

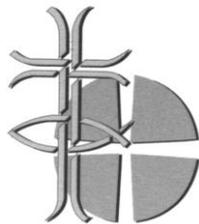
**CHRIST CHURCH**

**United Reformed and Methodist**

**CHRIST CHURCH**  
***LINK***



**September 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.

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## FROM THE SECRETARIES

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

Although we have now been back worshipping at church for three months, it still doesn't feel as though things have fully returned to normal. Despite the availability of vaccines, many people are understandably still wary of leaving home and mixing with others, given the continuing high levels of covid infection, both locally and nationally. Mercifully, however, hospital admissions and deaths from covid have been much moderated by the vaccines.

Like many other churches, we are continuing with Zoom transmissions, and have introduced livestreaming, of our services alongside worship in church. This has kept us in touch with everyone and given us the flexibility to make the best use of the worship leaders we have available. Here, we are very much indebted to Claire Bell, Gwyneth Watkinson and Tom Lunt for their efforts in preparing and leading services (and, of course, to Neil Fisher for his technical wizardry in connecting us all online – LF)

However, there is no hiding the fact that that the wider church is struggling with pulpit supply and that this problem is likely to become even more difficult in future. The letter reproduced below from Rev. Bridget Banks, Moderator of the URC Southern Synod, sets out the problems starkly in what she calls a “deployment crisis”.

Our Synod area is noticeably better provided with ministers than many other areas of the country and, as a result, any future URC ministerial vacancies in our area will not be filled until our provision reduces to a level more in line with other regions of the URC.

At Christ Church, we are fortunate in having Rev. Andrew Mills in post and a number of talented lay preachers within our congregation. However, there are vacancies elsewhere in the Central Sussex United Area and this affects the ministerial resources we share with other CSUA churches for worship, pastoral and administrative work. Looking ahead, it seems likely that reducing ministerial resources, and the

longer term effects of the covid-19 pandemic, will force the church to re-think how it pursues its mission.

We have again reviewed our risk assessment for use of the church buildings as we (hopefully) emerge from the pandemic. The Government relaxed all the legal restrictions in late July, but has put the onus on businesses, organisations and individuals to make their own decisions on any measures they think necessary to contain the spread of the virus. We have adopted a careful and cautious approach, but relaxing controls where we can and making the building more welcoming. We will keep matters under review and look again in about a month's time.

In September, we will be returning to monthly Messy Church services. Thank you to our team who have put together and distributed regular activity packs to our "messy families", so that we keep in touch through the pandemic. Particular thanks to Glenda Pett.

Meanwhile, it is pleasing to see many of our hall hirers returning to Christ Church over the summer, with others coming back in September. The Food Bank is now distributing food direct to clients on Mondays with just a few vulnerable clients still receiving home deliveries. Lewes Open Door continues to run its "Drop in Centre" for homeless people on weekday lunchtimes, following its re-location from Westgate Chapel. It is good to see the church back at the centre of local community life

On 30 August, we will be hosting an overnight stay by the "Coat of Hopes", a travelling work of community-created performance craft, instigated by Lewes artist Barbara Keal, which will set out from Newhaven East Pier on a nine week walk to the UN Climate Summit COP26, in Glasgow. Their first overnight stay on the journey will be at Christ Church. Worn by many and varied "coat pilgrims", the initially blank "undercoat" will gather patches made of blanket embellished by local people along its 500 mile route. Patches will be added to the coat at regular "stitching stop" events along the way.

We are also taking part in the Sussex Historic Churches “Ride and stride” event on Saturday September 11. More information on that elsewhere in this magazine, where we are seeking volunteers to help with “checking in” walkers and cyclists calling at Christ Church on their round of local churches

Lastly, we are sure that all of us will want to remember Rev. Andrew, and his family, in our prayers as he continues to struggle with long covid. Our hope is that he will be able to recover sufficiently to make a phased return to ministerial duties later in the autumn

**Neil Fisher, Church Secretary**

**Lindsay Frost, Administrative Secretary**

# MINISTERS' DEPLOYMENT: A LETTER FROM THE MODERATOR OF THE URC SOUTHERN SYNOD



July 2021

Dear Friends

I am writing to let you know about the deployment situation in the United Reformed Church. It has been recognised by General Assembly 2021 that we are in a deployment crisis.

In the past, when a minister moved on or retired, we were able to put our vacancies on the national list and have full time stipendiary ministers join us in our churches. Unfortunately, given the low number of ministers available, this isn't possible at the moment. At the end of June 2021 there were 249 full time Stipendiary ministers for the 1300 URC churches across the UK, with another 46 part-time ministers. These numbers do not include the Special Category Ministers or Church Related Community Workers who work on projects. Of course there will be retirements and God willing, more ordinands. So the figures will fluctuate but the overall reduced numbers mean we will have to continue to think creatively how ministry is filled within our churches .

Southern Synod has been blessed with plentiful Stipendiary Ministry for many years. We are in fact over the number given to us by Church House that fits our churches/members. We currently have 41.25 FTE stipendiary ministers to cover 140 churches and we need to be down to 39 by the end of the year. By 2023 that figure will be 34. In order to maintain the deployment responsibility with our fellow Synods, we aren't declaring any vacancies in the Synod until we are within our correct deployment number. Though I am not sure how long that will take.

I understand this may be a shock to you but I want to be honest and transparent. I realise that this will be difficult for churches who are currently vacant and I pray that they will be able to rise to the challenge that the denomination faces at this time. The Synod is working on a deployment strategy to encourage the ministry of *all* believers and we ask for your prayers. We aim to bring this to Synod Together in October 2021.

This crisis, should not take away the joy of good news as we see signs of growth in our denomination. The passion of the Youth and Children, people coming into membership, applying to do our Synod's Lay Preaching Course and others putting themselves forward to candidate for ministry in our Synod alone. There is hope for the future but we need to:

*run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. ( Ephesians 12: 2b)*

If you would like to know more or have any comments / questions on this matter please can you contact The Synod Ministries Convenor [revhelenurc@aol.co.uk](mailto:revhelenurc@aol.co.uk) by the end of August 2021. Once the comments and queries have been received Ministries Committee will do our best to answer them, or seek to get more information and clarification that will help us all in these challenging times.

Every blessing



Rev Bridget Banks. Moderator

## CHRIST CHURCH WALKS

The July walk was cancelled as it was “too hot” on July 18, when the temperature was around 30°C - the first time the heat has stopped us, rather than the more typical rain and mud.

Our walk on Sunday August 15 took us from church down to Landport, and then through the woods along the valley to Offham, before we climbed up onto the Downs at Landport Bottom. The weather improved as we progressed and we ended up in warm sunshine and blue skies with extensive views over Lewes and down the valley towards the sea.

On the Downs, Linda B's plant identification app was called into action and we were able to identify something that looked a bit like heather (and so should be on acidic soils rather than on chalk downland) as prostrate knotweed.



Prostrate knotweed

The next walk will be on **Sunday 19 September** and will start from the car park at the far end of Cockshut Lane in Southover (opposite the Southdown Sports Club) at **1.15 pm**. The walk will take us across The Brooks to Swanborough with a short loop up onto the Downs behind Kingston, before dropping down into the village and back to Southover: about 4 miles in all.

### Lindsay Frost



Some of our walkers on Sunday August 15

## **RIDE AND STRIDE**

Every year (prior to the pandemic), the Sussex Historic Churches Trust raised funds to carry out essential repairs and restoration works for old churches and chapels of all denominations across the county through a sponsored "Ride and Stride" event. They are back this year on **Saturday September 11** between 0900 and 1700.

Walkers and riders (on bikes or horses) work their way between as many churches and chapels as they can over the day. Christ Church is taking part in the event and will welcome and "sign off" participants on their way

You can find out more online at

[www.sussexhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk)

where you can also make a donation to this very worthy cause

Our co-ordinator is Linda Beddow. Please contact Linda if you can help to welcome walkers and riders, even for an hour or two

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**Thinktank - Wednesday 15 September 2021 7.30 – 9 pm**

**Professor Elizabeth Hill** will be speaking on

**"COP26 Climate Change and International Agreement "**

Liz Hill is an Emeritus Professor of Environmental Toxicology at the University of Sussex and a regular participant in thinktank meetings. Her talk will be related to the important international conference to begin in Glasgow in October.

# Greetings from Kenya – August 2021

Dear Friends,

After a very busy few months we are enjoying the school break and Vivian and I have recently visited her Grandmother who lives to the North East of the Great Rift Valley of Kenya. It was a very long journey by car but it was lovely to spend time with her and see the beautiful area where she lives. She gifted us with sacks of charcoal, wheat grain and maize, which we donated to a needy family. We got home with a just few minutes to spare before curfew at 10pm, exhausted and very tired.



I'm pleased to let you know that I have now received all my legal documents for immigration to enable me to remain here in Kenya for another three years. Unfortunately, the renewal of Vivian's court travel order is taking much longer than we had expected.

Back at the beginning of July Vivian enjoyed a few days away at school camp which was the bronze part of the President Award which all students begin in year 10. They went to Naivasha and climbed Mount Longonot which is stratovolcano which is believed to have last erupted in the 1860s. Its name is

derived from the Maasia word Oloonong'ot, meaning 'mountains of many spurs or steep ridges'. They also went on a boat ride to Crescent Island where they saw water bucks, hippos, gazelles and zebras as well as many different species of beautiful birds.

At the time of writing this newsletter Vivian has just completed a five day online international programme for young people with a UK based organisation called Future Foundations. The course was called 'Global Social Leaders' and was for young people who want to make a difference to the planet. Vivian particularly enjoyed taking part as there were young people from six different countries involved. A quote from Vivian about what she learnt from taking part, "The course has taught me that anyone can be a leader, and change starts with us, then others will follow our ways". As part of the programme Vivian has chosen to do a project 'Life on Land' which will be about how to protect the rhinos and elephants from extinction, as well as to promote and raise awareness of her chosen charity here in Kenya, <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org>

I am pleased to be able to tell you that from the beginning of September I will be serving full time with the Anglican Church Thika Diocese as School Administrator. My role will primarily be to support the Headteacher and staff in the running of the Church schools. I will also be involved in overseas partnership working with our schools which I am very much looking forward to.

We continue to enjoy on-line fellowship with our UK friends.

Please give thanks for:

- Cool weather
- Karen's renewal of missionary permit
- Karen's new role in the ACK Thika Diocese

Please pray for:

- Vivian beginning Year 10 at Braeburn Imani
- Renewal of Vivian's court travel order
- Karen beginning her new role in September

### ***HOW CAN YOU HELP?***

We appreciate your prayers and support in so many ways, we currently need to raise some more financial support for Vivian's secondary education, if you would like to contribute please do get in touch via the email below. As you are aware fundraising continues to be vital to us at present and we ask that if you know of someone who may be interested in supporting Vivian, please share this newsletter with them.

We very much welcome prayers as we continue this chapter in our lives.

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

**Karen & Vivian x**



***Artwork by Vivian***

Karen Terry – CMS UK Mission Associate

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**Skype:** karen.terry18 **Mobile** 254 700 767 383

## Church Calendar for September 2021

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

- Sun 5 10.30 am Climate Sunday worship led by Claire Bell
- Mon 6 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Wed 8 7.30 pm Church Council
- Sun 12 9.30 am Messy Sunday  
10.30 am Messy Church worship led by Claire Bell
- Mon 13 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Tue 14 7.30 pm CSUA Area Meeting
- Wed 15 7.30 pm Thinktank
- Sun 19 10.30 am Morning worship led by David Coleman  
(from Cross Way, Seaford)  
1.15 pm Church Walk (see page 6)
- Mon 20 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Wed 22 7.45 pm Nevill Housegroup
- Sun 26 10.30 am Morning worship with Holy Communion  
led by Rev Dr Richard Goldring
- Mon 27 10 am - 4 pm Fitzjohns Food Bank
- Sun 3 10.30 am Morning worship led by Tom Lunt





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.