

DERRIFORD URC NEWS LETTER

THE LIGHT, LIFE AND LOVE OF JESUS IN OUR COMMUNITY



27TH JUNE 2021



As I was preparing the sermon for this week's service – Ezekiel 47, the river flowing from the temple (see below) and as I read Isaiah 6 in preparation, I got to thinking about what it was that Isaiah was particularly concerned about and of course that was his lips – how he used them, or as James puts it in the book of James, in the New Testament how we use our tongues to speak blessings but also curses. This got me thinking; if a great prophet like Isaiah was worried about that, perhaps we should be. Perhaps we need to think about controlling what we say (and perhaps even what we think)?

As Christians we need to be a people who use our tongues for blessing, and only blessing. So often I hear people, especially Christians, bringing people down with what they say, gossiping or being critical about people. You know Jesus, even when he was on the cross, never said anything negative about His crucifiers! He said, "forgive them Lord, for they don't know what they are doing". Wouldn't it be fabulous if Christians were known, rather than what we don't like or think, as people who always lifts other up? In word and deed. I wonder what effect that would have on Church attendance and church growth?

We are told by Jesus to love our enemies and bless those who curse us (Matt 5:44). You know, I don't know that I have any enemies, but I have people who I feel have wronged me and people that I struggle with. I think Jesus is saying we should love these people too and if that is the case we should be speaking blessings into their lives too!

Let's be a church that never speaks negatively into people lives but speaks life, joy, peace and blessings. What do you think?

Hope you enjoy the newsletter. I have added on the back page, a list of all the events over the next few months. Hopefully, this makes it easier to transfer things into your diary.

God Bless

Mark

Summary of Sunday's Sermon/Service

The river flowing from the temple. Ezekiel 47:1-12

Rivers and water in general are powerful images in the Bible. They are images of new life and refreshment. And our Ezekiel passage is one of the most popular and well known in the Old Testament, if not the Bible as a whole. The temple is also a powerful image in the Bible, the image of meeting with

*For I am Yahweh your
God, so you must
consecrate
yourselves and be holy
because I am holy.
(Lev 11:44)*

God and God being at the centre with His people. The Trouble was, at least in the Old Testament, it was difficult to come into God's presence because God was Holy and humans were generally not, they were unclean and like light and dark or good and bad, they can't be together.

The whole book of Leviticus is summed up by Leviticus 11:44 Be Holy as I am Holy. The idea is that for people to meet with God (in the Temple) they had to be clean, and they became clean by (generally) sacrificing animals. All the rules and regulations are showing the Israelites how to get clean to enable them to enter the temple, enter into God's presence. This was the norm for these Israelite people, even (or especially because) they were God's chosen people. As we move on in the Bible this amazingly changes. Isaiah for example ends up in the temple (in Heaven) and he has not done all that he should have done to ensure that he is clean, and an amazing thing happens. He is terrified because he is unclean, however a Seraphim comes and touches his lips with a burning coal and instead of the coal becoming unclean which is what would normally happen, he becomes clean. So, Isaiah is in the temple and the temple cleans him!

Now as we move on in our Bible and we get to Ezekiel's vision of the river flowing out of the temple, what is happening? The river is cleansing the world and the further it goes from the Temple the stronger the current gets and the more life is growing and being refreshed. Which again is such a wonderful vision of the Temple touching and refreshing the world. And of course, when we move further in our Bibles and get into the New Testament we come to Jesus who becomes the personification of this river being the living water that give life as Jesus touches the unclean in society. The incredible thing here is this is not the end, first Jesus sends out His disciples and then sends out the 72 to be that living water wherever they go and then of course, even that is not the end. Jesus is crucified, goes to glory (after being resurrected) and sends the Holy Spirit on to all His followers which we (and those that have said yes to him) are now living waters themselves, bringing new life to the world around them.



*'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being
will flow rivers of living water (John 7:38)*

Of course, the one thing we need to do to bring these living waters to the world around us is be filled with living within ourselves and that ladies and gentlemen is the theme for my next service / sermon on the 8th August. For your homework, why not investigate for yourself what the Bible says about living water?

Now of course as always, the above is just a summary of the service on Sunday. If you would like to watch the whole service, including the sermon, prayers and songs, you can by clicking the link below:

<http://www.derrifordchurch.co.uk/sunday-4th-july-2021-morning-service/>

This **Sunday morning's service** is being led by Phil and Barry Jones is preaching. The title/theme for the service / sermon is **Worship Never Ceases**, and this week's reading is taken from **2 Chronicles 5:1-14**. If you are able, please do try to read this before the service on Sunday. I am sure this will be very inspiring, especially as we come out of a time where we have not been able to worship as we, perhaps, would have liked!

This Week's Notice slide

Notices

- **Tuesday Prayers** (9:15am) on Zoom
- **Sunday Service** (10:30am) on Zoom or in Person

Next Film Night

(Tuesday 10th August 7pm)

Next Nooma

(Tuesday 17th August 7:30pm)

Feast of Fun, Afternoon of Fun

(Tuesday 10th and 24th August)

Interested? Speak to Helen

We are also going to do Feast of Fun hampers on 3rd, 17th and 31st August



2 Chronicles 5:1-14
Worship Never Ceases

Prayer and Prayer Pointers...

There is so much in the world to pray for at the moment. Remember to pray through your newspapers and TV / Radio news reports. May I also ask you to pray through the events on the last page, our diary? Ask God if he will use each event to glorify Himself and to touch the people who attend with His presence.

Pray as we plan what to do with the buildings / halls etc. Pray that we hear God in all of our meetings. We had a wonderful meeting with the URC which was a real blessing. Please keep the process in your prayers.

Pray for our fellowship. There have been numerous people who have been on the prayer chain. Many of our folk, are needing God's healing hand and many of our folks are still feeling lonely and isolated. Please also remember to continue using those free minutes you have and ring people up to just say hello. Also continue to keep Ron, Andy and Lilly in your prayers.

Can I also ask you to pray for my son over the next few weeks. He moved to Blackburn on Monday the 5th July to start his first post as minister of Word and Sacrament after finishing training. He has been called to look after 11 churches (with two other ministers) in and around Blackburn. His ordination and induction service is on Sunday 18th July. Sheila and I would both value your prayers as he starts this new part of his calling by God. Also as he is going into one of the heaviest affected areas of Covid in the country!!

One particular thing to pray for this weekend, is the URC national assembly. This is where all the major decisions are made for the URC. It is held every year over a long weekend (Friday – Monday) and this year it is this weekend (Friday 9th – Monday 12th). This year it is (not surprisingly on Zoom) and I am one of the representatives for our (South Western) Synod.

Please remember to use the Prayer chain if you have something that needs prayer:

Any prayer requests please text / email Lucy on:
lucyparker59@yahoo.co.uk / 07503 003250

Future Church Events...

Derriford Film Club we had a smashing time on Tuesday as we watched War Room, I think each one of us came away with the thought and desire to improve our prayer life. It was such an inspiring film. The next Derriford Film Club, 10th August. Film yet to be decided.

Nooma Our next Nooma is on the 17th of August at 7:30pm. It is Nooma number 7 called Luggage. Please put the date in your diary.

Feast of Fun. Over August we are running Feast of Fun every Week, three times simply giving hampers as we have done over the last 12 months but twice inviting people to come and have an afternoon of fun, with games, sports and craft activities as well as a bar-b-que or picnic type tea. This will be a great opportunity to meet some of the families that we have been serving over the last 18 months or so

Other Church stuff...

Our Building etc.



The TVs are in and working (although I am writing this on Wednesday morning and they are currently still installing!!).

We had a very helpful meeting last Wednesday with Raoul Hewitt and Diane Phillips from the URC (South Western Synod) Property Office. They gave us lots of good advice that we are still processing. One of the things that we have to do first is to produce a vision plan. This is a plan of where we see God leading us here in Derriford and how we see the church growing and reaching out into the community with the love of Jesus. I think this is very exciting indeed. It is about how we see God guiding and growing us both physically and spiritually over the years ahead.



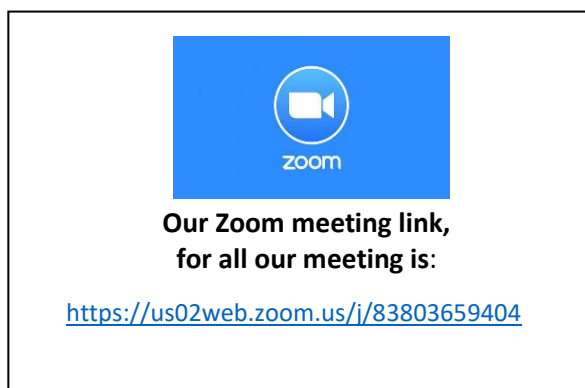
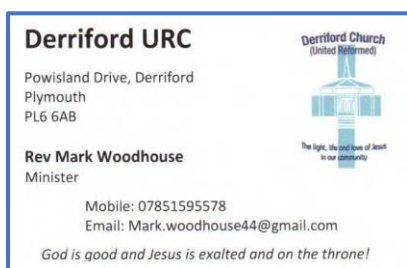
Keswick Convention. Keswick convention starts on 24th to the 31st July. Sheila and I will be there; however, they are also broadcasting it again this year. It may be worth searching YouTube to get the link and watch some of it. It is always inspiring and well worth connecting, especially the evening celebrations.

Church newsletter going forward as I said in the newsletter last time over the next couple of months the newsletter will be less regular than usual. Below are the Sundays when it will be produced (over the next couple months):

- 8th August (I am away from the 15th July both on holiday for a week or so and also going Keswick Convention – A Christian Conference similar to Spring Harvest held in Keswick in the Lake District.
- then next one will be the 19th September

I think the newsletter is a very valuable way to communicate and keep people informed, however I think weekly is a little over kill, especially now that most of us our able (will be able) to get out a little more. Therefore, my plan is to produce a newsletter once a month, rather than every week. And as always if you have any ideas on what could go into them, I am always struggling, let me know.

God Bless you all.



Church Diary

July / August / September

July

- 13th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 13th Elders Meeting (7pm) - please keep them in your prayers.
- 18th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 20th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 25th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 27th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom

August

- 1st Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 3rd Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 3rd Feast of Fun – Hamper delivery (11am)
- 8th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 9th Deacons' Meeting (10:30am) – please pray for them.
- 10th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 10th Feast of Fun, fun afternoon (2pm – 4pm)
- 10th Film Night (7pm) - Film to be arranged.
- 15th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 17th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 17th Feast of Fun – Hamper delivery (11am)
- 17th Nooma on Zoom (7:30pm)
- 22nd Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 24th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 24th Feast of Fun, fun afternoon (2pm – 4pm)
- 25th ACTaf Service in Church.
- 29th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 31st Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 31st Feast of Fun – Hamper delivery (11am)

September

- 5th Sunday morning service (10:30am) in person or on Zoom.
- 7th Morning Prayers (9:15am) on Zoom
- 19th Church Meeting – *please put this in your diary.*