

# NEWSTAND *Lite*



9th edition, 11 July 2020

Those of you who follow the activities of the wider URC may be aware that this weekend would have been when members and clergy from across the denomination were to gather together in Aston University, Birmingham for this year's General Assembly. Covid-19 unfortunately led to that physical activity being cancelled and instead most of this year's business being conducted in online meetings by Mission Council. Whilst all the outcomes of those meetings are being made available on the URC website after they have been completed, the usual opening (and closing!) worship was "live streamed" on the Internet (and formed the background to my putting *Newstand Lite* together today). You can access it via the URC website ([www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)) or direct by going to <https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3520-digital-general-assembly-due-to-take-place>. The URC made full use of the modern technology that we have available to us and it will be good to make use of that same technology when we are able to gather again in September.

Alongside Carla's musings and Prayers at 9:30, Val has sent in a more extensive list of books of the Bible for you to find. Thank you too to everyone who has sent in details of what they have been up to during lockdown. Please do keep sending pieces in, whether a few lines or much longer. I'm continuing in my DIY exploits, having now moved onto the bathroom that was looking rather shabby next to the shiny new shower room — perhaps more details (and a link to my often varied theology!) in the next edition... OK, just a sneaky photograph (no, we don't have an open air bathroom!).



Speaking of the next edition, I will be reducing the frequency of *Newstand Lite* back to one a month, so the next *Newstand Lite* will be through your doors (or in your email Inbox) in the first week of August. If you have any feedback on whether you'd like to see the full *Newstand* continue in a similar format (which will need an increase in the price due to being colour) or you'd like to see the return of the black and white A5 format, please let me know.

Stay safe everyone, God is with us!

**Tim**

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It's alright, don't panic, you are not going to read more ramblings of a vulnerable old woman. This is different!?!

My friend, who belongs to Holy Saviour's in Tynemouth, sent me this Bible quiz – but neglected to enclose the answers! However, I've worked out the answers after "a few days". Please enjoy it and "I" have enclosed the answers! I found a good way of finding the answers – treat it like a wordsearch!

Regards,  
Valerie

*There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them?*

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much he passed it on to some friends. One friend in Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact! Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a Minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, the books are all right there in plain view, but hidden from sight. Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is books like Timothy and Samuel may appear without their numbers. Also keep in mind that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus, there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in the paragraph waiting to be found!

*The hidden books can be found on page 7, though you may still have trouble finding them in the paragraph itself even when you know they are there!*

Please do send in your feedback, amusing stories, photos, poems, prayers, thank you notes, reflections, memories and anything else you think fitting to include in *Newstand Life*. They can be emailed to [standrewsnewstand@gmail.com](mailto:standrewsnewstand@gmail.com) or posted to Tim Cooke, 4, Kingfisher Way, Blyth, NE24 3QR

## Minister's Musings

Dear Friends,

I have written before about how our Bible is a treasure trove for hard times, having been written and collected by people who lived through terrible times: slavery, wilderness wandering, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the crucifixion of Jesus and the persecution of the early Followers of the Way. And it isn't only our Bible. Our hymns too are robust resources for faith in times of adversity.

The great German hymn of thanksgiving, *Now Thank We All Our God* (R&S 72), was written in the 17th century by Revd Martin Rinkhart (1586-1649). He wrote it as a table grace for his family during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and what became a time of plague. He was born and lived his whole life in Eilenburg,

Saxony. Eilenburg was a walled city and a place of refuge for people fleeing war and pestilence. At one point he was the only minister in the town and buried forty to fifty people a day. His wife died of plague but he survived. Hear again the words of this simple table grace:

*Now thank we all our God with hearts  
and hands and voices, who wondrous  
things has done, in whom this world  
rejoices; who, from our mothers' arms,  
hath blessed us on our way with countless  
gifts of love, and still is ours today.*

*O may this bounteous God through all  
our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us; and  
keep us in his grace, and guide us when  
perplexed, and free us from all ills in this  
world and the next.*

*All praise and thanks to God the Father  
now be given, the Son, and him who  
reigns with them in highest heaven, the  
one eternal God, whom heaven and  
earth adore; for thus it was, is now, and  
shall be evermore.*

How, you may wonder, does one sing a song of thanksgiving during war and plague? I certainly wondered that, aware that I have been doing my share of moaning. Walter Brueggemann in his new

book *Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief and Uncertainty* says that the task of the church in difficult times is to engage in relentless, uncompromising hope. Not the kind of hope that says everything will be ok. But rather the conviction that God's purposes that we and all of God's creation will flourish will be fulfilled. That

God will not quit until it is.

This does not mean no moaning! We have suffered losses. Grieving our losses is essential. As Brueggemann says, without grief there is no newness. We grieve what is gone so that our hands will be open to receive the new world and way God is guiding us into.

As we move through these days and weeks, we will remember: God is good, whose steadfast love endures forever (Jeremiah 33:11). God's steadfast love is invoked and proclaimed one hundred and twenty times in the Book of Psalms. It is the song that circles the globe and makes a home in our hearts. It is the promise of God's presence in this and every time.

*In Christian love,  
Carla*

**"the task of the  
church in difficult  
times is to engage in  
relentless,  
uncompromising  
hope"**

## What is getting you through these days of lockdown?

The question that Carla asked in the last edition of *Newstand Lite* and one that you've been generous enough to answer!

Please do keep letting us know, whether it's just a couple of lines or a whole essay (though we might have to edit those down a bit!).

During these weeks I have caught up on book reading.

First "Wilding" by Isabella Tree... the story of re-wilding their estate in Sussex, bringing the land back for wildlife from intensive farming. Then "Island Song" by Mother Mary Agnes about setting up a Christian Retreat centre on Fetlar, the most northerly of the Shetland Islands and a favourite place of mine. Then "Unnatural Causes" written by Dr Richard Shepherd, Britain's top Pathologist, who wanted to be a pathologist from the age of thirteen after borrowing a book that was only for adults! Now "Birds in a Cage" about Prisoners of War who used their time to study particular birds in detail wherever their POW camp was.

These were interspersed by a Grandson's Uni dissertation on "Male Contraception" which he sent me in case I was bored!!

Tried also to prettify some brown soil in the garden here, helped by many people giving some plants.

I miss my hugs and realise I have not experienced human touch since 23rd March. However I am very aware of God's love and that of the many folk from St Andrew's. Thank you all.

### **Pat Wardle**

The first thing that was getting me through was cricket, recordings of international and local tournaments of recent years. However, by May and much repetition, I was relying on G.M.R.- not a railway company, or route, but gardening, music and reading. I have never done so much gardening, especially in the month of April, but the marvellous weather and a lot of help from son and grandson from then on to the present, has made a big improvement. The M, as you might guess, has been music, both listening and playing. Much of the latter has been learning new pieces which could be useful when church services resume. Some will be well known, and some not, but they could be played, probably on the piano, before the service, maybe at a quiet middle moment, and at the close of worship. Members will not be tempted to sing, as none of them have words! My third activity has been catching up on authors and some of their books, in particular Ian McEwan and Hilary Mantel. My son had several of each author, which was very useful. The two Mantel books, based on the lives and reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII, made me wish I had chosen History for A-level, many years ago, instead of Latin!

Happy listening and reading to everyone.

### **Paul Hartley**

*More on page 6!*

## Tuesday Prayers—at 9:30

You faithfully answer our prayers with awesome deeds, O God our Saviour.  
You are the hope for everyone on earth, even those who sail on distant seas.

*Psalm 65v5*

### Prayer of Approach

God of grace and love, Your love extends to us in all ways and at all times, extravagantly and with generosity. We live day by day knowing Your care and concern is poured out for us in Your provision for our needs and beyond our imagining. You entrust us with the gift of the good news of the Gospel. You invite us to be partners in the sharing of the message of grace. We come to You to acknowledge You for all Your goodness to us.

Amen.

### A Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, for the times we dash into Your presence finding it hard to leave our cares and worries; for the times when we don't learn from our experiences; for the times we don't care for ourselves or turn away from those we share our lives with; forgive us and make us new.

For the times we just don't see what You want us to see and take things at face value; for the times when we decide how we want to follow our own plans rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us to where You want us to be Lord; forgive us and make us new.

Amen.

### And let us say the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:

Our Father who art in heaven...For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.



### Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Gracious and Generous Lord, we thank You for all the gifts You give us. Come into our lives and flourish in our lives.

Gracious and Generous Lord, when we long to save the world and sort it out, let us remember that You are sovereign of all.

When injustice stirs us to act, and when indignation rises like fire, give us the patience to consider carefully what we should do.

When we cannot understand why judgement is so slow to come, restrain us from making ourselves judge of all.

But, Gracious and Generous God, hear our prayer for justice, strengthen our hands to work for good, stir us in holy anger when people suffer, let our compassion and love of You stretch out to all those suffering and in need.

Gracious and Generous God, let us walk with You as part of Your story that can be our story.

We offer these prayers in the name of Your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

*Susan Durber (amended)*

### Blessing

May God bless each one of us and wrap us in love and tenderness.

May Jesus Christ bless us and walk with us each step of our journey.

May the Holy Spirit bless us and fill our lives with courage and wisdom.

Amen.

*Submitted by the Hope 4 Team.*

## A few more “What I’ve been up to” stories...

As well as my usual daily activities, in particular I have enjoyed polishing my silver ware. Whilst I've done this it has brought back memories of each person who has bought me an item, and the reasons for the gift. Treasured memories!

### **Meg Dickinson**

As well as school work and getting settled into the new school, I have started teaching myself the guitar and ukulele. This has become very challenging with times where my fingers are too big to fit where I want them or when they are too small and I can't stretch my fingers.

Lockdown has made me more fond of music with nothing to do except pick up the old guitar from the cupboard under the stairs and ask my mum to buy accessories like straps and picks - sorry Mum.

### **Sophie Cooke**

The only way I have survived is by thinking positively about Coronavirus. There are many very bad things which it has done but there are three things which, if you concentrate upon them, will get you through.

- 1) Coronavirus has drawn attention to the fact that dangers such as handshaking should become things of the past.
- 2) Bad traditions like sitting together in large groups for worship can now, fortunately, be replaced by modern technology like Zooming and Skyping. For old people like myself modern technology will help with worship and prayer.
- 3) Zooming and Skyping [and many other forms of “online” worship - Ed] has thankfully at last been bringing different branches of Christianity closer together.

### **Maurice**

While repairing a picture frame, a lady had to replace some chipped gold leaf. She asked at the hardware shop, “Do you have any gilt?” The shopkeeper replied. “Sometimes it's overwhelming,”

A one pound coin met a twenty-pound note and said, "Hey, where have you been? I haven't seen you around here much." The twenty note answered, "I've been everywhere - hanging out at the casino, I went on a cruise and did all the tours, then back home for a while, before going to a few theatre shows and shopping expeditions. And how about you?" The one pound coin replied, "Oh nothing much, just the same old routine - church, church, church."

Dear Friends All,

I would like to thank you so much for your generous contributions to my two charities following my mammoth face mask project! I am very happy to let you know that the total amount raised is £380.00. As it has worked out I can send 50% to each charity, and I can also reassure those of you who did specify a particular charity that your wishes have been carried out.

I do hope that you are all happy with your 'designer' masks, but if there are any problems please let me know. It has been a pleasure making them for you, and also enabling me to raise money for charity. I have made a total of 102 masks (20 went to staff on Clare's ward at Freeman Hospital to use in their off duty time when required). I now require a bit of a break, but will be quite happy to make more if the need arises...I think I may have withdrawal symptoms!!



Trusting you are all still coping, and keeping well. These are very strange times we are living through. Hoping and praying for the time that we can all be together again.

My love and best wishes,

**Una**

## Exercise daily — Walk with God!

*Submitted by Anne Cockburn*

### 100 Club results

The opportunity arose to draw the March 2020 "100 CLUB" on Friday at Church. The Executive team were preparing the premises for Laura Watkin's wedding, so the convenor of the Activities Team, Ann Hammond, made the draw and the result was as follows:

1st	No 103	John Scrafton	£133.50
2nd	No 79	Pat Peel	£66.75
3rd	No 46	Heather Carr	£22.25

89 numbers went into the draw and £222.50 was given to Church funds.

**Kathleen Hopper**

**Answers:** Amos, Mark, Luke, John, Joel, Judges, Job, Hebrews, Esther, Acts, James, Ruth, Romans, Titus, Matthew, Genesis, Philemon, Chronicles, Daniel, Nahum, Hosea, Lamentations, Revelation, Timothy, Samuel, Numbers, Malachi, Peter, Exodus, Kings

# Prayers and thoughts for this moment

*Wise words from the Archbishop of Canterbury:*

As we prepare to gather again, we do so knowing that many will be returning bearing new burdens of grief and anxiety. Others will be filled with hope and excitement.

But we do not gather just by ourselves. We are gathering in the embrace of God who holds our griefs, fears and hopes, and who walks with us into this new and uncertain future, lighting our paths along the way.

So please pray, not just for our return to our beloved building – with all the safety precautions that we must get right – but also for our return to each other.

*From the order of service of this year's URC General Assembly*

We pray for relationships within the universal church and between different faith groups that can be full of tension because of poor communication and mistrust.

Sovereign God, your covenant is with all peoples, with all of creation — you see us all as equal.

Yet because of culture, politics, interpretation of holy texts, and misunderstanding, we see division and levels of supremacy.

Let your word utter openness into view so that we might not see difference as divisive but only part of what makes us all members of your wonderful creation whom you love and show your eternal mercy.

Amen.

