



**Wilbraham St Ninian's
United Reformed Church
Newsletter**



April 2021

**Hallelujah!
He is Risen!**

**Thine be the Glory
Risen, conquering
Son**

**Endless is the
Victory**

**Thou o'er death hast
won**





From the Editor..... April 2021

Wounded Healers

Can you believe it is almost Easter already? It feels like we have been living in a kind of Lent for much longer than 40 days and nights!

March 23rd was the anniversary of the start of the first lockdown and was also a National Day of Reflection. Initiated by the charity Marie Curie, it was an opportunity for us to reflect on loved ones lost to Covid-19, what the past year of pandemic living has meant, how it has changed us - and, ultimately, how we might go about preparing ourselves to re-enter a world that is safer, that is vaccinated, in which we restore some semblance of our former lives.

It's understandable that many of us might want to forget the trauma of the last year, but in our eagerness to get to a place of wholeness and healing, "the new normal", perhaps we ignore a crucial part of the Easter message.

When Jesus is resurrected, he becomes "the wounded healer". It is from his own wounds that Jesus can touch ours. There is a basic truth here: our God is a God who was wounded; Jesus invites us to touch those very wounds. And we are made in the image and likeness of that same God.

This year we are all wounded, and we all want to be made whole. But think on - it might be through our own wounds - the loss of loved ones, strained relationships, anxiety over the future- that we find ourselves able to accompany someone else.

I certainly think this is true of medical and other front-line staff, who never signed up to be 'heroes'. They are caregivers; doctors and nurses and other hospital staff; shopworkers; emergency services workers; bus, train, taxi and tram drivers: people who also struggle with their own loss and grief, who worry about bringing the virus home to their families, who remain courageous despite their fears. And we should never stop thanking God for them and what they do.

We learn from them that we need not hide our wounds. We need not wait until we are fully healed, for some of the wounds we've endured during this past year will last a very long time. So, let's embrace Jesus' invitation to be wounded healers.

Let's ask Jesus, our resurrected, yet wounded healer:

To care for us, our loved ones and our church family with compassion

To comfort those mourning the loss of loved ones, or the loss of health

To bring strength, confidence and an enduring hope to each of us, and to our loved ones and colleagues

To enable us to take time to care for ourselves and to listen to the voices in our own hearts

To fill us with courage to remain faithful to the promise of healing

Amen

Every Blessing, *Mel*

Family News

The clocks went forward 1 hour on 28th March, giving us lighter evenings, and at the time of writing, lovely warm sunny weather, although we understand this is not going to last for long, sadly! Some of the morning congregation have already had their second vaccination, the rest are hoping for their second in April or May. Shielding is ending so that many of us who have been cooped up indoors will be able to go out and about and perhaps even go into a shop! (M&S Food, here I come!)

The **Space at the Table** project is currently funded until May, and the March Church Meeting agreed unanimously to ask our Managers to consider how much we would donate towards continuing until at least July. The midweek meal and the contact with church are much appreciated, especially by those who are unable to join services and meetings on Zoom.

The Hall family recently spent 10 days in isolation as **Rosa** contracted Covid-19. The height of excitement was the arrival of a new tin-opener! Fortunately, the rest of the family tested negative, and Rosa had very mild symptoms and is back at work. Rosa is looking forward to moving to a flat in West Didsbury over Easter, where she will have her cousin's family as (nearly) next-door-neighbours. We wish her and Billy all the best in their new home.

Ian Dyer of the Afternoon congregation is going into hospital soon for a minor operation. We hope everything goes well and Ian is back in circulation soon.

Church News

Rev Lee Battle is recovering at home from an unpleasant illness, which has prevented her being as active in the Partnership as usual. Lee has been very busy with Zoom coffee mornings, book club, Lent sessions and services; she has also been co-opted onto South Area Pastoral Committee to support NW Synod. We wish Lee a speedy recovery and hope she is well enough to attend our Easter service on Sunday at 11.00am. Details of Zoom Easter services and events are on page 8.

Our managers report that significant work is needed to bring the Old Hall up to scratch, and also that the Chorlton Good Neighbours office suffered badly from Storm Christopher earlier this year. Managers will ask three architects' firms to tender for the works and bring the results to Elders, who will work with managers and CGN representatives to bring a proposal to the June Church Meeting.

The URC has issued more advice and guidance about re-opening churches for worship and lettings. Although we all would love to meet together in person, we are still in unknown territory because we have yet to work out what 'in-person' services would look like and how we would operate. There is a lot to consider! **Elders would welcome your ideas and suggestions for opening up.** Please don't be shy...

The **New Hall** is likely to be a polling station for the local elections on May 6th, subject to strict Covid-19 safety and security measures. Pat Anstis will oversee as usual.

Claiming Gift Aid from HMRC on our church offerings

A message from Pat Anstis:

I have just completed and submitted the claim for 2019 – my apologies for not having done it sooner, just don't know where the last year went! As for much else, this year has been a difficult one for people trying to maintain their giving to church while we have not been attending services – so I want to thank everyone for adapting to the new situation by making their gifts by cheque or bank transfer.

Although the monies received as offertory in 2019 was slightly higher than that received in 2018, the amount that I have been able to claim back in the form of Gift Aid was over £1000 less.

Everybody who has signed a Gift Aid form is required to let me know if they stop paying sufficient tax to cover the Gift Aid I claim on their donations, or if they change their address, and I am required to keep a check on the situation – so, for 2019 I tried to contact everybody who has signed a Gift Aid form to check this, by phone, email and letter. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get a response from everybody so had to leave some donations out of the Gift Aid claim. I'm hoping that I won't have to do this again for 2020's gifts. For everyone that I spoke to, or received a response from, in the last year, I will assume that their tax situation for 2020 is the same – but for others, it would really help me (and the church) if you could let me know whether you still pay sufficient tax to cover the amount I can claim as Gift Aid, and also whether you have changed your address since completing your Gift Aid form (if not already notified).

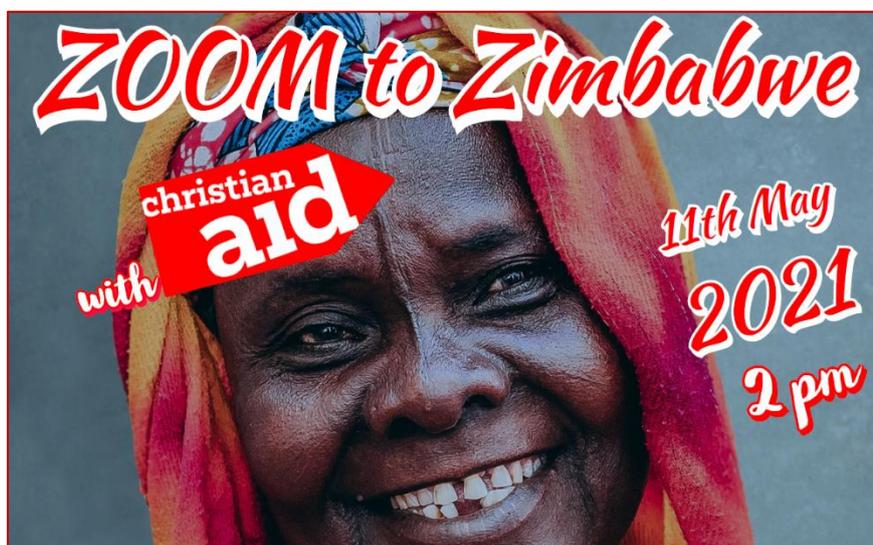
You can email Pat at patanstis@hotmail.co.uk ; her phone number is in the Church Directory.

Editor: I'm sure you'll join me in warmly thanking Pat for all she does to ensure our giving to the church is as effective as possible.

Lectionary Bible Readings for this month

Taken from "Roots on the Web" Lectionary Year B

April 4 th Easter Sunday	<i>Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18</i>
April 11 th Easter 2	<i>Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2.2; John 20:19-31</i>
April 18 th Easter 3	<i>Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48</i>
April 25 th Good Shepherd Sunday	<i>Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10.11-18</i>
May 2 nd Easter 5	<i>Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8</i>
May 9 th Easter 6	<i>Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17</i>



ADVANCE NOTICE!

A Commitment for Life / Christian Aid Event on Zoom.

More details in the May Bulletin



Holy Week and Easter Services

All services are on Zoom

Thursday 1st April (Maundy Thursday) - 7.30pm

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Meeting ID: 8928 7774 242

Friday 2nd April (Good Friday)

Lent Stations of the Cross 10:00am, repeated at 3:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82268125218>

Meeting ID:822 6812 5218

Tenebrae Service with Chorlton Central Church - 8pm

Meeting ID: 8481 2405 596

Passcode: 981138

Saturday 3rd Apr - 10.30am - 12 noon

Holy Saturday Retreat

Meeting ID: 8624 6349 125

Passcode: 024468

Sunday 4th April (Easter Sunday) - 11am

Easter Sunday Communion Service

Led by Rev Lee Battle

Meeting ID: 6538 798 55

Passcode: 1974

Sunday 4th April (Easter Sunday) - 4.30pm

The First Easter Day - songs and readings for reflection

Meeting ID: 9596 5574 422

