

Littlehampton United Church

Mini
Newsletter 10



Keeping
our church
together

The Mini Newsletter has reached double figures

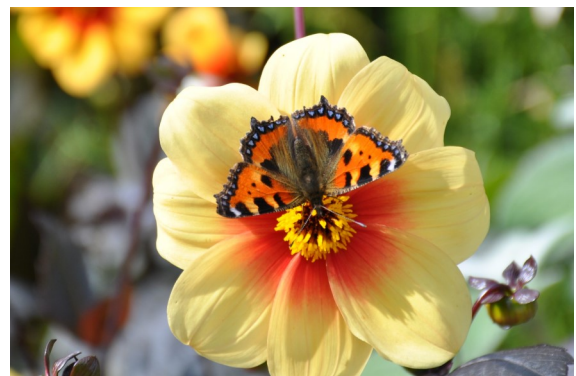
It is now 15 Sundays since we last met for worship and the idea of sending out a newsletter to enable us to keep in touch with each other has developed into a regular event. I have to say that I much enjoy producing the newsletter and hearing from many people. During the period of lockdown, the Leadership team have met three times (via Zoom), Naison has held thirteen services and probably the same number of Bible studies (all with zoom). I know that many of you regularly visit U-tube sites for Sunday worship and more. The BBC have pushed their Sunday Worship later and later but most of the short services have been very good, especially when they pulled out a few stops for Easter and Pentecost.

All this leads to the next question—what will worship look like in the future? The United Reformed Church have published two excellent and thought provoking documents: “The New Normal” and “New - Reality-Same- Mission”. You can read these or download a copy from the URC website. You will find them under “Information”. Both the documents take us on from the short presentation that Nigel gave at the last Church Meeting.

If you wish to comment on the matters raised in these documents please send your thoughts to me or other members of the leadership team so that we can include your opinion when we discuss how we eventually proceed towards re-opening the church.

Wishing you peace, joy and hope

Chris



From the minister's desk.

The famous speech "I have a dream" delivered by Dr Martin Luther King Jr on 26th August 1963; "*I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character,*" still lives on to inspire young and old. The encouraging words from Prophet Joel remind us; "*... your young men shall see visions:*" We have to dream for new world order where young men shall see visions imbued in the love that comes from God.

When reflecting on the words of Martin Luther King Jr, we are called to dream for a future full of hopes and aspirations. The world of politics has failed us and the surge of uncharted territories within the far-left wing and far right wing in political circles spread across Europe, America and five continents of the world have failed to offer us meaningful and lasting peace and justice.

What we are experiencing now because of the world pandemic vicious coronavirus is beyond human power, both political and economically. The world has been brought to knees by the pandemic of coronavirus that has resulted in over a million fatalities around the globe. The question that no one can satisfactorily give an answer to, what caused the virus that is so vicious? Those who claim to give false prophecy have been caught napping and have no clue to how they could reclaim their plagiarism to the truth that we find in the word of God ~the Bible.

What hope is there for us as we look forward to "The New Normal," this is about doing mission differently. Doing church is not going to be the same and we need to seek the face of God to help us and guide us for this next chapter to come. The prayer by Jesus Christ in the gospel of John; "*Protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.*" (John 17:11). This is a call for love and unity in the church, in the world and around the globe for all peoples.

Let me end with the words of Claude Cunningham, "The Holy Spirit makes us one, no matter what our diversity." We need to have a fellowship within a fellowship, like a turning wheel in the inside of a wheel that gathers to itself all who are of its spirit in every church and every land and every age. This is a common habitat of the Christian fellowship that is building the kingdom of God for God's people. We are also part of the solution to that common habitat of our diversity

Blessings!

Naison M Hove.



A reflection on Prayer from Rev. Norman Croft

There is a story about a minister who went to visit a member who was sick. The minister noticed an empty chair beside the man's bed, set at a curious angle. The minister asked why it was there and why it was in such an unusual place in the room.

The man said he found it difficult to pray because he didn't know what to say to someone he couldn't see. So a friend suggested to him that he put an empty chair in his room close to the bed, then he could imagine that Jesus was sitting there. Then he could speak directly to him and listen to his reply.

If nothing else the past few months of lock down have given us plenty of time to think about prayer and time to use for prayer without the thought that 'I've only got 10 minutes for this for I have to be somewhere else in half an hour.

With churches starting to open their doors to allow people to come in for private prayer this is possibly a good time to consider the question 'What is prayer?'

There are some clues in Ephesians Ch 3. One of the clues reminds us that prayer is about developing a deeper relationship with God. God created us all with unique personalities so each of us has to work out our own relationship with God. A relationship which will be different from everyone else. After all we all go through different rhythms and seasons during our lives which will be different from our neighbour.

Relationships are built with many components for example, communication, collaboration, creativity, fun, caring, compassion, and much, much more. All these things shape who we are, how we live our lives, and of course how our unique relationship with God develops and grows. Wherever we are on our Christian journey we still have a lot of growing to do. This time of 'lock down' has given us time and space to enable us to develop and grow that unique relationship with God wherever we are on our journey through life. And as with all things there is still much more for us to learn. The current restrictions continue to give us the time to spend developing that relationship. So, after lock down we should be better followers of Jesus than we were at the beginning of lock down!

There is, however, one thing that has not changed despite the current challenges and changes in our world and that is our God is a forgiving loving God who still answers the prayers of His people just as he always has done.

As Paul reminds us God has boundless resources that are made available to us all through Christ

This newsletter was written and edited by Chris Azzaro, who can be contacted on 01903 718070 or by email: christopher.azzaro@sky.com

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome

There is also information about our church on the website:

Littlehamptonunitedchurch.org.uk

News of the Family

Please continue to remember in your prayers Pauline's daughter, Michelle, very slowly recovering from Coronavirus, as well as Jackie Turvey and her family. We also pray for all in pain and awaiting treatment for their sickness. We continue to pray for all who await anxiously the chance to be re-united with families.

Please remember Wendy Corney in your prayers. Many of you will know Wendy as she regularly leads worship in our church and is our Representative from the Methodist Circuit. Wendy's husband, Pat, died in a car accident last week.

If you're passing by the church and wonder why there's a large container in the former manse garden - that is where Turning Tides are now housing the food bank. There are also alterations being made to the garage in order to create an office.

News from abroad

I know that some of you have been following the u-tube services posted by All Saints Church in Wick. This Sunday the service included a video link with Unity School, Mombasa to hear how Friends of the Mombasa Children have been helping with the needs of children, families and teachers. School Manager, Mr Norbert Were gives a moving account of their needs and how these are being met. Thank you to everyone who has supported our efforts. You can watch the service including the video from Norbert using the address: <https://www.youtube.com/AllSaintsWick> and click on the service of Sunday 28th June.

A Prayer

Lord, we are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

We pray for those whom you have called to service far from their homes – doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, and many more...

We are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

We pray for those who serve you in the church – those who clean, make tea and wash up, arrange flowers, offer a welcome, and many more...

We are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

We pray for those who serve you by telling your story – those who teach, lead assemblies, speak at meetings, preach the gospel, and many more...

We are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

We pray for those who engage in a ministry of prayer – spiritual directors, group/cell leaders, prayer network coordinators, and many more...

We are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

We pray for own discipleship, that we may face our challenges with courage.

We are your disciples: **make us one in you.**

May our united discipleship further your work and help to establish your promised kingdom. In your name, we pray. **Amen.**