

**The magazine of
Fareham United Reformed Church**

The Messenger



Autumn 2020

Reflection: Rejoice - Pray - Give Thanks

I am tired. Tired of the routine that isn't a routine. Tired of whole months disappearing in a blur of non-memory.

Zoom calls make me tired. I'm too tired to go to bed, too tired to get up, too tired to get the gardening done. If you get the virus, it exhausts you. If you don't get it, you're still tired.

Well done on having the energy to make it to this third paragraph. If you can summon up the strength, here's another for you to get through.

I am tired of the question: 'what is it going to be like when we get back to normal?' (Please say a prayer for the vaccine researchers, to get us our new normal some time before 2025). But this normal - what is it going to be? Frankly, I am too tired to think about it.

We need to learn from the marathon runners who know what it is to keep going when you are tired. The secret of the success of our Olympic athletes or

long distance runners is that they trained when they had felt like it, and they trained when they hadn't.

So despite the tiredness, we have to think about what the new thing has to be.

We have to be organised, keeping in touch with all those around us, making sure no-one slips through the net.

We have to remember who matters: NHS workers; care home workers; shop workers; delivery drivers; refuse collectors. All these folk matter.

Thirdly, many of us at some point probably thought we had caught this thing - a few did, most of us just worried, and then it went away again. Now we learn of 'the second wave' and we feel fragile again. The good thing about feeling fragile is that it shatters our illusions that we are in control. That this life can be taken for granted. So stay in touch with our fragility, because in our fragility we can also be grateful.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 we are given three pieces of advice which can apply to us all: 'Rejoice always, pray continuously, give thanks in everything'.

None of these things make you tired. They are the opposite of tiring, they are the stuff that gives you the energy for life. And we are going to need them more and more, because in the new normal, I don't want to be tired.

Moira Noble

(paraphrased from an article by Neil Glover)

*God of love and light,
In this time of fear, give us
your peace.
In this time of isolation,
give us your presence.
In this time of sickness, give
us your healing.
In this time of uncertainty,
give us your wisdom.
In this time of darkness,
shine your light upon us all.
In Jesus' name,

Amen*

Prayer suggestions for November 2020



To Ponder: Psalm 46

‘God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble’

Pray every week for..... Our Elders and Church Officers as they seek the way forward for Fareham URC and care for the congregation and those leading worship.

1st – 7th November

Praise God for His presence with us in all times and places

4th Bible Study on Zoom

Shoebox Appeal pray for those preparing them, those transporting and those receiving them.

Students who are taking their mock examinations

8th – 14th November

Give thanks for those who have given their lives for others.

8th Remembrance Sunday

14th Stall from Fareham URC at the Podium in Fareham (this is replacing the Christmas Fair)

Pray for those facing more restrictions due to corona virus

15th – 21st November

Praise God for the beauty of His creation

15th Songs of Praise on Zoom with friends from Sarisbury Green, Bishops Waltham and Gosport

Pray for all who are homeless or fear losing their homes

Pray for Charitable organisations that they may have all they need to continue their work

22nd – 28th November

Give thanks for those who have supported you in any way in these difficult times

Pray for all who have been bereaved recently - ask God to surround them with His love and support

Pray for those who are finding it difficult to make ends meet and those who seek to help

Pray for all those working in the emergency and caring services

29th – 30th November

Give thanks to our generous Father God who gave His Son to be our Saviour and Redeemer

29th Advent Sunday

Pray for those who live in fear of any kind in our country and around the world

Rejoice and Sing 705

'O God, our help in ages past
our hope for years to come
our shelter from the stormy blast
and our eternal home.'

'Under the shadow of your Throne
Your saints have dwelt secure
sufficient is Your arm alone
and our defence is sure.'

Isaac Watts



Noticeboard

A message from Rosie & Jeff Smith

We've done it - we've finally moved to Eastbourne!!

The idea was first thought of about 18 months ago after our son and his family moved there closely followed by our daughter and her family. Full of optimism, we put our house on the market and were delighted to 'sell' it immediately - this was obviously God's will for us.

But4 weeks later our buyers pulled out and then followed almost a year of viewings after viewings after viewings - but no offers!

We lived in a nice, family home in a catchment area for good schools so why did nobody want to buy it ?!

Eventually, just before lockdown, we accepted an offer on our house and found a lovely house to buy in Eastbourne - but 6 weeks later those buyers pulled out and as a consequence we lost the house we were buying, a huge disappointment.

Was God telling us to stay in Fareham?! How does God guide us and speak to us? How do we discern His will for our lives?

The whole experience has taught us patience and trust - words of the old hymn 'trust and obey' came to



mind . Trying not to worry and being thankful for what we had was helpful and trusting that one day we would move helped too. The lack of control over our situation was perhaps the hardest thing - how hard could it be to move house?!

Then, finally we did sell the house and have found another to buy. We moved a couple of weeks ago and are renting a cosy flat on the seafront complete with its own beach hut which our grandchildren are enjoying. Hopefully we will be able to move into our new home by the middle of November.

Thank you all so much for Fiona's kind words during our last zoom service, all the good wishes and for a generous gift voucher with which we

will buy something for our new home to remind us of happy times at FURC.

These are difficult times for everyone- we send our love and do hope you will find a new minister in the not too distant future.

*Rosie & Jeff
Smith*



Thank you to all those who look after the church and particularly the gardens. The yellow dahlias are beautiful.

Ann Arthur

Carol Rogers and all her family have been very grateful for the cards, messages and prayers that we have received following the very sudden death of Julian. He was well regarded by his Royal Navy colleagues and the Community of Helensburgh where he played a big part. He will be missed by many but of course especially his family. I am so grateful that he has been stationed in Portsmouth since January so I have seen him regularly. I am also grateful that he had been with his family in Scotland for the week before he died.

Carol Rogers

Messenger Dates		
Issue	Publication Date	Deadline for articles
Advent	December	22 November 2020
Lent	February	24 January 2021
Easter	April	21 March 2021

SONGS OF PRAISE EVENING.

WHEN:

**NOVEMBER 15TH, 2020
AT: 6PM**

WHERE:

In the comforts of your own home
*Zoom link available from your
church
secretary.*

FEATURING •

- Sharing hymns recorded by Fareham URC 'Virtual Choir' recorded for our Zoom church services during lockdown.
- Individuals favourite hymn verse (spoken)
- Fareham Virtual choir's special item for this evening and the Music Group.

If you would like to share a verse of your favourite hymn please (limited spaces so be quick) contact:

ruthdewisinfo@gmail.com

**ALL AGES
EVENT**

**Invite your friends
and family to join in!**

**SING YOUR
HEARTS OUT AT
HOME!**

**A TIME OF
SHARING
TOGETHER**

**SOMETHING TO
LOOK FORWARD
TO ON A DARK
SUNDAY
EVENING**

Knitwitters 2020

2020 has proved to be a year when the Knitwitters have continued to knit squares that are then sewn into colourful blankets, but this time in isolation in their homes owing to the lockdown and closing of the church. Despite these constraints the team have produced 24 beautifully knitted blankets that were presented to Jo from the Salvation Army. All the blankets will be distributed to those in need in the UK; they cannot go abroad because of Covid 19. These blankets are needed especially as the colder weather approaches. In this very difficult year the need for these blankets is greater. Jo was very grateful to take the blankets, asked to pass on her thanks to all and stated that all ages will receive the blankets.

Throughout these uncertain times as a church we are so blessed that we have people continuing to knit squares and sew them into blankets of all sizes. We have also had volunteers joining the team to help sew the squares together. The



blankets are knitted and sewn together with the love we are sharing with those less fortunate than ourselves. Thank you to all who knit and sew. We will be back together in the church soon, in the meantime I will keep you supplied with wool and squares and collect on an as required basis (my phone number is in the church directory if there are any others wishing to participate).

Every Blessing

Valerie Saunders



Bible study for today's world.

*
An opportunity to join in together to study God's word in an informal 'Zoom' setting in the comfort of your own home with a 'cuppa' of your own choice. You can stay muted and/or keep your camera turned off.

However you choose to attend you will be very welcome.

No one will be made to share but you are welcome to share your thoughts if you feel led to.

There will be opportunity to discuss topics but reflection on what the text is saying to us individually and as a church will be the main focus.

What is God wanting us to do today?

Please register your interest in attending in order to receive the link to join.

STARTING IN NOVEMBER

on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.

Contact details from : ruthdewisinfo@gmail.com



Fareham United Reformed Church

Market stall

Back to Church – preparing for Christmas



Saturday 14th November 2020

9.00am till 1.00pm

Fareham Town Centre Podium

Jam, Marmalade, Handmade Gifts,

Books, Fairtrade goods

Chocolate Tombola

Give Love in a Box this Christmas

Are you able to get involved in the Teams4Us Shoebox Appeal this year?

People might think it's just a shoebox, but it isn't..."It tells a child that someone, somewhere, cares about them."

Boxes will be distributed in deprived communities in Eastern Europe, where items that we take for granted, are treasured possessions.

The age ranges are :

Boy or Girl **3 – 5 years**
6 – 11 years
12 +

Ideas of items which CAN be included:

Chocolate, liquids eg bubbles, nail varnish, shampoo etc.
(If you include any liquids please ensure that they are sealed as new and put in a plastic bag)

Playing cards Cuddly toy
Pens- colours - Paper
Toys -Dolls - Jigsaws
Soap, flannel, toothpaste, toothbrush
Jellies - boiled sweets
Hat, gloves, scarf
Sanitary towels for older girls only
Draw string bags

Items which CANNOT be included:

Books or instructions with words
Food
Medicines
Aerosols or anything highly inflammable
Sharp items - War related toys - Soldiers
Knitted toys

Alternatively you could put together a **HOME BOX**, ideal for a family.

A Christmas card or photo can be included in any box, but please **DON'T** put your address in the box.

I am happy to collect completed boxes, items for boxes, or donations towards the £2.50 to cover the cost of transporting each box. My details are in the church directory, or phone 01329 668766. Processing will begin on Monday 16th November.

“GIVE A LITTLE TO CHANGE A LOT.”

Margaret Boyne

Ideas for a Home Box could include

Candles
Clothes line/pegs
Wooden spoons
Plastic containers
Tea towels
Bag for life
J cloths
Rubber gloves
Wind up torch
Small tool kits

Christingle Giveaway

From 4th to 6th December there will be a Christmas Market in Fareham. We have supported this event in the past with a Christingle making station which has been really popular. Current restrictions mean that we cannot do the same this year so instead we will be handing out DIY kit bags so they can be made at home.

We aim to be at the market from 10am to 2pm on 4th and 5th and

from 12 noon to 2pm (maybe 4pm) on 6th. We will also have a bag preparation day on either 2nd or 3rd – where we will put the red tape round the orange and put all the items in a bag.

If you are able to help for an hour or so please contact Liz Dunning treasurer@farehamchristians.org.uk



Synod Report

I was pleased to represent our church at a Zoom Synod meeting on 10 October. We had a practice Zoom meeting the week beforehand; there are a number of unfamiliar Zoom facilities available for meetings including a voting key and I could save all the chat to read afterwards. 100 people attended from their homes.

In the morning, there was worship led by the world church group and a presentation about the church in Zambia. We were invited to learn from the church in Zambia and how their very different church life can help us to grow our churches here. In small breakout groups we talked about how sad it was to see the toxic soil as children play and asked 'how does this Zambian situation make us feel? And 'what might the Christian response be?' Even though the people of Zambia are very poor they give and share within their churches very generously; the pictures were full of new buildings big enough for hundreds of worshippers. 'Are you a

cheerful giver?' Everyone in the church is involved with leading worship and pastoral care; they managed very well with the big congregations and only a few paid ministers.

The first resolution at the meeting was to welcome Miss Karen Bell as Synod Clerk, Karen comes from London Road URC Basingstoke.

Michael Hopkins said "I know it will be done later and more fully on our behalf, but I wanted to say a very big thank you to Sue for being an amazing Synod Clerk, and for all her hard work. Thank you, Sue!"

We heard from the Synod Youth Executive about the completion of Paddington's journey. We were encouraged to make all of our church activities available to the children and youth in our churches. There is a very exciting Advent Box promoted by the Synod Youth Executive which I hope we can use at Fareham. The advent box is £4 for the 6 weeks box Click [here](#) to see what each box contains .x



You will see from the notices that the boxes will be given to our church families - if you would like one talk to Jean Antcliffe as soon as you can.

After lunch we joined more breakout groups and considered Ministries and Learning, the Wessex Trust and Mission and Outreach. The shortage and poor distribution of stipendiary ministers was explained; the churches were asked to find new ways of lay leadership and to use all the training opportunities available to us. The Wessex Trust has been asked to contribute more money to

the National URC and there might not be as much for local churches.

In a news flash we learned that the Synod Big Day Out is postponed till 7 May 2022

At the closing worship Karen Bell was inducted as Synod Clerk and Sue Brown was thanked for her hard work.

The zoom meeting was better than I expected but I hope we can go to Southampton for the meeting in the spring.

Kathryn Childs

Memories of Fareham URC: Part 2

This is a continuation of the recollections by Madeleine Brand and Andrew Cooke of Fareham URC in West Street (now the Slug & Lettuce)

During the fifties there was a thriving youth group with at least a dozen young people who seemed to do a lot of activities together. However, they grew up and moved away. The Cane twins each married one of the girls in the group. Numbers in the afternoon Sunday School began to dwindle and I reckon it was around 1963 that the Sunday School became the Junior Church and was held in the morning alongside the adult service, much like it is today. Back then, the children did not help with the collection, but took turns to announce the children's hymn. By 1964 when Madeleine and Andrew reached their teens, they were two of only three in that age group. Andrew went to boarding school for the next four years. The third person came very spasmodically, so not knowing what to do with Madeleine, she was made a Sunday School Teacher for the smallest children. Sherida Freeman was one of her first pupils.

After four years, as she left college, Madeleine thought she was going to be working in London and finished teaching in Junior Church. She asked Rev D J Lewis about membership classes, but he said he did not think she was ready, so her church attendance dwindled somewhat. However, the job did take her to London in 1974 where she found her faith and when she returned in 1975 was able to take membership classes with Rev Stanley Hodgson. The rest as they say, is history.

Meanwhile Andrew returned from boarding school, transferring his membership in Caterham to Fareham. He was the first printer of the magazine, using an old Gestetner machine, which was cutting edge technology in those days. He progressed to photocopying a typed script and then computers came along. He was still printing the magazine when we transferred to the current church in 1994 and continued doing the job for over thirty years.

He also joined our father and other menfolk in the church in looking after the old building.

We have been talking recently about problems looking after our current buildings. Here are some of the tales about the maintenance of the West Street church.



If you look at the picture of the entrance to the schoolroom you will see a grating to the left of the door under the porchway. Next to this was a trap door entrance down to the boiler cellar. For ten years until

1966, Mr Hackett in his joint role with his wife as caretakers, had gone down to this cellar every day to stoke the boiler with coal in cold weather. After his retirement, the boiler was upgraded to a gas boiler with electrical switches. These required manual activation on the night before and we remember our father often going down to do this on a Saturday night. Once in particular the family had gone to Chichester Theatre to see Peter Skellern on an extremely foggy night. The return journey was via the church to put the boiler on. There was a stream that ran down to the creek near the church cellar. When there had been a lot of rain, the cellar would part fill up with water and we had no heating that Sunday. Eventually a ball valve was fitted that rose with the water that switched on a pump which drained the water out to the creek.

Changing the lightbulbs in the big hanging lights in the church involved at least three people. Health and safety did not come into this exercise. Firstly, a set of steps was



ladder below, would grab hold of the heavy glass shade, unscrew it, and take it away for cleaning.

Meanwhile the third person would change the bulb and test it was working. Once cleaned and dried, the glass shade was carefully screwed

set up under the trapdoor in the ceiling behind the organ. Then you had to make your way through the church loft by walking a series of planks to locate the securing pin over the light requiring a new bulb. Any deviation whilst walking said plank would have meant a swift descent to the pews below. A rope was then attached to a hook above the securing pin to enable the lamp to be lowered when the securing pin was removed. (This avoided an episode of Fools and Horses.)

The person in the roof, lying prostrate on the plank, removed the securing pin while securely holding the rope then slowly feeding it through the ceiling to enable a controlled descent. The volunteer at the top of the

back in position for the return trip to the ceiling.

The schoolroom lightbulbs entailed a similar exercise only this time a ladder was extended between the gallery bannisters and the volunteer had to impersonate a high wire artist, moving across to the appropriate bulb, change it and clean the glass shade. We would mention that no member of the congregation was harmed during a changing of the church lightbulbs.





Bronze Eco Church Award Certificate

This is to certify that

Fareham United Reformed Church

has won a Bronze Eco Church Award in recognition of their efforts to care for God's earth in each of the following areas (as applicable):

Worship and Teaching
Management of Buildings and Land
Community and Global Engagement
Lifestyle

Signed Andy Atkins Date 10th September 2020
CEO, A Rocha UK



ecochurch.arocha.org.uk
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*'Sharing Jesus' love
with the world today'*

