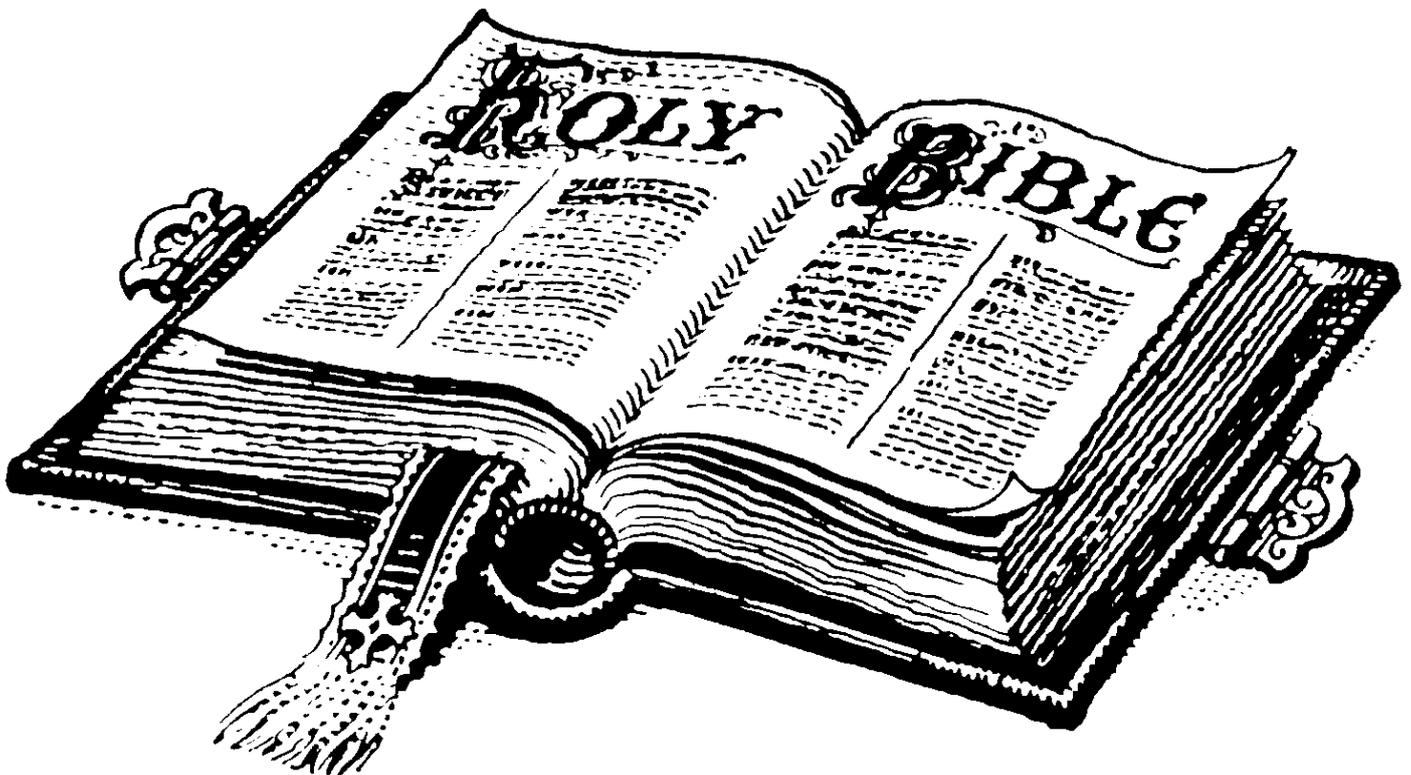


The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

SEPTEMBER 2020

## South Leicestershire Group URC



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

<http://southleicsgroupurc.org.uk>

## Contact us:

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South Leicestershire Group Minister

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## The Dawning of a New Age!

A few months into the year 2020 everything was just fine and dandy, summer holidays were booked, the school year was almost two thirds of the way through, everyone was looking forward to Easter and life was good! Then, a virus which was at first discounted by many, including some of the world's top politicians, changed the way we live day by day. It is a new age. New expressions came into our language, Covid 19, Coronavirus, safe distancing, Intubation, Stay Alert, Wash your Hands frequently; all to keep us safe from the 'Virus'.

Schools closed, cinemas closed, churches closed and the worst of all for some, Pubs, Clubs and Casinos closed! We are living through a nightmare scenario, some think that they will wake up soon and like JR's shooting it was all in a dream! Sadly no, the reality is simply this, for whatever reason humankind shot itself in the foot, and created this pandemic.

What good has come out of this pandemic? People of all races and creeds recognised that they had neighbours that cared for them. Many good neighbourly things were done and continue to be done, it was if there was recognition at long last that there are many more important things than making money and being on the work/mortgage/eat/sleep/merry-go-round, people mattered more than all these things.

People matter to the church too, our churches will open for worship when we have completed the Risk Assessments, prepared the buildings with the right regime of hand sanitisation and social distancing and mitigating measures to keep everyone safe. There will be no singing but we will have music, there will be no exchanging the peace or hugging, but we will be in fellowship together to worship God in the reading of the scriptures, the saying of Prayers, the recitation of Psalms and the peace of being in the presence of God.

The good news is that services will be shorter as the forty minute sermon slot will be reduced to a short comment on the scripture. Hopefully, this situation will not last years and years but maybe twelve to eighteen months, as we build up an immunity to the virus and as scientists develop the vaccines that will ultimately defeat the virus and we can start to develop a 'new normal'.

I cannot tell you if the 'new normal' will be better than the old ways but I can tell you this, God is with us throughout it all. God gives us the means and the intellect to combat this virus, he also gives us common sense. We do not have to heed the likes of Donald Trump and his lack of intellect and his madcap attitude towards the virus and politics in general. We just need to have complete trust in God, and God will see us through all of this. The Message paraphrase puts it like this:

**Psalm 46** <sup>1-3</sup> God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him. We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom, courageous in sea-storm and earthquake, before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains. Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, GOD-of-Angel-Armies protects us.

I still prefer the New revised Standard Version (NRSV)  
Psalm 46:1 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble'.

As we move forward, into the 'new normal', please remember to keep everyone safe and sound, do all the good things, washing of hands, wearing of face coverings, social distancing, we will emerge stronger and wiser and able to beat the virus. We just need to be patient and loving towards everyone, even the idiots who break the lockdown rules.

Stay safe.

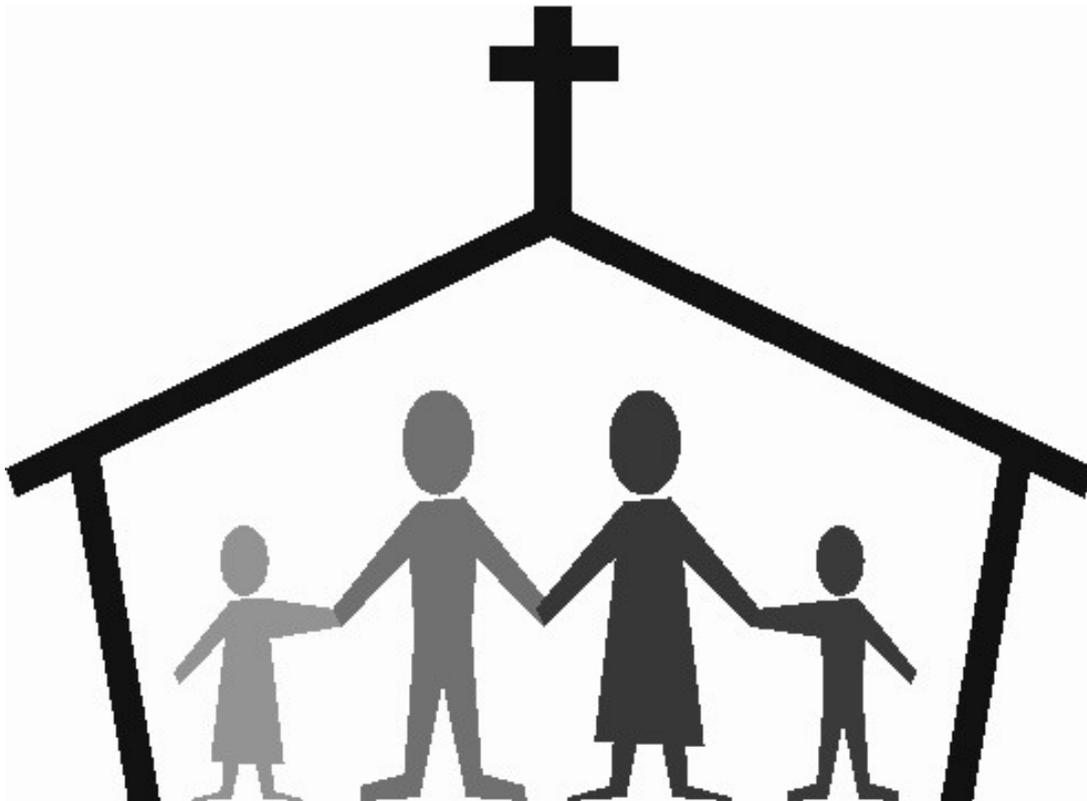
Peace and blessings,

Richard.

## SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING WHEN AND HOW CHURCHES WILL RE-OPEN PLEASE 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



## Personal Risk Assessment

As part of their "Return to Worship" Guidelines the URC have produced the following Personal Risk Assessment grid to help worshipers in their decision as to whether they should be returning to their church services.

Look at the grid on the next 2 pages and circle the score next to each one that applies to you.

Add up your score and then check against the notes at the end of the grid.

Risk Factor	Score	
<b>Age</b>	50-59	1
	60-69	2
	70-79	4
	80 and over	6
<b>Sex at birth</b>	Male	1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Caucasian	0
	Black African Descent	2
	Indian Asian Descent	1
	Filipino Descent	1
	Other (including mixed race)	1
<b>Diabetes &amp; Obesity</b>	Type 1 & 2	1
	Diabetes Type 1 & 2 with presence of microvascular complications or HbA1c $\geq$ 64mmol/mol	2
	Body Mass Index greater than or equal to 35 kg/m <sup>2</sup> online BMI calculator: <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator">www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator</a>	1
<b>Cardiovascular disease</b>	Angina, previous heart attack, stroke or cardiac intervention	1
	Heart Failure	2

<b>Pulmonary (lung) disease</b>	Asthma	1
	Non-asthma chronic pulmonary disease	2
	Either of the above requiring oral corticosteroids in the last year	1
<b>Malignant neoplasm (cancer)</b>	Active malignancy	3
	Malignancy in remission	1
<b>Rheumatological conditions</b>	Active treated conditions	2
<b>Immuno-suppressant therapies</b>	Any indication	2
<b>Total Score</b>		

**A score of under 3 indicates a lower risk**, but you should still be following the guidance for staying safe.

**A score of 3-5 suggests a greater risk** and you should consider ways of reducing your risk by taking additional precautions or avoiding some activities.

**A score of 6 or more suggests a high risk** and indicates that you should continue to work or participate in church life from your home.

This is not a definitive analysis of your risk but should be used as a personal guide when considering whether you should return to your church. The decision whether you return is **YOURS** based on your own personal feelings and health. Just because your church may have chosen to reopen do not feel that you have any obligation to be there.



Induction of

# **Revd Martin Ferris**

as

Resource Minister

Serving

Abbots Road URC

And

South Leicestershire Group

## **Saturday 5 September 2020**

Details about how this will take place are still being finalised. These will be issued by the Church Secretaries as soon as they are known.

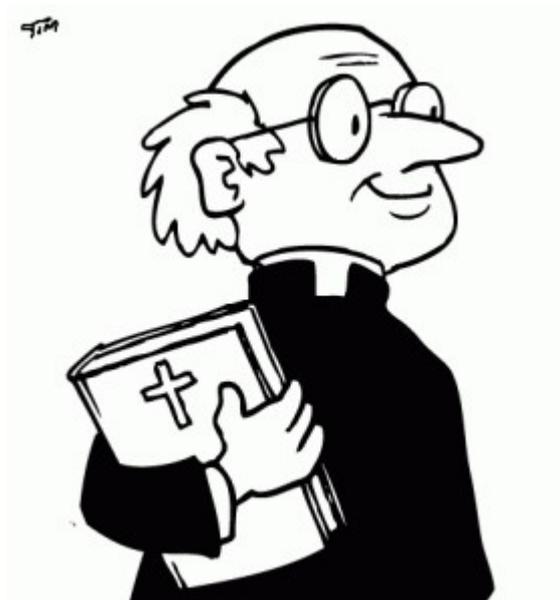
Please keep the date free and remember Martin and Charlotte in your prayers.

# Wigston Magna URC

are planning to reopen for services on

**Sunday September 6th.**

If you are planning to attend please check with an Elder before hand to make sure the service is going ahead.



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Louise Haywood (10)
- 8 Erin Deacy (10)
- 12 Madison Childs (15)  
Lynda Fisher
- 17 Nicholas Dunkerley
- 19 Shaun Powell
- 20 Eileen Williams
- 22 Sophie Holyland (18)
- 29 Hollie Eaton (12)



## THANK YOU

A big 'thank you' to everyone who sent cards and good wishes to us on the occasion of our Golden Wedding. We had a lovely day and got together with our children and grandchildren in the evening for an outdoors 'take away' supper. Not quite how we envisaged celebrating but enjoyable none the less.

Sheila & Phil x

It is planned that the Church will reopen for Worship

On

**Sunday 6 September 2020**

**10.30 am**

Under the guidance terms issued by the URC.

Self distancing arrangements will be in place

If you do not usually attend South Wigston Church but would like to come along to a service please advise Di Statham (0116 2810053) as numbers may need to be restricted.



### RECIPE - September: Cheese & Onion Tart (Serves 4)

1 oz butter  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
3 large red onions, thinly sliced  
2 tablespoons dark muscovado sugar  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
4 and a half ozs cheddar cheese, grated  
4 ozs shortcrust pastry, thawed if frozen  
Mixed salad to serve.

1. Pre-heat oven to 200 C/400 F/Gas 6.
2. Melt butter and oil in a large frying pan, cook the onions, stirring occasionally, for 5 - 8 minutes, until softened.
3. Stir in sugar and vinegar, cook for 2 minutes until sugar dissolves.
4. Spoon into 20cm oven-proof pie dish or sandwich cake tin.
5. Reserve 1 oz of cheese and sprinkle the rest over the onions.
6. Roll the pastry out to a circle slightly larger than the dish, then press it lightly over the cheese, tucking down the sides.
7. Prick gently with a fork and bake for about 25 minutes until the pastry is golden, and the filling bubbles up round the edge.
8. Set aside for a few minutes, then place a serving plate on top and invert.
9. While still warm, sprinkle over the reserved cheese, cut into wedges and serve with the salad.



## South Wigston News

### DIARY - September

- 6<sup>th</sup> The Church will open (obeying all rules) for a service at 10.30am.  
9<sup>th</sup> Elders' Meeting (Zoom).  
12<sup>th</sup> "Ride & Stride", the church will not be open, but there will be provision for cyclists/walkers to "sign in".

### GARDENING TIPS - September

- 1) Collect seeds from summer-flowering perennials, such as poppies hollyhocks, digitalis, keep in a cool dry place for the winter.
- 2) Use a spade and a template (using sand, spray paint or rope) to cut fresh, clean edges on your lawn.
- 3) Clip box, euonymus and privet hedges.
- 4) Cover the pond with netting so leaves do not fall into the water.
- 5) Take cuttings of bedding plants before the first frosts.
- 6) Prepare tender perennials, including dahlias and fuchsias, for over-wintering.

### BIRTHDAYS - September

- 19<sup>th</sup> - David Eastman  
20<sup>th</sup> - Margaret Darby  
22<sup>nd</sup> - Stephen Eastman  
27<sup>th</sup> - Joan Seaton

#### Thought for the Month.

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful,  
for beauty is God's handwriting.

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## South Wigston News

### SEPTEMBER PRAYER LIST - Please pray for:

- 1 All who are still ill and struggling with Covid 19.
- 2 Children, teachers, and all who work in schools as they try to get back to as normal a routine as possible.
- 3 All key workers, still working hard to keep our country running.
- 4 All who are now getting back to work after working from home
- 5 Those who have had to wait for their hospital treatment while the covid panic was at its height
- 6 Our group of churches as we begin to open again.
- 7 All who mourn the loss of a loved one.
- 8 Those who are trying to break free from the power of drugs.
- 9 All who are feeling lonely today.
- 10 Give thanks for the public services we take for granted.
- 11 All who have lost their jobs because of the virus.
- 12 All who are trying to raise money through "Ride & Stride".
- 13 Those striving to attain a stable family life.
- 14 All who are elderly and housebound.
- 15 The people of Beirut as they try to rebuild their lives.
- 16 Give thanks for the talents that God has given us; may we use them in His service.
- 17 All who suffer in body and mind.
- 18 Students starting their courses at university.
- 19 Young people who did not manage to get a place at university.
- 20 Farmers as they gather in the Harvest.
- 21 All who do voluntary work.
- 22 The residents and staff of our local Care Homes.
- 23 Give thanks for our friends.
- 24 Those going through the pain of divorce.
- 25 All who work for our Emergency Services.
- 26 Adults who cannot read, and those who help them to learn.
- 27 Politicians, that they may be led to make the right decisions.
- 28 All who work in our hospitals.
- 29 Give thanks for the beauty and blessings of Summer.
- 30 Ask for God's guidance as we move into the Autumn.

## Guide to Life's Manual (by Lauren Fretter)

For me the Bible was a dead, closed book  
I didn't even want to take a look.  
The words were hard, did not make sense.  
The whole thing was written in the past tense !

Though somehow I felt, give it one more try  
I've no idea, so don't ask me why  
I gritted my teeth, said "This I could miss"  
And opened the book at Genesis.

It's all very well but I found it hard to believe  
All this stuff about snakes and Adam and Eve.  
But as I read more it began to ring true  
For me, as well as the ancient Hebrew.

Some of those stories were really gripping  
Tales of love, fighting, and yarns that were ripping.  
Come to think of it, these things happened to me !!  
So was my reading this now just meant to be ?

It certainly helped me to take a new view  
Of my life and what I was meant to do.  
If the truths in it were as real now as then  
Maybe it really was written for all men

Now I eagerly took up the daily task  
Thought new thoughts and began to ask  
"God is this really you pointing the way  
You want me to live each and every day ?"

What a wonderful source that I can tap into  
Whenever I need or even just want to.  
How could I have treated the Bible so casual  
When God's written it for me, A Guide to Life Manual.

## Saffron Lane News

### Preachers and Readers list for September/ October 2020

	OT	NT	SERV	COLL	Preacher	
Sept 6 <sup>th</sup>					<b>Closed</b>	
Sept 13 <sup>th</sup>					<b>Closed</b>	
Sept 20 <sup>th</sup>					<b>Closed</b>	
Sept 27 <sup>th</sup>	10	11	#	14	E Williams	90 Anniversary Service
Oct 4 <sup>th</sup>	35	36	35	13	R Green	Communion
Oct 11 <sup>th</sup>	4	3	4	13	R Eastman	Communion
Oct 18 <sup>th</sup>	8	7	8	13	L Gill	Communion
Oct 25 <sup>th</sup>	6	5	#	14	G Milnes	Family 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

### OUR 90<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

At our recent Elders meeting we decided to hold our 90th Anniversary service **just for** Church Members and adherents who attend our Sunday services. This will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> September at 11.00am and will be led by Eileen Williams.

This means that the planned Group Service on that day has been postponed and Eileen has emailed the Moderator to ask if he could come in the New Year 2021. Then we can invite all our group members and friends to join us for a late anniversary service and tea then.

## Saffron Lane News

### September Birthdays

1<sup>st</sup> Maureen Foster

19<sup>th</sup> Pat Storton

Edna Pougher

20<sup>th</sup> Eileen Williams

### October Birthdays

31<sup>st</sup> Les Gill

### Ride and Stride

At the time of writing we are still hoping to open for the Ride and Stride event on Saturday 12 September. For further details please speak to Sandra Clay.

### Things we have missed during lockdown

2020 is our Big Year with our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 27<sup>th</sup> September. This will now be celebrated by a service for just our own members and adherents (See note on previous page)

We have missed our charity coffee morning for Water Aid and our charity tea and garden party at Eileen and Charlie's.

The Church was going out for a Sunday lunch to celebrate Sandra and Pete's 55<sup>th</sup> (Emerald) Wedding Anniversary on 14<sup>th</sup> August.

During the lockdown all of the Church's photograph albums have had a face lift & new posters have been made for our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### Harvest Festival

As we are not having a Harvest Service this year please bring your gifts for the food bank to the service on the 27<sup>th</sup> September.

## Saffron Lane News

### Childhood Memories

Do you

Remember all the happy hours spent at mother's knee,  
And running home. So fast from school, when crumpets were for tea.

Remember dear old Teddy bear who only had one eye:  
The other one kept falling out (I used to wonder why).

Remember playing in the street near the corner shop,  
Games like statues, hide and seek, hopscotch and whip and top,

Remember giving concerts on the lawn on Summer nights,  
And having caterpillar races, and flying kites.

Remember riding on the tram and plying in the park:  
And climbing to the top of the lamp - post for a lark.

Remember Church on Sundays, being MADE to wear a hat:  
Organdie ones in Summer with ribbons at the back.

Remember feeling sorry throwing out that treasured coat,  
And Carnival processions, sitting high up on the float.

Remember camp fires, Girl Guides nights, and rambles through the  
wood;

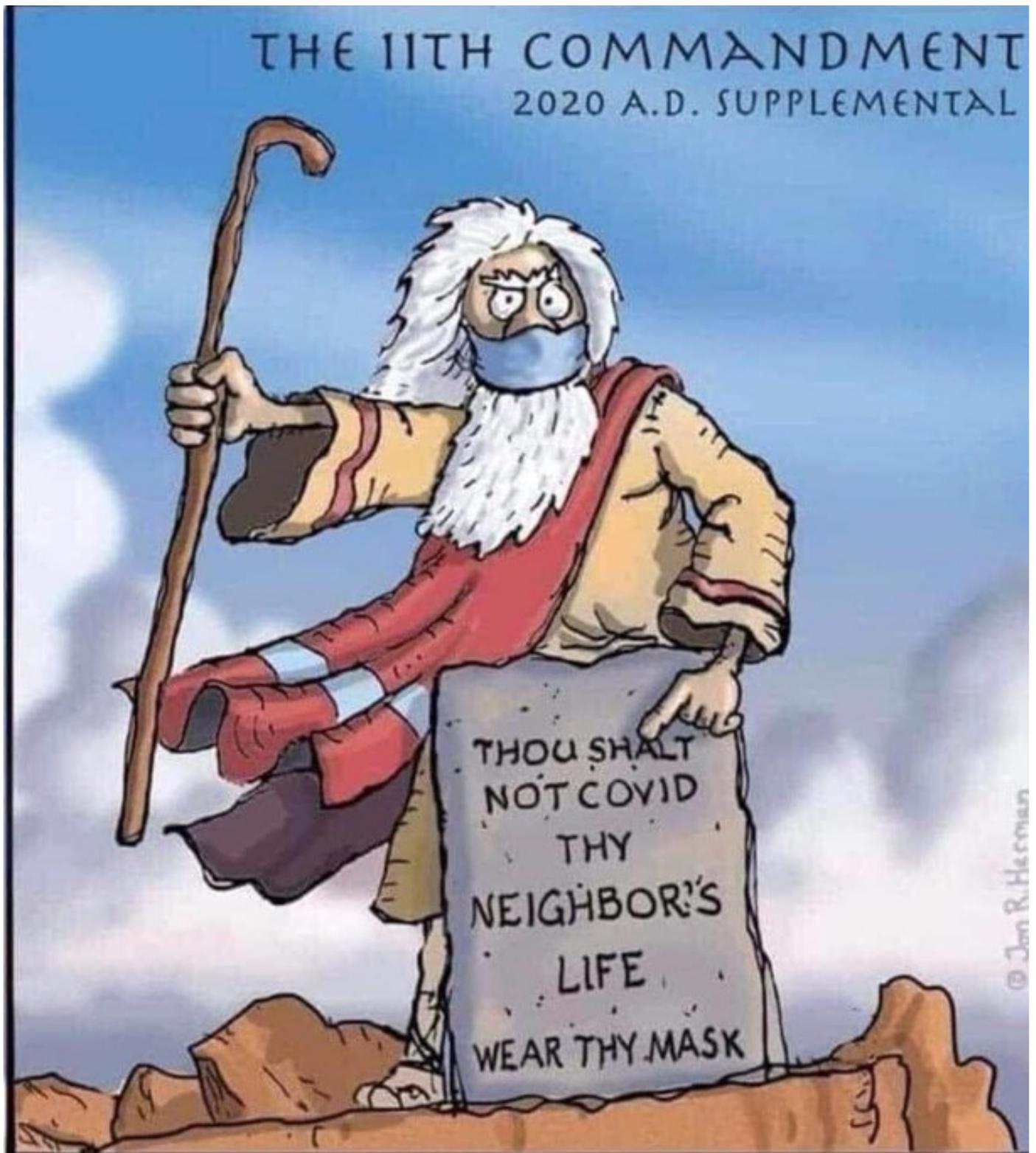
Potato picking in the rain, ankle deep in mud.

Do YOU remember happy times, holidays and treats:

Sandbags round the old school wall, and ration books for sweets.

I do.

**From Poems for Pleasure, by Doreen Storton.**



Thank you Elizabeth for spotting the above cartoon.

## We are Re-Opening on Sunday 13 September

Following the completion of a detailed risk assessment and a thorough clean, we are pleased to announce that our Church will reopen on Sunday 13th September at 10am.

We have complied with URC and Government guidance to ensure that we provide a "Covid safe" environment.

A one-way system has been created and hand sanitising stations have been placed at the entrance and exit. Floors have been marked out for Social Distancing and seating arrangements have also been made to adhere to safe distancing guidance.

Our first service will be an informal hour of private prayer and reflection, accompanied by hymns on the organ.

Our service on **20th September** will be led by our own **Kevin** and then on **27th September**, our **Minister Rev. Richard Eastman**, will lead us in thanks and praise for the harvest.

All are welcome to join us !

**Please remember in your prayers:**

Cis

Sheila Taylor (Gill's sister).

Aldyth

Eileen and family

Betty and Ken Werry.

Dorothea

May God's blessing surround them and all of us!

# Whetstone News

## HARVEST

It's been a strange year so far, hasn't it? And how quickly Harvest seems to have come upon us!

Of course, Harvest this year will be a very different experience to what we are used to. The fruits and vegetables which usually adorn our churches will not be permissible. The charity sale of Harvest produce that normally happens at Harvest in Whetstone won't be allowed. We won't even be able to sing any Harvest hymns.

There has been and continues to be considerable hardship and worry, yet we still have much to be thankful for! We thank God for his continued attention to our needs. We thank God for the work that is done to support the homeless and hungry and for those parents who go without food in order to ensure that their children are fed. We thank God for the work of agencies around the world that seek to provide food, shelter and safety to those in need. Isn't that what Christian life is all about?

God has taught us that our faith, trust and love in Him reaps rewards beyond our imagination. He provides for our needs, whilst reminding us of the importance of sharing. So maybe, instead of donating fresh produce to the church, we could donate ambient produce to a local food bank? Maybe we could donate money or unwanted items to charity?



## Whetstone News

Cont....

Harvest isn't just about crops, fruits and vegetables! It is a time to give heartfelt thanks and praise for God's blessing and love.

I'm sure I'm not alone in noticing the increasing number of Bible references found on social media. Isn't it encouraging that in times of need, people still turn to God? !

In John 4: 38, Jesus tells his disciples to "reap what they did not sow." The love of God, the strength of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit are working both within and without our churches. Surely then, we are called to seek every opportunity to "reap the harvest" that God has created?

Let us open our churches and pray for their growth, as more and more people seek to find the Good News that is our Lord and Saviour!

Let us come together to celebrate the harvest, give thanks for the beauty and bounty of our world and collectively, as brothers and sisters in Christ "Raise the song of Harvest home!"

Amen.

Kevin.



## Lectionary Readings

### **September 6**

Exodus 12 1-14

Psalm 149

Romans 13 8-14

Matthew 18 15-20

### **September 13**

Exodus 14 19-31

Psalm 114

Romans 14 1-12

Matthew 18 21-35

### **September 20**

Exodus 16 2-15

Psalm 105 1-6 & 37-45

Philippians 2 1-13

Matthew 20 1-16

### **September 27**

Exodus 17 1-7

Psalm 78 1-4 & 12-16

Philippians 2 1-13

Matthew 21 23-32