

Littlehampton United Church

October Newsletter



Dear Friends

I started writing this newsletter as we came to the end of that strange period of 11 days following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Life went on, but not as normal. The news had been dominated by preparations for the Royal Funeral. We heard many recollections from people who knew the late queen, or who had met her in many different circumstances. One thing has been evident: Her faith in God. Many have spoken of this and how her faith has given her the strength to carry out her many duties. Clips from her various broadcasts have revealed how Her Majesty found strength in Bible Reading and in Prayer. Only this morning, one commentator quoted her as saying that “One should never feel sad when leaving a church service”. Even in the words of a funeral service we are reminded that we have hope in the resurrection, Christ has gone before us to prepare a place for us. I recall, when I was in my teens, attending my Grandfather’s funeral. (The first time I had been to a funeral) Expecting something both sad and rather depressing, I was taken aback as the vicar led the cortege into to church with the words from John’s Gospel: *I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord: those who believe in me, though they die, they shall live.* This is not depressing; this is a message of hope. In his book “Surprised by Hope” Former Bishop of Durham, Tom Wright, reminds us that our hope is more than eternal life. The kingdom of Heaven is here now and we are already part of it. So let us all be *surprised by hope* as we work towards that kingdom.



On Sunday 29th August, at the Church Meeting, we bid farewell to Revd. Naison Hove. Naison was thanked for his ministry with us and presented with a gift of book tokens. He is now on holiday, prior to taking up his new pastorate in London. Apart from his ministry between his three churches, we will also remember him for his work in bringing fresh water to his village and a school in Zimbabwe.



Naison's departure begs the question "Who will be our next Minister?" This issue was raised at the Church Meeting. At present I can tell you that our Leadership team has met with the Superintendent of the Methodist Circuit, Revd Rosemarie Clarke, for a brief discussion on future ministry. The Chair of the Methodist District and Moderator of the URC Synod will be meeting in October. They will decide if Pastoral oversight will pass to the Methodist Circuit after nearly eight years of URC oversight. Being a very small congregation, we will be sharing ministry with other churches, as we have for many years. Questions remain to be answered, for example: what is now our mission? If we see ourselves as a Community Church, how do we relate to our community?

News of the family

Members were concerned to learn that Carol Taunton had been detained in hospital following an appointment with a physio-therapist. I am pleased to report that Carol is now home again but will require further treatment for her arthritis. Robert and Carol are both in good spirits. John and Christine Stevens have returned from holiday with a souvenir dose of corona virus. We wish them both a speedy recovery.



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

On October 1st the United Reformed Church celebrated 50 years since coming into existence.

Unfortunately some of the National celebrations were curtailed due to a rail strike but our local celebration will still be taking place on Saturday 8th October. Members of Naison's three churches will be gathering for tea and cakes (2.30 for 3.00pm) at St Andrew's in Holmes Lane—all are welcome.

What is the URC? The United Reformed Church is a family of Christians who meet in local churches across England, Scotland and Wales, part of the worldwide family of Reformed Churches, a group of more than 70 million Christians.

The URC has around 47,000 members in about 1,300 congregations with more than 600 ministers. More than 60,000 people worship in our churches each week, and many more take part in the weekday activities of the churches.

The history of the URC

The creation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 formally merged the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales. One Member of Parliament at the time described this merger as: “one of the most historic measures in the history of the Christian churches in this country.”

The denomination expanded when Churches of Christ joined it in 1981, followed by Scottish Congregationalists in 2000.

The URC is a nonconformist Church. Put most simply, this means that we are not an ‘established’ Church, with a formal link to civil authority like, for example, the Church of England has.

However, the URC is committed to working closely with Churches of all traditions, in prayer and social action, and many of our local churches are now united with local churches from other traditions (Baptist, Church of England, or Methodist to name a few).

A Few things to think about—especially as we contemplate our role in our own community:

We are still here after 50 years. What does that say to us? And what is God saying to us? What opportunities does it give us to reflect on our story, on who we are, on what we stand for, on who we follow – and to share that with others?”

As local churches and as the URC, marking our 50th year can help us to plan for the future – not only to keep pursuing our ecumenical vision, but also to plan for how we will continue to be an active, engaged and faithful Christian presence in our communities and in new ones. Not least, marking our Jubilee will be an opportunity to give thanks.

Dates for your diary

1st October 2022 50th Anniversary of the URC. There are celebrations planned in London.

A booklet has been produced by the URC which will be available to all church members (free).

Saturday 8th October A Celebration of the 50th Anniversary at St Andrew's Church, Holmes Lane, Rustington. You are invited join with friends from Emmanuel Church for tea and cake at 2.30 for 3.00pm

Friday 4th November 2022

Mr Norbert Were—school manager of Unity School, Mombasa, Kenya will be joining our 11.00am service, Following the service Norbert will be speaking about the school and recent progress and answering any questions.

This will be followed by a light lunch of African style food.

All welcome but please let Chris know if you wish to stay for lunch.



Friday 2nd December/Saturday 3rd December

“Crib– Fest” and Christmas Sale with The Friends of the Mombasa Children

A change from our Christmas Tree Festival as we plan a display of Crib Scenes. More details in the next newsletter.

Preachers is October

Sunday 2nd October	John Carr
Sunday 9th October	Chris Azzaro
Sunday 16th October	Revd John Scrivens
Sunday 23rd October	Chris Azzaro
Sunday 30th October	Revd. Nigel Stapley (Communion Service)



Friday services in October will mainly be taken by
Chris Azzaro

On Friday mornings the church is open from 10.15am until 12.00 The short service is at 11.00am. Tea/Coffee is available before and after the service. Donations for the refreshments will support the Feeding programme at Unity School, Mombasa.