

WARMINSTER UNITEDCHURCH

(Methodist/URC)

**George Street, Warminster BA12 8QA
Summer 2021**



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Dear Everyone



"The Times They Are a-Changin'" - it hardly seems possible that it was 1964 when Bob Dylan released that single! Since March 2020 how times have changed! We continue to live in different times, difficult times, liminal times, uncertain times, but definitely important times.

Hopefully we are now in liminal time - transition as we begin to emerge from the long winter of Covid: the here and not yet, the knowing and the unknown, the hope of the new and perhaps the bittersweetness of what is left behind. As people of faith a central tenet of Christianity is that God is with us at, and in all times. I recently attended an online conference where the keynote address had the amazing title 'What may grow from the compost of Covid?' The speaker spoke about a garden compost heap, how you put weeds, grass cuttings, vegetable peelings etc., and what emerges from all that "rubbish" is good compost.

God is constantly creating, moving, doing, being, calling and being "discovered" in the unexpected, and still redeeming that which seems lost. The different times of where we currently are, give us opportunity to pay attention to God's movement in us and in our community. As I have sought to minister during the Pandemic what has been uttermost in my mind is how pre-Covid we took for granted so many blessings! The literal being with one another, the worshipping together, singing together, learning together – such a source of blessing, yet how often did we realise this?

When we gather as a congregation, we are also a source of strength to each other, it is an occasion when we can deploy our energies, gifts, passions and visions both for the worshipping community and the community in which we are based. A community desperate for meaning, for safe spaces of questioning, and for a place to be loved and learn to love.

"The Times They Are a-Changin'" we go forward in faith, seeking to be faithful people of God through all times.

Peace

David

Loving Lord

We pray for your love and compassion to abound
as we walk through this challenging season.

We ask for wisdom for those who bear the load
of making decisions with widespread consequences.

We pray for those who are suffering with sickness
and all who are caring for them.

We ask for protection for the elderly and vulnerable
to not succumb to the risks of the virus.

We pray for misinformation to be curbed
that fear may take no hold in hearts and minds.

As we exercise the good sense that you in your mercy provide,
may we also approach each day in faith and peace,
trusting in the truth of your goodness towards us.

Amen

Prayer: Mothers' Union

Image: Elizabeth Perry



CHRISTIAN AID

I am pleased to tell you that we have currently banked £475.00
towards our church's £600 target for Christian Aid.

I will be having

**A Socially Distanced Coffee Morning
in my garden at 25 Ashley Coombe BA12 9QU
on Wednesday 14th July
from 10am to 11.30 am (unless it rains!)
to raise, with your help, the remaining £125.00
Please feel very welcome to join me.**

Love from *Karen*

And a message from Sheelagh Wurr, Christian Aid rep for the town:

"You will be pleased to hear that, despite difficulties due to Covid, I have today
sent £3866.40 to Christian Aid for this year's Christian Aid week.

If you would like a breakdown of how that money was raised, I am happy to
send it to you.

If any late donations come in let me know and we will send them on.

Thank you very much to everybody for all your efforts.

Best wishes, Sheelagh"

Pastoral Carers June 2021

As we begin once more to come together in our services, please remember those who are unable to join us; those who are unwell, Betty, Susan and Muriel as well as those who have left Warminster for pastures new, Claire and Margaret and Gordon and those amongst us who are bereaved.

Our lives have all been changed by the circumstances of recent months but we have learnt how to support and care more for each other in different ways. The virtual services and the Zoom Coffee Mornings and quiz's linking us together, thanks to the members who have regularly organised and planned these events. It has taken many of us into new ways of communication, which will stay with us for the future.

The pastoral carers have been supporting members as ever; my thanks to all of you. The Church Council will be discussing ways that this support can be offered as some pastoral carers have made the difficult decision that they are unable to continue. **As the Pastoral Care Lead for some years, I have decided to stand down from this position now; if there is anyone willing to take this valuable service forward, please speak to me or Rev David.**

It is envisioned that the Church will be able to hold an AGM in the autumn as previously and members will be invited to elect Trustees and Church Council members. Until that time, members of the Church Council have made decisions on your behalf and will share these decisions at the AGM.

In the last Newsletter, members were asked to complete the GDPR form with their personal details to give permission for the Church to store it.

This is a legal requirement which we need to update, since it is two years since we last asked for your permission. Please complete the slip on the back page if you are willing for the church to hold this information. It is not sufficient to complete without adding your name, address, telephone number and signing the document, indicating whether you give permission in the boxes provided. Those who previously provided a form do not need to do so again.

Marion Barton

Many thanks to Marion for her leadership and guidance in the role of Pastoral Leader, especially through these last months with the difficulties of keeping in touch.



SERVICES IN CHURCH

At the moment there are 2 services in church each month, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. When restrictions are eased it is hoped that more preachers will be available and more frequent services can resume.

The dates set are:

July 11th and 25th

August 8th and 22nd

September 12th and 26th

October 10th and 24th

Rev David Coppard will lead the first service each month, 25th July will be led by Rev Susan Holden and 22nd August by Rev Heather Morgan. Future dates to be decided.

There is no need to notify anyone if you wish to go to a service but social distancing and wearing masks will still be necessary until regulations change.

On the Sundays when there is no service in church there will continue to be services on Zoom at 10.30 a.m. which anyone is welcome to join. If you have not joined in one before and would like to then please contact Marion Hornby (marionhornby@gmail.com) who sends out the link needed to take part.



BIBLE STUDY

Every Wednesday evening at 8pm a varying number of us meet on Zoom for bible study. At the moment we are reading through the gospel of John and we read approximately one chapter a week - sometimes less if we have a lot to say. Some of us are regulars and some join whenever they are able - or remember! We take turns in reading a portion and then talk about the passage or listen as others talk. It is an interesting evening and we always learn something new. If you would like to join us any time, it is the same link that I send out for the Zoom Sunday services, or contact me (marionhornby@gmail.com) and I will send you a link.

Marion Hornby



Thank you for supporting the 2020 Christmas Box Appeal

We want to thank everyone at Warminster United Church.

Your wonderful donation of **85** shoe boxes to our 2020 Christmas Box Appeal helped to spread joy to thousands of boys, girls, families and communities in Bulgaria.

Christmas Box Appeal 2020



Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rich Parsons', is located above the printed name.

Rich Parsons

Operations Manager, FSCI (UK)
FSCI (UK) is a Reg. Charity in England & Wales 1170914

Thank you to all who made the commitment of time and money to contribute items for the boxes especially under the circumstances. Thousands of children and families in institutions, kindergartens and schools in poor rural and urban areas, senior citizens homes, Roma communities, protected homes and refugee centres throughout Bulgaria received Christmas presents as a result of the generosity of those taking part in the appeal, with a total 6,492 boxes distributed.

Teodora Koleva, Director of FSCI Bulgaria, is in no doubt about the importance of the project. *"I am sure many of us have felt separated from our church family over the last year. This feeling of being somehow separate is one that is common among the people to whom we distribute the Christmas boxes - many of them are cut-off from the rest of society. With these presents, we show the most vulnerable children and families that we think of them and believe in them, even more so in these challenging times. Thank you to everybody who contributed to the appeal once again!"*

COVID made for a very different feel to this year's campaign. Rich Parsons, the project leader says, *"It was a real relief to see all your Christmas boxes arrive in Bulgaria after being delayed because of COVID and other things beyond our control*. Despite all the difficulties, we were encouraged by our wonderful volunteers who helped to check and pack all the boxes, and of course by the number of presents we received from our amazing supporters, many of whom were only too pleased to be doing something to help others during this difficult period".*

(*The boxes finally reached their destination in May after many problems and much hard work by Rich and his team. Thank you again for helping us to be part of this.)

It is hoped that 2021 Boxes will not meet with the same delays and can reach the children by Christmas! Brenda is already collecting items for our boxes and would welcome any contributions. Small toys, stationary, toiletries, hats, gloves, scarfs, underclothes, socks, sweets. She has managed to gather some shoeboxes, but it is far harder this year – if you have any boxes, please let Brenda have them. Also, any spare Christmas wrapping paper! Ring Brenda (01985 213128) or Joan (01985 211861) if you want to arrange collection/delivery.

USE OF CHURCH PREMISES

It is planned that the church premises will be open to outside lettings and church groups from September, as long as restrictions are lifted as hoped.

New contracts are being worked on for lettings and group leaders will be contacted by the church property committee in the near future.

Many thanks to Erica, Marion and John who have spent many hours ensuring that the church building is a safe environment and working out any new guidance for its use.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our Offerings received for the last 3 months are as follows:

March: £1730.00

April: £1445.00

May: £1305.00

When our church services are going people can still use the offering envelopes. I still have some from last year so please ask if you would like some.

I am planning to give up as treasurer at the end of this financial year - 31st August. The job will not be as big as previously as I have arranged for an accountant to do the more complicated accounting, but someone is still needed to do the simpler tasks. Please talk to me if you would like to know more.

Hilary

Many thanks to Hilary for her years of dedicated work looking after the church's finances. She has been coping with an ever-increasing amount of work and it has been agreed that the accounting side of the task will now be done by a professional accountant.

**HOWEVER, A TREASURER IS NEEDED URGENTLY
COULD YOU HELP LOOK AFTER THE CHURCH'S MONEY
MATTERS?**

Please speak to Hilary or one of the church council members.

Please complete with the information that you are happy for the church to hold and return to Marion Barton, or put in the church letter box.

Name:
Address:
Telephone: Mobile: Email address:
Do you give permission for your photograph to be displayed in the church building? YES/NO
Do you give permission for your name and photograph to be added to Church publicity, e.g. for a coffee morning? YES/NO
Do you give permission for your name to be shared in publicity, eg in the Church Newsletter YES/NO
Signed: Name in capitals:

Marion and Hilary have both expressed a wish in this newsletter to stand down from their roles, there are others on the church council who also wish to stand down. **Please consider if you would be able to come onto the council at the next AGM.**

The past 18 months have changed many things; new ways of doing things, new ideas are needed. Please let your thoughts be know!

Thanks.