



# CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED  
REFORMED CHURCH  
MAGAZINE**

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*He is not here;  
He has risen!*

*Luke 24 : 6*

Minister Revd John Gray - details on Contact Page

Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson

Dear Friends,

A few years ago I was at Spring School of the United Reformed Church at Lee Abbey, Devon, having various biblical studies and a spiritual experience with lots of worship. One of those “spiritual experiences” was when I was staring at a white ceiling in my shared room after the sessions and was “challenged” by my roommate asking what I was doing. To which I replied: “I am thinking of the inner life of God”. Aha. “More specifically?”. I answered, “more specifically: the Perichoresis of God”. We both laughed, but then actually we had a good theological conversation on the inner life of God and the Perichoresis.

Perichoresis is a Greek word, it means cyclical movement or “dancing around with one another”. It refers to the mutual indwelling of the Trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We find its roots in the New Testament: the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father." (Jn 14:1) We also find the term in the works of the Cappadocian Fathers and in the teachings of modern theologians like Karl Barth, Jurgen Moltmann or Miroslav Volf. They all claim the relationship of the Triune God is intensified by the relationship of perichoresis. This indwelling expresses and realises fellowship between the Father and the Son. It is extreme spiritual intimacy, that’s why Moltmann speaks about the Crucified God in his central theology. Actually, Jesus compares the oneness of this indwelling to the oneness of the fellowship of his church from this indwelling. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (Jn 17:21). On the first Good Friday the intimate relationship within the Triune God turned into a very deep, self-sacrificial love on the Cross for the world, where the “dancing around of the Triune God” froze for a moment and the Son gave his spirit back to the Father. This all reminds me of the wonderful hymn: *I danced in the morning* and feel a kind of invited to join the dance led by the Resurrected:

*“I danced on a Friday and the sky turned black; It’s hard to dance with the devil on your back; They buried my body and they thought I’d gone, But I am the dance and I still go on... / Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. And I’ll lead you all wherever you may be, And I’ll lead you all in the dance, said he. / They cut me down and I leapt up high, I am the life that’ll never, never die; I’ll live in you if you’ll live in me; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he...”*

After the “static experience” of “staring the white ceiling” (what I did in Lee Abbey) during lockdowns, being confined in our own houses mostly and having a limited daily routine by the pandemic, we need to join the “dancing Jesus” in our Christian lives. We are not opening the church on Easter Sunday yet, but will allow the renewing powers of the Resurrection to energise us. We may be able to re-open – in what cautious way we don’t know yet, and please wait for confirmation – on Pentecost. May the dynamism of the Spirit make us “dance with the Triune God”. May joy come back to our church life. Pentecost. The date could not be more symbolic.

*With love and prayer,*  
John

## A Message from our Moderator

Recently we were recording a conversation about the readings that we will hear after Easter, and the comment was made that it’s really important to notice the locked door in the story of the resurrection of Jesus. It made me think...what if Jesus had hidden behind a locked door instead of going out into the garden of Gethsemane on the night he was arrested? What if Mary had hidden behind a locked door instead of going to the garden tomb on Easter Sunday morning? What if the disciples on the road to Emmaus had just got home and locked the door instead of ‘pressing’ Jesus to stay with them. How different would the story have been? But then I realised that every time there was a locked door in the story of the risen Jesus, it made no difference! The door is locked – but Jesus appears among them, time and time again. Thomas is sure Jesus is dead and his heart is locked shut – but Jesus breaks through and Thomas believes. Even the tomb of death – sealed shut with a stone – could not keep the living Jesus locked in. As I write this we are trying to work out what changes to ‘lockdown’ might mean for our churches. There will be advice - very soon, and you will all need to work out what to do for the best in your church. But know this: whether our doors are locked or not makes no difference to the power and the presence and the purposes of God. Whether the doors are locked or not, the risen Jesus can be celebrated this Easter. May joy be yours, in the name of the risen Christ, Ruth

## Commitment for Life Prayers for Economic Justice

God said, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"  
So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God." (Luke 12:20-21)  
Holy God, we confess the times when we have tried to grasp security by hoarding your gifts. We confess the times when we have tried to grasp life in all its fullness by medicating ourselves with another dose of more stuff. We confess the times when we have tried to grasp self-respect by acquiring the trappings of success.  
Free us, we pray. Give us an open heart and a generous spirit to respond to our neighbour in need, whether nearby or far away. Show us the part we can play in redeeming our economic system, bringing it under the rule of your Kingdom.

Amen

There is a short devotional service on Sundays on Zoom for the Joint Pastorate, if anyone is interested please contact the Minister for a meeting ID and passcode nearer the time.

Alternatively, please provide your email address, if you haven't already done so, so that the Minister may email you his weekly Sunday Message. If you are not on email, please contact the Church Secretary. Thank you

Many thanks and God Bless,  
John

## The URC daily devotions

The URC daily devotions can be accessed via [devotions.urb.org.uk](http://devotions.urb.org.uk) These are approx 5 minutes long. The Sunday service can be accessed from the same site.

## Prayers during the pandemic

Lord,  
We give thanks for the scientists tackling the pandemic;  
for their curiosity about your world;  
for their commitment to finding rigorous answers.  
We pray for those who nurture young minds;  
for teachers who open up new possibilities;  
for those who make it safe to ask hard questions.  
May your Church be somewhere where we wonder anew at Creation,  
hold out hope for a better world for all your children  
and take action to make that world a reality.  
Amen.

## Here for You

Your elders and John do hope you are keeping safe and well but please do not hesitate to call us should you wish, we are here to listen and to have a chat.

Sally and elders with prayers and virtual hugs!  
We will do so one day!

## Jigsaws

I hope you have enjoyed building jigsaws during lock down with satisfaction if finished! if not no one needs to know!  
If you are not too bored with them I have a few more to lend out.

Do you have some you have completed then please let me know and I will collect at a distance!!! to keep in our jigsaw library.

Sally  
Please ring me 07973 483525

Like everyone else, during lockdown I have been having a tidy up/clear out!! On my bookshelf I came across a book that had belonged to my mother which was written by a distant cousin in which she tells of a time in her life during the 2nd World War. The book is called "Cream with Everything" by Phyllis Kellar.

Although she came from Bristol, at the time she was staying just outside Plymouth. She was expecting her first child and her husband, Charles, was on fire watching duty in the city. This is what she wrote:-

*I could hear the planes coming over in droves, the drum-drum of their engines somehow more sinister than usual, and I saw, standing in the garden, the flares positively raining down, hundreds of them and I knew something awful was going to happen in Plymouth that night.*

*'Oh please keep Charles safe' I prayed as, after a while, I heard the thud of heavy explosive bombs and saw the red glow in the sky over the city. I thought of my family and the raids in Bristol with hundreds being killed. Was Charles safe? Many hours later I saw him, walking slowly along the road, his face, hair and clothing grey with dust, his every step showing his utter weariness.*

*'I'm perfectly alright' he said, 'just a bit tired.' Talk about an understatement!*

*The next morning I set out to the local bakery but when I reached the end of the road I found barriers up. An unexploded bomb from the night before had fallen on the bakery. I had just gone home when there was a terrific explosion which destroyed not only the bakery but a complete row of private houses. Fortunately, warning had been given and there were no casualties*

*The following day I was due to go to the hospital clinic for a check up but when I got there I found that the unit had received a direct hit, killing many mothers and babies. The sight of the broken cots among the rubble was heartbreaking and I saw doctors and nurses, one with her arm in a sling and many others bandaged and limping.*

*Then a great trek out of the city started. The police stepped in and stopped lorries or any other vehicle capable of taking passengers and asked them to take as many folk as they possibly could with them. I shall never forget my ride on the back of the bumpiest lorry in creation but at the time I was so thankful to board it that I barely noticed the bumps. I was safe, Charles was safe and my bump - soon to be a baby girl - was safe.*

In this terrible pandemic it is only right that we remember and celebrate what previous generations went through in order for us to live the lives we do. Yes, our freedom has been curtailed for a few months and this time the enemy is unseen but, once again, prayers have been answered, we have a vaccine and God willing we shall soon again be free to meet together, to worship together and even have a cup of tea and a biscuit together!!

Stella

To Do List. By Brian Bilston	
delay; defer; equivocate make some tea; procrastinate look at Twitter; stroke the cat readjust the thermostat	prioritise new tasks to shirk ponder changing world of work look at Twitter; spin on chair make a brew; loiter; stare
dawdle; dither; hem and haw fill the kettle; chew my jaw write nine words; spin on chair play six games of solitaire	check out latest cricket score reorganise the kitchen draw write nine words; cross six out stroke the cat; stoke self-doubt
observe the merry, dappled light dancing on the page of white review my words; paper scrunch stroke the cat; break for lunch	make tea; stroke cat; cricket; stare Twitter; chair-spin; solitaire stroke tea; make cat; twicket; wallow write To Do list for tomorrow

## DINNER IN THE FIFTIES

Pasta had not been invented. It was macaroni or spaghetti

Curry was a surname

A take-away was a mathematical problem

Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere

Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time

All chips were plain

Rice was a milk pudding and never, ever, part of our dinner

A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining

Brown bread was something only poor people ate

Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking

Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green

Cubed sugar was regarded as posh

Chickens didn't have fingers in those days

None of us had ever heard of yoghurt

Healthy food consisted of anything edible

Cooking outside was called camping

Seaweed was not a recognised food

Kebab was not even a word, never mind a food

Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold.

Prunes were medicinal

Surprisingly muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed.

Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only ever seen a picture of a real one

Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it they would have become a laughing stock

The one thing we never, ever had on/at our table in the fifties...was elbows, hats and cell phones.

