



Minister Rev'd David Jewell
Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson
nailseaurc.org.uk

CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED
REFORMED CHURCH
MAGAZINE
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I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never
walk in darkness, but will have
the light of life.
John 8 v 12

Dear Friends,

You may have experienced the challenge recently of roof tiles on your home falling off due to the high winds we have experienced, or fence panels become uprooted. The power of the wind is amazing! I recall walking on the Brecon Beacons in my youth and as I reached near to the summit of Pen y Fan, the highest point in that area, it was so windy that I couldn't stand up: I had to crawl to the ordnance survey marker!

We have had some windy days recently and this has brought to mind the double meaning of 'Ruach' in the Bible. This word not only means wind, but also Spirit. In Hebrew the Holy Spirit is the Holy Wind. As I found in my mountain scrambles, it is very hard to walk against the wind and it is tiring and exhausting to walk against the direction the Holy Spirit is wanting to take you. In our Bible study group recently, we discussed Jonah and he is the classic example of someone who tried and look what happened to him!

You may recall the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, recorded in the third chapter of John's gospel: *"Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

You may well be asking yourself the perfectly valid question: "How do I know when I am doing things in agreement with the Holy Spirit?" The Holy Spirit always blows in the direction of the Holy, the pure, the sacred. If you are attempting to commit yourself to unholy thoughts or actions, then you will be

competing against the Holy Spirit's work in your life. Once you repent and turn around then your life becomes so much easier, because you have the power and strength of the Holy Spirit behind you. When you walk in the Spirit, life changes from being a drag to becoming a breeze!

Bless you, Pastor David.

Subject: dates and themes for Bible study

February 6th - Bible overview week 3:
'The beginnings of Israel'
Genesis 18 v 1-15; Genesis 32 v 22-31

February 20th - Bible overview week 4:
'From Joseph to Jeremiah'
Hebrews 11 v 1-40

March 5th - Bible overview week 5:
'The prophecies and birth of Jesus'
Isaiah 53 v 1-12; Matthew 1 v 18-25

World Day of Prayer

This is taking place in our Church on:
Friday 1st March at 2.30 pm. All welcome.

Note for Your Diary

Our Annual Church Meeting will take place on Sunday 7th April. More details in next month's Connect.

A time to say "Help"

Sometimes I feel myself falling -
please catch me.

Sometimes I am lost -
please guide me.

Sometimes I am overwhelmed -
please sustain me.

Sometimes I feel empty -
please inspire me.

Sometimes I am weary of my tasks -
please energise me.

Sometimes I feel sick at heart -
please encourage me.

Sometimes I feel weak -
please give me your strength.

Sometimes I am so tired -
please help me find rest.

And when, quite simply, I lose sight of you,
and I don't know how to face the next step -
please carry me,
reassure me
and surround me with your grace.

Amen

Karen Campbell

The URC daily devotions

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

Communion Offerings for 2024

This coming year our Communion Offerings will be for
Commitment for Life, St. Peter's Hospice, Children's Hospice
SW and Vine Counselling.

As your Treasurer I thank you all so much for your
generosity. As a small congregation we should be extremely
proud of our giving to outside causes as well as our
weekly/monthly giving to our own church.

Isabel

Communion Offering for February

St Peter's Hospice

St Peter's Hospice provides
specialist palliative care to adults in
the wider Bristol area with life-
limiting illnesses, including support
to their relatives, friends and
professional carers. All Hospice
services are free of charge to
everyone.



At David's Welcome Service the three churches of Wrington, Winscombe and Nailsea were asked to give a brief history of their 'journey'. This was Nailsea's contribution.

Work on building our church in Nailsea began in 1838 to serve the ever growing number of workers in the mining and glassworks industries. First it was an Independent Chapel, then Zion Congregational Church and now Nailsea United Reformed Church.

Numbers have waxed and waned, at one point being as low as 8 and it was suggested then that we should close. But one very determined lady, a Mrs Freda Vowles, refused point blank to allow this to happen and, with the occasional help of itinerant preachers, held services for those loyal few in the vestry. Many of the older folk in Nailsea will still refer to us as 'Freda's Church'.

We became a joint pastorate with Clevedon in 1976 although a joint pastorate minister was not called until the following year . Unfortunately for us Clevedon decided to close and so we lost our minister, Rev Ian Kirby, as his stipend would have been halved. We then joined with Portishead when we were led by Rev Chris Serle. Chris was not a well man and when he died we were again declared vacant and Portishead decided to go it alone'.

Most recently we were joined with Horfield and Argyle Morley in Bristol led by Rev John Gray. This came to an end last year. We now consider ourselves very fortunate in not having had to once again declare a vacancy in the normal way. We are thrilled to be joining with Wrington and Winscombe with David Jewell as our joint minister. We are excited to join with a pastorate where we feel that the emphasis is on caring and sharing and working together as a true and equal joint pastorate

Our secretary, Sally Edmindson, is not well and so cannot be here today, but said to be sure to say that:- David is the 'Jewell' in our crown, a pastoral gift for our congregation. He is an answer to our

prayers, his Bible knowledge and prayer guidance means so much to us all.

We feel that the strength of any church is not only tested by the numbers worshipping but by the depth of loving care that is shown within it. We have had constant cause through all the years of our history to thank God for the warmth of fellowship and depth of concern for each other experienced among those worshipping with us.

We look forward with eagerness to whatever our future holds.

Stella

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY – FEBRUARY 2024		
SUNDAY 4th	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mrs Stella Patterson	11.00AM
SUNDAY 11th	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Jeffrey Ponsonby	11.00AM
SUNDAY 18th	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev'd Helena McKinnon	11.00AM
SUNDAY 25th	COMMUNION SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev'd David Jewell	11.00AM
SUNDAY 3rd	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Jeffrey Ponsonby	11.00AM

Flowers

February 4th Patrick
February 11th Barbara
February 18th Flower Fund
February 25th Flower Fund
March 3rd

Readers

Patrick
Isabel
Peter
Jill
Patrick

Please do speak to Sally or Barbara if you know of anyone including outside our church family who would appreciate flowers following our service and if you are able to deliver with a card (I have) we will then be supporting our community beyond our church doors.

Pipe Organ Recital

Did you know that the organ in Redland Park is one of the most Interesting and versatile Pipe Organs in Bristol.

A group are planning a series of short concerts on various Saturdays. Coffee and cakes will be available at 10.30 am followed by Organ Music at 11.00 am for approximately 45 minutes. More details will follow.

For admission they will be asking for a donation of £5 for adults under 18`s free.

Initial Dates	February	17 th	to be announced
	March	13 th	Eric Tyson
	March	23 rd	to be announced

The Good News

They don't publish the good news.
The good news is published by us.
We have a special edition every moment,
and we need you to read it.
The good news is that you are alive,
and the linden tree is still there,
standing firm in the harsh Winter.
The good news is that you have wonderful eyes
to touch the blue sky.
The good news is that your child is there before you,
and your arms are available;
hugging is possible.
They only print what is wrong.
Look at each of our special editions.
We always offer the things that are not wrong.
We want you to benefit from them
and help protect them.
The dandelion is there by the sidewalk,
smiling it's wondrous smile,
singing the song of eternity.
Listen! You have ears that can hear it.
Bow your head.
Listen to it.
Leave behind the world of sorrow
and preoccupation
and get free.
The latest good news
is that you can do it.

by Thich Nhat Hahn (a Vietnamese Buddhist Monk)