



CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED
REFORMED CHURCH
MAGAZINE
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From the rising of the sun
to the place where it sets,
the name of the Lord
is to be praised.
Psalm 113.v.3

Minister Rev'd David Jewell
Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson
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Dear Friends,

I have been listening to a remarkable series of Podcasts titled: 'The surprising rebirth of belief in God'. It is presented by Justin Brierley, experienced in chairing debates between atheists and Christians. He feels that the tide against faith has turned and that we are beginning to see people generally becoming more tolerant and even interested in what faith could mean for them. The key figure behind hardcore Evangelistic Atheism, Richard Dawkins, has even gone so far as to call himself a 'cultural Christian' which he defines as having no belief in God but appreciative of hymns and churches and of the Christian influence on society. Another central figure in the Atheist movement, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, has recently converted to Christianity. In her childhood in Somalia she had been a Muslim.

It feels to me like it is time for us who have been Christians for many years to remind ourselves of our first love and get serious again about who it is we serve and what the privileges, joys, and challenges there are in being a Jesus follower for much of our lives. We can find ourselves as the Older Brother in the Parable of the prodigal son or one of the outraged workers in the vineyard who had worked all day for the same reward as those who had been called late to the task.

In the course of my work, I find myself talking to those who are mature in years but are spiritual toddlers, relatively new to the faith, and they yearn to have had a much longer walk of faith with their Lord. I say about getting serious not just because of this, but also the sense that the tide is turning, there is a desperate need generally to find meaning and joy in life and some of those searching to have their hearts filled are turning to church. What will they find there?

The world around has moved on apace and many have lifestyles which are accepted by society, but whom church fellowships might struggle. I am currently running an Alpha course in one of the churches and two who have attended have said that they separately spent a year visiting empty churches in order to experience the sense of holiness and warmth in them!

So, there is an urgent need to build momentum so that we are ready and then God will encourage attendance in those He can be confident will receive a warm welcome without prejudice, without us wanting to sort their lives out, just leaving all to the Holy Spirit.

God bless and keep you, David

Hymn Of the Divine Dandelion

I am born as the sun,
But then turn into the moon,
as my blonde hairs turn
Greyish-white and fall to
The ground,
Only to be buried again.
Then to be born again,
Into a thousand suns
And a thousand
Moons

Suzy Kassem

Not peace, but a sword

You never said it would be easy, Lord.
You never promised that we would be respected.
That our churches would be full.
That our children would follow in our faith.

You never said that it would be comfortable
to challenge the powerful,
to speak up for the silenced,
to demand justice for the oppressed.

You never offered an escape
from the troubles of the world.
Instead, you showed us how to live with courage
on the way of the cross.

When we get disheartened,
remind us of the Father's endless love.
When we get complacent,
open our eyes to the cross we need to bear.

At all times, may we know
that you are walking beside us,
through whatever we face in your name.

Sue McCoan
URC Prayer handbook

The URC daily devotions

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

Communion Offering for June

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



In a recent copy of the URC magazine 'Reform' the question "What makes a church thrive?" was explored. Suggestions given by one of the contributors included the following:

- * Step out of your comfort zone - well out, if necessary.
- * Accept change for the better, even when it hurts.
- * Don't always try to fit people into roles - look at the gifts they have and use what God has put in front of you.
- * Play as well as work - relish social events, humour, food, music, drama.
- * Abandon things that aren't working.
- * Don't build the path and then get annoyed if people don't follow it. See where they need to walk and then pave those areas.
- * Learn from all others. There is no human from whom nothing can be learned.
- * Share feelings and problems candidly.
- * Forgive.
- * Learn from Jesus, who forged changes, called unlikely people, and pulled them out of their comfort zone.

I wonder, do you agree with these statements, and how does Nailsea URC measure up?

Also, would you have other ideas to add to the list?

I would be interested to know.

Patricia

GOD'S WISE PURPOSES

Psalm 13 v 1

The United Kingdom brims with history. Many towns and cities have plaques honouring historic figures or commemorating sites where important events occurred. But one such sign exemplifies the droll British sense of humour. On a weathered plaque outside a bed and breakfast in Sandwich, England, a message reads, "On this site, 5 September 1782, nothing happened."

Sometimes it seems to us that nothing is happening regarding our prayers. We pray and pray, bringing our petitions to our Father with expectation that He'll respond - right now. The psalmist David expressed such frustration when he prayed, "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" (Psalm 13:1). We can easily echo those same thoughts: How long, Lord, before you respond? However, our God is not only perfect in His wisdom but also in His timing. David was able to say, "I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation" (v5). Ecclesiastes 3:11 reminds us "(God) has made everything beautiful in its time." God may not always respond to our prayers when we'd like Him to, but He's always working out His wise purposes. We can take heart that when He does answer, it will be right and good and beautiful.

Loving God, please help me to learn a patience in prayer born of trust in You.

Source: Our Daily Bread

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY – JUNE 2024		
SUNDAY 2ND	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Daviid Jewell	11.00AM
SUNDAY 9TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Jeffery Ponsonby	11.00AM
SUNDAY 16TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Daviid Jewell	11.00AM
SUNDAY 23RD	SUNDAY COMMUNION WORSHIP with Rev'd Helena McKinnon	11.00AM
SUNDAY 30TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Mr Brian Jones	11.00AM
SUNDAY 7TH	SUNDAY WORSHIP with Rev.d Daviid Jewell	11.00AM

Flowers

June 2nd

Ave

June 9th

John B

June 16th

Flower Fund

June 23rd

Mary

June 30th

Sally

July 7th

Patricia

Readers

Patrick

Jane

Isabel

Yvonne

Philip

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.