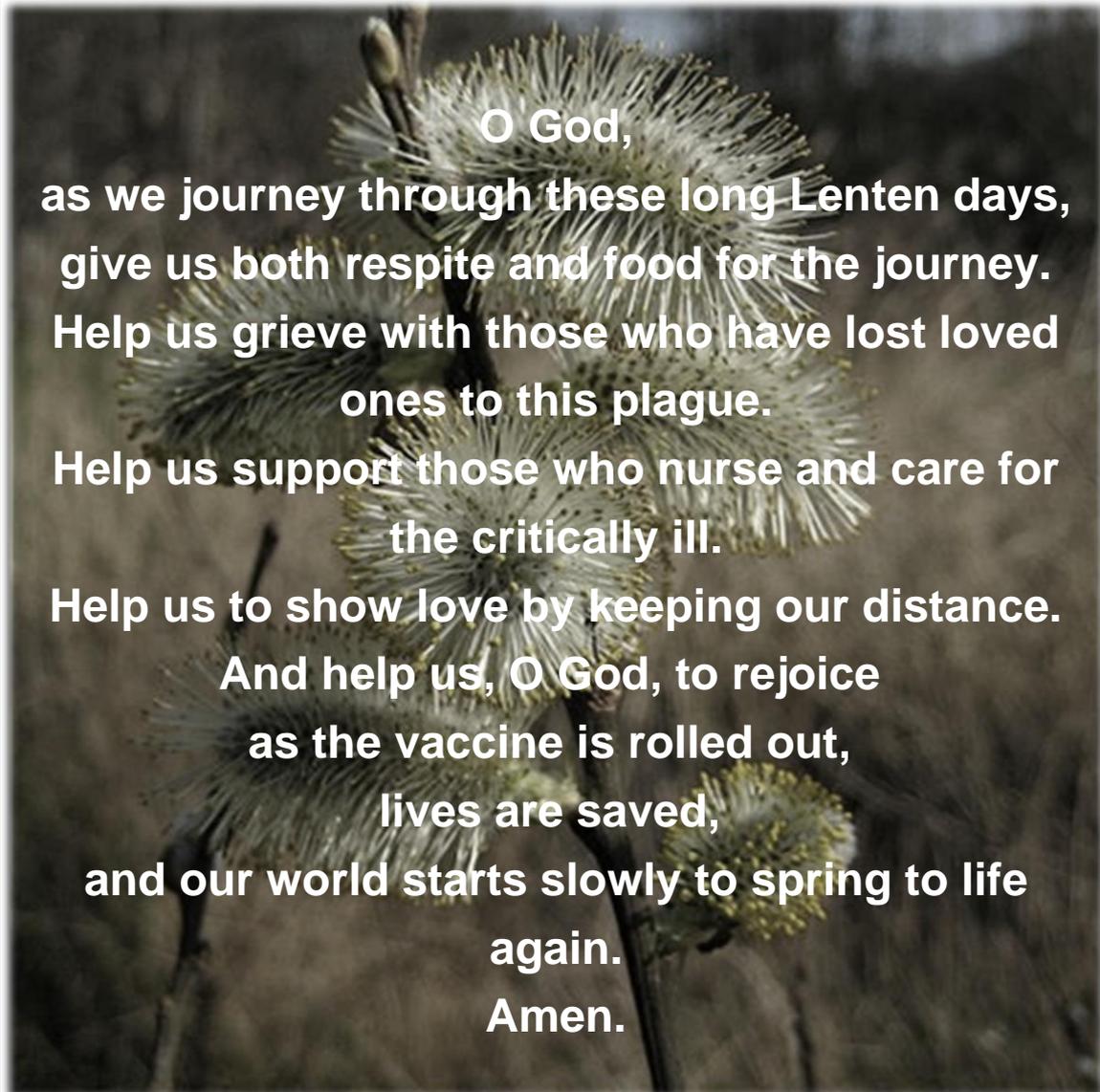




# Wilbraham St Ninian's United Reformed Church Newsletter



*March 2021*



O God,  
as we journey through these long Lenten days,  
give us both respite and food for the journey.  
Help us grieve with those who have lost loved  
ones to this plague.  
Help us support those who nurse and care for  
the critically ill.  
Help us to show love by keeping our distance.  
And help us, O God, to rejoice  
as the vaccine is rolled out,  
lives are saved,  
and our world starts slowly to spring to life  
again.  
Amen.





## From the Editor..... March 2021

### Stuck with Our Neighbours

Our cat, Magik, has well and truly settled in and has been exploring everywhere in our house and garden. Occasionally we hear a desperate yowl as she manages to shut herself into a wardrobe or gets herself stuck in the lilac tree. Sometimes we have to get hold of her and rescue her! Being a cat, of course she's not remotely grateful.

And I don't know about you, but it feels like we've been stuck in permanent lockdown in Greater Manchester - it's nearly the 1-year anniversary of the start of England's first lockdown (March 23<sup>rd</sup>). But what happened in my road during that first lockdown was that the neighbours came together in community, helping one another get through in their own ways - shopping, passing on useful information, praying together for a seriously ill Muslim neighbour (he's OK now), playing music and singing along, sharing food...you name it, we did it. We wondered how we would keep our church fellowship going and together we worked out a way to manage somehow, with help from technology, creative people and old-fashioned neighbourly acts. What seemed impossible turned out to be doable with a little help and insight from friends, family members, neighbours, maybe even a stranger. Sometimes we just need a different perspective that challenges our old ways of thinking about things.

Lent is when we're meant to critically examine our lives and see where we're stuck, and stripping away what is getting in the way of our relationship with God. So, when we feel stuck and can't feel God's closeness, let's remember that we journey to God with each other, **together**, just as it should be, and God will make himself known in our fellowship that we have with one another.

Every Blessing, *Mel*



**The Last Week:** Lent 2021 course which reflects day-by-day on Holy Week  
**Tuesdays 2pm and repeated at 7pm**  
 Led by Rev Lee Battle

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March  | Monday & Tuesday                 |
| Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March  | Wednesday                        |
| Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> March | Maundy Thursday (with Communion) |
| Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March | Good Friday                      |
| Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> March | Holy Saturday                    |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> April  | Easter Sunday                    |

**BASED ON THE LAST WEEK. YOU DO NOT NEED TO BUY THE BOOK, ALL MATERIALS ARE PROVIDED.**

**ZOOM MEETING ID**  
**812 6213 7220**  
**PASSCODE**  
**LENT**

**Easter Online Festival: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>– Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

Technology makes it possible for people to join this online event happening in the USA! It is free to join. For details of how to join, please email the Rev Dr Kevin Snyman, Commitment for Life Coordinator, on [kevin.snyman@urc.org.uk](mailto:kevin.snyman@urc.org.uk)

## Family News

There are signs that spring is on the way: daffodils, snowdrops and crocuses have been spotted and the days are getting fractionally longer. The clocks will go forward 1 hour on 28<sup>th</sup> March, giving us lighter evenings, and hopefully the chance to mix with friends and family outdoors. The wonderful news is that far more of the morning congregation have had their first vaccination and hope for their second in April.

**Jenny Johnson** was eventually vaccinated at home as she was classed as housebound and vulnerable. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but we will have to continue being patient.

Meals from **Space at the Table** are still being received and appreciated. A midweek surprise and contact from church is important to all involved in the scheme.

**Sheila Lyall** has been troubled by another ulcer on her leg which needs to be dressed by the district nurse. **Alastair Lyall** was perplexed to find moss growing on his artificial lawn. The artificial lawn was supposed to be maintenance free!

**Joyce Henry** has been in her flat for 10 years now. Her husband John would have been 100 on 28<sup>th</sup> February. It was traditional for Joyce to make a Christmas pudding for his birthday and this year Joyce will mark John's birthday with a Christmas pudding from her M&S hamper.



It is one year since **Rev Lee Battle** preached with a view and accepted the call to ministry on our Missional Partnership. I don't think anyone could have foreseen what she ended up taking on! We congratulate her on her anniversary, and we are grateful for the energy and creativity Lee has brought to her ministry, especially in the realms of using technology to stay together in fellowship when we cannot meet in person.

**Sue Posada** sends her love to everyone. She enjoys starting the day with the Daily Devotions and finds they help her feel in touch with Wilbraham St Ninian's and the wider URC community. Mario's mum, Maria, is staying with them at the moment. She has dementia but she still has a good energy and loves helping round the house and fussing over the cat, which is a great help! They are keeping fit with yoga and swimming and Mario still rides his bike and motorbike. Nadia is still in Colombia and looking for a new job. Lauren is buying a flat in Whalley Range and is following in her proud Mum's footsteps by starting a Masters degree in Psychology in September 2021! Sue reports that the Covid vaccination programme hasn't really got off the ground in Colombia but she is looking forward to the day (as are we all!) when she can hop on a plane and visit family and friends in the UK.

Our **URC Daily Devotion** writers are writing prayers to help us through these strange times, which we hope will give voice to the many different emotions we are all feeling. Each Thursday a new prayer will be published at this link: <https://urc.org.uk/prayers-during-the-pandemic>. The first prayer is on the front cover, written by Rev Andy Braunston.

# Church Events

*online via Zoom until further notice*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2pm / 7pm    | Lent Course – see page 3                                |
| Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 11am       | Coffee Morning  |
| Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 7.30pm     | Growing Together – Bible Study/Worship with Dave Fraser |
| <b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 7pm</b>     | <b>World Day of Prayer Service</b>                      |
| Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2pm/ 7pm     | Lent Course   |
| Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March 11am      | Coffee Morning  |
| Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm    | Growing Together  |
| <i>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm</i> | <i>Elders Meeting (if required)</i>                     |
| Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2pm / 7pm   | Lent Course <i>with Communion</i>                       |
| Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March 11am      | Coffee Morning  |
| Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm    | Growing Together  |
| <b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2pm</b>    | <b>Church Meeting</b>                                   |
| Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> March 7pm          | Mindfulness Service led by Lee                          |
| Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2pm / 7pm   | Lent Course   |
| Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 11am      | Coffee Morning  |
| Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm    | Growing Together  |
| Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2pm / 7pm   | Lent Course   |
| Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March 11am      | Coffee Morning  |
| Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March 7.30pm    | Growing Together  |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2pm / 7pm    | Lent Course (final session)                             |

## Lectionary Bible Readings for this month

Taken from "Roots on the Web" Lectionary Year B

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Feb 28th<br><b>Lent 2</b>                             | <i>Genesis 17.1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22.23-31;<br/>Romans 4.13-25; Mark 8.31-38</i>                 |
| March 7 <sup>th</sup><br><b>Lent 3</b>                | <i>Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19;<br/>1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22</i>                       |
| March 14 <sup>th</sup><br><b>Mothering<br/>Sunday</b> | <i>Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;<br/>Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21</i>                |
| March 21 <sup>st</sup><br><b>Lent 5</b>               | <i>Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12;<br/>Psalm 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10;<br/>John 12:20-33</i> |
| March 28 <sup>th</sup><br><b>Palm<br/>Sunday</b>      | <i>Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Mark 11:1-11</i>  |
| April 4 <sup>th</sup><br><b>Easter<br/>Sunday</b>     | <i>Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;<br/>1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18</i>            |
| April 11 <sup>th</sup><br><b>Easter 2</b>             | <i>Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2.2;<br/>John 20:19-31</i>                              |

### World Day of Prayer 2021 Zoom Service

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 7pm



**“Build on a Strong Foundation”**

written by the women of Vanuatu

**Zoom Meeting ID: 820 8752 1931**

**Passcode: 382783**

**Telephone dial-in number: +44 203 901 7895**

## URC Giving Thanks for Our Vaccine



As we and more of our family, friends, and neighbours receive our COVID-19 vaccine, we are both joyful and relieved. But we are aware that many communities around the world don't have access to vaccines. The COVID vaccine rollout is one latest example of the inequalities exposed by COVID, with many poorer nations and vulnerable communities having no access to the vaccine or being charged up to four times the price paid by European countries. And many of these communities lack the basics they need to protect themselves like clean water for handwashing.

Christian Aid has invited the URC to partner with them in addressing this disparity. The Just Vaccine appeal encourages us to show our thankfulness at receiving the vaccine by making a donation enabling others to receive the vaccine too. Please see the link below. Support if you can and encourage others to do the same.

<https://events.tapsimple.org/page/christian-aid/united-reformed-church-supporting-a-just-vaccine-rollout>

If you can't donate online then the best way to donate is by telephone on **020 7523 2269**, because, unfortunately, under the current circumstances, there is a delay to processing donations by post. You can still send a cheque payable to Christian Aid, and post it to Christian Aid, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL.



£20 could buy access to clean water for a family for 6 weeks. £40.00 could provide a family with hygiene kits including soap, hand sanitiser and face masks. As you or a family member is protected, please give to help protect those who don't have access to vaccines.