

**CHRIST CHURCH**  
**United Reformed and Methodist**

# **CHRIST CHURCH**

## ***LINK***



**June 2021**



**Prince Edward's Road**  
**Lewes BN7 1BL**  
**[www.christ-church-lewes.org](http://www.christ-church-lewes.org)**

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The publication date is normally the final Sunday of the preceding month, and items for inclusion should be sent to the Secretary by the Wednesday before that date.

Church Office Telephone: 01273 488237

## FROM THE SECRETARIES

Welcome to the June edition of Christ Church *Link*.

As much as we all love Zoom, it was great to return to church worship at Pentecost (Sunday May 23). Perhaps not surprisingly after many months of lockdown, some may have been a little wary of getting back to church, but it all went very well. We hope that more of our church family will join us each week as we gradually get used to worshipping together again in person, rather than online.

Thank you to Claire Bell for leading our return with an inspiring service, and to her (and Neil) for sorting out the technical side of "live streaming" so that people could also continue to enjoy worship from home on computers and phones, including our friends from Seaford and Alfriston, whom we have come to know much better over the last year.

At the service , it was lovely to hear the letter of thanks from Fitzjohn's Food Bank for Christ Church allowing them to use a large part of the church buildings since March 2020 to deliver food to local people in need. Over that period, they have delivered over 3,500 bags of food. You can see the letter in full elsewhere in this issue of **CC Link** .

With the gradual relaxation of covid restrictions, we are very pleased to welcome back members of the local community – both old and new-who use our buildings at Christ Church for a wide variety of activities. However , this is not proving as easy as we might have hoped, as the Government guidance is not always clear and Ministers have spoken of "the need to exercise discretion and common sense" as we emerge from the pandemic. This can be a recipe for confusion and argument.

Covid infections have greatly reduced in Lewes over recent months and the local vaccine roll out has gone well. However, the pandemic is not over and we all know that slack covid hygiene and new covid variants can quickly disrupt the progress we have made towards resumption of "normal life".

This means that we have to operate a cautious and phased return where we keep safety as our top priority. We are reviewing our Risk

Assessments for use of the building and hope that we will be able to lift many of the existing controls when the remaining national legal restrictions go on June 21 (or any later date determined by Government).

However, even after the legal restrictions go, it will still be prudent to sanitise hands and check in for “test and trace” on entry, maintain social distancing, and wear masks in common areas of the building.

Lastly, there are two important but contrasting events at the end of the month. On Saturday June 26 at 2.p.m., there will be a memorial service for Alexander Bloomfield at Rodmell Church , for many years a member of our Junior Church , who died at the tragically early age of 28. We can arrange lifts for those who wish to attend ,but don't have transport of their own( windows open in the car for covid safety ). Please contact us if you need a lift.

On the following day, Sunday June 27, Crossway will be having a dedication service after completion of the extensive building and refurbishment works at the church in Clinton Place, Seaford. We look forward to joining them as the service will be streamed to Christ Church. We hope that they will be happy in their new home.

**Neil Fisher - Church Secretary**

**Lindsay Frost - Administrative Secretary**

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A congregation of food bags (see Letter 1).

**Letter (1)                      From Roz Basford, chair of Fitzjohns Foodbank,  
on our return to worship at the church.**

21 May 2021

To all at Christ Church

I am writing to you on behalf of the Trustees, Co-ordinator and volunteers at Fitzjohn's Food Bank in order to pass on our heartfelt thanks for allowing us to use the sanctuary during the Covid pandemic. We are delighted to restore the sanctuary to its rightful purpose - but it has not been empty and unused. There has been a congregation of bags on the pews each Sunday as volunteers sorted, stored food and packed bags whilst the pulpit was surrounded by cereal boxes (see picture left).

Over the 62 weeks that the church was closed we have packed, dispatched and delivered over **3,500** bags of food - each household also got a bag of fresh veg, milk and eggs every week. None of this would have been possible without the airy space of the sanctuary to work in. Our use of this part of the church made it possible for us to work in a socially distanced way and we always felt warm and safe there.

Your generous hospitality made it possible to protect our clients from food shortages and also keep five weeks of 'just in case' food in the apse. Despite the pandemic our clients, with your help, were able to celebrate Easter, Christmas and Easter again and our clients were especially moved by your gift of advent calendars.

Livelihoods fell like ninepins during the first weeks of lockdown and as the referrals rolled in, at our peak we were serving **57** households a week while families waited anxiously for benefit claims to be processed.

*As one of our clients said "I just wanted to say thank you so, so much for helping us for all this time. There have been many weeks when all we had in the cupboard was the food you provided, especially since lockdown".*

It is thanks to everyone at Christ Church that we have been able to offer that lifeline.

With warmest wishes,

Roz Bassford

Chair

Fitzjohn's Food Bank

## Letter (2) From Karen and Vivian

# Greetings from Kenya – Summer 2021

Dear Friends,

So sorry that we have not been in touch before now. As some of you are aware I have had a period of ill health due to an accident and was admitted to hospital with a broken collar bone and had to have surgery. Following the operation, I had a period of six weeks recovery, unfortunately shortly after this I contracted Covid, and I had to isolate, and have full time nursing care at home for ten days as there was no available beds at the hospital. We were very fortunate that Vivian has not contracted Covid and is well and healthy. I am recovering and pleased to be up and about. We are most grateful for the love and support from our immediate neighbours, family and friends, which is helping to speed up the recuperation process.

We are at that time again where I am applying to renew all my legal documents for immigration to enable me to remain here in Kenya. Also, in the coming weeks I will be returning to court to renew Vivian's travel order which allows her to travel to the UK during the school holidays.



Back in March Vivian had her 15th birthday and is growing up so fast. She now has some rollerblades and loves to get out and about, looking the part with all her protective clothing. Vivian continues to enjoy school and works very hard, her favourite subjects are English, Geography, Chemistry, Physics and Maths. She is continuing to learn German and loves to listen to a variety of music in her leisure time. Vivian is now in the process of choosing her IGCSE subjects in preparation for Year 10. We also attended an online talk with parents, Year 9 students and the school Careers Adviser on how to make these choices. She is attending new lessons in BTEC Sport, BTEC Business and Sociology.

We have really appreciated the fellowship with our friends at Christ Church, Lewes, Cross Way Church, Seaford and All Saints Church in Eastbourne. This continues to encourage us and help us not to feel so far away from family and friends during these challenging times.

After my period of recovery, I am looking forward to exploring different serving opportunities within the local community.



Please pray for:

- Opportunities to serve within the community where I can make a positive impact.
- My legal documents to be processed within the necessary deadline.
- Vivian's continued desire to learn and the gift of knowledge and not to be discouraged when she cannot grasp things with ease.

***HOW CAN YOU HELP?***

If you feel you would like to contribute towards Vivian's secondary education, please do get in touch; [karenterry14@icloud.com](mailto:karenterry14@icloud.com).

Fundraising is vital to us at present and there are lots of fun easy ways you can help, such as simply doing a book sale or a raffle amongst friends, family, or colleagues. We very much welcome prayers as we continue this chapter in our lives.

We look forward to sharing our journey with you again later in the summer.

**Karen & Vivian x**

## **Letter (3) From the URC Finance Committee**

It would be fair to describe the year-and-a-bit since March 2020 as having been “different”, wouldn’t it? Lots of us have experienced loss of loved ones, loss of income and perhaps jobs. All have experienced periods of lockdown; periods without ‘non-essential’ shops; and continuous and extensive disruption to our ‘normal’ social interactions and relationships. The world we thought we understood and could take for granted has been utterly transformed. How many of us imagined at the start of 2020 that we could go months without a haircut or without people not in our ‘bubble’ entering our homes?

As members of United Reformed Church congregations ourselves, we understand much of what your church community has experienced since March 2020. The absence of what is now regularly labelled “in-person worship” for much (or all) of this time has compelled us to turn to other ways of being church. Buildings in which we used to praise God regularly have been shut, both to regular worshipers and others who might have sought solace within their walls during these desperate and troubling times. It has been hard to maintain close fellowship with people we only meet over Zoom (or the like) – if we are digitally enabled

Financially, things have been extremely tough too. Plate offerings have collapsed; some regular givers have had to reduce or entirely stop giving to support God’s work; and those churches which hire out their premises have seen income from that source disappear.

At denominational level, we feared that these financial troubles would spell disaster for the URC’s Ministry and Mission (‘M&M’) fund through which the URC has always supported and developed our stipendiary ministers and Church Related Community Workers. It would have been all too easy for congregations to forget that for almost 49 years this fund (under various names) has provided stipends, pension contributions and training for all ministers throughout the three nations in which the URC operates: so that ministry reaches where synods judge it to be most needed and is paid for according to each congregation’s ability to contribute (though the ways of determining that vary from synod to synod). It was all very well to remind ourselves that the M&M fund is meant to be the first call on every congregation’s resources if the undertaking to financially support our ministers is to be honoured. We feared that drastically reduced income would make that impossible and that, because the need was less visible than the other calls on your

diminished resources, payments to the M&M fund would have stopped first.

We are sorry if we ever doubted you

It quickly became apparent that, although some congregations had to reduce their pledged giving to the M&M fund, many more of you were continuing to meet the 2020 commitments you had made during better times, despite the struggles that required. At the start of that year we had been expecting churches and synods to contribute around £18.5 million to the fund. By the year end, all but half-a-million pounds of that had been received. Since Church House staff and committees managed to reduce their budgeted expenditure by almost £1 million, your money enabled us to meet the full costs of our Ministries, Education & Learning, Children's and Youth Work and Mission departments in 2020 as well as covering amounts spent on safeguarding, denominational governance and communications.

What is perhaps even more amazing is that, collectively, you have pledged to give £17.3 million during 2021 despite the financial problems caused by the pandemic being fully apparent well before your offers for this year were made.

We are always grateful for the financial support given each year to the M&M fund by all of you; but this past year has been phenomenal.

Thank you to those of you who have been able to maintain or increase financial support for your church congregation through this difficult time. That has enabled those responsible for your congregation's finances to keep more money flowing to the M&M fund than we expected.

Thank you for all your previous financial support to those of you who, after prayerful consideration, have had to reduce or stop giving in response to your changed financial circumstances.

Thank you for the pledges your congregation has made about contributing to the M&M fund during 2021 even though you were by then aware of the impact the pandemic was having on your local congregation's finances.

Thank you in anticipation for what you agree to offer to the M&M fund during 2022 to enable the denomination to deliver ministry, education and learning, children's work and mission activity on God's (and your) behalf.

We are aware that synods have played a significant part in encouraging and supporting many congregations with their contributions to the M&M fund. We have separately written to Synod Treasurers to express our thanks to them and their colleagues too.

Of course, our giving for God's work is in response to the amazing generosity and love of God which we see in Jesus. Nonetheless, it is important for us to thank every one of you for what you do for God, your congregation and its and our denominational finances.

**Thank you!**

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

**Ian Hardie (Treasurer) and John Piper (Deputy Treasurer)**

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**Letter (4). A card from Margaret Shave's daughter Do**

Dear folks at Christ Church

I just wanted to say how much mum, Margaret Shave, appreciates the visits some of you that know her have been able to give her. She remembers these visits and enjoys the connection with her Church Family.

Thank you, from us all in the family for your thoughtfulness and care for a member of your church who has been a significant member in the years now past.

Mum's eyesight is failing her more and more; however, it does not prevent her from reading the newsletters that arrive and the notices. She uses a strong magnifying glass to do so. Unfortunately, the print in some of her prayer books and bible are now too small.

Thank you for your thoughts and remembrance of Mum.

May you all be safe, happy and well.

Yours,

Do Horne and family

## Christ Church Embroidery Tea Towels.

There are still lots of Tea Towels available if you haven't already ordered yours.

There are two different tea towels, one with the main centre panel on and one with the two side panels on.

They are £7.00 each or £12.00 for two (one of each). They are 100% cotton.

Please contact me on 01273 813003 or email [christchurchtreasurer@btconnect.com](mailto:christchurchtreasurer@btconnect.com).



## Irene Gannon



**Thinktank - Wednesday 16 June 2021 7.30 – 9 pm by Zoom**

**Dr Peter Holmes** will be speaking on

**"Brexit isn't done yet. What comes next? "**

The government insisted on preservation of sovereignty rather than free trade in its deal with the EU, but the legal framework allows for convergence or divergence to be negotiated in the future. Peter Holmes is an Emeritus Reader in Economics at the University of Sussex Business School and a regular visitor at the College of Europe in Bruges and Warsaw. He has published widely on regionalism and the world trading system, but his talk will avoid technical language.

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## **Church Walks**

The very unsettled weather for much of May blocked our hopes for a church walk at Firle on May 16 and then again the following week on May 23, with wind and rain on both days . Never mind. We will have another try on Sunday June 20 by which time we hope that the British summer will have arrived. The walk takes us through the landscaped grounds of Firle Place, seat of the Gage family for centuries, then across the fields to Charleston Farmhouse, the country haunt of the Bloomsbury Set. We then return along the foot of the Downs to Firle. It's about 3.5 miles and not too hilly



Firle Place and its bio-lawn mowers

**Lindsay Frost**

## Church Calendar for June 2021

*All Sunday worship is at the church and by Zoom.*

- Sun 6 10.30 am Morning worship with Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Richard Goldring
- Mon 7 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Wed 9 7.30 pm Church Council
- Sun 13 10.30 am Morning worship led by Claire Bell
- Mon 14 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Wed 16 7.30 pm Thinktank
- Sun 20 10.30 am Morning worship led by Tom Lunt  
1 pm Church Walk
- Mon 21 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Wed 23 7.30 pm CSUA Area Meeting  
7.45 pm Nevill Housegroup
- Sun 27 10.30 am Morning worship from Cross Way
- Mon 28 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank  
8 pm Ecumenical Housegroup via Zoom
- Sun 4 10.30 am Morning worship with Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Richard Goldring





CHRIST CHURCH (United Reformed and Methodist) seeks to proclaim the Gospel and serve the community around it. The Minister and Church Council Members would appreciate information about those who need pastoral care, and will endeavour to answer the questions of those who want to know more about the Church's life and witness here in Lewes.