

The
United
Reformed
Church

AUGUST 2020

South Leicestershire Group URC



SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE GROUP UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
Saffron Lane-Wigston Magna-South Wigston
Oadby-Whetstone

<http://southleicsgroupurc.org.uk>

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It is with some trepidation that we step into the unknown. Taking that initial first step can be daunting, a new job, a new school, retirement, just walking into a room for the first time without the support of a loved one. These are, and can be, giant leaps of faith. We all have to do some things that we find difficult, or go to places that we would rather not go to, but life is like that. We are all tested, sometimes to a greater degree than others. I remember the first time that I stood before a congregation to read from the Bible - it was many years ago, but the thought of how I felt on that day has never left me and can still make me tremble.

How difficult, then, is it going to be for us to re-open our places of worship for the first time after so many weeks of lockdown? This too will be a giant leap of faith - faith that we have all the required precautions in place, faith that we will all abide by the rules of engagement, no hugging, no handshakes, no singing. But we should all have the faith that God will be with us as we tentatively step to a 'new normal' way of life.

These are frightening times, but some words of wisdom can help, try the Psalms for words of encouragement and inspiration, and sometimes we can be given a verse that seems apt. One I would like to share with you was given to the women at CWF 2020 from Amy Boucher Pye, our main speaker - it is pinned to my notice board where I can see it as I sit at my computer. It reads -

Practise the pause.

When in doubt, pause.

When angry, pause.

When tired, pause.

When stressed, pause.

And when you pause, pray.

I pray that you will feel that God is with you and with those whom you love.

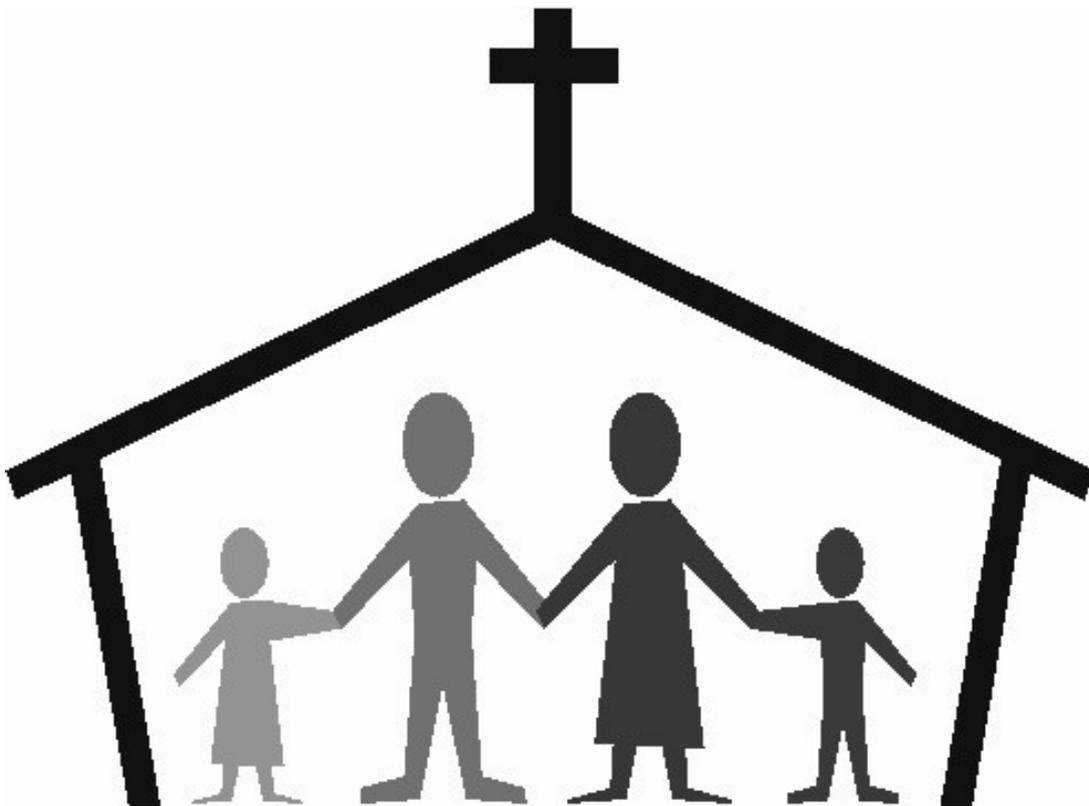
Eileen

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SERVICES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE CHURCH SECRETARY

Whetstone URC	10.00 am
Oadby URC	10.15 am
South Wigston URC	10.30 am
Wigston Magna	10.30 am
Saffron Lane	11.00 am



Regular Group Church Events

SERVICES AND MEETINGS / EVENTS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

For any more information / advice please contact the Church Secretary

South Wigston

Di Statham Secretary 0116 2810053

Wigston Magna

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DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER 2020 MAGAZINE

Sunday 23 August 2020

**Send your items to your church representative or direct to
di.statham@btinternet.com**

If you do not have a computer a hand written copy can be accepted.
Contact Di Statham 0116 2810053 for information

Reflection by Ron Kenyon

Chair of the East Midlands Synod Trust

In this strange world of ours we have all learned to live with 'Voicemail' as a necessary part of modern life. But have you wondered, "what if God decided to install voicemail?"

Imagine praying and hearing this:

Thank you for calling My Father's House

Please select one of the following options:

Press 1 for: **Requests**

Press 2 for: **Thanksgiving**

Press 3 for: **Complaints**

Press 4 for: **All Other Inquiries**

I'm sorry, all of our angels are busy helping other sinners right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order it was received, so please stay on the line.

Press 1 if **You would like to speak to God**

Press 2 if **You would like to speak to Jesus**

Press 3 if **You would like to speak to the Holy Spirit**

Press 4 if **You would like to hear King David sing a Psalm
whilst you are holding**

Press 5 for **Reservations at 'My Father's House' followed by
J-O-H-N 3-1-6**

Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow.

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Isla Leggett (10)
- 4 Lizzie Chauhan (18)
- 19 Kate Smalley
- 26 Teresa Wiggins
- 28 Chloe Powell (19)

Happy Birthday!



CONGRATULATIONS

to

*Sheila & Phil Stephens
on the occasion of their
Golden Wedding Anniversary
Saturday August 22*

THE GARDENERS HYMN

**"All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all."**

But what we never mention, though gardeners know it's true,
Is when He made the goodies, He made the baddies too.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

The greenfly on the roses, the maggots in the peas,
Manure that fills our noses, He also gave us these.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

The fungus on the goose-gogs, the club root on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce and chew the aubergines.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

The drought that kills the fuchsias, the frost that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings, the blight that hits the spuds.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

Wigston Magna News

Cont.....

The midges and mosquitoes, the nettles and the weeds,
The pigeons in the green stuff, the sparrows on the seeds.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

The fly that gets the carrots, the wasp that eats the plums,
How black the gardener's outlook, though green may be his thumb.

*All things spray and swattable, disasters great and small,
All things paraquatable, the Lord God made them all.*

But still we gardeners labour, midst vegetables and flowers,
And pray what hits our neighbours, will somehow bypass ours.

*All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all*



RECIPE: AUGUST - Baked Pork Chops (Serve 6)

6 pork chops

1 oz dripping

2 lbs potatoes

$\frac{1}{4}$ pint white wine, cider or stock

1 large onion

1 clove garlic (optional)

Parsley to decorate.

- 1) Fry chops lightly on both sides in dripping.
- 2) Peel potatoes, slice thinly and cover base of a casserole dish with half.
- 3) Add chops, crushed garlic (if using) and sliced onion.
- 4) Cover with the rest of the thinly sliced potatoes and cover with the wine, cider or stock.
- 5) Cover with buttered paper, then the casserole lid.
- 6) Cook for 2 hours at Gas 3, 330 F, 160 C.
- 7) To serve, sprinkle parsley on the top.

GARDENING NOTES: AUGUST

- 1) Keep dead-heading roses to stimulate more flowers.
- 2) Trim hedges before growth slows down.
- 3) Summer-prune trained fruit.
- 4) Weed borders but watch out for self-set seedlings.
- 5) Cut down spent raspberry canes and tie in strong new ones.
- 6) Sow fast-growing lettuces such as "Tom Thumb" or "Little Gem" which should mature in about ten weeks.

A Thought for the Month ahead.

Words are more treacherous and powerful than we think.

Jean-Paul Sartre

South Wigston News

AUGUST PRAYER LIST

Please pray for:

- 1 All who are ill, especially those with coronavirus.
- 2 All those who work for the NHS - give thanks for their hard work and dedication.
- 3 All who are having to plan a funeral in this time of lockdown.
- 4 Our Emergency Services, especially at this difficult time.
- 5 All those who are working to keep our country going.
- 6 Those now unemployed because of the present circumstances.
- 7 The homeless.
- 8 LOROS and other hospices.
- 9 Our friends in the other churches in our localities.
- 10 All who are lonely.
- 11 Give thanks for the companionship of our pets.
- 12 Those with financial worries.
- 13 All those who broadcast services to us each Sunday.
- 14 The bereaved.
- 15 Those who live in countries where water and food are scarce.
- 16 The work of "Rainbows".
- 17 The Community of Grace & all who live or work there.
- 18 Christians in countries where faith is dangerous.
- 19 Researchers trying to find an answer to the corona virus.
- 20 Farmers, anxiously waiting to bring in the harvest.
- 21 Those suffering from depression.
- 22 Give thanks for the beauty and peace of gardens.
- 23 All who have looked forward to holidays, but now cannot go.
- 24 All new babies born this month, and their parents.
- 25 Give thanks for family and friends - they keep us going.
- 26 Those who feel overwhelmed by life's problems.
- 27 All who give us the news, that their reports may be accurate.
- 28 Those coming to terms with having a terminal illness.
- 29 Give thanks for the pleasure we gain from books.
- 30 All children who are able to start school this term.
- 31 Give thanks for some blessing in your life.

South Wigston News

Dear Friends,

I would like to thank all the people who sent messages of sympathy after my husband, Richard, passed away late in June. My daughters and I were completely overwhelmed to get so many cards and letters representing every church in the Group. It felt like a tidal wave of love and care, not, of course, forgetting the prayers, which have sustained us through this very difficult time - and are still doing so.

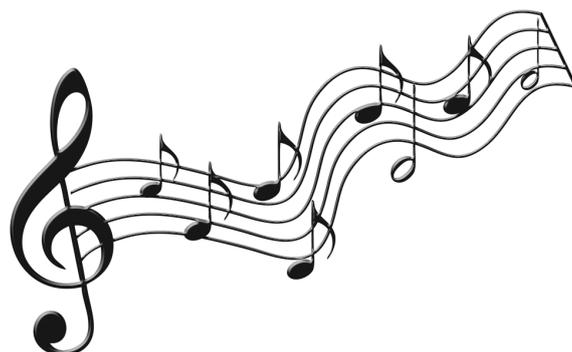
The funeral had to be under lockdown conditions, which could have been distressing, but was in fact very calm and peaceful. Richard had chosen his favourite hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty". Chosen for two reasons: one was because it was the first "real tune" he played on the violin, and second because the words of the hymn were written by Reginald Heber, an Englishman who went out to India, and became the Bishop of Calcutta, which is the place of Richard's birth. Surprisingly, but happily, we were allowed to sing the hymn - which would have really pleased Richard.

Thank you all for your prayers and loving care.

God bless and stay safe,

Love from

Marion.



South Wigston News

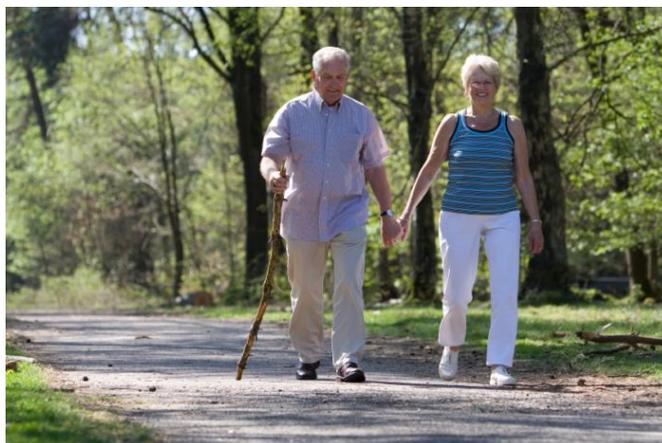
As I was walking
Along life's track
I resisted the temptation
Of looking back.

The past is full
Of sin and shame
I'm determined now
Not to do the same.

My future's filled
With hope and light
My freedom's won
By sacrificial fight.

My Saviour is
My all in all:
I'm walking forward
Stepping out tall.

Lauren Fretter



A few thoughts about COVID-19 Lockdown

So let me get this straight, there is no cure for a virus that can be KILLED by sanitizer and hand soap?

I am done with my 90 day trial of 2020. How do I cancel my membership?

Remember, Rapunzel was quarantined and met her future husband. Let's think positively!

How long is this social distancing supposed to last? My husband keeps trying to get into the house.

Is it too early to put up the Christmas tree? I have run out of things to do.

When this virus and social distancing is over I still want some of you to stay away from me.

Just wait a second - are you telling me that my survival depends upon the common sense of others?

People are getting scared of getting fined for gathering in large crowds. As if catching a deadly disease and dying a horrible death is not sufficient a deterrent.

If you believe that this disease will soon end and we can get back to normal when we re-open everything.... Please raise your Hand... Now slap yourself with it.

Another Saturday night at home! I have just realised that the waste bin goes out more often than me.

Remember when you were little and your underwear had the days of the week on them. Those would be useful right now.

I get so excited nowadays when I take the waste bin out. I spend ages wondering what to wear.

Remember all those times when you wished the weekend would last forever. Well, wish granted. Are you happy now?

Washed a big load of pyjamas today so I would have enough work clothes for the week.

Saffron Lane News

Preachers and Readers Planned for August /September 2020

	OT	NT	SERV	COLL	Preacher	
Aug 2	6	3	6	13	D Howlett	Communion
Aug 9	8	7	8	13	R Eastman	Communion
Aug 16	12	30	12	13	E Williams	Communion
Aug 23	36	35	#	14	K Drinkwater	Family Service
Aug 30	3	4	#	13	J Slatford	5 th Sunday
Sept 6	7	8	7	13	R Eastman	Communion
Sept 13	5	6	5	13	S Eastman	Communion
Sept 20	30	12	#	13	P Tiplady	Communion
Sept 27	10	11	#	14	E Williams	Family Service
Sept 27 4.00pm service	??	??	??		Rev. Geoffrey Clark - Synod Moderator	Saffron Lane 90th Anniversary Group Service

3 Kath T	7. Angela S	12. Elizabeth R	# no server
4. Maureen F	8. Brian S	13. Darren C	30 Sandra
5. Sue B	10. Molly B	14. Mackenzie	35 Anne
6. Pat S	11. Richard B		36 Dec B

Saffron Lane News

August Birthdays

27th Kath Thorpe

September Birthdays

1st Maureen Foster

19th Pat Storton

19th Edna Pougher

20th Eileen Williams

Moving On

Mrs Ann Carroll has left her house on Saffron Lane which she moved to from London for her husband to work on the Leicester railway 25 years ago.

Ann has made the big decision to move back to London to be near her children after being ill at the beginning of the year .

Ann wanted to move her Saffron Lane house and garden down with her to London but of course it was not possible, and she is now moving into a flat. She had a worrying time as the move was delayed when the corona virus put a stop to moving house.

Ann will miss all her neighbours and the friends she has made at the Church but her daughter said she would try to get her mum up on a visit to the Church.

Ride and Stride

Ride and Stride is planned for September 12. Please let the Church know if you are able to sit in the Church for 2 hours as we man the Church from 10.00- 4.00pm. We also hope that Terry will be riding to raise funds for the Church so please sign his sponsor form.

If you wanted to get your old bike out you could also join Terry. Sponsors forms will be available soon.

Saffron Lane News

A thought for today

Never put off till tomorrow what can be done today.
It's an old saying but very true, so just take heed and pray.
Remember time is passing by; take it in your stride;
Do all the things you've planned to do and many more beside.
Fill each hour of every day with pleasant thoughts and deeds.
Life is like a garden rare, so choke it not with weeds.
Weeds are words of discontent and grumbles that we hear;
Too many people love to moan and look around and sneer.
Let him be your guild and helper through the months ahead;
Kind and thoughtful you will be, if by him you're lead.

From a book of poems for pleasure by Doreen Storton
Pat's Storton's sister in law



The Church had a lovely thank you letter from the Chatterbox preschool for all our help in letting them open for the children of NHS workers over the coronavirus lockdown. The preschool put all the safety conditions in place so the Church did not have to do anything.

Saffron Lane News

Please Do Not Forget the Church

The church has now been closed for 19 weeks but we have still got bills to pay. If any member has been saving their goodwill offerings and would like the church to collect them would they please let Sandra Clay (0116 2835375) or Elizabeth Richardson (0116 2993176) know and they will arrange to collect them from you. I know that some members have already let us have their offerings for which we are very grateful.

I hope that you are all keeping safe and we hope to meet again soon.

Sandra



Saffron Lane News

July 2020

The below just goes to show that you never know what is round the corner.

Today, my son, who works for Network Rail has had a thank you letter from them for his safety idea during this Covid-19 and they want to include him on their Wall of Pride. I am so proud.

BUT I have now received a post from my cousin's daughter's family coming home from a Cornish holiday and my heart was in my mouth. All thank God are ok but their motor-home caught fire on the motorway at 11.30 this morning and the brakes failed. Horrendous but all are safe.



Saffron Lane News

Cont

My relations as stated are all safe but I thought you might like to hear another wonderful thing that followed after the accident. Wonderful kindness of strangers.

My cousin's daughter said this on facebook. "It's so true about the material things. Just a bit of a nightmare when no insurance for the contents of the vehicle. But really we were so overwhelmed with the help and compassion of the kindness of strangers. A family helped us & took us into the petrol station services we were heading to, and gave Nellie a pair of their youngest's shoes, & Daliah a blanket, & jumpers & then bought them both a new cuddly toy each from the petrol station. Then Devon & Cornwall police went out of their way to take us to a hotel 30miles away! Then they secretly arranged over the radio for an officer to go to John Lewis to buy two brand new teddy bears for the girls which were waiting for them when we walked into the room!! Then to top it off the staff from the hotel went to Tesco to get pjs, shoes, underwear & toothbrushes for the girls! Then cleared the whole bill including the stay & food. Absolutely overwhelming kindness from them all. Unbelievable !

But the real super hero in the whole catastrophe is Tim who managed to stop that massive van when the brakes completely went and thought on the spot to mount the grass bank verge between motorway & slip road which halted the 50+ speed we were going. Absolute winning hero If that van had overturned none of us would be here.

Think he needs a medal

I was very humbled by all of this and a very grateful thanks in prayer is said to our Saviour every night.

Elizabeth Saffron Lane URC

Whetstone News

Thoughts About Now and The Future

At the time of writing, I am sat on the sea wall at Harwich. It is early morning. There's no one around and it's a beautiful sunny day.

I watch the waves lapping lazily on to the beach. The sun glints off the calm, blue sea and to my left there is a large container ship waiting to be loaded in the nearby port.

As I sit quietly, it's almost as if none of the other stresses in life exist. All that matters is this moment in time.

Of course, soon I will have to return to reality - the everyday worries, the continuing issues regarding Coronavirus, the concerns about the future of our Churches.

Looking out at the sea reminds me of that old Sunday school song: "Wide, wide as the ocean, high as the Heavens above; deep, deep as the deep blue sea is my Saviour's love..." Isn't that an amazing thought - God loves us?!

We are in "uncharted waters". We feel anxious because we do not know what lies ahead - but the hymn reminds us: "I (we) know who holds the future and He guides us with His hand. With God things don't just happen, everything by Him is planned".

We fear for our health, we fear that our churches may never reopen, we fear that things will never get better again. Of course, we need to be realistic but that doesn't mean we should be pessimistic. There will undoubtedly be difficult times ahead with difficult decisions to be made but "where there's a will, there's a way!"

Whetstone News

We need to face each challenge head on, safe in the knowledge that God is with us. Where there is need, God will provide! We need to trust our government and its medical advisers as they try to get us through this global pandemic. We need to trust that Synod and the wider URC won't abandon us and will help prevent more Church closures. We need to have faith that God has guided us through all problems - past and present. And we must never underestimate the power of prayer.

I know that all of this is easier said than done but now - more than ever - we need to focus on supporting one another. Through friendship, fellowship and faith, we will come through this. Christ faced extreme adversity but came through triumphant. With Him on our side, everything is possible!

So as I take one final look back at the sea and leave the peace of this moment, I know that I have spent time with the Lord in the quiet of this time and have felt the calmness of the Holy Spirit refresh me. So when things feel overwhelming, take time to sit quietly. Let God wrap His loving arms around you and remember "What a friend we have in Jesus!"

God bless.

Kevin.



Oadby News

Jean Sketchley 1925-2020

The Reverend Richard Eastman conducted the funeral service at Great Glen Crematorium on Tuesday 7th July 2020 of our much loved and valued Church member, retired Elder, and dear friend Jean Sketchley.

Although Jean was born in Croydon and had moved to Leicestershire when she was six, she always considered herself to be a 'Leicester Girl'. She knew many people because of her varied interests.

For many years Jean was our church organist and pianist. Music played a great part in her life. She was an accomplished pianist, also a lifelong member for over 50 years singing with the Leicester Philharmonic Choir.

She was a gracious, elegant and smart lady with a good sense of humour. She was fun to be with and when a few of us had a "girls day out" to Scarborough we had to pack in as much as we could into the day. First was a coffee stop, then a walk around followed by a sightseeing cable car ride past Peasholm Park. Of course we had to lunch on fish and chips! To end our lovely day, for Jean we had to have a paddle and nearly missed the coach back home.

Jean was a regular member of the Ladies Evening Group, supported all Church events and enjoyed our weekly meetings of the 11 o'clock Group, especially the summer holidays organised by Jim Garrow. Over the years Jean faced many challenges and she met them well. We all hold in our hearts fond memories of Jean and will greatly miss her.

Jean was married to Norman for almost sixty years and they had two sons, Tim and Peter. It is hoped that when things get back to 'normal' that Oadby URC and her friends from across the Group can meet and share memories together and give thanks to God for all her years of service as an Elder and our organist at Oadby.

V.M.

Lectionary Readings

August 2nd

Genesis 32:22-31

Psalms 17:1-7,15

Romans 9:1-5.

Matthew 14: 13-21

August 9th

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Psalms 105: 1-6,16-22,45b.

Romans 10: 5-15

Matthew 14:22-33.

August 16th 2020

Genesis 45:1-15

Psalms 133

Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32.

Matthew 15: 10-20, 21-28.

August 23rd

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Psalms 124

Romans 12: 1-8.

Matthew 16: 13-20.

August 30th

Exodus 3: 1-15

Psalms 105; 1-6,23-26,45b

Romans 12: 9-21.

Matthew 16: 21-28.