



# CONNECT

## **NAILSEA UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MAGAZINE**

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I will praise you, Lord,  
with all my heart;  
I will tell of all the  
wonderful things  
you have done.

Psalm 9 : 1

Minister Revd John Gray details on Contact Page

Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson

Dear Friends,

The fact that we have Mothering Sunday in the middle of Lent here in England underlines the spiritual character of this day, not the commercial one. Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are not the same. It is thought by some that the spiritual roots go back to Paul's letter to the Galatians, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" - for many years this was part of the Bible reading on this Sunday. On this day we give thanks to God who gives us life and for the Church, which, like a mother, nurtures us in the life of the Spirit. Years ago when we had a different lifestyle it meant that church-goers in outlying villages and hamlets would make the journey to the mother church of the parish taking their offerings.

That's how it started. Of course, the religious background and the secular-commercial one blended into one in our practice, so when we celebrate Mothering Sunday we give thanks to God for our Mothering Church that has nurtured us spiritually and never stopped loving us, and of course, we celebrate mothers and all women in general who had a positive influence on our lives by their sacrificial love. We give thanks for all who have nurtured us and supported us during our formative years and remember them in prayers. Also, it is heart-warming to receive flowers, cards, and most importantly a Thank You from our children and grandchildren. It is a pity that in March we are still not allowed to give a hug to each other (never mind, next year will definitely be different!)

However, Mothering Sunday gives us an opportunity to extol the mother-like qualities of God. Normally, we think of God as our Father and the reason is that for the most part, God has chosen to reveal Himself in the masculine - in most cases. Of course, we know about the fact that Old Testaments Hebrew was not so gender specific as the New Testament Koine Greek was (the Spirit of God Ruah Elohim is in feminine and Elohim is plural, but let's not overcomplicate things now). As a Father He provides for our needs. He trains, corrects, and educates us in love and service as members of a great family. But in Isaiah 66:13 we have something deeper. A mother is a ministering angel in times of pain and sorrow. She has the art to comfort usually better than a man. - God combines in Himself all the virtues of a perfect

character. He is not only strong and protective, correcting and rebuking, He is also tender and comforting. In fact, Paul refers to Him in 2 Corinthians 1:3,4 as "*the God of all comfort.*" That's what we need now after a year of isolation, loneliness, church doors closed, social distancing and lack of socialising, pain and delayed treatments, job losses and quite a lot of social and mental health problems in society. Comfort.

God does have mother-like qualities. He comforts us by his presence, by his words, even by his silence and by his generosity, and by sending others, who are often seen as mothers in faith, to us. Whenever we feel sad, let us remember Isaiah 66:13: "*As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you*", says the Lord.

With love and prayers,  
John

It is with great sadness that we learn of the sudden and unexpected death of our minister's mother in Hungary. We send John, Esther and all the family our heartfelt condolences and we are sure that everyone will wish to remember them in their prayers.

## World Day of Prayer – Change of Plan

The date for World Day of Prayer this year is March 5<sup>th</sup> and the service has been written by the women of Vanuata which is an archipelago of 80 islands in the South Pacific 2000 miles East of Australia. Sadly because of Covid restrictions we will not be able to hold a service in Nailsea in person on March 5<sup>th</sup> this year. Instead we plan to hold a service when restrictions have been eased hopefully in September this year. We will confirm a date nearer the time.

However, if you wish there are services online which you may wish to join on March 5<sup>th</sup> - [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk) for details.

## Commitment for Life Prayers for our Partners

Gracious God, creator, provider and sustainer of all things; we have not taken good care of the wondrous creation that you gave us to oversee.

We have not loved as you commanded, but have allowed selfishness, self-importance, injustices and inequalities to invade our societies leading to climate disruption, social and economic disparities.

Through our actions people all over the globe have been left vulnerable, desolate and open to disease and poverty.

We pray that you will bless the work of organisations such as Christian Aid, Global Justice Now, Fairtrade, Jubilee Debt Campaign and other groups as they seek to respond to global spiritual, moral, social and economic issues to make it a fairer and more equal world.

In your mercy, hear our prayer,

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

## Connect news

Pauline Hill you may remember moved to St Monicas at Sandford from Nailsea Bright hour visited her about 3 years ago for tea and cake which was enjoyed by 18 of us.

Pauline has now recently moved to Clevedon Court Nursing Home Dial Hill, Clevedon BS21 7HN

She has settled well and says hello to those who remember her.

## Message from Jean Clavey

My Fred and me would have celebrated our 60th Wedding Anniversary on my birthday March 18th.

Hope you are all safe and God bless you all  
Love from Jean

## Greetings from Ave

Ave sends her sincere thanks to all for cards, messages and prayers received whilst in hospital and in rehabilitation which has given her a lot more strength to be able to return home.

## 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!

Thank you to Barbara for the following:-

## BIBLE FUN

Q: Who was the fastest runner in the Bible?

A: Adam - because he was first in the human race.

Q: What kind of car did the disciples drive?

A: A Honda - because the Bible says they were all in one Accord.

Q: Who was known as a mathematician in the Bible?

A: Moses - he wrote the book of Numbers.

Q: Why didn't they play cards on the Ark?

A: Because Noah was standing on the deck.

Q: What did Adam say on December 24th?

A: It's Christmas, Eve!

Q: Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?

A: Noah - he was floating his stock while everyone was in liquidation'

Q: When is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?

A: When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

Q: Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A: Samson - he brought the house down.

Q: How did Noah see inside the ark?

A: He used floodlights.

Q: Why was everyone so poor in Bible times?

A: Because there was only one Job!

## BILLION - It's a VERY BIG number...

If I gave you £1 billion and you stood on a street corner handing out £1 per second, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, you would still not have handed out £1 billion after 31 years!

This is rather hard to really understand.

A billion is a difficult number to comprehend, but one advertising agency did a good job of putting that figure into some perspective in one of its releases.

1. A billion seconds ago it was 1959
2. A billion minutes ago, Jesus was alive.
3. A billion hours ago, our ancestors were living in the Stone Age
4. A billion days ago, no-one walked on the earth on two feet.

Taken from the HSBC pensioners magazine

## 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

## **Keep Us, Good Lord**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Amen.**

