

Kendal United Reformed Church



April and May 2020

Kendal United Reformed Church

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Covid-19

Revd Martyn Coe writes

At present, all public gatherings (including worship and other activities) at Kendal URC are suspended. It is anticipated that this suspension will continue until at least the end of May.

The Church remains a community of faith, and its life goes on. Taking care of each other should always be our priority; and, although we may not be meeting together for a few weeks, we will be keeping in touch.

There will be no face-to-face pastoral visits except in exceptional circumstances. However, pastoral visitors will keep in touch with you by phone or e-mail.

If you want to talk or to find out more information about Church, please telephone or email the Administrator or the Church Secretary or one of the Elders.

If you have access to the internet and to email, you can sign up for the United Reformed Church daily devotions and receive these every morning by email.

I will be putting a short worship and reflection on to the Kendal URC web site each week. This can be found at kendalurc.org.uk: you will just need to click on it for it to play.

Look after yourself; and if you need to stay away from others please do so, but do keep other people in mind. For many people, personal contact is critical for their spiritual and psychological health, so try to keep in touch with others. Use the telephone, or email, or send a text message or photograph – whatever you can do.

Pray for one another, and for the community; and pray too for those living in places where the health system is not able to cope with the situation.

Yours

Martyn



North Western Synod

Franklin Street, Eccles,
Manchester M30 0QZ

19 March 2020

From Brian Jolly, Synod Moderator

Dear Friends

As we face the unprecedented challenges of the moment, locally and globally, I write to remind and assure you that we face these things together, with fellow pilgrims in the United Reformed Church and in the local and worldwide ecumenical movement, and in partnership with members of other faiths and all people of goodwill.

We can face uncertainty with faith. The psalmist assures us, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble* [Psalm 46:1]. Jesus promises us, *I am with you always* [Matthew 28.20]. Although we may have to celebrate Easter in our homes and with ongoing uncertainty about the future, the truth of the resurrection will be undiminished by whatever we face.

Please be assured of our common concern and support for one another, of our prayers for one another and especially for those who face the greatest challenges in our families, communities and world. As you are able, please care for folk in your community in whatever ways are possible, in the name of Jesus.

Closure of the Synod Office

Yesterday the synod officers took the decision to request all synod office-based staff to work from home. During usual office hours the synod office phone line [0161 789 5583] will be diverted to a member of staff working at home. Items posted to the synod office will be collected several times each week and dealt with as promptly as possible. Email enquiries to synod staff can be made, as usual.

Closure of Church House, London

Church House is now closed but staff are working from home. They can be contacted on the usual numbers.

Closure of local churches

Government advice is that **religious gatherings should cease to meet**. The elders' meeting of a local church [and the equivalent body in LEPs] are responsible for implementing this advice; that is the duty placed upon the elders' meeting by the Structure of the United Reformed Church. It is important that members of congregations are supported in any practical, emotional or spiritual ways that are possible - avoiding face to face meetings wherever possible. Pastoral care can be practised by telephone. Networks of people [for example, elders' pastoral lists] can keep in touch with one another.

It is very important for Elders' Meetings to arrange for consultation with building insurers about their preferred actions when buildings are closed temporarily.

Wedding and funeral services

Wedding couples could be asked to consider holding the service with the legal minimum number of people present (five, I believe). Then they could defer their main celebration to another time, when it could of course include a much fuller church service.

Funerals often attract a lot of elderly mourners. So perhaps we should think instead about a simple committal ceremony at a cemetery or crematorium with an intentionally very small number of people present. Tributes can then be paid in other ways for larger numbers of people to read – either online, or in a church newsletter – or given in a memorial service later in the year. All of that may feel very unsatisfactory. But there is not a satisfactory way to deal with these issues. We don't want anyone's life to end because they attended a funeral.

Further, ministers or other worship leaders who are vulnerable – either because they are over 70, or because of health issues – should surely stand down from public duty. Much can be done from home, by phone and online. As a Church, we ask those who care for us to care for themselves too, especially when life could be at risk.

Cash flow

It remains important that members of our congregations maintain their giving, so far as they are able. This will help to ensure the sustainability of our mission and ministry in the coming weeks and as we emerge from these emergency times.

Worship

Services will be available on the [URC's Daily Devotions website](https://www.urc.org.uk/devotions) each Sunday. The Daily Devotions also offers a daily Bible reading, reflection and prayer.

A comprehensive list of churches offering live streamed services, sermons as podcasts, recorded services on YouTube, audio files of services and sermons and other resources has now been published and can be accessed at: devotions.urc.org.uk .

To close, I offer you this prayer, adapted from The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland:

Let us acknowledge the company we share in the life of the church:

the faithful who worshipped before us;

the hundreds of thousands of every place and language who, each day, seek to set their lives within the atmosphere of renewing grace.

As we think of them, let us take deliberate encouragement from our unity with them all.

Let us acknowledge that all round the world people pray for us each day: and let us take heart from the knowledge that we pray for one another within the fellowship of the whole United Reformed Church, our local church, and ecumenically,

seeking not only our own peace, but the peace of every person.

As we are assured each day of God's mercy and liberating grace, and know that we are accepted in God's love, let us live the lives of forgiven people, transmitting the grace which comes to us and extending to others the love which is shown to us.

These thoughts and desires we offer in the name and Spirit of Jesus, in whom the holiest in the height touches our hearts and shares our joys and sorrows, our circumstances, and our hope.
Amen.

Yours, in prayer and fellowship

Brian

Secretary's Ramblings

As we all face this unprecedented challenge of the Coronavirus pandemic, we need to support one another and help members of our community and congregation as best we can. The situation seems to be changing daily, and, as I write this today, I am hearing that all schools will shortly be closing; but by the time you read this article I expect much more drastic action will have been taken by the Government in an attempt to stop the spread of this terrible virus. I'm sure that many of you are worried about your family and friends. Keep in touch by phone and email and if you hear of anyone who needs help please get in touch with us (details at front of this magazine). We are trying to keep communication going with email and social media, although I know that some of you do not have access to this. One thing that we can all do is pray. I therefore share a prayer written by the two URC Assembly Moderators.



The Moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church (URC), the Revd Nigel Uden and Derek Estill, have offered the following prayer as the UK and the rest of the world come to terms with the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'
Psalm 46:1, NRSV

As so much is re-shaped by Coronavirus Covid 19, let us pray with
people left unwell, beckoned by death or bereaved;
people providing professional health care and advice, looking after loved ones at home or working to create treatments and cures;
people shaping the response of nations and neighbourhoods, of commerce and industry, of service and voluntary organisations and of communities of faith;
people who are anxious or afraid, alone or isolated.

Living, loving God,
we praise you,
and through times of peril we lean into you,
for in Jesus Christ
you have trodden paths as difficult as ours,
revealing there a love that nothing defeats,
a love that bears us through.

Even as we strive to behave responsibly,
and to care reliably,
so we feel after you
that in these uncertain times we might trust you are with us,
our refuge and strength,
and our faith, hope and love might be renewed,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Sheila

Boxes of Hope Cumbria 2020

Ann Hindle writes

The Elders have decided that our Shoebox Service will be on Sunday 18 October.



We hope that as many people as possible may consider filling a box over the next six months. Because we are not yet in 106 we will have to gather boxes ready filled at that service.

A reminder list of items we like to include is below.

Hat, scarf and gloves

Pair of socks

Notebook

Pencil case (pens, pencils, coloured pencils, pencil sharpener and rubber)

Soft toy

Toiletries (soap, facecloth, toothbrush and paste and a comb)

Small gift

Plastic cup

Ball

Small car

Packet of sweets

Fortunately, we do not usually include a toilet roll

The next few weeks may well limit our shopping but I am sure that with God's help we will get through. You will be spared my nagging (encouragement) until later in the year.

Keep safe everyone

Ann

Update on Sale and Redevelopment

Nick Andrews writes

Sale

Our purchasers have had a meeting with planning officers at SLDC, and also with the members of our own steering group. SLDC are unhappy with some of the proposals made and our purchasers are having to resubmit amended plans. The effect of this will be to delay the date when they will receive planning permission, probably to early June; and this will have a knock-on effect on the sale going through. This is very frustrating for all. Our purchasers, however, remain very committed to buying the church, and have spent a lot of money on surveys and other reports.

Redevelopment

This is going well and is on schedule for the works to finish at the end of July. This is not dependent on the sale going through. The new three phase electric supply meter was installed in January, and works on this are finished. The new telephone and broadband service has been installed early, at the request of the sound and wiring people, so that connections may be run to various parts of the building. We are pleased that we have been able to retain the previous telephone number which is in all the URC and other directories.

We have had the lead piping discovered under the yard replaced, at a cost of about £1,700, which we weren't expecting to pay. We have also discovered that the existing gas pipe network on site is not adequate for the new boilers. After digging of trial holes and discussions involving our architect, the heating engineer and the gas network people we have had to agree to pay for a new connection to the gas main supply in Highgate, which will involve digging up the main road outside. The new larger supply pipe will come into the front of 106, and from there drop down into the cellar. The cost of this unexpected and unwelcome work is almost £6,000. We are awaiting a quote for works to move the water meter and join up the plumbing which is currently separated into two separate systems.

The kitchen sub-group have agreed a design for the kitchen. We will be creating a new hatch space which will be higher up than the old one. Everything else is continuing.

Nick



Christian Aid Week 10 to 16 May 2020

Standing together to fight the injustice of poverty

(from the Christian Aid Magazine)

"Christian Aid was founded 75 years ago,
when churches came together to respond to

the urgent need of refugees fleeing conflict after the Second World War. Our task today is different, and yet, the same.

We need your help to ensure that we can continue to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. We have been working hard to ensure that we build a Christian Aid for the future. A future that is uncertain for the most vulnerable people in the world. Our key priorities will be humanitarian and resilience, climate justice, peacebuilding, health and economic justice. We aim to get maximum value out of every £1 we raise from supporters like you."

As we no longer have a house-to-house collection, we are taking the opportunity to enclose an envelope with this magazine. This envelope will need to be returned to:

Christian Aid, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL.

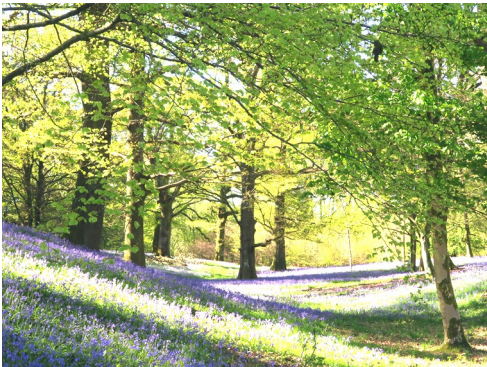
Please make cheques payable to Christian Aid.

If you have internet access, you can donate at caweek.org.

Alternatively, you can phone 08080 006 006.

Thank you again

Anne Handley and Edward Irvine



Bluebells in the
woodland at
Calgarth Park
(photo by Barbara
Crompton, Carver
Uniting Church)

Minister's Letter

Revd Martyn Coe writes



Last time I wrote about the ways that words and music from the Iona community had inspired my faith journey. I also described why the use of inclusive terms is important to me (why say man when you could easily say person?): contemporary images and use of words are important in our liturgy and song. Equally important is an understanding of God which makes sense in the world we experience, and images which help make real our life with God not push God further away.

If I pull the Sunday School Hymnary (21 editions 1905-1948) off my shelves there are any number of late Victorian songs aimed at children and youngsters which express the difficulty of being a Christian or of living the life to which we are called. Over the years, however, our collective memory of that era has diminished. Our songs for children in Congregational Praise are remembered by me as warm, soothing and affirming. The section starts with *For air and sunshine pure and sweet*. The closest the "For Children" section comes to the gloom of Victoriana is the final verse of *Away in a manger* where we ask to be made fit for heaven.

By the time I am looking at 'Youth Praise' (1969, costing 10 shillings), I read about modern songs showing the fresh air blowing through the church. While there is little of the social conscience which the church gained in the late 1960s, youth and children's songs have become totally affirming. Ask and Jesus will help you, and if you know God then all will be all right. This was maybe a spiritual echo of the sense of scientific progress of the times. And there (with some changes of instrumentation and language) much children's song seems to have stuck. The holiday clubs I have seen have used Scripture Union and the like: all very positive images of faith.

I have two, linked, arguments with this way of singing with youngsters. Firstly it often leaves us with adult Christians who are not mature. Their foundations lead them to expect a faith life which is not achievable.

Secondly, to at least some children as young believers, the songs are palpable nonsense. Even though they know Christ, things in life still go wrong. Knowing God does not stop bullying and abuse, and being a friend of Jesus does not stop parents separating or being ill or dying. Being filled with the Holy Spirit does not whisk away mental health struggles.

Now, don't get me wrong: I am not saying we should not include celebratory and positive songs in our work with youngsters and children. Nor am I saying that the warmth which comes to us in adulthood of music which can take us to a positive point in our history should be dismissed. What I am saying is that, like the rest of our liturgy and song (indeed like our physical diet), there has to be a mix.

One group which works with school and church song and which recognises the difficulties of life (as well as its joys) is Fischy Music. My children loved their kids' songs and I know many groups (like toast church in Grange) which have benefited from using songs like this ('When people are cruel it makes all the difference'):

*On a rough wooden cross a young man was hanging.
Can you imagine the agony?
But he knew where he came from and where he was going,
Facing the bullies of Calvary
(© Fischy Music)*

Or 'Tears falling' which starts with 'Daddy said I'm leaving but I do still love you. It's just some things have changed...'

Both these songs recognise that life is hard. The first also links bullying with Christ experience and so the circle is closed. Now we don't have a song which says that if I know Jesus all will be fine. Now we have a recognition that life is not fine, but Christ knows all about that. What we say, the images and words we use, and the way we say and sing things express what we understand of God.

Whether we are 1 or 101, we know that at times life is great and at times it is hard: we need songs and liturgy which represent that. I know God does not make everything bad or hard go away. I also know that, having lived on earth, God fully understands what human struggle is like and now stands with me even in the most trying of times.

Martyn

Thank you to all who have contributed to this magazine.
Please let me have any material for the next issue by
Monday 18 May.

John Costello

Thanks for the prayer shawl

Lucy Foster writes

"I cannot tell you how good it feels to know that people care about you"

At our latest ordination training weekend at Rydal Hall I gave one of our beautiful prayer shawls/scarves to my friend Duncan from the west coast of Cumbria. He is training whilst undergoing chemotherapy. He was absolutely delighted with the scarf and wore it for the whole weekend. With his permission I'm sharing a photo of him from the weekend and the email he sent me afterwards so we are reminded of just what a difference the prayer shawls and all small acts of love and kindness can make:

"Dear Lucy and all your friends at the URC

... That scarf was knitted with love and prayer. I cannot tell you how good it feels to know that people care about you, even when they don't know you. The current crisis tells us that love and prayer are the principles that keep our communities running.

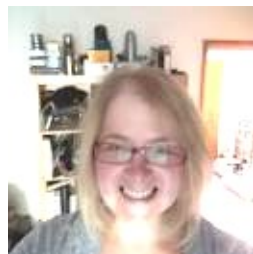


When we love our neighbour (and, as the Good Samaritan showed, even the neighbour we don't know) then we fulfil God's command and learn to live in harmony. It is the selfish, those that no longer know their neighbour, that show how society breaks down when once we lose sight of God's love.

May God bless you and all of your community.

Duncan Jackson"

Lucy



The Prayer Shawl Group: Update on Twiddle Muffs

Pauline Goodridge writes

You have generously given me ten twiddle muffs since my last distribution to care homes before Christmas.



I realised that with the coronavirus crisis,

distribution would be difficult, with care and nursing homes starting to exclude visitors. I learnt from a Lancaster friend about a London organisation *Knit for Peace* that twiddle muffs are on their 'wanted' list. The organisation believes that knitting is good for people and that the articles made and sent in help those in need. So, at the start of this new crisis I posted all the remaining muffs off to *Knit for Peace*, making a request for a newsletter.

I think that over the spring and summer we should suspend making muffs as it is a time of year when they are needed less, and maybe resume making them in the Autumn, in readiness for next winter and cold hands. But do carry on making prayer shawls.

Pauline

Celebrating
70 years
of marriage

Platinum Wedding

Gwrhyd and Jean Lewis
celebrate their 70th
Wedding Anniversary on
Friday 10 April.



Award for 100 blood donations

On 20 February, Alvene received an award at the Castle Green Hotel in Kendal for having donated blood on 100 occasions, over a period of 47 years. She made these donations in many different venues: in Lincoln, Bradford, Huddersfield, Lancaster, Windermere and Kendal.

Agnes Cumming

At a recent service it was announced that the Church had received a legacy from the estate of Mrs Agnes Cumming. For those who may be unaware, Mrs Cumming who died in June 2019 was the widow of Revd Albert Cumming who was the minister of St John's Presbyterian (later United Reformed) Church in Sandes Avenue from 1950 until it closed in September 1980. He then ministered with Revd Andrew Hodgson at Kendal United Reformed Church while the members of his congregation settled in at their new home at Highgate.

Revd and Mrs Cumming moved to live with their daughter, Margaret and her husband in West Cumbria after his retirement, until his death in 2003; and Mrs Cumming continued to live there until her death last year.

Edward Irvine



Lakeland Disability Support started life as New Holehird about 14 years ago. The charity was formed to try to save the Cheshire Home at Holehird, when Leonard Cheshire Disability announced that they intended to close the home. By the time Leonard Cheshire decided, five years later, to keep the home open, New Holehird had raised well over £1million, so we decided to change direction and use the money to help physically disabled people throughout South Lakeland, the area in which the money had been raised.

Changing our name to Lakeland Disability Support, the purpose of the Charity is to give grants of financial assistance to help improve the quality of life for people in South Lakeland who have a physical disability. Although we have been doing this for many years now, it would seem that relatively few people have heard of us, despite several publicity drives.

Funding may be given for respite care, day care, equipment, mobility and services that will enhance the life of disabled people, and which the applicant or social services are unable to provide. It is not the purpose of the Charity to provide the primary support: that is the responsibility of the local authority. Where there is a shortfall in such support, the Charity may be prepared to assist, each case being considered on its merits. Successful applicants may reapply at some future time, but long term funding will not be considered.

We meet quarterly (January, April, July and October) and welcome applications from individuals or charitable organisations within the administrative area of South Lakeland.

If you are disabled, or know of anyone in the area who would benefit by help from us, do please get in touch with me, either by email (brendarobinson2015@gmail.com) or by phone (015394 42800). We ask that applications are supported by care workers or healthcare professionals.

Brenda Robinson (Secretary of Lakeland Disability Support)

Church of England in Cumbria Safeguarding: Past Cases Review 2



Many will know that during 2020 the Church is embarking on an in-depth review of the records of clergy and other church officers (employed or volunteers) - the Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2).

A Past Cases Review is an independent audit of written records that enables the Church to know that all safeguarding concerns recorded against a member of clergy or a church officer have been properly actioned.

The first PCR in 2008/09 looked at all clergy files, but there were gaps. In particular little concern was paid to concerns for vulnerable adults or to domestic violence. Every diocese is therefore required to revisit the PCR during 2020.

As a first step Bishop James has written to all incumbents and churchwardens to ask parishes to confirm that any safeguarding concerns they are aware of have been referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).

PCR 2 - Reporting Structures



If you want to report or discuss abuse that you or you believe others have suffered please do not hesitate to contact our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Charles Proctor – his contact details are on our Safeguarding front page.

We recognise however that if you have a lived experience of abuse involving a clergy person or church officer, you might want to talk initially to someone not connected to our diocese. In that case you can contact the independent helpline set up by the Church of England and run by the NSPCC.

**Past Cases Review 2 NSPCC helpline for Children and Adults:
0800 20 20 20.**

Prayer

A lot of this magazine is about prayer; and, for the foreseeable future, the coronavirus outbreak is likely to dominate our concerns, our thinking, and our prayers. This is both inevitable and right. We pray for all those who suffer directly as a result of infection, and for those who find social isolation difficult. However, as we think about the resurrection at Easter, we are given hope for the future; and, in May, Christian Aid week reminds us that there are other, persistent problems in many parts of the world. Joan reflects on both these ideas in our prayer diary.



Prayers for April and May

(contributed by Joan Ratcliffe)

April

As we celebrate Easter, remembering Christ's sacrifice and giving thanks for his resurrection and promise of eternal life, we give thanks also for all the signs of new life in the natural world. At a difficult time in the life of our world, these signs encourage us to look towards the future; and we pray for the new life that we trust will come. We give thanks for the commitment shown by our ministers, secretary, treasurer, elders and Church members, in continuing to care for one another and to work for the future of our Church. We pray for those involved in planning the redevelopment work at 106, and for the safety of those working on the building day by day.

May

Christian Aid Week falls in May. Give thanks for the work of this charity, and pray for all who work for it. Pray for volunteers, for all who raise money in so many different ways, and for all who benefit from the work of Christian Aid in many countries around the world.



(photo by Megan Kinsey)