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| ALLERTON  CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH |



June/July 2023 Newsletter

Dear Friends

Former President of the United States of America, Benjamin Franklin, once wrote, “Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.”

Undoubtedly it’s a phrase we’ve heard before, and experience tells us that Franklin was certainly right about death and tax! Perhaps there is a third certainty that we could add to that list, though, and that is grief. For various reasons it’s something that many people don’t really like to talk about, but the reality is that we all go through it from time to time. We experience grief at the loss of a loved one, but we can also feel grief over big charges, such as moving house, losing friends or leaving a job. We miss something or someone that was a big, or important, part of our life. Grief also has stages that we go through, and amongst them is depression, which can often show itself as a deep sorrow.

In the Bible we find that Jesus experienced deep sorrow too. Our Saviour is described as crying, or weeping, when His good friend Lazarus died (John 11:35). Even though Jesus knew that He would be raising Lazarus back to life soon, He still wept for his friend and for the grief that others were feeling at the death of Lazarus. This shows us that God cares for us and joins us in our suffering and grief. Perhaps we need to be reminded of this when times are tough and we are experiencing grief ourselves? God is with us, and He knows how we feel.

There are another couple of references in the New Testament to Jesus weeping, or crying. The first of these is Luke 19:41. There we read that when Jesus “drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.’” (Luke 19:41-44)

In this passage Jesus shows His sorrow for the city of Jerusalem and its people who had failed to recognise the signs of the coming of the Messiah. There was a grief for the destruction the city and its temple would face in the year 70 AD. Not only does Jesus weep over the loss of people, but also for the loss of the city, or a great change that would not be for the benefit of God’s people.

The final reference to Jesus crying is found in the letter to the Hebrews. “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him” (Hebrews 5:7-9).

Jesus’ love and care for sinners like you and I was so great that His prayers of intercession were accompanied by wailing and crying. All of this should give comfort to us when we experience grief in its many and varied forms. We have Someone who knows us and understands us, interceding for us at the Father’s right hand in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me conclude with some words from the apostle Paul, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

Yours Fred

Secretary’s Thoughts

As the weather becomes better, most of us will have been enjoying the sun, warmer days and lighter evenings, which always makes us feel better.

The Christian aid Coffee Morning went quite well raising £170 and, hopefully, the Leprosy Mission Coffee Morning on June 10th will be even better.

It was good to hear that Betty and Nancy have settled in their respective care homes.

The AGM was well attended last Sunday, although the news about the state of our building wasn’t good. Hopefully work will get under way soon to try to remedy some of the problems.

Janet

Treasurer’s Reflection

It was good to report to the AGM that our offerings had risen by a further 5% during the year to 31st March 2023. Well done!

However, what was less positive was the report regarding the heating and electrical systems and the recommendations for the work that will need to be tackled over the coming months and years towards a more compliant building. The current estimated cost of the works required is somewhere in excess of £200,000, a sum that is certainly beyond our means.

The meeting authorised the Finance Committee to proceed with further investigations to implement the first part of the work by encapsulating the asbestos in the boiler room and then to sort the electricity distribution boards.

We will be investigating possibilities of grants to assist us in some of the cost, but there will be a need to sell some of the investments (the ‘rainy day’ fund), which will result in a fall in our investment income. It will therefore require us to raise further income, either by increasing our regular weekly/monthly giving or other forms of fundraising, such as coffee mornings, concerts or ?????

We will be grateful if you can give this your prayerful consideration, and, if you feel able, to increase your giving, or if you have other suggestions as to possible fund raising activities, please have a word.

In the meantime, please continue to hold the situation in prayer.

Thank you

David

Dates for your Diary

Friday 2nd June – Ladies Circle Meeting – 1.00pm

Saturday 10th June – Leprosy Mission Coffee Morning – 10am-12noon

Saturday 17th June – Coffee Morning at Riddlesden URC – 10.00am

Friday 30th June – Ladies Circle Meal @ The Brown Cow – 12.30pm

Tuesday 4th July – Finance Committee Meeting 10.30am

Saturday 15th July - Ladies Circle Coffee Morning – 10am-12noon

Saturday 23rd September – Harvest Supper – 4.00pm

Saturday 25th November – Christmas Coffee Shop – 10am-12noon.

Flower Rota – flowers provided by:

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| June 23 | |  | July 23 | |
| 11th | Miss N Abbott |  | 16th | Mrs S Coldwell |
| 18th | Mr & Mrs P Barfield |  | 23rd | Mrs J Holdsworth |

On Sundays not listed, silk flowers will be used.

Preaching list

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| June 23 | |  | July 23 | |
| 4th | Mr David Robinson |  | 2nd | Rev Fred Rich |
| 11th | Rev Allen Holmes |  | 9th | Rev Robert Waddington |
| 18th | Rev Fred Rich |  | 16th | Rev Fred Rich |
| 25th | Rev Richard Lewis |  | 23rd | Rev Fred Rich |
|  |  |  | 30th | Mr Trevor Kershaw |

Finance Committee – A message from the Financial Secretary

See Treasurer’s report above.

Coffee Rota

As we have returned to having coffee after services, it would be really helpful if those on the rota could come a little earlier to set things up. You will not need to bring milk.

The coffee rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Bible Reading Rota

If you would like to offer to read the Bible for Sunday services, the Bible reading rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Note from the Editor

The next newsletter is due on 30th July 2023 – please let me have any items for inclusion by 23rd July 2023.

Thank you – Carole

Sundays - Services at 10.30 am.

Addresses:

Pastor: Secretary & Treasurer: Editor:

Fredrik Rich Janet & David Muschamp Carole Brook

## Website: allertoncongregationalchurch.org.uk

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