



Flowing streams, bringing life

BEULAH CROSSROADS

BEULAH

September 2020



The
monthly newsletter of
Beulah URC

Musings from the Manse

Dear Friends,

September 2020

Martha's first real experience of ministry was working as a hospital chaplain in a large hospital in North Carolina. Part of her rotation was the ITU. Outside the ward was a waiting room, where families gathered day and night, waiting to be allowed inside to see their relative, waiting for news—good or bad.

As she sat listening to people, she became aware of how stressful everyone found the experience. They did what they could to find comfort in very painful times, wondering whether their relative would live or die.

At that time the hospital brought in a policy that smokers had to go outside the building to smoke. For the ITU families, that meant down 8 storeys and a long walk to reach the doors outside. It was a long way from their loved ones.

While neither of us have ever been a smoker, we did wonder about the families and this policy. They were living through a very stressful time. Smoking was a comfort, wrongly we know, for them. As a young professional, Martha thought it cruel they had to go so far,

leaving their loved one and the possibility of news, to smoke a cigarette. (Now she is grateful for the policy.)

As we live in a pandemic, we guess lots of us do things to comfort ourselves. We might do all kinds of things to distract ourselves from the painful times. Most of us are simply trying to find ways to feel comfortable and safe in very uncertain times.

Many of us take comfort in our relationships. We find safety in the people who surround us. We often find that sense of peace and safety in our church relationships. We have conversations. We talk about our week. We listen to each other. It may be much the same week after week, but it helps us. It grounds us. And now we can't do that. We feel adrift and unsure without our routine.

When we see each other, it is on a screen or at a distance. If our church is opening, we might see our friends briefly, behind a mask, but it's not the same. If our church isn't opening, we will still see each other from a distance.

We get it. We want to hear those reassuring words that everything will work out. And right now, we just don't know how life will pan out over the

next year. We want to plan, but often when we put a plan into place, it has to change.

We may not have energy for connections on Zoom or WhatsApp or Facebook,

but we wonder whether it is the gift of friendship that will get us through this time? Are there ways friendship and support can bloom in different ways? Can we meet up for a walk? Can we talk on the doorstep? Can we find create ways to use the limited energy we have to connect?

People often comment that God surprises us. As people of faith, there is always a nugget of hope. We remember that God is present and in that presence brings comfort and love. Maybe what God is doing now is grounding us in relationships, old and new, that can sustain us and nurture us through this time.

And maybe even in uncertainty, God remains with us. Isn't this the essence of the incarnation — relationships and presence in difficulty, pain, and questions?

May you be blessed with surprising and comforting friendships.

In Christ,

Martha and David

Church News

As Summer is drawing to a close, it's time for a new term.

There are many new beginnings for us.

I hope those of you that have been away have had safe travels and a time to relax and recharge and have avoided having to self isolate on your return.

This is always a busy time, this year no is no exception but in different ways. Some of the leadership team, elders and members are working on our Risk Assessments and procedures which need to be in place to open our buildings.

I joined a Synod Zoom meeting this week about the 'Next Steps.' The focus was mainly on wellbeing. It allowed an opportunity to speak with others throughout Wales. Breakout room discussion included questions on: How we have balanced our time growing faith through lockdown; What have we missed the most/ least; How do we ensure no one seems overwhelmed; What is our community and how do we care for it?

For those who receive Crossroads in paper form

you may have met some of our Young people, at the correct social distance of course. Thank you to them for kindly volunteering to help those Pastoral Elders who were unable to venture out.

Beulah is piloting a District tea in the garden with Louise's district. This is weather permitting of course and with the building remaining closed, no toilet facilities yet. I'm sure the sun will be shining.

(Alas, rain stopped play!... Ed)

Family news

Best wishes to those family and friends who are unwell, in hospital or recuperating. There are many Congratulations this month, to those who have graduated from both University & Conservatoire well done., Best wishes in your next chapter whether that be into employment or further studies.

For those receiving A Level results and off to University, Good luck in the future and do keep in touch. Well done to you all.

Finally Well done for all those with GCSE results and moving to Year 11 and 12 good job on some great grades.

*Best Wishes
Anne*

Ministers in the Pastorate:

Rev. Martha McInnes

Rev. David Dean

Email: ministers@beulahurc.org.uk

Visit us at..... <http://www.beulahurc.org.uk/>

Safeguarding Training

New online dates are now available from September - December

Further details and booking form available in the August Synod newsletter

Recommended for all Church officers

I have a Pastorate meeting on 15th September to discuss the churches plans for opening.

Also discussions about how we celebrate at Christmas.

If you have any ideas for Christmas please let me know before the meeting.

*Thanks
Anne W*

Please don't forget that, although Beulah's buildings remain closed, our ministers, secretary, and elders are working hard to keep in touch via the Beulah website.....

<http://www.beulahurc.org.uk/>

and also through our Facebook pages.

<https://www.facebook.com/BeulahURC>

I and all the family are very appreciative of all the cards and messages of sympathy we have received since we lost Denie.

The very kind comments and peaceful words have proved to be very helpful and supportive for all of us and we give thanks and gratitude to everyone concerned.

Ron and family



Church Secretary:

Mrs Anne Wilkes

email:

secretary@beulahurc.org.uk

Church Treasurer:

Mrs Barbara Rhys,

If you are interested in news from Canton Uniting URC, please get in touch with Helen White at admin@beulahurc.org.uk

Helen will forward their newsletter to you each month.

We wish to thank all who sent us flowers, cards and messages of condolences on the death of Warren, my stepson and Peter's son at the age of 50. He lost his four year battle with cancer.

He is now at peace.

It has been a strange time but we are very grateful to the nursing staff who allowed us to spend his last days with him in his hospital room.

A family funeral service was held in Langstone Newport crematorium on 5th August where 20 of his family and close friends were allowed to attend.

Rest In Peace Warren

Lorraine X

KIN

Thanks to everyone who took part in our Summer Social and Fundraising Beetle Drive and Quiz evening raising money for Sanyu Babies home where Emily Cheer is working. For those of you who were unable to join us on the evening, or missed watching the video on the following Sunday morning, Emily wrote

It is actually a year ago that I left the UK to travel here and what a year it has been! Thank you to all that have donated so far, your money will do so much to help the children at Sanyu and the children in our wider community. There is a little video (here <http://bitly.ws/9z5z> - can be viewed on Facebook Beulah Friends) that Seb Cheer made for me that I feel really captures the atmosphere of Sanyu! Lots of the things you see in this video like trips and class activities are all paid for using money that some of you donated last year in one of my fundraising events! The circumstances that bring these children to Sanyu are often awful and some of the children arrive so malnourished or scared. Despite this Sanyu is a place of love, joy and family and I'm so proud to be a part of it. If anyone wants to donate here is the link with some extra information!
<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sanyucovidsupport>

The video is available on Beulah Friends Facebook. We were able to raise £645 so far and there is an opportunity for people to continue to donate through Emily's Just Giving page .

We are discussing how best to organise some other KIN / Social events for the rest of the year. If you have any ideas, please get in touch with one of us.

Thanks

Eleri, Eileen and the KIN / Social Groups.

Over the Bank Holiday

Over the Bank holiday weekend I'm having a few days in Aberaeron. Very nice, you might think, but the thing is I was meant to be at Greenbelt, near Kettering, Northamptonshire. I'm disappointed not to be able to be there. It has become an important part of the year – a time to soak up ideas, chat with friends and strangers and find some peace and quiet in the beautiful setting of Boughton House.

Greenbelt is a festival of arts, faith and justice, that has been going since 1974. I first went in about 1985 when I was working for Christian Aid; Christian Aid is now

one of the key sponsoring organisations behind the venture. Like all big festivals and events, however, Covid 19 has put a stop to plans for this year.

But there is a Plan B: I see from the Greenbelt website that a 2 day 'Wild at home' event is taking place on 29th and 30th. **A £10 digital ticket gives access to all online events, either as they happen live, or anytime until the end of September.**

There is a published programme of talks and discussions, music and comedy, films and, I hear but can't quite imagine, a Zoom fun run! And the Greenbelt 'pub', the 'Jesus Arms', is

running social meet ups and quizzes.

Sunday morning Radio 4 worship will be coming from Greenbelt at 8:10 am, as well as a lunchtime communion service and picnic, live from the beautiful (but empty) festival site.

If you have no better plans over the bank holiday I recommend that you drop in and explore what's on offer. I may do the same - in fact I'm quite looking forward to the idea of being 'Wild at Home' - in Aberaeron!

Fiona Liddell

(Unfortunately, the date of publication is not until the end of this event! Ed)

Love never fails. In times of crisis, love unites us all.

Angela's coffee farm used to provide a good living to support her daughters Ariana and Johaira.



When crisis arrived on our doorsteps this year, neighbourly love helped us through.

Will you stand together with your global neighbours near and far this autumn?



This autumn, let's show love to communities still facing crisis
caid.org.uk/neighbours

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To: The members and friends of all our 1,400 URC congregations

‘THANK YOU’ for your unique and vital contribution to the life of the United Reformed Church, and for the work of the kingdom which we are able to do together in God’s name

We are living through an extraordinary and challenging time – a very anxious time for everyone; a difficult time for many; and a time of suffering and loss for some. Yet, the main purpose of this letter is to say **‘thank you’** to each of you for all that you have done for the Church in the past; for all that you continue to do even in these difficult times; and for what you will do in the future.

As we are treasurers, you will not be surprised that the focus of this letter is on finance. But we recognise that finance is only a means to the end which is our doing of God’s work together.

‘Thank you’ for your giving to your local church.

Financially, this giving is the lifeblood of your own church and of the whole United Reformed Church across England, Scotland and Wales. It is this personal giving that enables your local church treasurer to pay your church’s bills. Typically, the largest of those ‘bills’ is the contribution

your local church pays to the URC Ministry and Mission Fund. This Fund meets the central costs of the United Reformed Church. The total budget is around £20 million and is approved each year by Mission Council. Over 80% of this money is spent on ministers and church related community workers – their training, stipends and pensions. But the other 20% also achieves an enormous amount on behalf of us all. General Assembly 2020 was severely constrained because of the Covid-19 lockdown, but the reports written for General Assembly are available on the URC website, and they paint pictures of all the work that has been done in our name over the last two years and much of that work is ongoing.

‘Thank you’ for your giving and the giving of your local church last year. In 2019, over **£19.4 million was given by local churches and synods to the Ministry and Mission Fund.** The total contributions from local churches reduced very slightly but the average giving per member has, once again and remarkably, gone up by more than inflation.

‘Thank you’ for your continued giving this year. We fully understand that circumstances this year are difficult. Most local churches have been unable to meet for over five months. We have not had the usual

opportunities to make our offerings for the work of the Church. But most of the costs of the local church and of the denomination have not reduced and some have increased as a consequence of the pandemic. We are also aware that some have lost income or work this year and are therefore in great financial difficulty. But there are others on fixed incomes who are actually better off than they might otherwise have been. **So, please continue to give what you can in whatever way you can – or save it up until you can hand it over.**

Any giving of ours is a response to the amazing generosity and love of God which we see in Jesus. Nevertheless, **it is important for us to say ‘thank you’ to each and all of you.**

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter then please speak to your church treasurer, who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ, Ian and John

*Ian Hardie, Treasurer
of the United Reformed
Church
and John Piper, Deputy
Treasurer*

The next edition of Crossroads will be prepared by Colin, and anything for inclusion should be sent to him by Sunday, 20th September 2020.

Colin Grimes,

Huw Morgan,

Please note, editorial e-mail:
crossroads@beulahurc.org.uk