

Kendal

United Reformed Church



December 2016 and January 2017

Kendal United Reformed Church

Kendal United Reformed Church

Highgate, Kendal LA9 4HE

Web: kendalurc.org.uk

Church email: kendal.urc@southlakeschurch.org.uk

Lead Minister: **Revd Carole Marsden**
The Manse, Main Street, Sedbergh LA10 5AB
Tel: 015396 22030 Mobile: 07890 650545
Email: carolemarsden@live.co.uk

South Lakes Group Minister: **Revd Martyn Coe**
Sherwood, Fernleigh Road,
Grange over Sands LA11 7HN
Tel: 015395 33223 Mobile: 07973 359882
Email: unitedchurch@btinternet.com

Non-stipendiary Minister: **Revd Pam Noonan**
Tel: 01539 724711
Email: pam.noonan@btinternet.com

Secretary: **Sheila Andrews**
2 Wakefield Meadow, Sedgwick, Kendal LA8 0JD
Tel: 015395 61988
Email: sheila.andrews5@btinternet.com

Treasurer: **Nick Andrews**
2 Wakefield Meadow, Sedgwick, Kendal LA8 0JD
Tel: 015395 61988
Email: nick.andrews08@btinternet.com

Caretaker: **Andrew Neal**
104 Highgate, Kendal LA9 4HE
Tel: 01539 232567 Mobile: 07729 658645

Editor: **John Costello**
2 Hawesmead Drive, Kendal LA9 5HD
Tel: 01539 730524
Email: johnxcostello@btinternet.com

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From Nick Andrews

As I'm writing this I've got to hand the note from Pam Noonan with the "homework", which is the readings for Sunday 6th November. The Old Testament words, from Exodus, are the story of Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro. Moses, the leader of the Children of Israel, is doing all the work to hear all the disputes from the entire population, many thousands of people. This work is taking him all day, every day. Jethro urges Moses to delegate a lot of the dispute resolution, judging and decision making, to members of the group, and thus save himself a lot of work, but also to reserve the more important issues to himself.

Moses was able to delegate some of the work he did. There are many jobs and tasks at Kendal URC where we could do with some help. At the moment we are looking for someone to take the minutes of our church meetings. We seem to be short of people who have basic administration and PC skills. So if you can help, do let one of us know.

We are, at Kendal URC, at an interesting, and exciting time. We have a lot going on. We are endeavouring to reach out into the local community with a number of activities which have been successfully organised, such as the Holidays at Home, Harvest lunch and the Bacon Butty service for the Mountain Festival. We have agreed to try and sell our Church building and the main hall, and our agents have put the buildings on the market. We are also starting the process of discussing with our architects what we want in the new worship space in the lecture hall.

This letter is being written because we have had an offer to help provide a church magazine again, after a bit of a pause, and we are very grateful and pleasantly surprised to be in this position. This magazine will be coming out as we move into Advent, always an interesting time, with its sense of waiting for the coming of our Lord. This year we will be having a "carols by candlelight service" on Sunday 11th December.

So the idea here is that we will continue, that we have a plan, and that things will change as we move on. We pray that we will all be looked after in our efforts!

Nick

(on behalf of the Leadership Team at Kendal URC)

From Revd Pam Noonan

It is hard to believe that two years have passed since Dave and I moved to Kendal and I began worshipping with you, and eighteen months since I was inducted into the South Lakes Group.

It has been an exciting time for us as we settled into the town, making new friends and responding to the challenge of doing new things in a new place. It has been a privilege to join you as you seek to share God's love with others in a host of different and new ways.



As I write this, I am conscious that Christmas is just around the corner and New Year is on the horizon with its different opportunities for the future. I find myself asking these questions -

How will God continue to lead us in 2017?

What new thing does he want to do in and through us?

And will I (we) be ready to respond?

The elders meeting has already been thinking to the future with plans to try café style worship once a month during the winter months. Do let us know what you think.

However, I ask myself whether it will be the year of monumental change as we take further steps to realise our vision for the future. Will the church and hall be sold? Will we start work on developing the Lecture Hall? We do not know the answers to these questions but we do know that we trust in the One who has led his people through the years.

As we celebrate our Lord's coming amongst us and then look forward to the New Year, let us renew our trust in God and all he would do through us.

May I take this (early) opportunity to wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas and New Year?

Pam

Ramblings from the Secretary

It's good to have a church magazine again so we can share some of the things that have been happening around the church during the last few months. Thank you very much to John Costello from Carver URC for offering to edit this so we can all keep in touch again.

The Prayer Shawl Group has now been running for over three years and we have given out 125 prayer shawls to people near and far. We normally get about 20 ladies coming to the group (but men are allowed as well!), on the first Tuesday in the month from 10.00 am to 12 noon. If you would like to join us there is still plenty of room. Come and knit, natter and have refreshments. If you know anyone who would appreciate a prayer shawl do let me or one of the Ministers or Elders know. We have now started a general craft group on the third Tuesday of the month, so again it will be craft, natter and refreshments! All welcome.

The outreach that has happened in the church over the last few months has been fantastic. To name but a few events, we have had the school children coming in for Rainbow Roundabout, and at the other end of the age scale we held our Holiday at Home for some of the older folk who are not able to go too far now. At Harvest time we held a lovely lunch and entertainment. Our normal Shoe Box Sunday was held in October: the number of boxes just keeps rising each year! Our Gatherings are continuing, and we had an excellent talk from St. John's Hospice recently. At the time of writing this, we are just about to have our first bacon butty service for people attending the Kendal Mountain Festival.

All these activities just don't happen by themselves, so a big thank you to everyone involved. But there are still jobs that need doing at church and we need more help. As you may have read in another report, we still need a Minute Secretary for our Church Meetings. We also could do with a few more people willing to arrange the flowers on a Sunday, as well as people to go on a rota to help with the coffee after morning worship.

We have continued our joint worship with our friends from Stricklandgate and do hope this will continue next year, although firm plans have not been arranged yet.

Finally, dates for Church Meetings in 2017 are 15 January, 19 March, 21 May, 16 July, 17 September and 19 November, all held after our Sunday morning worship service. If you would like the agenda, minutes and other church related matters emailed to you please let me know. You may previously have been on a distribution list but I will be starting a new one. Just email me at sheila.andrews5@btinternet.com

Sheila



What a brilliant day we had packing our boxes on 9 October!

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way at all. Box wrappers, shoppers, knitters, stitchers, collectors, sorters, donors, lunch providers and anyone I've missed.

Most of all, thank you for the love that went into every box.

This year we are sending 255 boxes to Romania which equates to 255 young smiling faces.

An incredible £600 was also given to pay transport costs and a cheque for that amount will go with the boxes to the warehouse.

You set another record this year, packing 255 boxes in 40 minutes!!!

Thank you from the children in Romania.

Ann Hindle

P.S. Shoebox Sunday 2017 will be on 8 October.

Financial Matters

I wanted to remind all our Members and Friends of the current situation relating to the various Gift Aid schemes which exist at the moment.

The traditional Gift Aid scheme is open to anyone who is an Income Tax payer, and is prepared to sign the appropriate declaration. Our Gift Aid secretary, Edward Irvine, will give you a set of envelopes for your contributions. Here at Kendal you will get envelopes numbered 60 or above. Alternatively, if you prefer to pay by standing order directly to our bank account, please talk to me and I'll let you have the required information.

A couple of years ago the authorities issued a second scheme - the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme or GASDS. This enables us to claim Gift Aid on the remaining collection money, although there are a couple of rules and regulations which we have to follow.

If you put money into the collection plate without an envelope, or have a set of envelopes numbered up to 59, this may be eligible for GASDS. Monies here have to be in cash, so any cheques put in must be discounted by the people who count the money. Also, the maximum single donation has to be £20, so any envelope containing more than this must be discounted, as must any £50 note in the collection.

So, if you are using an envelope numbered up to 59, and are in the habit of putting more than £20 in a single envelope, please either come and talk to either Edward or myself, or try and split your giving into separate envelopes.

Just to clarify, for those people in the main Gift Aid scheme (envelopes 60 and above), the GASDS rules do not apply to you: please carry on doing exactly what you are at the moment.

All this money makes a significant contribution to the Church's income, and is both welcome and essential to God's work here in Kendal. If you have any queries or questions please do ask.

Nick Andrews

Treasurer

Kendal URC



In September, I took part in the Great China Trek to raise money for St John's Hospice. Elsewhere in this magazine, you can read a description of the trek itself, as presented by Chris Wheatman at the November Gathering. For my own part, through a variety of events and a lot of sponsorship, I have raised a total of about £6,240 so far, for the Hospice. I would like to thank all who have made such generous contributions to this amazing amount.

Alvene

The Candle is a Sign

These are the words of a notice seen in Laycock Church, Somerset:

THE CANDLE IS A SIGN
of our prayers and the offering
of our lives in the service of Christ.

....of our prayers for others
That they might be strengthened
In their faith and love of the Lord

....and a symbol of all those who
through the ages have shone their lights
In the darkness of the world,
and of their prayers for us

....and a witness that this is a place of prayer,
a place where people have knelt
in worship through the centuries.

(contributed by Ann and John Hindle)



Church Diary

December

Sunday	4	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	6	10.00 am	Prayer Shawl group in the Lecture Hall
		2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Wednesday	7	9.30 am	Coffee and Chat in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	11	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by Revd Pam Noonan
		4.00 to 6.00 pm	Carols by Candlelight in the Main Hall, led by Pam and Carole
Tuesday	13	2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Wednesday	14	10.00 am	Mid-week Communion in the Minister's Office
Sunday	18	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by the Elders
Tuesday	20	10.00 am	Craft group in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	25	10.00 am	Mince pies and coffee, followed by Christmas Day Service in the Lecture Hall, led by Revd Pam Noonan



January

Sunday	1	10.30 am	Worship in the Lecture Hall, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	3	10.00 am 2.00 pm	Prayer Shawl group in the Lecture Hall Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Wednesday	7	9.30 am	Coffee and Chat in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	8	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by John Costello
Tuesday	10	2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Wednesday	11	10.00 am	Mid-week Communion in the Minister's Office
Sunday	15	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by Revd Sarah Moore Church Meeting after Worship
Tuesday	17	10.00 am 2.00 pm	Craft group in the Lecture Hall Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Sunday	22	10.30 am	Worship in the Main Hall, led by Revd Carole Marsden
Tuesday	24	2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall
Wednesday	25	10.00 am	Discussion group in the Minister's Office
Sunday	29	10.30 am	Joint Worship (to include Stricklandgate Methodists) in the Main Hall, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	31	2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowls in the Main Hall

Now for something entirely different

Revd Carole Marsden writes:

Sitting writing an article before Remembrance to be read through Advent, Christmas and into the new year is an interesting one! So I decided I would go for something entirely different.

Early this month I came across this image. I love colouring. Always have. My mum would colour with me and I now colour with my girls. We chatter as we go and we relax. I love to colour images of the psalms or of the Celtic scriptures. It is really helpful that colouring is now an “in” thing as books are far easier to find than they used to be.



So what was it about this particular image? As I coloured I got to thinking...

When we are still, are we doing nothing? I don't think so.

When we are still, do we allow our minds and hearts to be stirred by God in different ways? I think we do.

When we are still, are we wasting action time when we could be living out God's love? Depends I guess.

What about when I have no time to be still? Is God further away? Feels like it sometimes, but I think not.

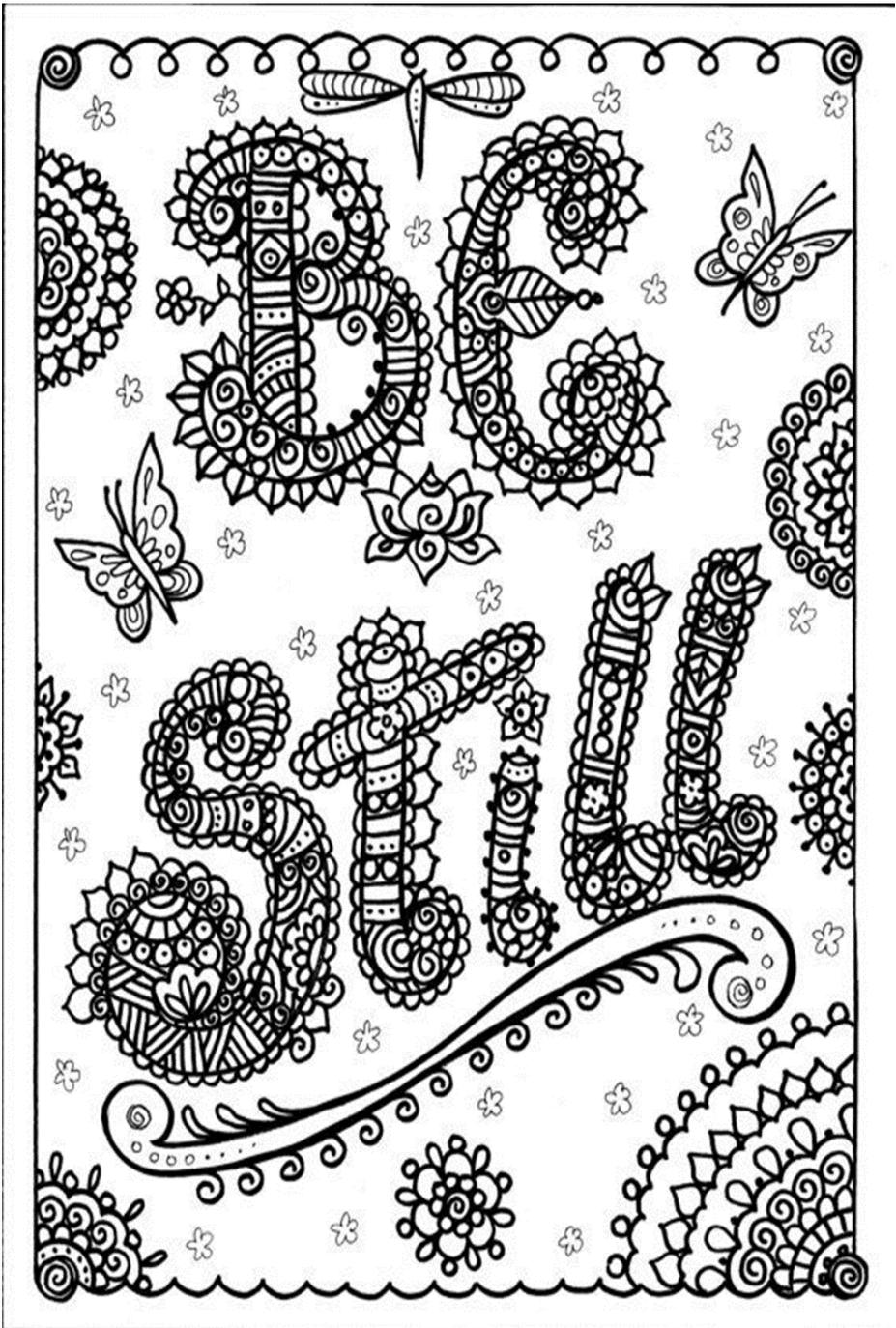
Perhaps the most famous follow-on from the Psalms is “Be still and know that I am God.” And from one of my favourite more modern hymns: “Be still for the presence of the Lord the Holy One is here.”

It struck me that we are going into a period of time that fluctuates in busy-ness. But I offer this colouring page to you whether you are busy or not. Have a go! Relive your youth or discover something new. If anyone would like a large copy please ask me and I'll print you one off.

May those times when we are “still” with God bring you blessing, strength and joy now and every day.

With much love

Carole x



The November Gathering

Just over 20 people gathered together, after the Remembrance Day service led by Revd Martyn Coe to hear about the work of our local hospice, St. John's in Lancaster, and the Great China Trek. This fundraising expedition of 31 intrepid volunteers took place from 17 – 27 September 2016 and a well-illustrated talk was given by Chris Wheatman. He conveyed his impressions of the spectacular landscape in which the wall is set, with its severe undulations which meant many, many steps to be negotiated. The warning signs read in English: *Please Leave Nothing But Footprints and Take Nothing But Memory*. The fortifications reminded me of what Hadrian's Wall tower forts must have been like, but on a smaller scale altogether. This frontier wall dates from 300 to 200 BC, much older than our northern wall, and is in parts rocky and dilapidated. It provided a challenge for many participants who soon gelled as a team, encouraging each other onwards and upwards. Chris showed us pictures of some of the dinners including the celebratory Peking Duck meal at the end of the Trek. He didn't sound too enamoured of the breakfasts! He mentioned that, surprisingly, one participant found a Starbucks' coffee shop in a remote mountain village. The group went to a village to be shown the papercutting craft and a few bought souvenirs.

At the end of the trip there was time for visits around Beijing including to Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. Two from the group queued for some time to see Chairman Mao's tomb and a small group visited a hospice on a different scale to St. John's as it was serving a population of 25 million rather than 250,000.

Children were usually seen singly in the rural areas, a result of government policy. The overall impression gained of the Chinese people was of warmth and interest.

The trek was the first overseas fundraising challenge by the Hospice as part of its 30th Anniversary celebrations. The aim was to raise £50,000; the total raised so far is around £110,000, making it a most successful venture. The money is very much needed as the Hospice is only 29% funded by the NHS and needs £7,000 per day to keep going.

If anyone is encouraged to help the Hospice on its next trek, it is planned to take place in March 2018 to Machu Picchu in Peru. Applications are being invited.

Pauline Goodridge (Gatherings' Convenor)

Bert Suttie writes:

Rainbow Roundabout

The Rainbow Roundabout originated in the Furness area. It was introduced to this area by Carver URC about ten years ago.

Kendal URC has continued to run the event since then and over the years we have had between 100 and 200 local primary school children (year 4) visiting us each year, one school at a time, over a period of a week during the summer.

The programme deals with world wide issues from injustice, water, endangered species and fair trade, to let the children see how things are not the same for everyone and how that could be changed. This year there was a change to the programme when we introduced other items dealing with creation, communication and an item to help with an awareness of the usual activities within a church. We also have a section on music around the world – as with sport – good for bringing people together in an enjoyable way.

This event would not succeed without the help of a good number of volunteers. Fortunately they seem to get as much enjoyment from the sessions as the children do.

Short Mat Bowls

Our short mat indoor bowls, started by David Robertson a few years ago, is going from strength to strength. We meet for a two hour session on a Tuesday afternoon. We are well supported by players from outside our church, particularly from the Subscription Bowling Club. This helps to create a very friendly and social gathering.

We have three mats which allows 12 players to play at any one time. This usually means that we have a few players sitting out, each round – lasting about half an hour. This is a good time to get to know others and preparing for the important tea/coffee break.

In my opinion this event is important in bringing people together from outside our church community, during the winter months.

Bert



From Revd Martyn Coe

What would it take for you feel obliged to leave your home without telling neighbours or friends? What things would you take with you? How would you feel about not sharing why you are leaving even if you knew that others could be saved if you encouraged them to go too? How frightened must you be not to be sure which friends, relatives or neighbours you could trust with information that people were coming to kill many people in your street?

In Matthew's version of the Christmas story this is the position that Mary and Joseph are in. We read about the flight to Egypt and we move on, but I think it needs more reflection. We might want to think such things could not happen, but they do. We have seen genocide in Germany, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the last century. This year we see the inhumanity in Iraq and Syria, and we have seen unprecedented numbers of folk seeking asylum in the EU.

Imagine Mary and Joseph had faced the UK's asylum regime. Arriving at what they hoped would be a safe country they would have been questioned. Why did they leave? Could they not safely have stayed somewhere else on the way? They would have been separated and probably put into detention centres. Mary would face intrusive questioning about whether Joseph was Jesus' father, and what their relationship really was, and whether Jesus was her child. If Mary and Jesus were allowed to leave detention, they would be sent to a hostel anywhere in the country regardless of any family or other links. Forced to live on about £5 a day for all her and Jesus' needs, Mary would be at risk of sexual and economic exploitation. Joseph would be at risk of deportation, and, despite being a skilled tradesman wanting to look after himself and his family, he would be forbidden to work throughout the several years the process of being granted asylum takes.

Possibly, after having her application rejected by the home office but upheld by the courts, Mary and Jesus would have been allowed to stay in the country for five years. Jesus would be at risk of deportation at 18, regardless of the length of time he lived in the UK.

We don't know what happened to Mary Joseph and Jesus in Egypt, but Matthew says they found safety and were eventually able to return to their

home nation. Sadly, that desperate flight to safety, the desperate hope of avoiding death squads and the guilt of leaving others behind and in danger is faced by too many people in our world today.

The media and some politicians give us a picture of those seeking asylum which is simply not true. Neither you nor I would risk the things they do lightly. You and I would have to be very scared to undertake the journeys they do, and so are they. I have heard suggestions that it is odd that there are young men who are seeking asylum. Parents and grandparents are the same wherever they are in the world. Faced with the possibility that your son or grandson would be pressed into a war they did not want by government or rebel snatch squads, or suspected of disloyalty by one or both sides and tortured and killed, what would you do? If there was only the money for you or him to be smuggled out of the country, which parent or grandparent would not pay to send their son or grandson to safety?

Most refugees are not running towards a better life (they do hope they will find one), but because life at home has become so dangerous that traveling to a new country in a small boat across a dangerous sea seems less of a risk than staying where they are.

The story of our faith would have ended before it began had not Mary and Joseph found safe refuge a long way from home. I don't want to live in a world where people are forced to flee their homes and I believe we need to change the things that cause such movements of people.

Equally, I do want to live in a country which welcomes those seeking asylum rather than demonising refugees. I would want to see us welcome folk like Mary and Joseph and Jesus as people deserving protection not as people to be mistrusted.

This Christmas, as we hear that story, let us try to hold in our hearts and minds the situations we see in our world today. Let us try to build a nation which welcomes those who are in danger. Maybe a Christmas gift to yourself or a friend could be a donation to a charity which supports refugees in the UK or around the world.

We can, and should, have fun at Christmas, but God's call for justice and peace for all is there right from the start of the story. Let us pray for change and act in ways which help our leaders make the world a better place for all.

To you and yours, blessings and peace this Advent and Christmas.

Martyn

Mission Communities

At Kendal URC we are far better informed about *mission communities* than many local congregations: remember the comprehensive briefing Revd Sarah Moore gave us. You may be wondering whether anything is happening; and yes it is. Several *mission communities* have already been set up in Cumbria. However the Kendal area is problematic – probably too big for a single community, but what criteria should be used to split it into three *communities*? After much thought, deliberation and prayer a decision will soon be made by the local steering group, guided by “higher” authorities. I am your (very humble) URC representative on this group.

Remember the *mission* referred to is that of spreading the gospel to everyone. The *communities* are the ecumenical groups (of churches) that will work together and share their resources, including ministers, services and physical resources; making better use of all of these is very necessary. The recent removal of restrictions on clergy of some denominations performing the sacraments in churches of other denominations removes a potential problem.

The mission aspect is partly addressed by the *God for all* initiative, whereby “by 2020 every person in Cumbria will have had an opportunity to discover more of God and God’s purpose for their lives.” Lots of information and news about both this and *mission communities* can be accessed on the website www.godforall.org.uk.

Anne Wilson

Some future events in the South Lakes Group

29 January 2017 at 4pm: a service at Carver, celebrating the legal formation of the LEP making Carver Uniting Church.

21 May 2017 at 6.30pm: Methodist District testimony service at Carver. South Lakes Minister Jo Rand will be one of those sharing testimony prior to her ordination at Methodist Conference in June.

4 June 2017: South Lakes Group Pentecost service at Grange.

Daily Devotions during Advent

Daily Devotions from the URC will be sent out by email every day from the first Sunday in Advent. A team of writers from different places and perspectives in the URC will provide a reflection on a reading and offer a short prayer each day, for us to use in our own journeys of discipleship. In order to sign up please simply go to tinyurl.com/URCDailyDevotions and complete the form.

Resources for worship: Worship Words

A new website worshipwords.co.uk brings together writers and worship leaders to share progressive Christian prayers, songs and liturgies. The website offers free worship material which is inclusive, progressive, relevant and ready-to-use. The site creator and editor is Revd Dr Ana Gobledale. She, and her husband Tod, are ministers in the Wessex Synod. For more information, contact Ana on worshipwordsmatter@gmail.com

From the editor:

It has been good to receive contributions for this magazine, covering so many aspects of church life; so a big thank-you to all who have sent material.

This is your magazine, and all contributions to future issues will be welcome. This might mean articles on matters of interest to members, news of church activities which have taken place (perhaps with photographs), plans for future events, and indeed anything which you would like to bring to a wider readership.

It would be especially good to have a “family news” section, with news which you would like to share or information about family situations which need the support and prayers of friends.

Please let me have any items for the February/March issue as early as you can and preferably before Monday 16 January.

John Costello

Peace begins in the heart



and reaches around the world...