

MARCH SERVICES

Due to recent high local case rates for COVID, worship for the churches of the South West Hants Group continues online – we are keeping the situation under review and will resume in person worship when it is safe to do so. The following details are shown in good faith, but are subject to change.

Sun 7th Mar – Online worship led by Rev Sarah Hall on Youtube.

Sun 14th Mar – Mothering Sunday – Online Zoom worship, led by Rev Sarah Hall and Rev Mark Robinson.

Sun 21st Mar – Online worship led by Rev Mark Robinson.

Sun 28th Mar – Palm Sunday – Online worship led by Rev Sarah Hall.

Fri 2nd Apr – Good Friday Zoom service

Sun 4th Apr – **Easter Day worship online or in-person if circumstances permit.**

If you need a minister, please phone (023) 80575909.

For online worship go to:-

- “Rev Sarah Hall” on YouTube or
 - bit.ly/revdmark to join Rev Mark Robinson – please note the change of online address
- OR
- asaunc.org.uk (the website of our sister church of Avenue St Andrews) to download the service script or download the audio as an mp3 file.
 - OR Telephone Church – dial 023 82352055 to hear the online service on your phone. Calls charged at the local rate.

You can also go to dailydevotions@urc.org.uk for URC worship.

ISAAC WATTS MEMORIAL CHURCH



MESSENGER



MARCH 2021

www.isaacwatts.org.uk
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EVENTS/MEETINGS

Wednesday 17th March – 7.30pm Prayer Group – please let me (Chris Noyce) know beforehand, contact details above, and I will send you a Zoom link.

Due to Covid-19, the following activities are suspended at the time of publication, but will resume when circumstances permit:-

Mondays in termtime – Boys' and Girls' Brigades from 6pm to 8.45pm (separate sections for different age groups from ages 5 to 18). For more details (including of when the Brigades restart) please speak to BB Company Captain Mr Doswell (tel: 023 80872648) or GB Group Leader Mrs Naomi Howard (tel: 023 80873769).

Thursdays – 10.30am to 11.30am, Nibble and Natter in the Church

Fridays - 2pm Badminton/Social Group in Church Hall

Our monthly Community Lunch and Community Fellowship Meeting continues to be suspended also.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, you'll be a week into the big Lenten quandary: To give up, or to take up?

Most years, it's not too hard to think of something we normally enjoy but can lay aside to focus more on God. But let's face it - this last year has sometimes felt like nothing *but* giving up. Giving up company, giving up travel, giving up entertainment, giving up even on meeting together for worship. Do we need yet *more* practice in self-denial this year? You could argue that if we had to give something up because of Governmental restrictions, that doesn't count - but even so...

OK then, what about taking something up? Explore your creativity. Begin a new hobby. Learn a language. Walk 10,000 steps each day. Write cheery letters to gloomy friends. Start a prayer journal, writing or drawing. Meditate for five minutes before breakfast. There must be hundreds of ideas to help us develop new skills or dust off old ones we've not tried for a while.

That sounds promising. But you'll be reading this a week or more into Lent; and I wonder how far your creativity has taken you. Are you feeling ever so slightly smug, because so far you've achieved whatever it was you set out to do? (If so, points will be deducted. Lent isn't meant to be an ego boost.) Or are you nervous in case you can't keep it up? Or even despairing because, though it was a great idea, you really *haven't* got the resources to keep it going for forty days, even taking Sundays off?

If your giving up, or your taking up, is working well and feeling like a gift from God, please ignore my carping comments. But if not, here's another idea for Lent. Just a one-off idea - though you could repeat it as often as you wished - that ties in with the Lent booklet you should already have received through your Elder or pastoral carer (if you haven't, do get back to me and I can get you one).

Remember the Advent windows at Avenue St Andrew's, where you were asked to send in an answer to the question: 'What does Christmas mean to you?' to the church office? Here's a Lent question

to match it, and it works just as well whether you send it to ASA or not:
What steps can you take to building back a better world?

The news has changed. Vaccinations have rolled out. Whether lockdown may be relaxed for Easter or for Pentecost I won't guess. But we're on the right path. And now is the time for us to pause and think: where do we go from here? When we return to meeting and travelling and spending, when we return to our church buildings, to gathering for worship and service, we will have an unparalleled opportunity to look at our own lives and the life of our churches and think: *What do we want to change?*

To be clear, I'm not suggesting a full-scale reformation! People have gone through a lot, this last year. People have suffered. People have lost those they loved. It'll be time for taking stock, for being gentle with ourselves and with others. But the question remains: What steps can we take to building back a better world? Huge strides or little baby steps: in a way, it doesn't really matter. For the important thing is starting on the journey to newness of life. And we won't take that journey alone. We're going with Jesus.

Sarah Hall

NEWS OF THE FAMILY

Congratulations and good wishes go to Iris and Peter Minard who celebrate their 70th Wedding Anniversary on 28th March.

Meanwhile Malcolm Green has been able to return home after a period of convalescence. We wish him well.

It is good that the vaccination programme is in full swing. Many of you have had your first dose and a number I know have started to receive the second dose. Please continue to pray for the rollout of this particular programme, and for the protection of people from this virus.

Keep up the communicating and do join the regular after service Zoom get togethers after services if you can do so. As a regular attender of these I am meeting plenty of people from Avenue St Andrews but very few from Isaac Watts!! Whilst I shall miss that on 7th March (it is a college weekend for me) I am hoping to be at the others, so perhaps I will see you there?!

Remember also that if you wish to talk to someone, or have someone pray for you, you can always contact Mark, Sarah or myself.

MESSAGES OF THANKS

Dear Friends, I would like to thank everyone at Isaac Watts and Avenue St Andrews for your prayers, cards and telephone calls that I received after Barry died. I sincerely hope that I will see you all again when our churches reopen again for services. Stay safe, God bless.

Irene Carroll

It was a joy to see familiar faces from our church before Christmas, to be cheered by their carol singing and to feel part of the group.

Pat Walker

LENT AND FORTHCOMING WORSHIP...

Look out for our worship on Mothering Sunday, which will be via a Zoom service and therefore slightly different to our usual YouTube offering (details will be sent out closer to the time).

Going further forward we are looking at holding in-person worship again at Easter, if this is safe to do so. Please look out for local announcements and updates via the Hope Harbinger.

In the meantime Sarah Hall has put together an excellent Lent reflection booklet (and I'm not saying that because I have contributed to it!). If you do not have access to this, please let me know.

SAFEGUARDING

Hi, here are some safeguarding training dates from Ruth Heine for those of you who have not attended in the past 3 years. I did the online training last June and found it very accessible. Please let me know if you book up or when your last safeguarding training was completed.

Thanks,

Mandy Renshaw, Safeguarding Officer

To: Church Secretaries in Wessex Synod
To: People on the waiting list for safeguarding training
To: Children's and Youth contacts in Wessex Synod
To: Safeguarding Coordinators in Wessex Synod

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to announce dates for the next two safeguarding training courses. Each safeguarding course is delivered across 3 sessions on Zoom. Participants must attend all 3 sessions to complete the training and gain a certificate. Please publicise these training courses widely and encourage people to sign up.

For anyone who is reluctant to attend the training, here is a recent feedback comment.

"The whole 3 sessions exceeded my expectations. **I joined because I felt I ought. I came away having enjoyed it and having learnt a lot.** Very many thanks."

Safeguarding Training on Mondays in May 2021, 4pm – 5.30pm

Session 1 – 10th May 2021
Session 2 – 17th May 2021
Session 3 – 24th May 2021

Safeguarding Training on Thursdays, 7pm – 8.30pm

Session 1 – 24th June 2021
Session 2 – 1st July 2021
Session 3 – 8th July 2021

Booking is essential and places are limited.

To enable us to put you in the right breakout group, please say whether you are;

- a children's and youth worker
- a worker with adults at risk
- or in church leadership (Safeguarding Officer, Elder)

If you are wearing more than one hat, then please rank them into your priorities for the training. You might like to consider which one you are

less experienced in, or which one you have more questions about.

I look forward to receiving bookings.

Best wishes,

Ruth Heine

Development Team Administrator

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Tel: 023 8067 4513

Working from home:

Work mobile: 07864 729 275

Flexible working – Core hours: 9am - 1pm, Monday to Thursday

Day off - Friday

ELDERS' TRAINING

Also from Ruth Heine at Wessex Synod comes this information of interest for existing Elders and those thinking about eldership in the future:-

Dear Friends,

These sessions are for Elders and anyone who might be interested in becoming an Elder.

Elders' Development Sessions on Zoom

1. **Mission, Functions of Eldership and Trusteeship – on Tuesday 13 April 2021, 7pm – 8.30pm**
2. **Pastoral Care and Boundaries – on Wednesday 21 April 2021, 7pm – 8.30pm**
3. **Worship, Prayer and Spirituality – on Thursday 29 April 2021, 7pm – 8.30pm**

Book your place by emailing development@urcwessex.org.uk to receive the Zoom link.

Ruth Heine, Synod Development Team Administrator

World Day of Prayer Service 5 March 15:00 on Zoom



Friday 5 March is World Day of Prayer. While many communities have caved in to the pandemic, Andover, Devizes, Poole and Salisbury area World Day of Prayer planning groups have rallied and united to provide an exciting and vibrant service open to all. This ecumenical event involves several churches. Salisbury URC is hosting on Zoom – with space for 300 to join in.

Groups around the world will gather virtually for this year's service, written by the Christian women of the Republic of Vanuatu. In our fragmented and uncertain world of today, pushing on with this global day of prayer points to the resilience and faith of so many, and the commitment to not give up in the face of adversity.

Consider joining in, linking with fellow worshippers around the Synod and around the world on this momentous day of prayer.

Learn more about joining the service on 5 March at 15:00 here: [World Day of Prayer service Friday 5 March 15:00 on Zoom | Salisbury United Reformed Church \(salisburyurc.co.uk\)](https://www.worlddayofprayer.org/2020/03/05/world-day-of-prayer-service-friday-5-march-15:00-on-zoom-salisbury-united-reformed-church-salisburyurc.co.uk). You do not need to register.

By Revd Ana Gobledale, Andover & Salisbury United Reformed Churches

READINGS TO EASTER

Some Lectionary readings for you to reflect upon through Lent are as follows:-

Sunday 7th March – Third Sunday of Lent – Psalm 19; Exodus 20:1-17; John 2:13-22; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Sunday 14th March – Mothering Sunday – Psalm 34:11-20; 1 Samuel 1:20-28; Luke 2:33-35; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Sunday 21st March – Fifth Sunday of Lent – Psalm 34; Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 12:20-33; Hebrews 5:5-10

Sunday 28th March – Palm Sunday – Psalm 118:1-2,19-29; John 12:12-16

Monday of Holy Week 29th March – Psalm 36:5-11; Isaiah 42:1-9; Mark 11:15-19; Hebrews 9:11-15

Tuesday of Holy Week 30th March – Psalm 27; Isaiah 49:1-7; John 12:20-36; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Wednesday of Holy Week 31st March – Psalm 70; Isaiah 50:4-9; John 13:21-30; Hebrews 12:1-3

Maundy Thursday 1st April – Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2,12-19; John 13:1-17, 31-35; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Good Friday 2nd April – Psalm 130 and 143; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; John 18:1-19:42; Hebrews 4:14-16 and 5:7-9

Sunday 4th April – Easter Day – Psalm 114 and 117; Isaiah 25:6-9; John 20:1-8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

PROPERTY UPDATE

Good news is that we now have planning permission and Wessex Synod Trust permission to proceed with the new emergency door from the main Church into the Luccombe Road garden. You will remember that this is about replacing the emergency access route via the old Church Lounge/ ex-Christian Aid Office, where inward opening doors, various steps and special unlocking arrangements have been a bugbear for some years. In the end, rather than approaching this in a half-hearted manner (i.e. replacing the window by the Church Lounge with a narrow exit door), it seemed better to go for a proper width emergency door. This has required permission from the authorities noted above and sincere thanks are due to Sarah Wood for drawing the plans, arranging documents and obtaining the permissions.

It has been a long saga and the end is not in sight just yet since we need to get a builder to do the work for us!

Meanwhile, repairs to the boundary wall, recently damaged at the car park entrance and crumbling at the Winchester Road entrance, are in hand. Plans for flat roof repairs (which will be substantial) are currently on hold due to the present situation (see the accounts below, which are diminishing).

ACCOUNTS UPDATED

ISAAC WATTS CHURCH ACCOUNTS			
6th April 2020 to end 5th Feb 2021			
Income		Expenditure	
Envelopes	£4,735.00	M & Ministry	£14,560.00
Loose cash	<u>£698.00</u>	Heat & light	£567.60
sub total	£5,433.00	Maintenance	£5,915.06
Communion collections	£0.00	Water	£205.19
Use of premises	£3,799.50	Insurance	£1,813.88
Messenger	£45.00	Pulpit	£150.00
Special events	£0.00	Music	£494.13
Donations received	£2,857.25	Cleaning	£3,033.30
Tax rebate	£0.00	Group Expenses	£1,005.00
Interest	£160.92	Messenger etc	£96.93
Other	£0.00	Stationery	£156.96
		Giving to others	£80.00
TOTAL	£12,295.67		£28,078.05
Income-spend difference	-£15,782.38		
Bank Account: On 6-04-20	£20,777.15	On 4-02-21	£84,471.79
Building Society Account 6-04-20	£79,438.00	Closed in October, to bank account with interest noted above	

Of Note:-

- Reduced lettings due to Covid
- Reduced services due to Covid
- Some donations recently received and banked are yet to be included on monthly statement (should be on the next statement). This includes a bequest of £1000 from the late John Ovey.
- Bank balance has fallen by about £2,700 over two months.

Sarah Wood

You are always welcome to make a donation. By way of a gentle reminder too for any tax payers planning to do this, the current financial year ends at the start of April. Donations to the church can be sent to our address or to Sarah Wood as treasurer.

GROUP MINISTRY TEAM

Most worship at Isaac Watts is led by members of the South West Hants Group Ministry Team, which comprises the following people:-

Sarah Hall and Mark Robinson (stipendiary ministers)
 Bernie and Gwen Collins (retired ministers)
 Leanne Langley (elder and member at Avenue St Andrews)
 Chris Noyce (non-serving elder and member at Isaac Watts)
 Sue Scott (elder and member at Chandler's Ford)

PRAYER GROUP

Your presence will be welcome at our monthly prayer group. We are continuing to meet by Zoom, and all are welcome. If you are unable to attend but would like a person or situation to be remembered in prayer then please let me know – we have had requests on previous occasions and have always prayed for them.

CLOSING DATE FOR APRIL 2021 MESSENGER

Sunday 21st March 2021.

N.B. All uncredited items are by the Editor.