



Cheltenham United Reformed Church

www.urcic.org.uk

Bulletin 16th January 2022

The Pulpit at Prestbury

All Sunday Services begin at 10.30am

16th January

Dr Tony Jeans

23rd January

Rev Iain McLaren

Communion & Church Meeting

6th February

Rev Dee Brierley-Jones

All-Age Worship

The Pulpit at St Andrew's

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

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

Please sit on Pale Blue Chairs for social distancing

16th January

Rev Iain McLaren

Church meeting after worship

Agenda's have been sent out by email during the week.

23rd January

Dr Tony Jeans

30th January

Rev Iain McLaren

Baptism

6th February

Rev Iain McLaren

Communion

The Pulpit at The Church in Warden Hill

Details of all Christmas Services can be found in 'Lantern', and 'Grapevine' both available at

<http://www.tciwh.org.uk>

13th February

Rev Iain McLaren

Communion

Keeping us all safe while worshipping.

Wearing masks in enclosed public spaces is COMPULSORY

Please respect social distancing and the sensitivities of others around you in church.

Thank you.



Prayer Requests this week:

All those known to us who are ill

The URC community.



Rev Iain McLaren, our Minister writes:



What will you be doing on Monday morning? 'This time tomorrow' is a worship idea popularised in recent years by the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity. A church member is invited during Sunday worship to tell the congregation what they will be doing in 24 hours' time. They might speak about their job, if they are employed, or their childcare responsibilities, if they have a young family. If they are retired, they might speak about a hobby, or some voluntary work they do, or family responsibilities. The congregation is then invited to pray for the person in that situation.

The object of the exercise is to move away from a mindset that sees being a Christian as being about what we do in church on a Sunday to one that recognises we are Christians during the week too. In fact, we spend far more time at home and at work than we do in church, and it is outside church that we are most likely to come into contact with people needing to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ. In practice, many Christians do much good work outside Sunday worship, but we often fail to recognise it for what it is: mission – our contribution towards God's plan for the world.

The Church's mission is God's plan, not ours. This means we need not worry if we don't have all the answers, if we don't know how to solve all the world's problems. God has a plan to save the world, and our calling is to make our contribution towards this. Furthermore, God will supply us with the gifts we need to fulfil our mission.

With this in mind, perhaps we ought to spend less time worrying about what churches can no longer do and more time paying attention to what church members can do and are doing. We may be older, greyer and have less energy than we used to. Our buildings may be emptier than they once were. However, there are still things we can be doing for Christ. God has not finished with us yet.

Yours in Christ, *Iain*

Rev Iain McLaren can be contacted at:
01242-231602, or 0748311842 revdiain@urcic.org.uk

Day off on FRIDAYS.

Lectionary Readings:

Isaiah 62 v1-5

Psalm 36 v5-10

John 2 v1-11

1 Corinthians 12 v1-11

Support the Food Bank

Thank you for your ongoing support. The items we need most at the moment are: UHT milk, long-life fruit juice, coffee, ketchup or brown sauce, tinned ham, hot chocolate, gravy granules, savoury crackers.

We don't need pasta, rice, pulses/beans, soup, tinned tomatoes, cereal or tea as we have plenty of these at the moment.

Thank you.

St Andrew's January/ February Charity

How a Picture stirred Cheltenham into Action

I gave you the wrong reason why CWR came into existence in 2016. The real reason was the picture of the body of a 3-year-old lying on a Turkish beach. He was a Syrian Kurdish boy, Alan Kurdi, whose refugee family had set off in an overcrowded boat to make the 30-minute crossing to the Greek island of Kos. The boat capsized and he, his mother and his brother were all drowned.



The picture, which you may remember, quickly appeared in newspapers and on line worldwide. This frail innocent child lying alone and exposed on the shoreline seemed to speak for the many thousands of Syrians, and other nationalities fleeing the violence and persecution of their homelands. Greatly moved, people everywhere asked what they could do. In Cheltenham a group came together to ensure refugees reaching here received a welcome, and in a short time the Council declared itself a 'Town of Sanctuary', linked with other similarly minded places.

That was then. This week I have received up-to-date facts and figures from the Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS). In the county there are 84 Syrian families, of whom 36 are in Cheltenham, and 13 Afghan families, of whom 4 are in Cheltenham. These families arrive here through the UK Government's Resettlement Scheme. The next families to arrive will be from the Sudan, and the numbers requiring resettlement are likely to increase. The hope is that all those registered as refugees will in time get employment and be fully assimilated in the community.

The ones needing most help however are the asylum seekers who have yet to be accepted as refugees and receive minimal government subsistence allowance. They can wait a long time, in sparse accommodation. There are at present 29 places for asylum seekers in Cheltenham. CWR says that they take up the majority of the available money and outreach work they can give.

In January and February St Andrew's is appealing for a substantial 3-figure sum to be able to give towards their work with refugees and asylum seekers. Please will you help.

Robin Derbyshire

A BIG Thankyou

The following Donations were made for the retiring offerings at St Andrew's during the year 2021.

Jan/Feb:	Save The Children: £265.00
Mar/Apr :	Cheltenham Open Door: £300
May/June :	Christian Aid: £266.75 plus the envelopes that go direct.
Jul/Aug :	Cheltenham Foodbank: £465.00
Sept/Oct:	Commitment for Life: total for year - £2,456.50
November :	The Royal British Legion: £153.75
December:	Salvation Army: £406.25
	The Children's Society: £345.00
	Save The Children: £645.54

All of these donations include gift Aid

Donna Sutherland

ECO News

'FoodLoose' is Cheltenham's zero waste loose food shop. Located in the centre of Cheltenham, it is a not-for-profit, ethical, volunteer-run community business which gives local people the opportunity to make lifestyle changes that allow us all to walk more gently on our earth. The vision for **FoodLoose** is of a new way of shopping for domestic consumables in the Cheltenham area, with a community-focused, values-driven business model, led by passionate volunteers. They are looking to not only make a measurable reduction in the creation of single-use plastic waste in landfill sites, watercourses and oceans but also set an example to local and national businesses and government that the power to transform how we shop, how we live and how we relate to our communities and our environments is in our hands. Please do take a look to learn more about how everyone can be part of their future.

crowdfunder.co.uk/foodloosecommunityshareoffer

Big Garden Birdwatch

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch takes place on the weekend of 28-30 January. The bird feeders in the church garden are proving very successful so we thought it might be nice to see how many birds we can spot. If you have an hour to spare on that weekend to pop along to the church garden and see what you can see, that would be great. I will put a list up in the link gallery where you can add your findings. You can find more information on the RSPB's website www.rspb.org.uk/birds-to-spot.



What's on across CURC

Mon 17 th Jan	10:00 - 11:30	Prestbury URChins Baby & Toddlers	
		Cancelled – restarts 24th January	
Mon 17 th Jan		Footsloggers	
Wed 19 th Jan	12.00-13.00	Midweek Worship	St Andrew's
Fri 21 st Jan	10:00 - 12:00	Coffee, Chat ++	Prestbury URC

Scottish Society Burns Supper



This will be held at the Lilleybrook Golf Club on **25th January 2022**, a three-course meal with entertainment and all the customary traditions of the event.

Please contact Brian or Jean Smith to book your place – Tel: 01452 714051

Reading Group

The next meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 17th February at 'Karinya'. The book is **'The Seven Doors'** by **Agnes Ravatn**, a thriller which mixes Jungian and Freudian psychology. New members always welcome.

Mary Cummings

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)