Lent lunches cannot go ahead.

Instead, Christian Aid Week is moving online! We are building a vibrant, virtual Christian Aid Week so you can take part with our online community. We would love you to join in to show love for our neighbours near and far, as a global family.

Daily live-streamed services with guest speakers

As we aim to have a virtual Christian Aid Week this year we really want to come together as a community at a time where the world needs this more than ever.

We have all been heartened to see incredible stories of collective action, local neighbourhood help, and prayer. Now is the time to stand together in love and solidarity.

We would like to invite you to join us for a daily live-streamed service with guest speakers during Christian Aid Week, so we can come together online in prayer and worship.

Sign up using: https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-live-streaming

To contribute:

All are invited to act in imaginative ways to raise money for those in our world most in need. All donations for **Christian Aid Week only** can be paid direct into our Wallasey Village URC designated account at HSBC bank, sort code 40-24-15, account number 01304291. **Please use the reference CAW2020WV for each donation**, whether made by cash, cheque or internet banking, to enable our account to be accurately reported to the Christian Aid North West Region office when the Week is over. Thank you.

Questions to David Bigmore telephone 0151-638 1900, email bigmores@btinternet.com.

Our global response

Christian Aid and our partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and we will build on this experience to continue to stand together with communities living in poverty during this period. If infection rates start to develop as they are in Europe, then people in poorer countries will be hit even harder. Many are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps and in countries which do not have the healthcare infrastructures needed to combat widespread disease. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19. Please pray for us in this vital work, and support us where you can by making an online donation.

We are praying for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. We will continue to monitor the situation as it evolves. During this challenging time, we all need to take seriously the science and advice being offered, remaining calm but vigilant. If you have any specific concerns or questions please email us at info@christian-aid.org or call our helpline on 020 7620 4444.
I am keeping you all in my prayers.

With every blessing, *Amanda Khozi Mukwashi*

From the editors

We have had to adapt to very strange circumstances. Once again, I haven't been able to print the magazine , so it is only a "virtual" on the computer.

I apologise to all of you who have not got the equipment to peruse it (which means of course, that you won't get this apology). There has been a change in our services and those who have computers have been able to watch the Sunday morning services produced by our minister, Jeff Hughes. Not only have our churches been watching them, but also many from other churches or from no church. We know this because we know how many are watching and the numbers are surprising. We thank Jeff for bringing the Word of God to our homes and to the homes of many more. We hope and pray that shortly we may be allowed to worship as we wish once more.

All items for inclusion in the June *Magazine must be in the hands of the editors no later than* Sunday 24th May

Contributions should be emailed to JoyceHumphreys@virginmedia.com

Handwritten (print) or typed contributions may be given to the editors or sent to:.

14 Prospect Vale, Wallasey CH45 6TQ

tel 0151 513 3678

Regular Activities

Activity:	Meets:	Notes	Where?	Contact
Little Stars	Thursday 10.00-11.30		Large hall	Christine Johnson 07581071979
Indoor Bowls	Thursday 1.30 - 4.00	Oct – Mar	Large hall	John Steel 637 0674
Rainbows	Thursday 5.15 – 6.30	Term time	Large Hall	Maz Sprenger 0790 3380683
Brownies	Thursday 6.00 – 7.30	Term time	Small hall	Emily Antley
Guides	Thursday 7:30—8:30	Term time	Large Hall	Gill Smart 630 0504
Sunday Breakfast church	9:15am—10:00am			
Sunday Worship	10..30– 11.30			Please see centre pages for details

All activities are suspended until after the lockdown.

Please see website for any changes.

www.wallaseyvillageurc.org.uk

email wallaseyvillageurc@gmail.com

Contact List

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Secretary	Joyce Humphreys	14 Prospect Vale Wallasey CH45 6TQ	513 3678 07590376633
Email	*JoyceHumphreys@virginmedia.com*		
Management Committee	Chris Doran		923 4298 07743161971
Bookings	Jean Copple		342 7247
Finance/Website	Ann Barr		638 9602
Church Cleaning	Karon Laing		638 7569
Heating	Peter Evans	7 days notice for changes please	638 2446
Flowers	Margaret Bigmore		638 1900
Pastoral visiting	Chris Doran		923 4298 07743161971
Prayer Co-ordinator	Hazel Welsh		07821171534
Children's work/ safeguarding	Joyce Humphreys		07590376633
Magazine/ Newssheet editors	Joyce & Gron Humphreys	14 Prospect Vale Wallasey, CH45 6TQ	513 3678 07484628534

We have recently seen, all over the place, depictions of the symbol of hope—the rainbow, mostly kids' drawings stuck in their windows or chalked on the pavement. This is a picture of a rainbow from the cover of last year's October magazine. Unfortunately, the printer wasn't working very well that week and the photo was not very distinct. This is an unusual rainbow in that we can see three. There is the usual inner and outer and between the two a third which is not concentric. The third rainbow is produced by the reflection of the sun in the sea.