

# STEPPING STONES November 2020

Epping Methodist Church – Epping URC- North Weald Methodist Church- Ongar URC

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## From the Minister

November is the month for remembering. Conveniently, the national act of remembrance at the Cenotaph (and in towns and villages) coincides with the church's season of All Saints tide. The feast reminds us of the 'faithful departed' whom we remember with affection and thanksgiving.

There are some saints who are 'great names' in the church's history, for example Martin Luther the reformer of the sixteenth century and his namesake Martin Luther King Jr of the twentieth; Mother Teresa of Calcutta and the opponent of Hitler and the Nazi regime, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

There are saints who have greatly impressed me, I cite one in particular: the journalist, broadcaster, and Christian apologist Malcolm Muggeridge. In my earlier Christian formation, I read two Fount Paperbacks by Muggeridge: Jesus, the man who lives, and Christ and the Media.

Some people leave an enduring mark on us. They can be famous people, or they can be saintly individuals whose Christian witness have impressed us, for example, a schoolteacher, or an aunt, or a minister.

To mark this special time of year I am inviting you to join me for a Service for All Saints Day. It will be held on **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November at 4pm on Zoom**. I realise that that may preclude some. Nevertheless there will be Sunday morning services and a weekly 'Worship at Home' sheet available to all.

To join the All Saints Day Service on Zoom at 4pm:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86547495965?pwd=d3lZU2lWVFlqZEtEOEV4Ky9NZTR3Zz09>

If required:

Meeting ID: 865 4749 5965

Passcode: 5tcyEH

## Ongar United Reformed Church

### Leprosy Mission

There is still time to order cards and gifts from the Leprosy Mission. The church benefits from most orders from them with a commission of 20% and last year on two orders alone this amounted to over £40. Delivery is now running at about two weeks as they are getting busier. If you would like to see a catalogue please telephone me and I will deliver one to you for return with your order and payment (this year they ask for payment in advance).

For **Remembrance Sunday** this year the British Legion recognizes that most of its poppy sellers are in vulnerable groups due to age and have made available on their website ([britishlegion.org.uk](http://britishlegion.org.uk)) a downloadable poppy for a donation as well as one for children to colour in. The idea is that, like the rainbows, people can put these in their windows. I hope to be able to print some off for people who do not have access to the website, which I will distribute with the Sunday service sheet.

Finally, I would like to share with you a poem from a Celtic Daily Prayer book by John Philip Newell, which I find very comforting in these days when we feel isolated and alone. God is in the face of all we meet and in our own face too. God made us in His image, but He is present in all His creation.

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face  
in the light of the moon and patterns of stars,  
in sacred mountain rifts and ancient groves,  
in mighty seas and creatures of the deep.

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face  
in the light of eyes we love,  
in the salt of tears we have tasted,  
in weathered countenances east and west,  
in the soft skin glow of the child everywhere.

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is Your face,  
there is Your face  
among us.

Joan

## Porch Pantry

Rev. Noelle Taylor has emailed to share her concern about hungry children living in the parish, especially at half term, in view of Covid restrictions. She proposes to have mouse-proof boxes on the benches in the porch at St. Martin's so that anyone in need can help themselves. She suggests that the boxes are kept supplied with cereal, UHT milk, tins of savoury food such as baked beans with sausages/meatballs etc., instant potato and cereal bars. If you are able to donate any items to this please do so. It is not designed to take the place of the food bank in Harlow/Epping but a more immediate emergency response.

## Cheryl's Diary Notes for October

Well I've had a mixture of activities & outings this month starting off with a walk to a local Church for Evensong. The children helped with action singing and we even had musical instruments to use along with the music.

I was invited to meet my daughter at a Retail Park to browse the carpet & furniture shops for ideas for her new home. It was fun to meet up and actually see so much & have so many choices. Sadly our browsing went on a little too long and we both received parking fines for £100! So, with Dentist & Optician appointments, it's been an extra expensive month.

My son was about to throw out a sweet little chest of drawers that I rescued just in time. Repainted grey & pretty patterned knobs bought on line it's now a smart piece of furniture & is most useful.

Continuing my make do and mend theme I tackled a complaint from 'him indoors' regarding the shortness of his pyjama bottoms. All went well with my needlework; although he was first bemused, then amused to find that the jacket now has short sleeves. Oh! I thought he wouldn't notice that.

I'm sad to learn that my neighbour & friend of more than 40 years is moving away to be near her family; but hopefully we shall remain penfriends.

One very pleasant outing has been with a dear friend, recently widowed, when we walked around the Bobbingworth Reserve, that her husband worked so hard to get transformed from original landfill use. We both enjoyed the peaceful time together & sat and meditated on the colourful view of the autumn trees. I've found it very difficult to know how to support this friend in her grief under current rules. Walking and talking seems to be the best option at the moment.

Enjoy whatever time you have with your families & friends in whatever form you can. Take care and keeping smiling, it's good for you. Love Cheryl.

## Thoughts from Pam

Just like to thank everyone for my birthday wishes and cards. It was a significant birthday as I can now have a bus pass! Bit of a shame I won't be going on a bus for a while!

We took advantage of one of the sunny days during the "birthday week" to re-visit Anglesey Abbey. We have been there several times over the last six months and this time we enjoyed the autumn flowers.

The dahlia garden was still doing very well. We saw swans with their cygnets on the river leading to the Mill. They were getting quite big but still keeping close to mum. When walking through the wooded area we came across an amazing display of cyclamen, I found this quite breathtaking. (It had the Wow! factor). We are now looking forward to going back later in the year to see what the winter gardens look like.

The puppy has now arrived and her name is "Hettie" She has been to play in our garden a couple of times which has been good fun for us. She dashes around exploring, wears herself out, then falls asleep on someone's feet! More tales from Hettie next month when we start looking after her during the week.

Autumn  
"Come little leaves,"  
said the wind one day.  
Come down to the meadows  
And we shall play.  
Put on your dresses  
Of red and gold,  
For summer is past  
And the days grow cold,

Dancing and leaping  
The leaves went along,  
Until winter called them  
To end their sweet song,  
Soon fast asleep  
In their earthy beds  
The snow lay a cover  
Over their heads.

Pam

Happy birthday to those of you who will have a birthday in November.

## Epping United Reformed Church

Although it was only for a few weeks, it was nice to be able to worship in our building once again for those of us who were able to. During these services the junior church created lovely collages on giving thanks to Lord and Psalm 96 'sing to the Lord and new song' which can be seen on our facebook page.

A Christingle service is planned for the 13<sup>th</sup> December and a Nativity service on the 20<sup>th</sup> December. Services on Christmas Day and the 27<sup>th</sup> December are to be confirmed.

Ahead of Advent we will be providing all- age 'Advent boxes' which will include activities and devotional items for the whole period of Advent through to Christmas and Epiphany to stimulate development in the Christian faith, look out for them at the end of this month. All of the families at toddler group will also be receiving a box.

A number of us enjoyed taking part in the first ever Eastern Synod quiz night on Zoom. We had two teams taking part and they finished last and second from last! Some revision needed for next time! The winners who earned a small prize were a team from Norwich. Thanks to Lindsey for organising this fun evening.

## Churches Together in Epping and District

**Bright and Light Party:** The annual outreach event on Halloween has not gone ahead this year, but party bags for the children were given out instead.

**Market Outreach:** would you be willing to spend 2 hours a month, on a Monday, at a CTED market stall, to be a listening ear? Training available. Talk to Lindsey or your CTED rep if you are interested.

**Remembrance Sunday:** A service for wreath layers only at the war memorial, 2:15pm followed by a service at St John's Church at 3pm which will be invitation only with all churches to be represented. The service will be live streamed on the St John's Facebook page -[click here for link](#).

**Regular Events:** It is hoped that annual events such as the Week of Christian unity, World day of prayer and Walk of witness will go ahead in some capacity either online and/or with a reduced format. More information on these closer to the time.

**Eco-Church:** Both Epping URC and All Saints Epping Upland have achieved Bronze awards. It is now planned to establish a network among CTED to foster green issues.

**Facebook:** A reminder that CTED has a Facebook page with the latest news and events- [click here for link](#).

## **HAEBEA**

Black Christian History and the Origins of Racism

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November @ 7:30 pm on Zoom

The considerable contribution that black people have made to the church and to the world in general will be traced in this zoom presentation by Rosemary Mutopo, student minister at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Harlow. The presentation also explores some of the painful origins of racism. Originally written and compiled by a friend of Rev Blair Kirkby's in Canada, this presentation is well worth your time, whatever your ethnicity.

For Zoom details please email: [haebeamoffice@gmail.com](mailto:haebeamoffice@gmail.com)

## **URC Eastern Synod**

The synod moderator, Rev Paul Whittle who has served in the role since 2008 is to move at the end of the year to the National Synod of Scotland to serve as moderator for a 3 year term which will take him to retirement. [Read more on his move here.](#)

## **Legacies of Slavery**

The URC's Global and Intercultural Ministries team has created a dedicated webpage inviting people to explore the legacies of slavery. Launched in October (Black History Month), the site offers a bank of material to resource continued reflection and conversation, including recommended books and films, poetry, songs, bible studies and worship. [Click here for link.](#)

## **Reset the Debt**

The 'Jubilee' campaign by the Joint Public Issue team was launched in October to help those who have fallen into debt as a result of Coronavirus. Visit the website <https://resetthedebt.uk/> for information & stories on why this campaign is needed, how we can take action, prayers and other resources.

## **Nuclear Weapons Treaty**

In October an international UN treaty banning nuclear weapons was ratified, which is a significant achievement that nudges the world closer to peace. This means the treaty, which bans the production, use and stockpiling of nuclear weapons will come into force at the start of 2021 for those who have signed it. Read more about the campaign, what it means in practical terms and what we can do about it from JPIT here:

<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/decades-in-the-making-nuclear-weapons-banned-by-comprehensive-un-treaty/>

## Eco Tip from Eco-Church

**Greening your home this Autumn.** With 40% of UK emissions coming from households, our homes have an important part to play in meeting the UK's 2030 emissions reduction targets. As temperatures drop in an increasingly warming world, you can help to tackle climate change and reduce your heating bill by testing how draughty or leaky your home is. Find the gaps that let the cold air in and warm air out (think keyholes, letterboxes, gaps around the edges or bottoms of windows and doors, loft hatches, floorboards etc.).

Homes are really important, and God calls us to play our part in giving nature a home too. Is your garden lacking a bird feeder ahead of the long winter months when it's particularly hard for wildlife to source food? Could your balcony or windowsill do with some plant life? How about installing a bird box or hedgehog highway? (Though in the latter case, do make sure the neighbours are happy for you to make a small tunnel/hole in your shared fence!)