



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 10th April 2022 (Palm Sunday)

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

17 th April	Mrs Julie Jefferies	EASTER SUNDAY
24 th April	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion then AGM

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

All Sunday Services are 11.00am, also broadcast on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0qso0uzwPJq-Onhf6fN2TA>

10 th April	Mr Bob Alger	PALM SUNDAY /Family Service
HYMNS: Rejoice+Sing 377, 141,261,671,209		
15 th April 3.00pm	Rev Iain McLaren	GOOD FRIDAY
17 th April	Rev Iain McLaren	EASTER SUNDAY /Communion
24 th April	Rev Dee Brierley-Jones	
1st May	Rev Iain McLaren	Communion then AGM

Special Collections at St Andrew's:

Retiring and loose collections over Holy Week will be for UKRAINE.

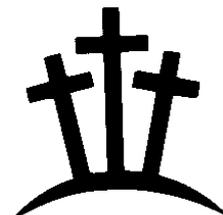
The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

10 th April	Rev Alison Evans	PALM SUNDAY (starts at URCC)
14 th April	Rev Iain McLaren	MAUNDY THURSDAY /Communion at URCC
		7.00 Agape meal, 8.00 Communion service

Details of all **HOLY WEEK** Services can be found in 'Lantern', and 'Grapevine' both available at <http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

8th May **AGM** 12 noon



Rev Iain McLaren, our Minister writes:



This Sunday, Palm Sunday, marks the beginning of Holy Week. It always strikes me that the disciples of Jesus experienced something of an emotional rollercoaster during that fateful week. It began with the joy and exhilaration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. On the Thursday there was confusion as they heard Jesus talk about betrayal and the offering of his body and blood. Friday was a day of anguish and despair as they saw Jesus put to death on a cross. During the Saturday they were plunged into deep depression and, in fear and trembling, locked themselves behind closed doors. Then, on the Sunday, there was amazement, relief, wonder and sheer joy as they encountered the risen Jesus.

The whole range of human emotions is present here and it seems to me that the Church's liturgical celebration of Holy Week should capture this emotional range. The danger of only attending worship on the Sundays is that you go straight from the joy of Palm Sunday to the joy of Easter, without the intervening emotions. This creates the unfortunate impression that Christianity is a religion of relentless, superficial jollity. The advantage of including worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday is that it allows for emotional lows to balance the emotional highs in such a way as to better reflect the ups and downs we all experience during the course of our lives.

The most significant Easter emotion, in my view, is hope. It is hope rather than joy, not because Easter is not joyous nor because joy is not important, but because joy is not an appropriate emotion when confronted with sin and suffering. At the same time, a religion focussing on sin and suffering is hardly the good news that Jesus came to preach. Hope is about good overcoming evil, love overcoming hate, life overcoming death. Our hope is for the forgiveness of sins and release from suffering. Hope is found in the transition from Good Friday to Easter Sunday.

There is much to be worried about in the world as I write this: wars in Ukraine, Syria and Yemen; the covid pandemic; climate change. The lesson of Holy Week is that we should never lose hope, for we know that the Jesus who died on Good Friday rose again on Easter Day.

Yours in Christ,

Iain

**Rev Iain McLaren can be contacted at:
01242-231602, or 07483118427 revdiain@urcic.org.uk**

Day off on FRIDAYS.

Lectionary Readings: (Palm Sunday)

Isaiah 50 v4-9a

Psalms 118 v1-2,19-29

Luke 19 v28-40

Philippians 2 v5-11

Worship on Wednesdays

1st Wed of Month at Warden Hill URCC, Rest of the month at St Andrew's. 12.15pm

EVERYONE WELCOME

Prayer Requests this week:



The family of John Hutton, Hanne Lambley, Geoff and Margaret Harmsworth, Mhairi Turner, Edith McKenzie, Mary Zakotti, The people of Ukraine.

With sadness we report the death of John Hutton, Member at Warden Hill, on 30th March. Details of Funeral will be published as soon as known.

Congratulations

We have heard that Rev Richard Atkins married his fiancée Dee on 2nd April in Portsmouth.



Significant Anniversary: Our best wishes go to Geoff and Sarah Tizzard-King. *Photo: Lyn Ricketts*

Cheltenham welcomed St John's Passion to town in a new version

During Lent Christians want to hear the Passion narrative once more. Composers set it to music, and musicians bring out for us the human drama of the weakness and the blindness of the characters and the horrifying brutality which follows. As the words of this version, performed in the Town Hall, have it: *'My life is full of laughter, joy and pleasure, but you must suffer.'*

The English Touring Opera production brought together Bach's powerful setting of the chapters from St John, the rich and expressive voices of soloists from secular opera, and an ensemble of instruments, many of them as they existed in the 18th century. Behind them the Cheltenham Choral Society created the clamour of the Jewish crowd (but sometimes the text was changed from 'Jewish' to 'people', conveying the universality of mob cruelty). Meanwhile the six soloists, led by the Evangelist, moved round the stage, no dress suits, talking and arguing, and coming to the front to address their appeals to the audience.

The choir, with the Children's Choir, played an important role as a commentator and interpreter of the action. Most of the text was sung in German, but the Chorales were in a free English version, translated by eminent clerics and theologians, such as John Sentamu and Dr Rowan Williams. A particularly poignant translation was by John McCarthy – *'Lord Jesus, your captivity/brings liberty to mankind./ And from your prison shines the love,/that offers sanctuary'*. John McCarthy was for five years held as a prisoner and hostage in Beirut.

This Passion was first performed in St Nicolas Church, Leipzig, in 1724. It was composed for Good Friday Vespers, and all the citizens of Leipzig wanted to hear this composition by the town's new music director, Johann Sebastian Bach. Half way through, the music stopped for the Sermon, as though the music had not already put the congregation in a sufficiently penitent frame of mind. In the Town Hall no sermon, but the audience took to heart Bach's Lenten message and were very moved by the musicianship of the performers.

Robin Derbyshire

St Andrew's

Reminder: Please send St Andrew's Annual Reports to Janet AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, for inclusion in the Report Book. **AGM 1st May** following worship.

Give thanks that the replacement front door is now finished and the new chairs for the Garden Room have arrived.

Charity for March/April : **Maggies in Cheltenham.**



CURC Lent Group

The Lent study group takes place via zoom on **Wednesday's** at 7.30pm.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86817591596?pwd=MkkzSzRWdzFPUTViUnZiNitLZStKUT09>

Meeting ID: 868 1759 1596

Passcode: 368163

What's on across CURC this week

Tues 12th Apr	10.30 – 14.00	Family Fun Day	St Andrew's
Wed 13 th Apr	14.00 - 16.00	Wednesday Social Group	Warden Hill URCC
		Speaker: 'Bard of Barnwood' – Margaret Daniels	
Wed 13 th Apr	19.30 - 21.00	CURC Lent Group	zoom
Fri 15 th Apr	10.00 - 12.00	Good Friday Prayers	Prestbury URC
		Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC
SUN 17th Apr	EASTER SUNDAY		
Thu 21 st Apr	12.45-13.45	Qi Gong	
Fri 22 nd Apr	10.00 – 12.00	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC



We are all invited to a **Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration** of the United Reformed Church's 50th Anniversary/Jubilee on Saturday 1st October 2022, 3pm-5pm at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London SW1H 9NH.

If you would like to go please let Janet know. A Coach will be booked later in the summer, when we have a firmer idea of numbers.

If you want to order your own ticket, but be on the coach – just let Janet know.

Free tickets: www.bit.ly/urc50

ECO News from Carol Drummond

We had a very interesting talk by Cat Elton from **Foodloose** on 23 March. Here are some key points



- Where our food comes from, how it is produced and how it is sold all has an impact on our planet.
- There is no clear case of 'good' versus 'bad'... the same food can have varying impact depending on its journey.
- This can be overwhelming, but we can all take small steps to lessen our impact. Perfect doesn't exist.
- Plan ahead to reduce food waste, choose consciously and ask questions of suppliers.
- Shop locally where possible, buy in season and avoid unnecessary packaging (shop loose at FoodLoose!)
- Use everything - challenge yourselves to a 'bare fridge project' to use up leftovers or a 'zero landfill month' to reduce your household waste.

Foodloose now have a regular stall at our Repair Café. April's Repair Café had a visit from our MP, Alex Chalk. Did you know there are now 10 Repair Cafes across Gloucestershire. Ours was the first! Though initially quiet by the end of the morning, a total of 61 items had been seen by the volunteer repairers of which 47 had been repaired.

Energy prices are very much in our minds at the moment. Vision 21 are running free home energy sessions at the Workshop, Malthouse Lane, Cheltenham – details on their website: <http://www.vision21.org.uk/news/home-energy-saving-retrofit-sessions/>

From Synod

SATURDAY 30TH APRIL
ENQUIRERS' EVENT

9.30am-12.30pm
on Zoom

Do you see new possibilities?
Do you feel God calling you to witness in
new ways in your local community?
Do you hear the need for 'church' to be different?

**Come along and hear more about
lay pioneering and the proposed
URC Pioneering Hub**

Contact Ministries@urc.org.uk for more information and Zoom link

50 th **United Reformed Church**

From the Editors

Thank you for all the copy that you send. We can be reached on: magazine@urcic.org.uk
Janet Kemp (Design) and Fiona Hall (Technology)