



CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED
REFORMED CHURCH
MAGAZINE
FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE 188**

*Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.
Psalm 46:10*

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

Dear Friends,

let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. (1John 4:7)

When I was thinking of a theme for this opening letter Valentine's Day came to my mind (which is on 14th February) with the above Bible verse. While it is considered primarily a romantic day by many, we are aware of its "not so romantic" historical and church roots. The Roman Emperor Claudius II needed soldiers. He suspected that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars, so he outlawed marriage. A kind-hearted young priest named Valentine felt sorry for all the couples who wanted to marry, but couldn't. So secretly he married as many couples as he could – until the Emperor found out and condemned him to death. While he was in prison awaiting execution, Valentine showed love and compassion to everyone around him, including his jailer. The jailer had a young daughter who was blind, but through Valentine's prayers, she was healed. Just before his death in Rome on 14 February 269 AD, he wrote her a farewell message signed 'From your Valentine.' So the very first Valentine card was not between lovers, but between a priest about to die, and a little girl, healed through his prayers." That's the kind of self-sacrificial love that lasts for life and beyond.

Another aspect of love, and it could be applied to romantic relationships too, is similarly selfless to how it started. It is when we show sincerity in our love towards others. "Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins." 1 Peter 4:8. In our society real sincerity is often undervalued in everyday relationships.

'A speaker held up a blank sheet of paper and asked, "What do you see?" The reply was, "A piece of paper."

He then placed the paper on the podium, made a tiny dot in the centre and held it up again. "What do you see now?" "A dot," was the unanimous reply from the audience.

"Imagine this blank paper is a person," the speaker said. "The small dot you saw is his/her biggest fault. The white surrounding the dot represents all of this person's worthwhile qualities which we so easily fail to see. Often a fault seems bigger than it really is and we allow it to overshadow the many positive aspects of that person's personality."

In our relationships what do we see in the other: the white piece of paper, or the tiny black dot?

Happy Valentine's Day! John

Annual Church Meeting

Dependent on the Covid situation it is hoped that our ACM will take place on Sunday 20th March. This will follow the usual format of worship, lunch and then meeting.

The purpose of the ACM is to adopt all reports including the finance report for the previous year, elect and re-elect office bearers etc. and only questions relevant to these matters will be addressed.

In the meantime, if you have any queries regarding church life please do not hesitate to speak with an elder who hopefully may be able to reassure you.

As in the past, proceeds from lunch will go to Commitment for Life.

Commitment for Life Prayer

Prayer for Fairtrade

All loving God of justice and mercy,
move your Holy Spirit within us:

To **consider** those who work to produce the goods that we enjoy, but who are not justly rewarded for their labour.

To **have care** for the producers who struggle to find the resources to feed their families, to send their children to school, or to live safely and comfortably.

To **be concerned** about the injustice which allows some people to amass great wealth, whilst others lack the basic needs of life.

To **devote time** to think about the way in which we shop.

To **support** those traders and businesses who treat people fairly.

To **witness** to Your loving care for creation in the daily decisions that we make.

And to **love you** by doing everything we can to treat all people with respect.

We pray in the name of your Son,
that we too will stand with the invisible, the forgotten and the marginalised and share in the heavenly kingdom that is theirs.

Amen

Dr Mark Dawson (Fairtrade Yorkshire)

Communion Offering for February

Children's Hospice South West

“Dear Friends,

On behalf of the elders, a big thank you to you all for providing us with comments and answers to the recent questionnaire we gave out relating to future ministry and scoping for Nailsea URC. This was much appreciated by ourselves, our minister and Stephen Newell, Transition Minister for the Bristol Area.

As you know, the elders met with Stephen and had a long and detailed discussion which gave much ‘food for thought’ for all concerned. At the end of almost 3 hours no final decisions had been reached, therefore future meetings to involve Stephen, ourselves, Sue Cossey (Synod Pastoral Advisor) and eventually Ruth Whitehead, Synod Moderator will take place.

As you can imagine, this will be a long process. However as decisions concerning Nailsea are reached you will be informed.

It is hoped that by the end of June all stipendiary ministers in the Bristol Area will be given a clear outline of the scoping of their ministerial work and all churches will receive the necessary information which will enable them to plan their future.

In the meantime we will fulfil our promise to report on any decisions that are reached concerning Nailsea URC. We are happy to listen to any questions you may have but we can't promise to know all the answers!

We appreciate your understanding and your prayers at these uncertain times.

Many blessings,
Patricia”

The URC daily devotions

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

Flower Rota

February

6th. John Fife.

13th

20th

27th Bright hour donation

Offers to arrange in a vase appreciated

Please speak to Sally or Barbara.

Also if you are aware of anyone who would appreciate receiving please let an elder know.

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY – January 2022		
SUNDAY 6TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Stephen Newell	11.00AM
SUNDAY 13TH	SUNDAY COMMUNION WORSHIP with Rev.d John Gray	11.00AM
SUNDAY 20TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Delwyn Tilke	11.00AM
SUNDAY 27TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d John Gray	11.00AM
SUNDAY 6TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Brian Jones	11.00AM

Can you make this add up?

How did you do?

		£	S	D
A leather worker	a Tanner			6
A Type of pig	a Guinea Pig	1	1	0
A singer	a Tenor (Tenner)	10	0	0
A part of royal headgear	Half a crown	2	6	
Move up and down	Bob			10
A Stone	14lbs	14	0	0
A mode of transport	Penny farthing			1 1/4
Mars-Jupiter-Pluto	3 far things (3farthings)			3/4
A portion of ladies underwear	Half a Knicker	10	0	
A poorly Octopus	A sick squid (six quid)	6	0	0
		£31 15 2d		

Prayers during the pandemic

Longer

The tunnel is longer than we thought,
More winding than we thought,
Harder and more painful than we could have imagined.

Multiple lights have appeared
Seeming to illumine the way,
Then cast long and heavy shadows
Across our path.

Loving God, we cry to you.

Healing God, we cling to you.

Compassionate God, we seek refuge in your arms.

You have journeyed with us this far - You journey with us still.

You always will. Amen