

**One more step along
the world I go . . .**



CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED
REFORMED CHURCH
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*Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!*

1 Chronicles 16 v 11

Minister Revd John Gray - details on Contact Page
Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson

Dear Friends,

One of the big changes for after 19 July is that we are allowed to sing, even if the URC's "New Freedom, Same Responsibilities" document suggests a "risk-managed approach to congregational singing". In the last 16 months we have not been allowed to do that, "risked-managed" or not. So many of you might have been like me: got a tune stuck in your head. Well, lately the words, and the tune "One more step along the world I go" popped up in my head and I often found myself humming or singing the hymn.

Now as the restrictions are further easing (but common sense still has to remain in place) people might find themselves very busy again, for them the tune of "One more step ... it's from the old we travel to the new..." stuck in their heads, and the meaningful words may well help. It has a calming effect on all of us, we should not worry. Up till now some of you may have had more time on your hands than usual. Time to tackle jobs you intended to do but never quite got round to, time to "improve professionally": more reading, more Biblical studies, more self-education and much more "computer science" (Zoom). Of course for many it has been quite the opposite – as those with young grandchildren to take care of while schools were closed struggled to have enough time for themselves and their immediate families. So many different experiences and so many different ways we had to adapt to a new way of living through Covid.

Then making our church life continuously Covid safe requires a lot of work and a long tick list. However, on our journey from the old (normal) to the new (normal) "one more step" means taking just one step at a time and leaving the worry behind. Our hope is that "*The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delight in him.*" (Psalm 37:4)

The following reflection published a few months ago by the URC has a message that is very true for our lives in the "new freedom" as well. "*We are on a journey through a pandemic, not knowing our destination, but aware we follow in a line of saints of old, who have*

set off before us in the footsteps of Jesus, walking the way. Like those before us, we may travel with faith and doubt, hope and fear, and, perhaps, have a holy encounter along the way. That we travel at all will mean that we are changed. Pilgrimage is about taking and risking such a journey, faith is knowing that we are accompanied by God, hope is in a Kingdom destination, and love may be experienced with companions." - Let us pray and thank God for his presence always, asking for courage to face the uncertainties, and wisdom to understand the direction ahead and the speed at which we should travel. Have faith that God is with us every step of the way no matter how rapidly the world is changing around us.

With Love and Prayers,

John

From your Treasurer - Good News Indeed!

We have recently received £2876 from HMRC in return for our Gift Aid giving over the last tax year. This is an amazing amount, bearing in mind we had closed doors for the whole of the tax year! This amount is entirely due to all of you who kept giving (and even increasing your giving) throughout the year. I can only say A GREAT BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL! With the elders' permission I am going to put this amount into our Savings Account.

Last month I made the suggestion that you consider your offertory being made by Standing Order (if you have not already done so). So far I have only had one response. I would urge you to consider this option especially in view that the offertory plate is now placed at the rear of the church there would be absolutely no embarrassment in "passing of the bag".

Bank details are available from me on request and a response by end of August would be most helpful. Of course, if this is not your preferred option then your usual way of giving would be most acceptable.

With Love, Isabel

Commitment for Life Prayer

Prayer for Zimbabwe

Lord God, in pursuit for justice, freedom and civil liberties, we pray for the leadership of Zimbabwe. Give them wisdom, vision and a desire for justice. We bring before you men and women serving prison sentences for crimes they did not commit.

Men, women and children struggling to put food on their tables as all means of survival have been thwarted. Lord, we pray for the eroded economy of this land. Weed out all corrupt elements to prepare for the kind of governance that you desire. We pray for those risking their lives crossing borders in search for greener pastures elsewhere, which for some remains a "pie in the sky" even when they get there.

We bring before you those dying in hospitals or at home with no access to drugs or better facilities. We do not forget those sacrificing their own lives for the sake of others. Doctors, nurses, teachers and all other civil servants fighting for the good of all.

You are a good God and you hear the prayers of your people.

Hear us Lord and come and heal Zimbabwe.
Amen.

Communion Offering for August

Commitment for Life

'What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6:8)

Greetings to all of you who so faithfully support Commitment for Life through your prayers and actions. Your concern, love and care for the people living in extreme poverty is deeply appreciated. During this time of coronavirus, love compels us to stand alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty.

Coronavirus has helped many to see how governments and corporations are falsely continuing to convert the commons, people and the earth into commodities that are bought and sold for a profit. We are rightly horrified by the callousness of some politicians, so ready to sacrifice elderly people and black, Asian and minority ethnic people on the altar of Mammon. We are vexed by the fact that once again it is marginalised and vulnerable people who are forced to bear the brunt of an uncaring and destructive economics. In this booklet, we'll hear stories of ordinary people pushing back...

Christian Aid and Global Justice Now have been working together to respond to the spiritual, moral, social and economic questions being raised at this time. All of us who are 'doing justice' through the Commitment for Life programme want to express our solidarity with, and gratitude for, the vital work of our partners around the world. Thank you!

At this uncertain time, we are not sure what the immediate future holds. But we trust in a wonderful God, who knows and cares for us all, more than we can ever imagine. Thank you all for your ongoing support for our global justice programme during this complex time.

With warmest wishes,

Kevin Snyman

Commitment for Life Programme Officer for Global Justice and Partnerships

The URC daily devotions

The URC daily devotions can be accessed via devotions.urc.org.uk These are approx 5 minutes long. The Sunday service can be accessed from the same site.

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY - August 2021		
SUNDAY 1ST	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Ruth Browning	11.00AM
SUNDAY 8TH	COMMUNION WORSHIP with Mr Angus Gregson	11.00AM
SUNDAY 15TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Sue Cossey	11.00AM
SUNDAY 22ND	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Brian Jones	11.00AM
SUNDAY 29TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Ruth Browning	11.00AM
SUNDAY 5TH	COMMUNION WORSHIP with Rev'd Helena McKinnon	11.00AM

Flower Rota

If you wish to donate and arrange flowers for the Church please add your name to the Flower rota on the Hall notice board. If you would like to donate to the flower Fund please see Sally or Barbara.

Tea and Coffee Rota

We hope to have tea and coffee in the hall beginning in September, but to achieve this we need volunteers to set up and clear away. Please contact an Elder if you can help.

New Freedoms, Same Responsibilities

The Synod Moderators July 8, 2021

As the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales move towards reducing or ending Coronavirus restrictions on Places of Worship, the Synod Moderators offer the following guidance to congregations of the United Reformed Church.

1. We remind churches of the Great Commandments: to love God with our whole being and love our neighbour as we love ourselves. All our actions must therefore be aimed at glorifying God and showing continuing care for others. We cannot cast off all restraint and still fulfil those commandments. It is therefore fully appropriate for us to continue some of the practices with which we have become familiar.
2. Elders' Meetings (and equivalents) must regularly review their Risk Assessment and put in place mitigations appropriate to their current circumstances, context, and activities, which might include continued social distancing and/or wearing face coverings amongst other measures. You must maintain a safe workplace for Ministers, staff and volunteers. This could usefully become a standing agenda item
3. Remember those who remain clinically vulnerable or anxious – what measures will you put in place for them – hybrid worship, separate services where current restrictions are maintained, “safer zones” in church (with social distancing and face coverings), or something else?
4. We encourage everyone to continue the practice of washing or sanitising hands when they arrive for worship and other activities. We would expect this to apply to external users as well as for church activities to reduce the possibility of virus transmission through touch points.
5. Similarly, maintain a careful cleaning routine, especially at touch points such as doors, hand rails, switches, etc.

6. These hygiene measures were shown to be effective at reducing a range of respiratory viruses (colds, 'flu), not just Covid-19. It will be a good thing to show love to others through minimising risk to their health, however minor the illness might be for most people.

7. As legal requirements to wear face coverings in public buildings (which include churches) are ended, we ask churches to consider whether it is appropriate to encourage their continued use inside our buildings. Many churches are difficult to ventilate effectively. We know that the longer we are in closed rooms, the greater the build-up of the virus and therefore risk of transmission, even to those who are vaccinated.

8. The scientific evidence on the risks of Covid-19 transmission from singing is not finally settled. Preliminary data show that singing inside, especially in rooms without adequate ventilation, DOES increase the build-up of aerosol particles. Singing together is one aspect of worship that most have us have missed greatly. Therefore, we encourage churches to continue with a risk-managed approach to congregational singing. Consider singing whilst wearing face coverings. If infection rates increase locally, it will be better to keep to shorter acts of worship and include less congregational singing or if necessary, pause congregational singing again.

9. The Moderators respect every individual's right to choose whether they be vaccinated. However, we encourage people to get fully vaccinated unless there are medical reasons why they should not. Vaccination massively reduces both the risk of illness and that of passing the virus on to others.

Vaccines are not, however, 100% effective. There are known cases of people contracting Covid-19 even after receiving two doses of the vaccine. We must therefore each take responsibility to do our part in keeping other people safe. "For you were called to freedom...only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another." (Galatians 5:13 NRSV)

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go,
From the old things to the new
Keep me travelling along with you.

And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.

Round the corners of the world I turn,
More and more about the world I learn,
All the new things that I see
You'll be looking at along with me.

And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.

As I travel through the bad and good,
Keep me travelling the way I should.
Where I see no way to go
You'll be telling me the way, I know.

And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.

Give me courage when the world is rough,
Keep me loving though the world is tough.
Leap and sing in all I do,
Keep me travelling along with you.

And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.

You are older than the world can be,
You are younger than the life in me.
Ever old and ever new,
Keep me travelling along with you.

And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.