



**DOWNING PLACE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
CAMBRIDGE**

PLACE MATTERS



**ISSUE 39
MARCH 2022**

CONTACT DETAILS – DOWNING PLACE URC

Address: Downing Place United Reformed Church
Downing Place
Cambridge
CB2 3EL

Telephone: 01223 756635

Website: www.downingplaceurc.org

Minister: The Revd. Nigel Uden
nigel.uden@downingplaceurc.org
01223 314586 (manse)

Children's Ministry Team Co-ordinator:
Elza de Bruin Lara
children@downingplaceurc.org

Open Table Co-ordinator:
Alison Binney
opentable@downingplaceurc.org

Church Office: Elaine Barker
(Elaine's rest day is Tuesday)
elaine@downingplaceurc.org
01223 756635

Ann Auger
(Ann's normal working hours are Monday-Friday 9-5)
ann@downingplaceurc.org
01223 756635

Church Secretary: Margaret Thompson
secretary@downingplaceurc.org

Clerk to the Elders' Meeting

Owen Saxton
clerk@downingplaceurc.org

Treasurer:

Ian Strachan
treasurer@downingplaceurc.org

Hospital and Hospice Visitor:

The Revd. Deborah McVey
hospitalvisitor@downingplaceurc.org

Directors of Music:

Mark Dawes
mark@downingplaceurc.org

Ian de Massini
ian@downingplaceurc.org

Audio-visuals:

av@downingplaceurc.org

The front cover shows the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Lord Wallace of Tankerness, preaching at Sunday worship on Sunday 20 February. See the full article about Lord Wallace's visit and his connections with us on p. 7.

Photograph by Jess Uden.

FROM THE MINISTER

I can scarcely recall a time when my life wasn't shaped by the church year. Such is the lot of a chorister. Of course, there was Christmas with the joy of Services of Nine Lessons with Carols. Raised in a small village, I also recall with especial pleasure both Rogation and Harvest, before the sowing and after the reaping.

Of particular impact, though, was Lent. Like many influenced by church music, my faith has always been shaped by what I sang. The weeks running up to Holy Week and Easter required intense groundwork on seasonal anthems, and not least the rather more rigorous demands of the St Matthew Passion by J. S. Bach. They left their indelible mark.



Lent remains important for me. Somehow, I cannot quite get to Easter without these six weeks of preparation. Vital as the music remains, it is not the only preparation I make for Easter. Every year I find myself having to examine again what all the crucifixion and resurrection stuff means. That's not because I am especially holy. Quite the opposite. I find that crosses and empty tombs cannot just be understood, even when I have been singing about them all my life. To be frank, I need the six weeks of Lent to wonder again what it is all about. I appreciate how this essential journey is summed up in the collect for the Third Sunday of Lent in some contemporary Anglican prayer books:

‘Almighty God, whose most dear Son
went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace.’

But how will we ‘walk in the way of the cross’? What might assist us in these secular days with so much to distract or disillusion or dismay us? After all, we cannot look at the state of the world and simply point our finger at ‘the others’. We’re involved, too. One thoroughly Biblical option is to ponder the seven words or phrases that the different Gospel writers suggest Jesus used on the cross. Thinking through those – how about one for each week of Lent? – can point to the way of life and peace. Moreover, a prayer to accompany each one can draw out possible meanings and implications in helpful ways. Eric Milner-

White, a former Dean of King's College, and more famous for *Nine Lessons with Carols*, has some finely wrought prayers for such a time. They are in his 1956 *A Procession of Passion Prayers*.

So, as Lent approaches (Ash Wednesday is 2nd March), one potential devotional aid could be to sit quietly for some minutes each day and let a word from the cross unhurriedly swirl around your heart and mind, alongside an extract from Milner-White's prayer inspired by that word. In what follows, his words are in italics:

Week beginning 27th February

Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' Luke 23.34

Grant us, O Lord, ... that we may better deserve the gift of thy glorious pardon.

Week beginning 6th March

Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.' Luke 23.42-43

O Lord Jesus Christ, look upon me with those eyes of thine ... that with the robber I may confess my sin ... and by the same voice be comforted.

Week beginning 13th March

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. John 19.26-27

To such love, without like, without limit, lead me, O Lord.

Week beginning 20th March

And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' Matthew 27.46

... fill me with that faith of thine ... that no suffering, no sin, no shadow of doubt may darken my trust in God.

Week beginning 27th March

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' John 19.28

Strengthen us, both to desire and to drain thy cup, that we thirst not again, nor go elsewhere to drink.

Week beginning 3rd April

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. John 19.30

Baptise and renew us with thine own Spirit, that we likewise may perfect the work thou hast given us to do.

Week beginning 10th April

Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. Luke 23.46

Grant us the peace of claiming thee in death as our Father, because we have served thee in life as our God.

If you have appreciated these words of Eric Milner-White, then on Good Friday, 15th April at 4.00pm, there will be a service in which Ian de Massini will use organ music by Philip Moore, one time Organist of York Minister, alongside my reading of some more of the Dean's words. It's called *Via crucis*, way of the Cross.

I pray for you to have a blessed Lent, which assists you to walk the way of the cross, and find it none other than the way of life and peace.

Nigel Uden

INDUCTION OF PIONEER MINISTER



Save the date! Our new Pioneer Minister, Alex Clare-Young, will be formally inducted on Saturday 9 April at 2pm. The service will be led by Revd Lythan Nevard, Moderator of the Eastern Synod, and the preacher will be Revd Jo Clare-Young (Minister of Newport Pagnell URC and Alex's wife).

THE VISIT OF THE MODERATOR OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND LORD WALLACE OF TANKERNESS AND LADY WALLACE

On the weekend of the 19th and 20th February we had the privilege of welcoming Lord and Lady Wallace to Downing Place. Lord Wallace has had an extremely distinguished career in politics and the law, in the Scottish Parliament and in the House of Lords. But in the seventies “Jim” Wallace was a student here at Downing College and worshipped at St. Columba’s. He was confirmed in St. Columba’s and took his first Communion at Emmanuel. Two of his great aunts were members of St. Columba’s - a link over the years.

Several members of Downing Place had the pleasure of meeting Lord and Lady (Rosie) Wallace informally on Saturday afternoon, and enjoyed chatting with them after they had toured the building and heard about our plans and aspirations.



*David Thomas showing the Moderator and Lady Wallace
the booklet on the history of St. Columba’s*

On the Sunday morning Lord Wallace preached the sermon and spoke to the children in Sharing Together. He showed them his Moderator’s cross and ring, and talked about the images on them – the burning bush and the cross. He and Nigel joined in the music making for the hymn, for which the children provided the percussion section.

Lord Wallace then preached about service – Christ as servant, and our own commitment to serve one another. We needed to remake our commitment to

God's creation too - the reading we had heard from Psalm 104 celebrated its riches and, like the prodigal son, we had abused them. The sermon began and ended with recollections of the Moderator's time in Cambridge and his confirmation by Ronald Speirs.

After the Benediction Lord Wallace presented Nigel with a plaque of a carving from St. Magnus' Cathedral in Orkney, where he serves as an Elder, and Nigel presented the Moderator with a glass ornament with an image of Cambridge, and Lady Wallace with chocolates, the more traditional flowers being deemed not helpful for a journey back to Scotland.



Joining in the percussio



Nigel then expressed the thanks of us all that during his very busy year of office the Moderator had chosen to visit Downing Place.

Photographs by Jess Uden

PROFILE – MADELINE IMPEY

I am a Cambridge person through and through. Both my parents lived here all their lives. My mother was actually born in St. Edward's Passage, in the house which is now the bookshop, and brought up mostly in Newnham, while my father came from the Mill Road area. My mother's father worked for Miss Eaden whose family owned the Eaden Lilley department store and as a College gardener. After having to give up the post of gardener due to a skin problem he became Porter at Sidney Sussex College, and then later on at Christ's College. My other grandfather was a proof reader at the Cambridge University Press. My mother and father had known each other from early childhood, having met when his aunt and her mother worked in service at Cherry Hinton Hall.



At Stonebenge in 1961 with my mother, my brother Robin, and "Humpty", my soft toy friend

I had a happy childhood in the house in Cherry Hinton Road which had belonged to my mother's grandfather before my parents bought it. They later moved to Coleridge Road, where they celebrated their diamond wedding in 2008 and featured in the Cambridge News.

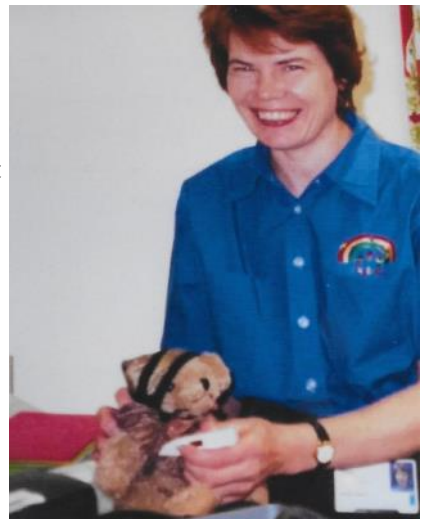
I was baptised in St. Columba's but my older brother Robin was baptised at St. John's Anglican Church in Hills Road, as my mother was an Anglican –my parents were married in Holy Trinity Church. My father was a Methodist, he was Organist at Castle St. Methodist for eight years from 1946. The whole family moved to St. Columba's when my father was appointed Organist there in 1954. I remember growing up in the Sunday school, I even remember being a "little one" upstairs in the former Macalister room, where we had a sandpit and a Noah's Ark and other toys. Then in the Gibson Hall, where we sat on green canvas chairs

and had a proper service of our own. Later I helped my mother in the crèche. There was a stage in the St. Columba's Hall then, and a drama group. The Minister was the Rev. Albert Cooper, a lovely man, though I used to think he was a "ghost" when he stood up in the high pulpit in his long black robes. He was succeeded by Rev. Ronald Speirs in 1961. I remember the bazaars and the games Bill Tripp organised for the children – a loop to pass along an electric wire, peas to be sucked up on a straw....

After nursery school in Cherry Hinton Hall just up the road and school at Morley Memorial and Netherhall, I went on to the Isle of Ely College of Horticulture and Further Education in Wisbech to train for a qualification in residential care of children. I really enjoyed my two years there and made many friends. We were able to open our own day nursery in a disused school building, and we even stayed on in the holidays so we could keep it open for the children. We took turns cooking lunch for the children - I was told off for making lumpy custard.

My first job was as an assistant House Mother in a residential nursery/children's home in Ipswich. It was good experience but exhausting as the older children had many behavioural problems. I could never leave my bedroom door unlocked for a second. I left after two years, the home eventually became a centre for teenagers. I did enjoy exploring the area by bike and still love Suffolk.

After that I managed to get the post of Nursery Nurse on the eye ward (Goode Ward) at the old Addenbrooke's hospital. The ophthalmic surgeons there were known worldwide for specialist eye surgery. I loved it there, there was a very happy atmosphere. I was a nursery nurse and play organiser, anything to do with caring for young patients. Then of course everything moved up to the new hospital, ward by ward. We were one of the last wards to move, and we had to get used to a new environment. My job was varied – feeding and bathing babies, making up lots of different feeds – that took a whole afternoon – providing play resources, entertaining and distracting young patients and helping with their treatment. Hospital stays were much longer then and for some



*At work as a nursery nurse, helping
at a Teddy Bear Clinic at
Addenbrooke's*

children I became almost a Mum or a Nanny. It was an exciting time, with new techniques being pioneered and children coming in from all over the country and abroad, but never quite the same as the older, more friendly hospital.

When I was in the older years at Netherhall we had been on adventure holidays to Drake's Island in Plymouth Sound, and I discovered I loved outdoor activities, climbing, abseiling but especially sailing. I joined the Cam Sailing Club and was asked if I would like to crew on a Broads sailing cruiser. I had many adventures on the River Cam and Ouse on several different boats, as the owner kept selling them and getting a different one. She then moved to Norfolk and I used to go and crew at Blakeney and on the Norfolk Broads. I learnt a lot as a crew member and for a time had my own dinghy.

I enjoy water colour painting and have been going to classes ever since I started working part time. I also love going to nature reserves, gardens, walking and being by the sea. I didn't really inherit my father's music, but I did teach myself to play the guitar after hearing Ralph McTell playing Streets of London at Cherry Hinton Hall, and I enjoyed playing John Denver, Simon and Garfunkel, that sort of thing.

My parents had been quite adventurous, taking their tandem on the train to Herefordshire and Cornwall, but in his later years my father grew reluctant to travel, especially when he developed angina. He had never liked driving a car although he happily cycled every day to his work in Trumpington. He worked all his life for the Post Office, working his way up from telegram boy to running Trumpington repeater station for many years.

On the other hand my mother loved trips out, and she and I used to take train trips, going as far as Kyle of Lochalsh and Inverness in this country and abroad to Austria and Venice. My mother always wanted to go to Paris though— she had been due to go there when war broke out, and afterwards she never made it. She loved history and was always well informed about whatever was of local interest. She had started her nurse's training but had to give it up due to illness. She did a secretarial course and worked for various firms in Cambridge including NIAB. She went back to work part time when I was in my teens, and among other things was a receptionist at the Marriage Guidance Council and then at the typing agency in Green St where the students brought their theses to be typed.



Crewing at Bottisham Lock

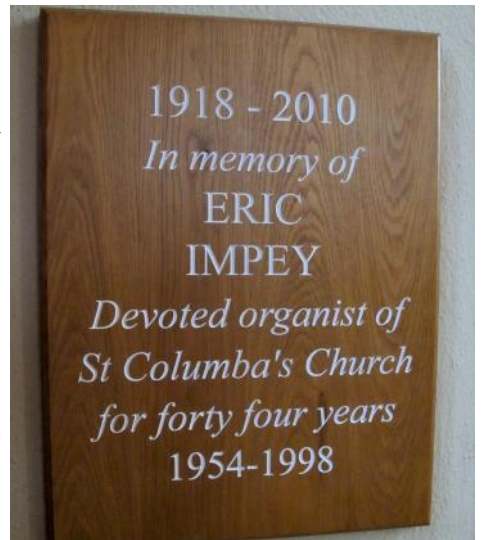
My parents' health declined, especially after they both had a bad fall in the garden. My mother was in hospital for several months after that, and neither of them were quite the same afterwards. After working part time for a while I took early retirement to care for them until they both passed away, my father first and then my mother.

As many St. Columba's people will know, my father was the Organist at St. Columba's for 44 years from 1954 to 1998. He played at my brother's wedding there. He had learned to play at the Railway Mission in Devonshire Road as a teenager, then had lessons at Hills Road Methodist, which until 1972 stood on the corner of Hills Road and Norwich St. He would have liked to go to the Royal School of Church Music, but the war intervened, and instead he went into the Royal Signals. There was always music at home, and Dad had a piano, later replaced by an organ, and keyboards he had built himself from a kit – a clavichord, a harpsichord and a virginal. He ran the Cambridge Organists' Association for many years with the help of my mother. He was great friends with the assistant organist at St. Columba's, Andrew Armour, who took over from Dad when he retired. Dad would have been fascinated by the amazing technology of our new digital organ and would have loved to have a go on it!

His other main interest was microscopy – he had a collection of different microscopes and every so often we would go up to London to meetings with other enthusiasts and look at fascinating slides – I particularly remember the vinegar worms! He belonged to the postal microscopical society and exchanged key slides with other enthusiasts all over the world.



Dad with the St. Columba's Church organ on his fortieth anniversary as Organist in 1994



Memorial plaque to Eric Impey in Downing Place

I enjoy being a Pastoral Visitor at Downing Place, helping with Junior Church and with the Gibson lunch, a great way of getting to know people. I am sure that our new building will be great for the Cambridge community.



Many thanks to Madeline for talking to Place Matters.

At Sheringham Park, 2021

ON HIS WAY

A series of six Bible study and discussion groups for Lent focusing on an encounter with Jesus and led by Janet Bottoms.

Monday evenings, by Zoom, 7.30 -9pm.

Tuesday afternoons, at Downing Place, 2.30 – 4pm.

The choice of passages to be discussed is drawn from the Scottish Bible Society Lenten course, but discussion will include personal responses and further relevant material as seems appropriate.

Week 1 - 28th and 1 March: John the Baptist [Luke 3:1-20]

Week 2 - 7th and 8th March: The Wedding at Cana. [John 2:1-12]

Week 3. 14th and 15th March: At Caesarea Philippi [Mark 8:27-38]

Week 4: 21st and 22nd March: The Pharisees [Matthew 12:1-14]

Week 5: 28th and 29th March: The Transfiguration [Luke 9:28-37]

Week 6: 4th and 5th April : At Bethany [John 12:1-8]

To register and for more information about the Monday evening sessions contact Tim Rowland; for Tuesday afternoons contact Janet Bottoms.

There will be handouts for each session available either by email or in the office.

JUNIOR CHURCH ACTIVITIES IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

After having stayed at home for part of December and the first couple of Sundays in January, the children were happy to be back at church and keen to share what they have been doing at Junior Church.

On 16 January the younger children participated in a birthday party during the 'Sharing Together' time and then went into their groups to talk about celebrations that Jesus might have joined in and to think about the story of the Wedding in Cana when He turned the water into wine. They then participated in a 'science experiment' to make something unexpected happen. We put drops of food colouring into a tray of milk and observed the stillness of the milk. Then we added a tiny amount of washing up liquid to the pools of food colouring marveling at the swirls of colour created as the milk moved around the tray. We then continued in our activities to make changes to other things, creating gift tags from old Christmas cards and decorating empty plastic tubs to use as crayon pots or treasure boxes. Our changes were good but couldn't match what Jesus was able to do to the water in the Bible story we had heard! Our session finished by sharing the cake that Nigel had brought for the birthday celebration in church.

The following week, we used the screen in the Junior Church room and watched a short movie about Jesus visiting the Temple as a 12 years old boy and spending many days there to spend time with God his father and learn and talk about what pleases God. The girls then joined in with a craft activity where we made 'helping hands' by drawing our own hands and thought about ways we could please God, in particular through helping others in very practical ways, such as 'help get PE kit out' and 'doing what your mum and dad say'. A few of the hands are captured in the photo. The boys opted to play with our toys instead, excited by the few new toys we recently acquired.



The first Sunday of February, we enjoyed singing 'love' and making hearts with everyone. We checked on the bulbs in the garden we planted last autumn, and thanked God with a jumping clapping prayer. Indoors we shared the story from Luke 5 1-11 of Jesus telling people of God's love. Simon Peter was very surprised to catch fish! The fishermen joined Jesus to tell everyone of God's love and to encourage everyone to live God's way.

We went fishing too! [with magnets]. We sang fishy songs and decorated the fish. We can share God's love with everyone.

On 13 February the session with the younger children focused on 'Love the World' in line with the theme of the church service led by the Sustainability Group. We talked about God's promise to

Noah that he would not flood the whole world ever again, a promise symbolised by the rainbow. The pollution of the oceans was our theme and we built up a



tableau to accompany the story 'Little Turtle and the Sea' by Beckie Davis and Jennie Poh. We created an ocean scene using tissue paper, shells and brightly coloured sea creature toys covering it with items of plastic rubbish as the story progressed. As the divers arrived to clean up the rubbish the children removed the plastic items and restored the life and colour to the ocean. The children then suggested promises they could make to show their love for the world. These included not dropping litter, (especially chocolate bar wrappers!), helping to recycle the rubbish at home

and reusing things rather than throwing them away. Our session concluded with the children creating magic painting pictures of the planets. By using clean water, they painted over their black and white pictures and watched beautiful colours appear.

Last but not least, we are still looking for leaders and helpers. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with Daphne Thomas if you are interested or if you have any questions about such a role.

Elza de Bruin-Lara, Lorraine Thornton and Daphne Thomas, with thanks for contributions from JC leaders and helpers

SPECIAL CAUSES



Thank you so much

Congratulations to
Downing Place United Reformed Church
for raising an amazing total of
£1186.30 !!!

Together, we can build a world where all people
with disabilities can achieve their full potential.

www.cbmun.org.uk • Tel 0800 567 7000

Registered charity no. 1058162 (England and Wales); SC041101 (Scotland)



We were delighted to receive the above 'thank you' last week from our January Special Cause, Christian Blind Mission.

The amount stated comprises £400 from our York Street fund; the collections from our weekly concerts and donations which were placed in the Gift Aid envelopes provided by Gill Godber and collected directly by her.

MONTHLY CAUSE FOR MARCH

The Sally May International Preschool, Sierra Leone

A short conversation on a bus and the exchange of details led to Marian Koroma visiting the Downing Place Knit One Give One group. Marian is from Sierra Leone and has lived and worked in the UK for many years. On returning to Sierra Leone in 2016 she noticed the children playing in filthy water and realised something needed to be done about it. She managed to set up a small group of two to six year olds in a church room, paying for two to three staff. The number rapidly grew and she realised a school building was needed. Land was found and the Sally May I P was founded from her own resources and from donations. It now has six classrooms, twelve staff and over 120 children. The toilet block is still to be finished. Marian says: “We are a Christian school, we believe in the Christian ethos. The school is my vision and my passion.”



Downing Place has been supporting the Sally May school ever since. The Knit One Give One group has been creating jumpers and hoodies for the children, and has provided pencils and other equipment. When we moved to Downing Place the children's chairs from Emmanuel went out to Sierra Leone. The school now needs funds urgently to pay staff, including a caretaker they have recently appointed.

Anne Disney

Donations should be made to Downing Place for this Special Cause.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
21 FEBRUARY – 6 MARCH



Traidcraft was founded in 1979 and has since become a world-changing fair trade organisation. It has successfully demonstrated that businesses can be both profitable and at the same time ensure that workers and producers in the developing world are paid a fair price for their goods. In turn, the workers and producers are then able to support their families and

improve facilities in their own communities. In 1992 Traidcraft jointly founded the Fairtrade Foundation with the aim of establishing the standards that underpin today's well-known Fairtrade mark. In 1997 the Fairtrade Foundation launched Fairtrade Fortnight in Edinburgh which is now celebrated in countries around the world and continues to be supported by Traidcraft.

I hope you will have had an opportunity to read in our weekly notice sheet about the various activities being organised by the Fairtrade Foundation on their website www.fairtrade.org.uk. The focus of Fairtrade Fortnight this year is climate change. Farmers are reporting this to be one of the biggest obstacles they face. These farmers, in countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Honduras, live in countries that have contributed least to climate change.

The new Traidcraft catalogue for Spring 2022 is now out so please pick one up and enjoy browsing the goods available and reading the articles on some of the producers. Our stall is now available in the Gibson Hall after Sunday services and is also running in the Hub on Wednesdays between 12.00pm and 3.00pm. Traidcraft has produced a series of activity sheets which are available in the Hub covering climate change issues and fair trade facts. Why not have a look at them over a cup of tea or coffee? If we all committed to buying one fairly traded item on a regular basis, we could make a difference to the lives of many in the developing world struggling to secure a living while trying to combat the effects of climate change.

Lorraine and Stephen Thornton



Bible
Society



Cambridge Bible Society Action Group invite you to

Spring Supper and talk

'Good Friday and Easter: 4 accounts, 1 message?'

Guest speaker: Dr Peter Williams, Principal, Tyndale House

Friday 25 March 2022 at 6.45 pm
Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way,
Cambridge CB1 8QN

The talk will be live-streamed at 7.45pm
No tickets; please email penny.flynn@gmail.com to reserve
a supper place or for the live stream link.

REFUGEES

Refugees are very much in our mind this month, migrants in Calais hoping to make it across the Channel, migrants from conflicts in Syria or Afghanistan, victims of conflict and climate crisis in the developing world. As Downing Place becomes a Church of Sanctuary, we look this month at some of the organisations, mostly charities, working to help asylum seekers and refugees in Cambridge.

What is a refugee? The Refugee Council gives this definition from the United Nations Refugee Convention:

“A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality and is unable or, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country”

In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that an individual who has applied for asylum meets the definition in the Refugee Convention ...

Up to that point that person is an asylum seeker (or person seeking asylum), defined as

“A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but whose application has not yet been concluded.”

Migrant is a more general term: “A migrant is someone who has moved to another country for other reasons, such as to find work.” However the term “migrant” is often used of refugees and asylum seekers such as those at Calais.

NRPF Some refugees granted limited leave to remain in the UK have “no recourse to public funds” (NRPF), which means what it says – no right to any kind of benefit or allowance. They can use the NHS, but may be asked to pay.

In Cambridge we have many people working within several different organisations to help refugees and asylum seekers. This table sets them out.

A GUIDE TO REFUGEE SERVICES IN CAMBRIDGE



ORGANISATIONS WITH LEGAL DUTIES

Cambridge City Council is responsible for housing agreed numbers of resettling refugees under a contract with the Home Office. **Cambridgeshire County Council** has responsibility for the care of unaccompanied minors. **Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum** is the Council's designated provider of advice to refugees and asylum-seekers on legal, immigration and accommodation matters

01



CAMBRIDGE
CITY COUNCIL

ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH REFUGEES

Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign provides support, befriending and activities for locally resettled refugee families. **Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group** fundraises, supports displaced people in Calais and collects material aid. **BACA** runs 'family-style' hostels for lone teenage refugees. **Give Your Best** runs an online catalogue free-shopping service for refugee and asylum-seeking women.

02



At the top come the City and County Councils, who are contracted by the Home Office to find accommodation and look after unaccompanied minors. Working under contract with the Councils is the Refugee Services arm of **Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (CECF)**, giving legal and other practical advice to asylum seekers and refugees in Cambridge.



The CECF works in partnership with the statutory and voluntary sectors to meet the needs of refugees most effectively. In 2016 it produced a wide-ranging report on the refugee situation in Cambridge at that time – you can read it [here](#). One of the projects organized by this umbrella organisation is *Crafting the Self*, offering migrant women the opportunity to reconnect with their home culture through art and craft.

We in Downing Place made a substantial donation to CECF last year.



Then come the other voluntary organisations.

Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign (CRRC) takes help to refugees a stage further, offering welfare support, language tuition and so on. They are a volunteer-run group of Cambridge people formed in 2015 to welcome refugees into the community, which became a registered charity in 2017. They work together with other charities to help refugees settle in, looking for people willing to provide homes, and then offering all sorts of practical support - help with furniture and equipment, providing bicycles, and then helping with access to medical care, education, and social events to help families to integrate. They also seek to spread awareness of the refugee situation, in schools and other local organisations.



03

UNIVERSITY GROUPS

The University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Global Human Movement hosts the **Refugee Hub**, with information on scholarships and support for refugee students and academics. Student-led groups include **Cambridge Refugee Scholarship Campaign**, **Cambridge University of Sanctuary**, **Cambridge Undoing Borders**, **Re:action**, **Solidaritee**, **StAR**, **CRAS**

OTHER REFUGEE-RELATED ORGANISATIONS

Cambridge City of Sanctuary provides a forum for local groups and also connects with the national City of Sanctuary network. **Cambridge Welcome** exists to promote a welcoming environment for anyone settling in Cambridge and to combat the 'hostile environment'. **The Aid Hub** organises shipments of material aid collected by UK groups to Europe and the Lebanon.

These national groups have a presence in Cambridge:

Refugee Education UK (formerly Refugee Support Network) offers educational mentoring.

NACCOM,

Refugees At Home & Room for Refugees all work to provide accommodation

There are also several student groups based in both Universities, local groups such as Cambridge Welcome and Cambridge City of Sanctuary, and national groups working in Cambridge such as Refugee Education UK and BACA, which we mention below.

The Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and the Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign worked together to help Miriam (not her real name), and her family to settle in Cambridge. Miriam came to Cambridge from Iraqi Kurdistan with her husband and children as refugees in 2016. She told Place Matters her story.

Miriam's Story

The first time we came to the UK we were not refugees. We came to Sheffield in 2011 where my husband was doing research at Sheffield University for his PhD. He had a student visa, I was looking after our children – my youngest was born in Sheffield in 2013 -, but I also managed to attend some English language courses. It was quite a difficult time though.

After my husband completed his PhD in 2015 we returned home to Iraqi Kurdistan, but found things very difficult. Isis had arrived in 2014, with all the destruction they brought with them, and were particularly hostile to our minority religious group, the Yarsani or Kaka'i. most of whose believers are Kurds from Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan. Isis class Yarsanis as unbelievers, who must convert to Islam or die. So our lives were in danger, and after six months or so we had to leave and made the journey back to the UK.



Miriam

We arrived at Gatwick airport and were interviewed by the immigration authorities. They knew that we had been in the UK before and had a bank account, and just £700, so they wouldn't give us any help until we had nothing left. £700 doesn't go far with five people to support. After a night at the airport we contacted a relative of my husband in Canterbury and he drove to Gatwick and picked us up. We stayed with him in Canterbury, but the house was not big enough for two families. The immigration people still refused to find us accommodation, so we went to St. Neots, to another family from Kurdistan.

After two days there we had to move on. My husband had been searching on - line for organisations who would help refugees and found the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum. So we came into Cambridge and at 10 a.m. we knocked on their door – they were such nice people and made us feel

welcome. We stayed until 4 pm while they phoned around to try to find someone who could offer us somewhere to stay. But no success – he told us that if they could find something a lady would call us.

So there we were at 4 o'clock standing in Mill Road just in front of St. Barnabas Church when a lady called my husband. They had found somewhere for us and she would pick us up and take us there. This was so good, we had two bedrooms, a bathroom, and the couple there were so welcoming. After two days we said we must move on, but he insisted “No Way! I don't want you to leave this house until you have found a proper place to live”, so we stayed two weeks with them.

The Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign kept on supporting us – thanks to them we did find a proper place to live, offered by another very kind lady, in Cambridge, where the children could have school places. We were there for a year while we applied for our right to remain. That was a very stressful time, our first application was refused but the people from CRRC helped us with our appeal. They were marvellous. They helped us to fill in all the forms, they engaged a solicitor for us at their expense and paid all the court fees to fight our case. Once we had our right to remain we could apply to be housed, which took three or four months.

Now we are very happy to be here and safe and well settled. Our three children are in good schools and doing well, my husband has his own small company, and I work part-time for him doing paperwork and administration. I also volunteer with CRRC to help other refugees.

The people at CECF and CRRC worked so hard. All the way through they supported us. They made us feel comfortable, feel that we were not alone here even though we don't have relations in Cambridge. We can't thank them enough.

Thanks to Miriam for telling us about her experience as a refugee in Cambridge.

Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group (CamCrag)

(www.camcrag.org.uk)

sends convoys with volunteers and supplies to Calais. Downing Place has been pleased to support CamCrag since 2016 – they were our monthly cause in August, 2020.

Freya, a CamCrag volunteer, told Place Matters about her experience working with migrants in Calais.

Volunteering with CamCrag, the Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group.

I first went to Calais just after I left College in 2019. I can't remember how I got to know about CamCrag, but I went over for two days with a convoy. On your first trip you don't meet any of the refugees, I just helped in the warehouse, in the kitchen, preparing food and clearing up. This was my gap year, so after working to earn some money, I went travelling, to Australia and Sri Lanka – until the first lockdown, when I caught the very last flight home out of Sri Lanka.

The next autumn I went up to Nottingham to read Liberal Arts, but after two weeks I dropped out – it didn't feel right for me. I worked for a while, then in January 2021 I headed back to Calais, during lockdown. It was very difficult getting the paperwork, but I made it, originally for two weeks, but I stayed a month in the end. Now I am at Bristol, reading law and doing everything I can to make people aware of the predicament of refugees, among other things going into schools as part of the Schools of Sanctuary strand of the Cities of Sanctuary movement.

My second, longer, stay in Calais, brought me into direct contact with the asylum seekers, and at first it was overwhelming, but CamCrag are very well organised and give you lots of support. Before you go out to take food you have a daily briefing with very precise guidelines about your behaviour and your safety, some quite surprising. For example, you should avoid



saying “sorry”, as we tend to do casually – many people will have heard this so often on their journey when help was refused that it has become a trigger word for them. And you shouldn’t “pidginise” your English, but be articulate and speak normally. Using “pidgin” English, even with the intention of being better understood, can be seen as condescending, and doesn’t help people trying to improve their own English. Nor should you be anything other than professional, personal relationships are out of bounds. If people want to share their story with you that is OK, but you don’t ask them questions.

As for safety, there are protocols in place. If tension develops the team leader will give a code word and everyone immediately gets back in the van. And every evening the volunteers would de-brief over supper, sharing their feelings and experiences during the day.

I boarded with a local family, but spent all the day at the warehouse run by Refugee Community Kitchen, (*see the RCK website www.refugeecommunitykitchen.org for lots more information and videos*). The mornings were spent in food preparation, everyone lunched together at midday – on yesterday’s curry – then we set out in the van. Two groups would go out, one taking food to two points in Calais, the second to another point in Calais and to the camp in Dunkirk. The Dunkirk camp was different, it was in woods outside the town, controlled by the Kurds who were the main inhabitants, and access was more tricky, except for us taking the food. We all had extra training before going in to the Dunkirk camp. There were more women and children – we always served them first and separately, but it was hard to see babies and small children in these awful conditions. The Calais camps were less organised, more like street sleepers, and there we saw mainly young men, from many different countries in Africa and the Middle East, but often very well educated graduates with excellent English.

We would go out in the van in a group of four with an enormous vat of curry, two vats of rice, a huge bowl of salad, condiments, tea and coffee and water. We never quite knew how many people we would be serving – could be 300 to 600 or more – but we only ran out of food once, which was a harrowing experience, having to say no to hungry people and feeling it must be our fault. We would set up a table and people queued up – there were no limits on what or how much people could take, it was important to preserve their autonomy. Occasionally when there had been tension,

perhaps after a police raid, we would pack up the food instead and leave it to be collected.

The CRS - the French riot police – would turn up regularly to try to move people on. Their methods were brutal, they slashed tents and took away people’s belongings, used teargas and batons, even slashed the water carriers. All futile, as people simply returned the next day. The conditions in January were horrendous – cold, wet, snowy and always deep mud underfoot.

I struck up a friendship with a young woman refugee from Iran who was living in the house where I boarded. She had little English, so we communicated via Google Translate! She was gay, but had made the journey to Calais with a man and his young son who were willing to be her “husband” and “child” to make things easier. Now she was on her own, hoping to make it across the channel. As I left on my comfortable train she was about to risk the boat crossing. When I got back home I didn’t hear from her for a week, which was awful – the smugglers had thrown her phone and all her belongings out of the boat to make room for more people. Now she was safe but had nothing, so I and my friends got together a case full of clothes, etc. – when she saw it all she burst into tears! She is now in the north of England, applying for refugee status, but has to “prove” that she is gay – how on earth do you do that?

Going to Calais was hugely rewarding but I can’t feel proud of myself, only very humble and even ashamed when I compare my own privilege with what these people have been through and are still facing. The CamCrag convoys are now taking off again after Covid, and volunteers are so badly needed – see the CamCrag website at <https://camcrag.org.uk/>

Many thanks to Freya for talking to Place Matters



A national charity which is active in Cambridge is **Refugee Education UK** (REUK). It used to be known as Refugee Support Network, but changed its name when refugees pointed out that it wasn't clear that it provided advice about education. It helps young migrants by pairing them with a volunteer mentor to support them in their education.

REUK say: We are an educational charity working predominantly with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people by supporting them in their education and Cambridge is one of the cities that we work out of.

Asylum seeking children have overcome so much to get here, compounded by being young and alone. Their lives in the UK often continue to be filled with uncertainty, a continuation of the journey they have been on, as they navigate the British asylum process. Battling culture shock, loneliness and long stretches of time waiting on decisions, they have by no means “arrived”.

The pandemic we have been living through has been especially hard for young people who may have felt they had just started to settle in and get a grasp on English only to have their education interrupted once again. The huge levels of uncertainty we have all found difficult have been very painful for young asylum seekers and refugees who have already experienced so much uprooting.

As a charity founded on a Christian ethos, REUK wants to send a message of hope to these young people by investing in their education. We are working towards a world where all refugee and asylum-seeking children and young people can access education, thrive in education, and use that education to create a hopeful, brighter future.

REUK currently runs a number of services supporting young asylum seekers all the way through Further Education and Higher Education. The charity started out with an educational mentoring programme in London which has now spread to other parts of the country including the East of England and Cambridge. Volunteers are trained and paired up with a young person who they then meet with on a weekly basis for English language learning support and homework help.

Having a mentor is a real help for young people needing to progress in their English so as to move on with their studies. On top of the language learning benefits, for many of our young people, this is the first time they are being supported by someone who isn't paid to do so. The consistency of their mentor being present to meet with them every week speaks volumes and helps them

develop self confidence and a sense of self worth.

The Cambridge based programme isn't currently recruiting new volunteers but if you have any questions about our work please contact Becca on becca@reuk.org.

Aisha (not her real name) is one of the young people helped by an REUK volunteer mentor

Like a lot of young people her age, 15 year old Aisha was anxious to do well and put a lot of pressure on herself to perform at school. However, she was also dealing with the uncertainty of not knowing if she would be granted refugee status, and living in a foster family as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child. She was particularly concerned about passing her English exam and was referred to REUK by another charity who supported her and expressed concern about her stress levels.

Aisha was matched with Mariana, an REUK volunteer mentor, who began to help her with her reading and writing skills but also provided support in thinking calmly about the future. Together, they developed strategies for Aisha to begin to manage her stress, and after a few months of mentoring, she passed her exam. Her confidence in speaking English has really progressed, and although she still struggles with understanding the questions at school, she is able to study more effectively now that she has some coping strategies. Through REUK's support, Mariana was also able to encourage Aisha to apply for a summer volunteering programme for young people, which was a great experience and a huge boost to her confidence and motivation. Aisha has now got her refugee status and is taking further courses at school in maths and accounting and has an ambition to work in finance. She told us:

“I had to learn new words for my assignments. We wrote a long list and she [my mentor] explained the meaning of them to make it easy to remember. She helped me with school, no one else did. In school it is not easy to ask if everybody else understands. If I'm stressed, she gives me advice. It makes me happy when I'm sad. She shows me how to be better and pass the exam. [Mentoring] helps you to be who you want to be in the future.”

website: www.reuk.org



BACA is a charity based in Loughborough which runs hostels for unaccompanied minors throughout the Midlands, working with local authorities, and has recently opened a house in North Cambridge. BACA takes care of these young people, building up their confidence and equipping them with the skills for living independently.

BACA is named after an ancient place in the Middle East called the Valley of Baca. This place was a waterless and barren valley that pilgrims had to pass on their long journeys to Jerusalem. It is said that faith and hope turned this arid dry place into springs and that those who journeyed through found refreshment and blessing in the most untoward circumstances. It gave them strength to continue forward and to have vision for their future.

Psalm 84, vv 6-7: Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength

It is thought that this refreshment came from the trees that lay along the route. These are often called ‘Baca trees’ or ‘balsam trees’. Therefore, the name Baca and the logo of a tree represent what Baca believe they do as an organisation.

Baca say: “We believe each young person arriving on our shores has a dignity worth celebrating, talents worth discovering and a life worth living to its fullest potential, no matter their past experiences nor present circumstances.

The young people who we work with have often experienced terrible and traumatic pasts. Many have been orphaned, seen war, persecution, been trafficked away from their families and exploited on their journeys as they seek some kind of safety and a chance of a better future.

We hope that as they arrive at Baca, that the faith and hope we invest into these young people give refreshment, hope and passion. We recognise

that we are not their final destination but a place to stop, rest and gain the skills and strength for their onward journeys into their futures.”

We are committed to providing an inspiring environment that raises hope and strengthens resilience, enabling each young person to rebuild his or her life.

Arif is one of the young people whom Baca have helped to settle in this country.

Arif (not his real name) is from Sudan and travelled through Libya and France before arriving at Baca at the end of 2018. On arrival Arif spoke no English and had very little education in his home language, this made learning a second language even more challenging. Arif also couldn't cook as his sisters had done this at home. Right from the start he worked hard to learn, after a few weeks he was cooking dinner with his support worker. In a review of his progress in January Arif commented how in a few months he has learnt to “cook, speak English, use trains and buses, wash clothes, and budget money”. In January he also started attending additional weekly reading sessions with one of our reading volunteers. Our volunteer lead spoke to Arif after the session to see how it went, he said "yes, very, good, she is a good teacher". He has attended these sessions every week and has also been supported by students at Loughborough University. After sitting his exams, in June we found out that Arif had passed his Entry 1 English and Maths together with speaking and listening exams. His teacher congratulated him on his achievement, he replied "Thank you so much teacher, you help me, I knew nothing when I came here". Arif started college in September and is doing well.

website <https://www.bacacharity.org.uk/>

Loosely linked to CECF is the **City of Sanctuary** movement. City of Sanctuary is a grassroots, national movement of local people and community groups working to make their cities a place of welcome and safety for people seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. Cambridge has a well established tradition of sanctuary. From Basque children fleeing the Spanish civil war, Jewish Kindertransport, Vietnamese, Bosnian and Chilean communities, through to more recently Syrian and soon Afghan refugees.

Cambridge has been a City of Sanctuary since 2015. Within the City of Sanctuary movement is the Faiths group, as we heard from Rosemary Watson in our Church meeting last September. Churches are encouraged to become a Church of Sanctuary, pledging to welcome refugees, and work to spread awareness of the real facts about refugees in the community



Downing Place has applied to be a Church of Sanctuary, as Emmanuel was, and has agreed to adopt this pledge:

‘We support Cambridge as a City of Sanctuary. We aim to learn what it means to seek sanctuary and we wish to raise awareness across the community. We recognise the contribution of sanctuary seekers and refugees to the city and are committed to welcoming them and including them in our activities.

We are willing for our organisation's name to be added to the list of supporters of Cambridge City of Sanctuary and we are willing to explore ideas for how we can turn this pledge into practical action.’

The City of Sanctuary’s Faiths group recently circulated one account of how the Church of Sanctuary scheme could make a real difference:

In the days between Christmas and New Year a newly arrived and destitute Asylum Seeker who had spent a night on our streets saw one of these stickers (from the Sanctuary movement) at the front of one of our faith buildings, and found a door bell to ring. He was welcomed, fed, and emergency bed and breakfast was arranged to carry him over to the New Year, when organisations were opening up again and he could be directed to help with all his problems. He is now being temporarily housed through the hosting organisation Refugees at Home while awaiting official asylum support. Thanks are due to the initial faith group which responded so generously, the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum Refugee Services and the kind host family as well as individuals who have all demonstrated that Cambridge is a City of Sanctuary.

website: <https://cityofsanctuary.org/>

There are many other organisations, national and local, which work together to help refugees. These include:



Cambridge Welcome, a group of volunteers from all walks of life and ages based in the Cambridge area, who promote a hospitable and welcoming environment for everyone who comes here to live, study, work, seek sanctuary, join family and enrich our local community.

“We believe that all people in the community, wherever they are from and whatever their immigration status, deserve to be treated with dignity and fairness.”

<https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeWelcome>

Global Justice Cambridge

Global Justice Cambridge are a group of committed local people who campaign to tackle the root causes of global poverty and injustice. They are part of Global Justice Now (formerly the World Development Movement), a democratic movement in the UK which campaigns in solidarity with people in the global South. Downing Place supports **Global Justice Now** through **Commitment for Life**.

<http://groups.globaljustice.org.uk/cambridge/>



Give Your Best is an online clothes donations project. “We connect pre-loved clothes with those who don’t just need them but choose them. ... Our catalogue of gifted woman’s clothes and accessories can be ‘shopped’ for free by people who are refugees, seeking asylum, NRPF or with precarious immigration status.

<https://www.giveyourbest.uk>



Refugee Week

Refugee Week 2022 will run from World Refugee Day 20th June to 26th June, with the theme of “healing”.

Our thanks are due especially to Rosemary Watson of CECF and Cambridge City of Sanctuary, to Catharine Walston of CRRC, to Becca Torrance of REUK, and Terry Spencer of CamCrag for their help with this article, and to Freya and “Miriam” for sharing their experience with *Place Matters*.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2022



On **Friday 4 March** with a theme of Hope prepared by the WDP Team in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

‘I Know the Plans I Have for You’
Jeremiah 29:1-14

2022 is a special year for the World Day of Prayer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI). These ‘home nations’ have prepared the World Day of Prayer service, which takes place on **Friday 4 March** at St Clement's Church at **10.30am**. More details from Deborah McVey, Pamela Cressey or Ann Phillips.



LUNCHTIME CONCERTS - WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary. Come and bring friends!

2 March	Adam Parrish (piano)
9 March	Cambridge Chamber Ensemble
16 March	Philippa Jones (cello) & Maurice Hodges (piano)
23 March	Nico Buri (classical guitar)
30 March	Ian de Massini (piano & organ) & Jane Bower A concert of music and poetry

See more on our website:

<https://downingplaceurc.org/lunchtime-concerts/>



LECTIO DIVINA

It is not too late to join the lectio sessions for Lent. Several people (from four different churches) have now found this simple hour of meditation on a passage of scripture to be foundational for the day ahead. We will link the scripture with one of the set lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday which is by way of preparation for Lent-tide Sundays. Is this the moment to dip your toe in and discover a new way of praying? And this all happens on Zoom so you could join in your dressing gown if you so wish!

We will hold six Lenten sessions for Lectio Divina on Friday mornings from **4th March** to **8th April** 2022. As before, these will be from 8.30 to 9.30 am - except the first session (4th March) which will be from 8.15 to 9.15am to accommodate Deborah's involvement in the World Day of Prayer (see above).

Please let William McVey know if you are wanting to sign up. If you haven't explored this form of engagement with scripture before you are most welcome.

Do be in touch with Deborah McVey if you want to chat this through.

Revd Deborah M McVey



PROCEEDS FROM THE EMMANUEL BOOKSTALL

The proceeds from the bookstall at Emmanuel have been sent to the Kuwadzana Christian Training Centre in Harare, renewing and continuing a long-standing link with the URC. Ted Dennison, who ran the bookstall, was anxious that the money should benefit Christian education in a developing country.

A sum of £363.48 (\$473) has been transferred to Revd. Jonah Masaka, who founded the school, together with Paul Whittle's father, Raymond, in the 1960's.

Jonah responded: "Thank you for this money. I have been to Western Union where I have collected it. We have now reopened the Bible school after the lockdown, with 15 students doing two-year courses in Christian studies. We are printing lectures for the students, and some of the students who are unable to meet the costs will get help from this fund. Thank you again. Jonah"



Lindsey Brown of the URC writes:

"It was because of this personal relationship (between Raymond Whittle and Jonah Masaka) that Eastern Synod's partnership with the UPCSA in Zimbabwe was established in 2010. Raymond Whittle was also a one-time minister at Westborough URC in Wessex Synod, and that church still has a very strong relationship with the School also. Their current minister, Revd Graham Hoslett, was very helpful to me in getting the money to the right place. He has visited a few times and even led some short courses there. Having visited the School myself in 2012 I know that they really appreciate the connections they have with us and that while they have real financial struggles they are also a wonderful resource both for their students and the wider community (from their borehole to their library, for example, they serve not just the School but also the immediate residential area around it)."



CHRISTIAN AID IN LENT WALKING HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD

Christian Aid invite you to journey through Lent with their weekly podcast on the theme of

Micah, 6, 8 – “ ,,,, to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God”.

Starting on Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter Sunday, a weekly podcast (with transcript) – Walking Humbly - will be available for streaming or download, along with questions for reflection and small group discussion.

Register to receive our Prayer and Worship e-mail to get a reminder to download the podcast as Lent begins, and to find out about our ongoing prayer and worship resources.

[Sign up to our Prayer and Worship e-mail](#)

A prayer for walking humbly

We have walked to Glasgow for climate justice.

We have walked 300K steps.

We have walked with Christian Aid Week envelopes.

We have walked to hand in petitions

We have walked to get medical help

We have walked for daily water.

We have walked to reach new pasture

We have walked to get an education.

Show us this Lent what it means to walk

humbly with you as we seek to act justly and love mercy. Amen.



In 2022, Christian Aid Week will take place from **15th to 21st May**.

The theme of this year's Christian Aid Week will be "Hungry for Justice" and will focus on the impact of climate change and drought in Zimbabwe.

A Commitment for Life ZOOM EVENT

COFFEE WITH WILLIAM

JOIN US ON ZOOM TO HEAR WILLIAM BELL SHARE ON THE IMPACT OF THE 2021 CHRISTIAN AID REPORT 'WHERE IS PALESTINE?'



THURS 17th March 2022
11am-12.15pm GMT

ZOOM Meeting ID: 826 2918 7235

Commitment for Life

The United Reformed Church

MOVING STORIES

Commitment
for **Life**

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Committed to supporting | our global partners | in Bangladesh



The poster features a yellow background with decorative circles in white, orange, and red. At the top left, there are clusters of small dots in green, yellow, and orange. The text is centered and reads: 'Commitment for Life' (with 'Life' in blue), 'Service of Celebration', 'For our time with', 'CENTRAL AMERICA' (in large bold letters), 'with Revd Dr Susan Durber', '31st March 2022 @ 2-3PM', and 'For ZOOM login detail contact suzanne.pearson@urc.org.uk'. In the top right corner is the logo for 'The United Reformed Church', which consists of a black cross with a blue fish symbol inside. At the bottom, there is an illustration of three women with long arms holding hands, forming a circle. The woman on the left has long black hair and wears a teal top and yellow skirt. The woman in the middle has her hair in a bun and wears a yellow top and teal skirt. The woman on the right has short black hair and wears a teal top and teal skirt. A red arrow pointing right with the text 'Christian aid' is located in the bottom right corner of the illustration.

Commitment
for **Life**

The United Reformed Church

Service of Celebration
For our time with
CENTRAL AMERICA
with Revd Dr Susan Durber
31st March 2022 @ 2-3PM
For ZOOM login detail contact suzanne.pearson@urc.org.uk

Christian aid

Prayer Time

Jesus, you declared a New Jubilee at the very start of your ministry, a promise to cancel all debt demanded by the rich. And then you overturned the tables of unjust economic structures. Praise be to God! Help us, Jesus, to follow in your footsteps. Give us the wisdom, tools, and courage to subvert the deeply unjust economic structures of empire in our day, and in so doing, to usher in the kingdom of God. In your name we pray. Amen.

Service for Central America

Commitment for Life has worked alongside Christian Aid in Central America for over a decade. We have helped countless poor communities with everything from women's empowerment to drought resistant coffee beans. But things change. Christian Aid is steadily winding down its presence in the region, and it's time to say a fond farewell to our presence in the region as we consolidate and engage with our three remaining regions: Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, and Palestine and Israel. Join us on Zoom for a fond farewell service of celebration with the wonderful Susan Durber (see poster.)



Angela Biswas writes: “Each morning I wake up with the clucks of my hens. I was able to build up my poultry farm with the support of Christian Aid Bangladesh which gave me a hope to stand strong despite my poverty. It allowed me to make a handsome amount of savings.”

Thank you for your support for our work in Bangladesh. What an enormous difference it makes!

THE CHERRY HINTON ROAD TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP

Since the writing of the last report the CHR Tuesday Fellowship has continued to meet weekly in the chapel at St Athanasios Church. Covid restrictions were observed by wearing of masks and maintaining social distance. The Harvest Festival service took place in the chapel and £35 was collected and sent to the Trussell Trust. In October we filled three shoe boxes for the Link Hope charity. This charity collects items, such as toiletries, gloves, scarfs and sweets and craft materials for families and individuals living in Eastern Europe. We also gave a donation of £20. Gill Godber gave us a most inspiring talk on the work of the Christian Blind Mission, and we were able to send £72.20 to the Mission. In December we had our Carol Service and raised £52 for the Bible Society. Finally after Christmas we had a delightful afternoon with the Capriol Dancers who came to the hall and danced for us in memory of Liz Russell.

We are now in the process of deciding where we want to hold our meetings, either in the hall or in the chapel, or a mixture of both, because there have been difficulties arising from our chairs having to be moved in the chapel to accommodate the children who meet in the chapel for classes. We continue to be so grateful to the Greek Orthodox Church for their support and are very willing to fit in with their wishes. We also appreciate all our helpers who make the continuation of the Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship possible. We particularly thank Carole Scullion and Sheila Simpkins who play the piano and even the accordion for us!

We will be having a service on March 1st at 2.30 pm in St Athanasios Hall which will be taken by Nigel Uden. We will be very pleased to welcome anyone who would like to come.

Penny Milsom



MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

6 March	Janet Tollington	Melbourn
13 March	Chris Baker Janet Tollington Nigel Uden	Stetchworth & Cheveley Trinity, Burwell Fulbourn
20 March	Liz Caswell David Cornick Penny Flynn Janet Tollington	Stetchworth & Cheveley Buntingford Melbourn Wylde Green, West Midlands
27 March	Chris Baker Janet Bottoms Liz Caswell Penny Flynn David Tatem	Littleport Methodist Stetchworth & Cheveley Trinity, Burwell Fulbourn Melbourn

LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Here is advance notice of services in Holy Week and Easter. More detail will be given in the April edition of Place Matters. We are grateful to three United Reformed Church ministers whose contributions are the backbone of our services throughout these important eight days.

April 10th Palm Sunday

11.00am Morning Worship,
with the reading of the Passion Narrative according to St Luke
The Revd Dr David Cornick leads and preaches
This service will be in person and live streamed,
with the recording available subsequently

April 11th Holy Monday

April 12th Holy Tuesday

April 13th Holy Wednesday

The Revd John Proctor is recording reflective moments for these days, including music from Ian de Massini.

*The recordings will be available on the
Downing Place Church YouTube channel,
intended to make access possible at any time of day, to suit viewers' diaries.
Available from the evening before, on YouTube.*

April 14th Maundy Thursday

7.30pm Holy Communion
The Revd Deborah McVey
*This service will be in person and live streamed,
with the recording available subsequently*

April 15th Good Friday

10.00am A service for the city centre Free Churches,
at St Andrew's Street Baptist Church,
led by its minister, The Revd Dr Steve Langford,
with Pfarrer Kerstin Othmer preaching from the
German Speaking Lutheran Church
This service will be in person and on Zoom concurrently

5.00pm The Way of the Cross, a Devotion for Passiontide,
featuring the words of Eric Milner-White and the organ music of
Philip Moore
This in person service will not be live streamed.

April 16th Holy Saturday

The last of John Proctor's recorded reflections, available from the evening before, on YouTube.

4.00pm Music for Easter Eve
- a free concert by *Cambridge Voices*

April 17th Easter Day

11.00am Holy Communion
The Minister
This service will be in person and live streamed, with the recording available subsequently

7.30pm Open Table Holy Communion
The Minister
This in person service will not be live streamed.

IMPORTANT NOTICES - WORSHIP IN MARCH

CAMBRIDGE HALF-MARATHON

The next Cambridge half-marathon will take place on Sunday 6 March; and Trumpington Street will be closed from 8.45am. You will still be able to approach the Church via Lensfield Road and Tennis Court Road. Please allow extra time to get to Church!

SUNDAY 20 MARCH

The service on Sunday 20 March will start at **10.30am**, to accommodate the Church Meeting which will then take place by Zoom at 12.30pm.

Codes for the Church Meeting will be sent round nearer the time.

DIARY

Services are conducted by the Minister, except where shown

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	27-Feb-22	Sunday Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	28-Feb-22	Funeral of Sheena Jackman	2:00pm	Downing Place URC
Mon	28-Feb-22	Lent House Group (see p.13)	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	01-Mar-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	01-Mar-22	Lent House Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Wed	02-Mar-22	Hub Hospitality	10:00am - 4:00pm	The Hub
Wed	02-Mar-22	Lunchtime Concert - Adam Parrish (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	02-Mar-22	Ash Wednesday Communion	7:30pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	03-Mar-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	04-Mar-22	World Day of Prayer (see p.36)	10:30am	St Clements
Fri	04-Mar-22	Lectio Divina (see p.38)	8:30am	Zoom
Sun	06-Mar-22	Sunday Worship with Communion	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	06-Mar-22	Open Table Social	7:00pm	The Hub
Mon	07-Mar-22	Officers meeting	4:00pm	Downing Place URC
Mon	07-Mar-22	Buildings Group	6:00pm	The Hub
Mon	07-Mar-22	Lent Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	08-Mar-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	08-Mar-22	Lent House Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Wed	09-Mar-22	Lunchtime Concert - Cambridge Chamber Ensemble	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	09-Mar-22	Hub Hospitality	10:00am	The Hub
Wed	09-Mar-22	Property Group	6:15pm	Zoom
Thu	10-Mar-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	11-Mar-22	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Fri	11-Mar-22	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Sun	13-Mar-22	Sunday Worship led by Revd Liz Caswell	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	14-Mar-22	Lent House Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	15-Mar-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	15-Mar-22	Lent House Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Tue	15-Mar-22	Elders' meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	16-Mar-22	Deadline for submitting items for Place Matters		
Wed	16-Mar-22	Lunchtime Concert - Philippa Jones (cello) & Maurice Hodges (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	16-Mar-22	Hub Hospitality	10:00am	The Hub
Thu	17-Mar-22	Gibson Lunch	12.30pm	Gibson Hall
Thu	17-Mar-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	18-Mar-22	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Sun	20-Mar-22	Sunday Worship	10:30am	Downing Place URC
Sun	20-Mar-22	Church Meeting	12:30pm	Zoom
Sun	20-Mar-22	Open Table Communion Service	7.30pm	Downing Place URC

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Mon	21-Mar-22	Lent House Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	22-Mar-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	22-Mar-22	Lent House Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Wed	23-Mar-22	Lunchtime Concert - Nico Buri (classical guitar)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	23-Mar-22	Hub Hospitality	10:00am - 4.00pm	The Hub
Thu	24-Mar-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	25-Mar-22	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Fri	25-Mar-22	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Sun	27-Mar-22	Sunday worship led by Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	28-Mar-22	Lent House Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Tue	29-Mar-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	29-Mar-22	Lent House Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Wed	30-Mar-22	Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini & Jane Bower; a concert of poetry and music	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	30-Mar-22	Hub Hospitality	10:00am - 4.00pm	The Hub
Thu	31-Mar-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	01-Apr-22	Lectio Divina	8:30am	Zoom
Sun	03-Apr-22	Sunday worship led by Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	03-Apr-22	Open Table Social	7:00pm	The Hub

LECTIONARY FOR MARCH 2022

These are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary, as in ROOTS, the material used by our Children's Ministry team. They may be altered if that is the preacher's wish.

March

2 *Asb Wednesday*

Joel 2.1-2, 12-17 OR Isaiah 58.1-12

Psalms 51

II Corinthians 5.20b-6.10

Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

6 *Lent I*

Deuteronomy 26.1-11

Psalms 91.1-2, 9-16

Romans 10.8b-13

Luke 4.1-13

13 *Lent II*

Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18

Psalms 27

Philippians 3.17-4.1

Luke 13.31-35

20 *Lent III*

Isaiah 55.1-9

Psalms 63.1-8

I Corinthians 10.1-13

Luke 13.1-9

27 *Lent IV*

Joshua 5.9-12

Psalms 32

II Corinthians 5.16-21

Luke 15.1-3, 11b-32

April

3 *Lent V; Passion Sunday*

Isaiah 43.16-21

Psalms 126

Philippians 3.4b-14

John 12.1-8



MAGAZINE EDITOR: Sheila Porrer

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

Please send items to both Sheila Porrer and Ann Auger
(ann@downingplaceurc.org)

WEB EDITOR: Ann Auger

Please send all items to be included in the April edition to both Sheila and Ann by the cut off date of **Wednesday 16 March**

The April edition will be available from **Sunday 27 March**.