



The Magazine

March
2021



Wallasey Village Church

The United Reformed Church in Wallasey Village





Letter from Jeff

Hope springs eternal

Poet, Alexander Pope wrote,

***"Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blest.
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come."***

In those few words Pope gives a vision of hope. But, as I sit to write this message I feel a bit hopeless - it's cold and dark outside, even though it's only 2 in the afternoon. It's raining and the wind is howling, and I've just watched a news update of the snowy conditions in Texas where usually, temperatures of between 20-24 degrees C this time of year are the norm. It seems that winter is well and truly in charge and spring will never arrive, and yet...



And yet...crocuses are poking through the front lawn and daffodils are blooming (at least on south facing walls), bulbs are showing signs of life as green shoots break the surface of the soil, buds are appearing on the trees, and bird-song is becoming more prolific. Winter might still be with us but the new life promised by the spring, is beginning to show and eager to burst forth.

As we move through lent and look towards Easter we do so this year with hope; hope of the resurrection of course; hope of our new life in Christ, but hope also in the roll out of vaccinations with the promise that we too might 'burst forth' from our imposed and self-imposed isolation. We might feel like 'souls, uneasy and confined from home'

Cover Picture
Sgŵd y Pannwr
Breconshire



Work is ongoing at church to open our premises safely and, if restrictions allow, we hope to be able to mark and celebrate Easter physically as well as virtually this year.

The writer of Hebrews tells us that, **"Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see"** (Hebrews 1:11).

So, even as we experience this time of 'winter' we have hope in the spring to come and the new life it promises. And so, **"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."** (Hebrews 10:23)

Every blessing.

Jeff



Fair Trade Easter Eggs

(see p8-9 Fair Trade Fortnight)

Lynne is taking orders for Easter eggs and any other fair trade items. See website:

<https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/easter>

Please let Joyce know what you would like and we will send off the orders together and I will deliver them to you. Real Easter Eggs are £5.

JoyceHumphreys@virginmedia.com





A Word of Thanks

As I write this, it is with a deep sense of gratitude to our Heavenly Father and all our friends in the fellowships of Wallasey Village URC ,Prenton URC and Hamilton URC and of course to those Christian friends around the country. Our friends from the Tuesday Coffee Morning have also been friends indeed, with their loving concern. Needless to say, our daughters and grandchildren have also been a wonderful support. Mavis and I have been overwhelmed by your prayers, love, thoughtfulness and generosity, so thank you and may God bless each of you for helping us through such a difficult time.

From Ron and Mavis

Hazel sends her thanks to everyone for their support during her illness. She is slowly improving now and thanks everyone for the prayers, messages, cards, gifts and flowers which have been sent.

Christine thanks everyone for their kindness in remembering her and Craig in their prayers when they were ill with Covid.

Jim is now recovering from Covid slowly at home and is improving daily. He thanks everyone for their prayers and good wishes, particularly the one which came when he was still in the ambulance on his way to hospital .



A Hymn / Prayer

In 2007, I had one of those special quiet, moments with the Lord and wrote the following. I hope it might be a blessing to you:

As I consider You, My God
I'm lost in wonder, love and praise
Because Your faithfulness abounds
In every aspect of my life.

You gave me what I don't deserve -
Forgiveness and a fresh new start
To live a life that wants to bring
Glory and honour to your name.

I long for others now to see
The wonder of your love in me
So they may also come to be
The child You love so tenderly

Take all my life and use it, Lord
To heal, to comfort and to bless
Where there is sorrow and despair
In any corner of your world.

Thank You, my God, for all you've done
Through Jesus, our arisen Lord.
Help us to know and love Your Word
And walk the humble path You trod.

Ron Taylor (2007)



As more of our family, friends, and neighbours receive their COVID vaccinations, we rejoice and are glad that our loved ones are protected. We give thanks for all the NHS staff and key workers who continue to save lives across the UK.

For the poorest and most vulnerable communities across the world, there is little hope of a vaccine rollout. These people already face a lack of water, food, and healthcare.

Some are homeless. Some are living with underlying health issues such as HIV.

Christian Aid is already on the ground, helping keep people safe from coronavirus with practical support – but with your gift of thanks we can do more.

Have you or your loved ones had your vaccine?

Please give thanks with a donation to help protect our global neighbours while the vaccine is out of reach.

Contribute on line using:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/give/ways-donate/give-thanks-your-coronavirus-vaccine>

Support our Vaccine Gratitude Campaign

Members of the URC are very grateful for its vaccines, but are deeply concerned about those who are struggling because through unfair economics and resultant poverty have no access to vaccines. Let's help Christian Aid support those who are the most affected, in particular those at the front edge of climate breakdown.



Prayer of thanksgiving

God of Hope, Sustainer of all life,

We give You thanks for the coronavirus vaccines, for the skill and wisdom of scientists, NHS staff and key workers.

By the power of Your Spirit, may we overflow with hope and joy as we see our friends, families and neighbours protected.

God of Justice, Protector of the vulnerable, may we be your well-washed hands and willing feet.

Move us to give and act,

to challenge the injustices that anger You.

May we seek to protect all Your children, particularly those for whom the vaccine is out of reach.

With hope and trust we pray,

Amen



Christian Aid is working with like-minded groups to advocate on the importance of ensuring that vaccines are made available to vulnerable people in poor countries and not monopolised by the global North.

And when vaccination campaigns begin, Christian Aid will support them by:

- equipping local health services with data on hard-to-reach communities
- mobilising communities to come forward for vaccinations
- Working with faith and community leaders to share positive messages about vaccines.



Fairtrade Fortnight

22 February to 7 March 2021



There will not be the usual events that are associated with the fortnight. We can still support Fairtrade fortnight in different ways such as buying Fairtrade goods when we go to do our essential shopping and activities online through the Fairtrade Foundation Website. <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/Current-campaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight/>

How can I get involved?

Choose the world you want festival throughout Fairtrade Fortnight (22 February to 7 March). Join our online festival with your friends and family. Sign up today and we'll send you all the latest news as more exciting events are confirmed. You can expect to find fascinating and fun events featuring all parts of our global Fairtrade community, including Fairtrade farmers and workers, other climate campaigners and of course the amazing grassroots network. Climate, Fairtrade and you

Join our free virtual festival to hear why winning a fairer deal for farmers and workers is critical in tackling the climate crisis.

The festival will feature:

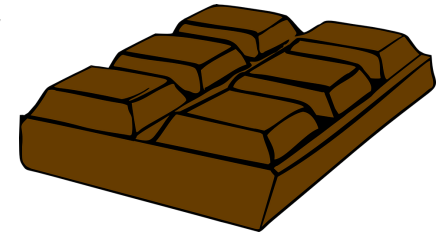
- Farmers and workers from around the world explaining why they need to earn more to survive a climate crisis that is already hurting their communities
- Discussions between farmers, other experts and famous faces about what we need to do to choose a better future



- Music, art and entertainment, from all corners of our passionate and talented global Fairtrade community
- Fun interactive workshops on sustainable living here in the UK.

Quiz: How Much Do You Really Know About Chocolate?

Love chocolate? How much do you really know about it? Take our quiz to find out whether you're a true chocoholic or whether your knowledge takes the biscuit!



Take the Cocoa Quiz and the quiz can be access on the Fairtrade Foundation website. See at the beginning of this article for the details on the website.

Ecumenical Service of Worship

A pre-recorded ecumenical service of worship for Fairtrade Fortnight – curated by Kevin Snyman, URC Commitment for Life, with contributions from Fairtrade Supporters and churches. Access the resources through <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/Current-campaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight/>

The above link on the Fairtrade Foundation website under Fairtrade Fortnight 2021 folder.

Hold Ctrl and left click on the link to go directly to the website.



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

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

<https://wallaseyvillageurcorg.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.

For news of any future events, refer to the website above



March Dates for your Diary

22nd Feb—

Fairtrade Fortnight

7th Mar

Mon 1st

St David's Day

Fri 5th

World Day of Prayer

Sun 14th

Mothering Sunday

Wed 17th

St Patrick's Day

Advance Notices

1st April

Maundy Thursday

2nd April

Good Friday

4th April

Easter Sunday

All items for inclusion in the November Magazine must be in the hands of the editors no later than Sunday 21st March

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



Malawi Oxygen Appeal



Dear Jeff,

I hope you and everyone at Wallasey Village URC is safe and well.

We live in extraordinary times and I appreciate that the church may have had requests for help from other charities both home and abroad.

However, as your church in the past has been involved with visitors from Malawi during the time of the 11 year Synod Global Partnership with the Churches of Christ in Malawi and has supported other fund raising initiatives for this 4th poorest country in the world, I am sending you information about a Scotland Malawi Partnership Appeal to meet immediate oxygen needs in there. I have been helping the SMP task group here and support this Appeal 100%. See email below.

I leave it with you.

Wishing you well for the future

Susan Flynn (Revd)

From: David Hope Jones david@scotland-malawipartnership.org

Sent: 16 February 2021

Dear Susan Flynn,

As I'm sure you know, through January and February Malawi has been suffering a second wave of Covid-19 which has been far worse than the first.

On the [25th January](#) we heard from Malawi's Minister of Health and healthcare professionals across the country about the scale of the challenges, and specifically the urgent need for oxygen in



hospitals. We quickly established an expert-led [Scotland-Malawi Oxygen Supply Coordination Group](#) which has been helping connect members, partners and those on the ground managing the Covid response.

In the first instance, funds will be used to support **emergency assistance to help repair the numerous broken Oxygen Concentrators currently onsite in Malawian Hospitals.**

I write to ask your help. Responding to the clear call from Malawi on the question of Oxygen, the Oxygen Supply Coordination Group has established an urgent, time-limited appeal. 100% of all donations will be used to support Oxygen supply in the crucial next month while Malawi waits for new equipment which has been donated to arrive from suppliers.

If you can, we invite you to donate to this appeal, and help us share this appeal with your organisation and across social media.

Thank you for your support,

David

If you would like more information about the group and the challenges facing Malawi during the Coronavirus pandemic, or would like information about making a donation, then please visit <https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org>.

Revd. Susan Flynn, former minister at Wallasey Village and co-ordinator of the Synod's Malawi links, Chifundo and Chanassa, has been helping the Scotland Malawi Partnership, specifically on the Scotland-Malawi Oxygen Supply Coordination Group, who are raising funds for oxygen supplies for Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world and wishes to highlight the plight of the Malawi people, particularly during the current pandemic.



Lockdown Log

When we first went into Lockdown a year ago we expected it to last for 3 months or perhaps a little longer, but for many of us it's been 12 months since we have lived anything like a 'normal' life.

I've noticed that almost everything that I do takes longer than it used to, and I wonder why. There may be several reasons for this; it might be my imagination, it might be that I'm getting older and slower, it might be that I'm doing things more thoroughly, (most unlikely), it may be that I have more time, so I take more time. I don't know what the explanation is but sometimes I wonder how I will manage to do things when 'normal' returns! I do look forward to trying though!

During the period of Lent, as I have said before, rather than giving up something, I try to take up something new. I have joined the Lent study groups via Zoom and find them thought provoking, but I have also joined in following a scheme run by Premier Radio, it's called 'Give Him Five' and it suggests giving 5 minutes a day to God throughout lent. So far these have been things that can be done without leaving home and spending nothing but time. (You can still join in either with the study groups or with Give Him Five). I listen to Christian radio stations and have heard a lot of talk about how good lockdown has been for helping to realise how much we can do as Christians and how much closer we can get to God while we have less busyness in our lives. I find that a real challenge. Am I using the extra time I have to grow closer to God and to pray more for His purposes?



Is not being able to go to the church building stopping you and me from being church? And more than that is it stopping us from being followers of Jesus? I am using the period of lent to bring back my focus to who I am in 'normal' times. Do you need or want to join me?

I'm still knitting, and cleaning, and washing, and ironing, and cooking, and planning what to do in the garden, and speaking to people on the phone, and attending meetings on zoom, but I'm not sure I'm giving the hours I would normally spend in fellowship with others to the best use, ...something to consider ... perhaps I could make positive use of this time? How about you?

Thankfully, I've had my first vaccine dose and look forward to the second and hopefully an easing of restrictions as soon as it's safe. Until then I'll make the most of the extra time I have, not waste it, idling it away and bemoaning the fact that I want things 'back to normal'.

Perhaps you feel the same? Let's make this abnormal time abnormally good.

Stay safe, stay well and stay in touch,

*Thanks to
Heather Hughes
for this piece*

Heather





Childhood Memories

Learning to Spell



In September 1939 I was a six year old boy. I had completed a year at The Hollies primary school in Middlesex learning to count, model plasticine, make bobbles for knitted woolly hats, play hop-scotch and write in capital letters. I learnt how to pronounce letters of the alphabet and recognise words on a page but spelling was not at the top of my list of attainments.

It was a fine day when I was evacuated by my parents in the family saloon from North London to a prep school on the Sussex coast. Halfway there, they parked the car at the road side and went into a house, leaving me in the car with a colouring book and crayons. After what seemed an eternity to me, my parents got back in the car and completed our journey to Bexhill-on-Sea. I had no idea, until after they had left me at Collington Rise, my new boarding school, that parking the car had enabled Dad & Mum to hear Neville Chamberlain's radio broadcast informing the public that Great Britain was now "at war" with Germany.

After one term, during which I learnt joined up writing called "copperplate", I was removed from Bexhill, which was being bombed as the Luftwaffe tried to destroy the anti-aircraft gun sites along the south coast to give their bombers a trouble-free route for their London blitz.



My 3rd school in 3 terms was a large country house, outside Lindfield, named Great Walstead. It is set in 200 acres of Sussex countryside which included 100 acres of Ashdown forest and a working farm. During World War 1, I was told, it was requisitioned by the Army and a number of campaigns to liberate Europe from German occupation had been planned in the rooms where we learnt Maths, Science, History, Geography, Languages and Christianity during World War 2.

The "first year" boys' classroom was a wooden conservatory at the back of the house, where I remember being taught to spell "difficulty" by rote, the whole class repeating our handsome, young English teacher's formula – "Mrs **D**, Mrs **I**, Mrs **FFI**: Mrs **C**, Mrs **U**, Mrs **LTY**" – which I've not forgotten from that day in 1940 to today. Soon after, we learnt that our teacher had been called up for Military Service and we never saw him again. His spelling lessons had been a great success.

*Thank you, David
Bigmore for this article*

DGB





World Day of Prayer 2021

The World Day of Prayer, formerly the Women's World Day of Prayer, takes place this year on Friday 5th March.

The service this year comes from the women of Vanuatu and is entitled 'Build on a strong foundation'.

Although our church has been involved in these services in past years, the current Lockdown means that local services are cancelled (or postponed). However, the International Committee have joined with the women of Vanuatu and are holding a service from 10.30am on 5th March which can be accessed through the World Day of Prayer YouTube channel or via their website: <https://www.wwdp.org.uk>. Limited numbers of the order of service are available from, Pat Caddick for Wallasey or Jean Bayley for Prenton.

As a result of reduced physical services worldwide, there is great concern about funding as most of the WDP income comes from the collections taken at all services. So, if you would like to make a donation you can put it in an envelope marked 'WDP', and drop it through the church letter box. Cheques should be made payable to 'World day of Prayer'. Alternatively donations can be sent direct to WDP, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells. TN1 2RR, online through the website: <https://www.wwdp.org.uk>, or by text message: Text 2021WDP 5 to 70085 to donate £5. You can use this to donate up to £40.

Thank you, Jean Bayley, Prenton URC.



New Moderator of URC's Mersey Synod

We're delighted to announce that the Revd Geoffrey Felton has been nominated as our new Moderator of the United Reformed Church (URC) Mersey Synod.

Geoff was born and raised in Higher Bebington before moving away to study. He became a Christian in 1984 during Mission England, led by the late Dr Billy Graham.

Having passed his Geology degree at Portsmouth Polytechnic, he worked in the North Sea on various offshore installations as a geologist.

At St George's URC in Hemel Hempstead, Geoff began to explore his call to ministry by attending the London Bible College and Westminster College in Cambridge.

He was ordained in 2000 and inducted into the URC's Southern Synod, which he served for ten years. He moved to Plume Avenue URC, his current pastorate, in 2010.

Geoff is excited about returning to the north west and serving the people of Mersey Synod with compassion and vigour. He said: 'We live in difficult days, but we have a God who through Jesus Christ is victorious. I'm looking forward to leading the Synod through these post pandemic years – years that will help shape the Church of the future and its witness to a world in need of hope and love.'

The nomination will be presented to URC national Mission Council in March and Geoff should start with us sometime in July.

We look forward to welcoming Geoff and his family into Mersey and to working with him in the future..



*Rita
Mersey Synod Clerk*



Contact List

Minister	Revd Jeff Hughes	109 Shrewsbury Rd Claughton Birkenhead CH43 8SS	201 1883
<i>Email</i> JeffrHughes@virginmedia.com			
Secretary	Joyce Humphreys	14 Prospect Vale Wallasey CH45 6TQ	513 3678 07590376633
<i>Email</i> 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