PRENTON NEWS

The Magazine of
Prenton United Reformed Church
Prenton Road West, Birkenhead

JUNE 2020

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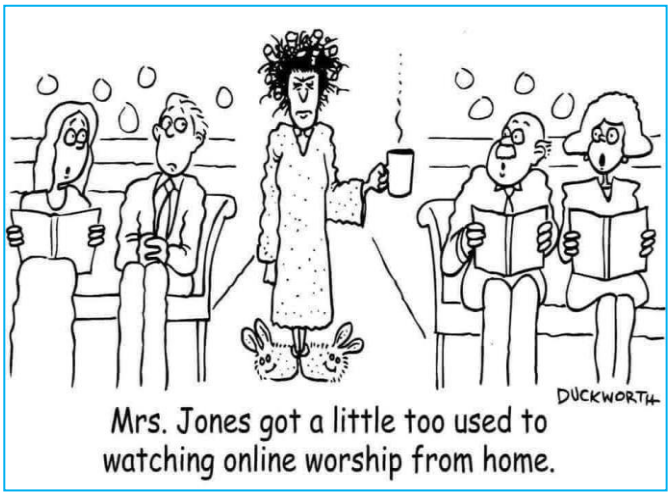
Church and Community Activities are all suspended until further notice.

Items for the July church magazine by Sunday 14th June 2020 please.



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

After 2 weeks of quarantine with her husband, Gertrude decided to knit him a scarf..

Donations towards the cost of the magazine would be appreciated

FROM THE MANSE

BEING CHURCH IS WHO WE ARE NOT WHERE WE MEET

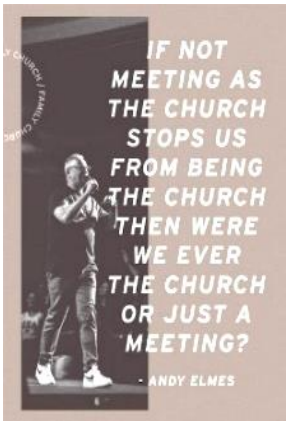
I saw a video the other day, if you're on social media, it was of hundreds of chickens running down a road, veering left and right and crisscrossing the road. I don't know what a happy chicken looked like but these chickens looked happy. You could almost sense the excitement of these chickens revelling in their freedom. The caption read, 'When the government says everyone can go out now.'

I'm sure we're not going to be like that when our lockdown ends but I hope that we too can look forward to it with a degree of excitement (if not tinged with just a note of caution). Until then we must continue to support one another as best we can.

My daughter overheard her boys talking the other day. Reuben (3) was in his bedroom playing when Elijah (5) came in. 'Get out' said Reuben, 'I want some alone time.' 'I want some alone time too', said Elijah, 'maybe we can do it together.'

We're definitely in strange and uncertain times and, some are finding 'lockdown' a bit of a struggle. I know we are all looking to the day when we can get out again and just have the freedom to do what we used to do, including going to 'church' and being in fellowship together. But, until that happens maybe we can try and do this 'lockdown' together.

Although we've been unable to meet together at church and unable to fellowship together there have been some great examples of us living out what church is all about. People are calling one another to check how they are, others are shopping for those who can't get out or who are shielding, others are getting involved in the favourite hymns and online worship whilst others receive a copy of the Sunday services. This has enabled relationships to grow and those who were unable to get to church before lockdown are now sharing worship through social media or the printed copies of the service.



The URC has produced a document entitled 'Ready for the new normal' which the Elders will be looking at over the next days with the hope of creating a plan for when our church buildings can open again. The earliest reopening date has been given by the government as the 4th July but even then, we expect some restrictions to still be in force.

Until then let's continue to be alone together, and continue being church even when we can't get to church.

I still have copies of the John Lennox book, 'Where is God in a coronavirus world?' and the leaflet, 'Hope beyond coronavirus'. If you would like a copy of the book and extra copies of the leaflet please get in touch with me. They are free of charge.

Also, can you let me have any prayer requests that we can share during our worship or if you would like some private prayer that too can be arranged During this strange and unprecedented time, we need to remember that church is who we are and what we do, not necessarily where we meet.
God bless.
Jeff.

Bethlehem was God with us, Calvary was God for us and Pentecost is God in us.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY and FRIENDS

We remember in our prayers all our members and friends at this time of "lockdown" and hope that they are all coping in these difficult circumstances.

We send our love, sincere sympathy and condolences to Jenny Peace (Hamilton Memorial) on the death of her husband, Beric, on May 1st and the Rev Anne Bedford on the death of her mother, on May 14th.

THANK YOU

I would like to say a big thank you to my Elder for looking after me from March when we became "shielded". She has done the shopping every week and whilst Robert was in hospital, having fallen and fractured his femur, she went to Arrowe Park Hospital and dropped items off and picked up the washing !! Thank you Elaine, I really do appreciate all that you are doing for us.
Margaret

MEMORIES OF VE DAY – 8th May 1945

On VE Day 1945, I went out with school friends to Victoria Park, near my home in Tranmere, but I did not get home until 12 o'clock midnight, Double British Summer Time.

My friend Edna Peters' mum cut her hair as a punishment. I had a good hiding for being late, but all ended well.

Next day, we all went to the Town Hall in Birkenhead with lots of other people to celebrate the end of the war, and when we came home, we had a large tin of salmon for sandwiches. There was a street party at the top of Mallory Road. There was a school form (bench) to sit on.

Glennie Mortimer (nee Brereton)

THY KINGDOM COME

As we look forward to church buildings opening again possibly on the 4th July we pray that God will go ahead of us and preparing a way and that he will be with us in our planning for the future of how church will be in the 'new normal'.

We have just celebrated Ascension and Pentecost and have been praying for people especially through 'Thy Kingdom Come' which ran between these two celebrations.

Now is a good time to pray for our families and loved ones. I'm sure you've already been doing that during this crisis that they might keep safe and well, but we can also pray for them that they might have faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. More and more people are becoming aware of their own mortality and are asking big questions and seeking answers about God, life and death.

Below are some prayers from this year's 10 Days of 'Thy Kingdom Come', you might want to use as you pray for yourself and those you know and love.

Read John 3:16.

Pray: Loving God, thank You that You gave Your Son Jesus for me, and for all people. Help me accept the love that You showed me in sending Your Son. I pray for my family and friends. Please open their hearts to Your love. And teach me to love more truly**. Amen**

Read 1 Corinthians 13.4-7

Pray: Loving God, thank You for the way You love us. Please help me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to love as You love, so that my loved ones may come to know You. **Amen**

Readings: Luke 15.1-6; see also Matthew 18.12-14
Pray: Loving God, thank You for coming to find us with Your love. Please reveal your love and peace to my family and friends. **Amen**

Reading 1 John 4.9-10, 19
Pray: Loving God, thank You that before we loved You, You loved us first. We recognise Your love for us today and choose to love You too. Thank You for my family and friends. Please open their eyes to Your love and action for them. **Amen**

Reading Romans 5.6-8
Pray: Loving God, I am sorry for the times when I have not loved others as You love. Thank You that, before I thought of confessing, You had forgiven me. I confess all that is not right in my life today and ask for the forgiveness You so lovingly give. May this love transform the lives of those I love also. **Amen**

Reading: 1 John 4.7
Pray: Loving God, help me to know You more. Through knowing You, may I show You more and love as You love. Please show Your love to my family and friends – through me and others who love You. **Amen**

Reading: 1 John 3.16-18
Pray: Loving God, thank You for Your costly love. Please may those I love understand something of the strength of Your love for them. Help us to use our resources well. **Amen**

Reading: Romans 8.37-39
Pray: Loving God, thank You for Your love from which nothing can separate us, and which does not depend on our efforts. Please reveal this love and the peace it brings, in the lives of those I am praying for. **Amen**

Reading Luke 15.20-24
Pray: Loving God, please get my friends on the road where they see You running to meet them. Thank You that You welcome us with joy however far or however long we have been away. **Amen**

Reading: 1 Kings 19.11-13
Pray: . . . [Be silent in God's presence] . . .

LOCKDOWN LOG

Hello everyone, long time, no see and it could be quite some time before we are back together in the way we used to be.

Many of you, like me, are shielding and have been since March and I'm sure you're getting a little frustrated at least on occasions.

For the most part I feel as though I'm coping reasonably well with the restrictions to my freedom, but I do have my moments when I find it all too much! A cuppa, a chat on the phone, a video call with my grandchildren or just a firm word with myself usually puts me back on an even keel.

My life is usually very diary driven. Before the lockdown I was out 5 mornings each week, had other meetings afternoons and evenings and now I am not allowed to leave home. Everything has stopped although I have had an online synod meeting from 10am 'til 3pm, quite an experience!

I have filled my time in a variety of ways, tidying a very messy house, (ongoing); I've done a bit of decorating, (but I'm not the best with a paint brush); I've been gardening, repotting, weeding and deadheading mainly, (we do have a lot of garden this too is ongoing!) I've enjoyed sharing messages and phone calls with people to keep in touch and pass on news and encouragement.

On Wednesday mornings at 11am, I meet in thought with many of Prenton Coffee Morning people as we think of each other and remotely share a cuppa and a biscuit. If you don't do this already please join in, we just take a break from whatever we're doing, have a drink and remember each other. Midweek, I help Jeff filming the favourite hymns video and then I share watching that with those who receive it.

Sharing worship online has been a new experience for me. I have been able to enjoy hearing different speakers and styles of worship. I can join in worship in our daughter's church, where our son-in-law is the pastor; at our niece's church in Caton, where her husband is the pastor and of course still share in fellowship with Prenton and Wallasey Village URCs.

There is a lot available online. We joined in a lot of teaching seminars at Spring Harvest and I love listening to music, particularly worship songs, they do uplift me.

As I am not able to shop haphazardly, as is my wont, I have to think

a week ahead and write a list for Jenni to go and buy for us, no impulse buys! I've tried new recipes, taken time over preparing a meal rather than grabbing something quick for tea and I've even done some baking! (not been great for the waistline though I'm afraid!)

I've learned to cut Jeff's hair, (with only one disaster so far) and I don't think it's too bad, considering!

Our dining room is full of things to go to charity shops, back to the 'rightful owner', back to church and so on.

This experience is new for most of us, but perhaps the loss of freedom gives us opportunity too. This loss of choice & freedom gives me a chance to stop & think. Some of our fellowship and society are housebound always. Some people live their lives in fear or captivity. Some people never have a choice.

Sometimes I take everything God has given to me for granted, that needs to stop. I need to change.

As I carry on in these uncertain days, I am assured and know that God is constant and good and I need to learn what new things He wants to show me.

I'd love to hear how you are doing and what new things lockdown has taught you.
Much love, Heather x

SUMMER HOLIDAYS ? ?

What chaos this pandemic has caused to our plans. Booked holidays have been cancelled and at the moment the French Riviera, Costa del Sol and the Italian Riviera seem a distant dream for 2020.

So "Stay at Home" could be "Stay in England" as Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are lifting their "lockdown" in different orders to that of England and travel between these countries might not be easy.

Maybe "Day Trips" are the answer and for us the Peak District is nearby. The town of Buxton is 1,000 feet above sea level and is known as the highest town in England (a fact disputed by Alston in Cumbria), and has much to offer the visitor. It has the largest unsupported "dome" which can be seen on a building in the Crescent. There are beautiful parks and walks alongside the River Derwent.

From Buxton you can do a "round" tour and travel to Bakewell, the home of the Bakewell Pudding, not Bakewell Tart as it is generally called in shops these days.

The Pudding was a mistake as an absent-minded cook at the White Horse Inn (now the Rutland Arms) in Bakewell was making a strawberry tart and she spread the egg mixture meant for the pastry straight on top of the jam. By the time she spotted her mistake it was too late to start again and she sent the puddings through in the hope that no-one would notice. They were so popular that Mrs Wilson, the wife of the candle-maker who lived nearby, obtained the recipe and set up in business in her husband's shop, which is now called the Old Original Bakewell Pudding Shop. Bakewell Puddings are still made here from the secret recipe and sent all over the world. They should be eaten hot, with cream or custard.

From Bakewell you can cut across a "country lane" to Youlgreave which has the smallest detached house in the world, called Thimble Hall. It is 11 feet 10 inches by 10 feet 3 inches and 12 feet 2 inches high. In the 19th century it was occupied by a family of eight.

Other places of interest are Matlock and Matlock Bath; Crich the home of the National Tramway Museum and Cromford the first mill village in the world with its original cotton mill.

As you are coming back towards Buxton on the A5012 and A515 on the left-hand side is Hartington, a very pretty village and one of the "country lanes" out of there was and probably still is a "gated road", so someone has to jump out of the car to open and close the gates!!

Personally, I think this area between Buxton and Matlock has so much to offer and you don't have to retrace your steps to get back to Buxton, and you can always come back to Birkenhead by a different route too!

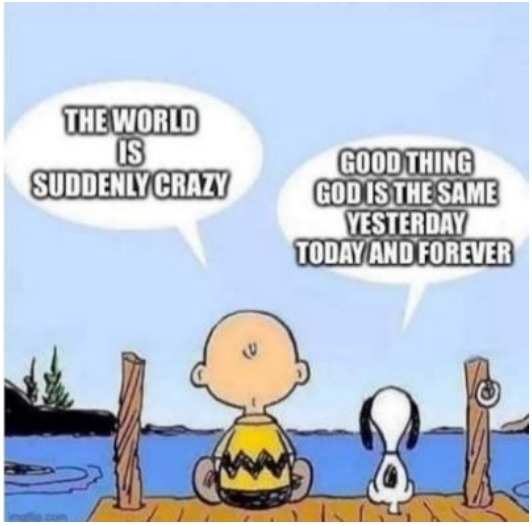
To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

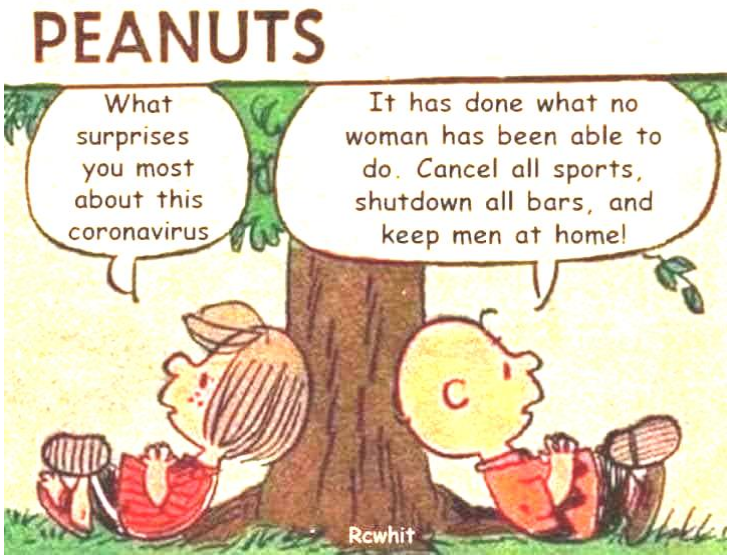
TAKE TIME

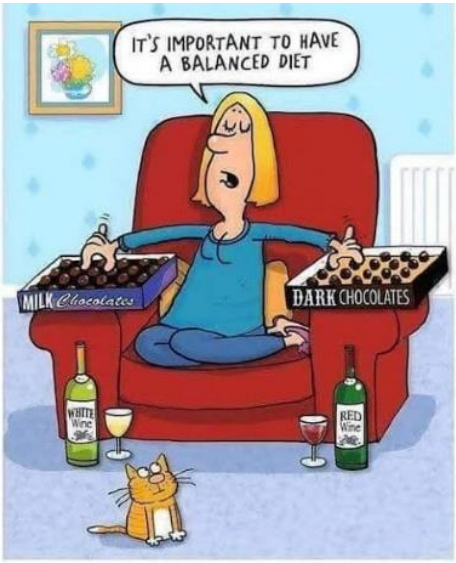
Take time to think; it is the source of power.
Take time to read; it is the foundation of wisdom.
Take time to play; it is the secret of staying young.
Take time to be quiet; it is the opportunity to seek God.
Take time to be aware; it is the opportunity to help others.
Take time to love and be loved; it is God's greatest gift.
Take time to laugh; it is the music of the soul.
Take time to be friendly; it is the road to happiness.
Take time to dream; it is what the future is made of.
Take time to pray; it is the greatest power on earth.

Author Unknown

LOCKDOWN LAUGHTER
from the Manse computer

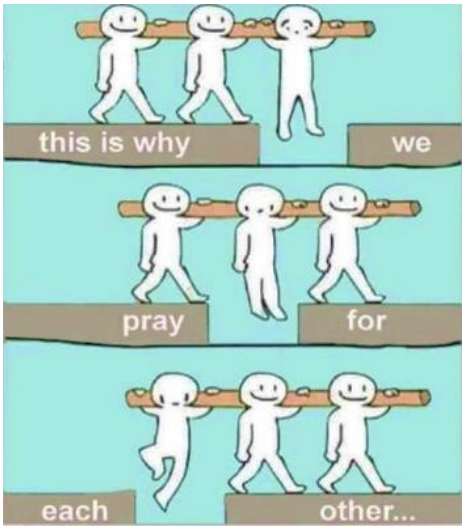



PEANUTS
What surprises you most about this coronavirus
It has done what no woman has been able to do. Cancel all sports, shutdown all bars, and keep men at home!
Rcwhit


IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A BALANCED DIET
MILK Chocolates
DARK CHOCOLATES
WHITE Wine
RED Wine

With COVID-19, I closed your churches!
On the contrary, I just opened one in every home!

Apparently we can't visit our relatives homes but estate agents can buy and sell houses. So I've put my house on the market and Mum and Dad are coming for a viewing at 4.30pm!!..


this is why
we
pray
for
each
other...

DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong as they sometimes will;
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill;
When the funds are low and the debts are high;
And you want to smile but you have to sigh.
When all is pressing you down a bit –
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.
Success is failure turned inside out;
The silver tint on the clouds of doubt;
And you can never tell how close you are;
It may be near when it seems so far.
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit –
It's when things go wrong that you must not quit.

John Greenleaf Whittier

WHAT GOD HATH PROMISED

God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through,
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

God hath not promised we shall not know
Toil and temptation, trouble and woe;
He hath not told us we shall not bear
Many a burden, many a care.

God hath not promised smooth roads and wide,
Swift, easy travel, needing no guide;
Never a mountain rocky and steep,
Never a river turbid and deep.

Annie Johnson Flint (1866-1932