

EGERTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

August September October 2024



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“And the One who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also He said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’” (Revelation 21:5)

“The more things change, the more they stay the same.” (Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr, French writer, 1849)

How many ... does it take to change a lightbulb?



Do you like change? Well, I guess it depends on what is changing! How was it before it changed? Did we like it how it used to be? How is it going to change? Will we like what is coming? What will be the scale of the change? What happens if we don't like the change? How does change make us feel?

Let's take one example: we visit our usual supermarket, and they have moved everything around! That would be mildly irritating for some. For others whose memories aren't what they used to be, and those who find navigating a supermarket difficult – that could be a difficult and unwelcome change.

Another example: a farmer – could be almost anywhere in the world – expecting a certain amount of rainfall now faces more droughts, floods and severe weather. Crop yields fall, even fail. For some, there is no food available to eat; for others, food becomes too expensive to buy. Climate change.

Let us consider political change. The UK has just elected a different ruling party of government whose byword during the election was “change”. How will “they” effect change in the coming years?

In 2017, the North-Western Synod underwent a change in the way the churches are organised. The Missional Partnerships of which all our churches are now a part came into being. As with all church denominations in the UK, how can we ‘do ministry’ with fewer ministers and smaller congregations?

The model of ministry in our Missional Partnership has changed. On 20 July, in a splendid service, we welcomed the Revd. Barnabas Shin and the Revd. Maria Lee as full-time Ministers of Word and Sacrament, joining the Revd. Mark Cowling, the Revd. Dr. ‘frin Lewis-Smith and myself, alongside our Ecumenical colleagues, local church leaders, lay preachers and elderships.

As a new, larger team of ministers, we wish to hear from all churches: their hopes, their needs, their dreams. On Saturday 7 September, the Missional Partnership Steering Group will meet: the representatives will share each church's vision and discern how the ministers will focus their time.

We would like to urge everyone in all churches to think big, to talk about what they might like to see from the ministry team. Please share your thoughts with your Steering Group representative.

The quotes with which I began this article may cause a wry smile. Lightbulb jokes tend to play on stereotypes. While lightbulb jokes about the church might leave us feeling a little uncomfortable, do they confront us with an underlying truth?

Karr's quote about change resulting in no change is also a shared experience. A quote credited to Albert Einstein puts it a little more strongly: “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” We would like our churches to grow, so...

In closing, let's turn to the Bible. It's full of change! In Genesis 1-2, God creates and the created order changes day-by-day. In Genesis, we read about the big names like Noah, Abram/Abraham, Isaac, Jacob/Esau, Joseph – we read the changes for worse and for good. Skipping forward to the Gospels, Jesus encountered so many people, beginning positive change in each of their lives.

If we reflect on our own lives, change runs through it: as we grew up, developed careers and families, moved house, said goodbye to loved ones...

Our God is a creator God who has never stopped creating. God re-creates us and the world around us. God re-creates us as individuals, as families and as churches. And we need not be afraid: Jesus' last words to the Disciples in Matthew's Gospel (28:20): “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Revd. Walt Johnson, Minister in the Bolton & Salford Missional Partnership

Prayer Page



Loving father God,

Jesus, with all he had to accomplish in the 3 years of His ministry, lived each moment, & was never in a hurry. He always had time for His Father God.

Help us to take time, even just five minutes a day, to stop what we are doing & sit in your presence.

Help us to walk through each day with you.

Prayer

Loving God, we have let our differing gifts & priorities cause division;

instead of using them to work together for you.

Heal us we pray & help us restore relationships.

Only you know what is in our hearts

Help us honestly to examine our hearts & minds before you

And admit our failings to you & each other in love.

Forgive us when we have not trusted you to show us the way.

We lay all this before you now.

Guide, encourage & strengthen us by your Holy Spirit as we seek to be

Your church in this neighbourhood.

In Jesus' name we ask.

Amen

God has many gifts

Given by his Son

Building the Body of Christ

Creating a faith that is one.'

'We are the family of God

Joined by the Spirit above

Working together with Christ

Growing & building in love.'

Bind us together, Lord,

With chords that cannot be broken

Bind us together with love'

Alternative words to verse 2 & 3 of Bind us together, Lord by B. Gillman, Mission Praise



Card or cash? Tap, tap, tap...

Is it too easy to tap, tap, tap away on card machines making small purchases or even those up to £100.00 often several times every day. Is the convenience really worth the price we are paying? There certainly is a 'hidden' cost which if we are not careful will see the demise of cash in our pockets, if not yet, definitely for the future. What lessons are we giving our children?

In short, the banks will make more money as we pay more for our goods.

I often visit a lovely family farm shop in the nearby town of Bury, many of you have enjoyed their delicious cheese pies at our monthly lunches, and my eye was taken by a notice that definitely struck home. I might say though, much more is on offer in their shop than gorgeous cakes and cheese pies!

What do you think?

Reproduced with kind permission of the Park Farm Garden, Gift Centre and Tearoom, Walmsley, Bury

Sweden Inspiration

Sunday School Swedish style— held at the back of churches— some food for thought...?



Gamla Upsala

The old capital of Sweden. The place where Celsius worshipped. He of centigrade fame

The Pearls of Life

The Pearls of Life was created in 1995 by Bishop Emeritus Martin Lönnebo (Bishop of the Diocese of Linköping, 1980-1995) as a rosary to focus one's own thoughts, feelings and prayers. The Pearls of Life has since spread throughout the world. More information about the Pearls of Life is available at www.fralsarkransen.se.

The Pearls of Life and its beads are a tool used by the modern pilgrim on the most difficult of all journeys – the one that goes inwards

You are limitless You are near You are light and I am yours.

The Via Sacra – The Pearls of Life in Linköping Cathedral

There is more information about The Pearls of Life , Martin Lönnebo's eleven beads on the next page. Thank you Sue Topping for sharing this and the photos with us



1 The Pearl of God

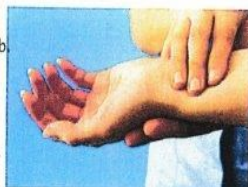


This pearl reminds us that, regardless of whatever happens to us; God is always close by.

God is always with us and watches over us, is the beginning and the end of all things.

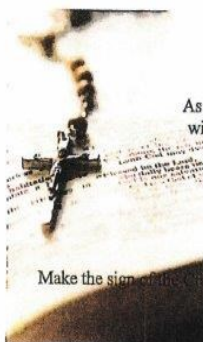
2 The Pearls of silence

There are six oval Pearls of Silence. They challenge us to shut out things that disturb. When approach infinity we have arrived at a place where words are not needed. You can just be yourself as you let go of the demands to need to do something. As you travel listen to your inner voice. Peacefully breathe in and out. Can you hear the beating of your own heart?



3 The I Pearl

Look at yourself in the mirror! As a grain of sand has the possibility to become a pearl, within each person there exists unrealized possibilities. See yourself as God sees you, with your inner being as the most beautiful ever seen. God created man in his own image, in Gods image he created her. God blessed them... and he saw that it was good.



Make the sign of the cross in front of your body; a beautiful creation of God

8 The Pearls of Secrets

Your secrets are in a secure place when stored in these pearls, because there is enough space for them. The deepest secrets of the heart are dreams and thoughts which we carry with us. People are a mystery. There is always something more to discover about yourself or someone else.

The secrets which make you glad are good for you. The secrets which causes you pain are good to share with someone whom you trust.

Take hold of the pearls and, in your innermost part, think deeply about how much space your life holds. Which door, in the deepest part of your being, is it time to unlock it and open?



9 The Pearl of the night

Feel the Pearl of Night, the black one, which is about the darkness in your life; your fears, your doubts ...

Pick up a stone and feel the heaviness. It might be awkward. Sometimes it hurts when you hold it tightly. If you like, you may take a stone with you and leave it at the next station.



10 The Resurrection Pearl

Night time is over and the morning has come. At the dawning of third day Jesus arose from the grave! He became alive again! Jesus was dead and is resurrected for you. You are forgiven, now go and forgive others.

You may leave your stone at the foot of the empty cross along with everything that weighs you down and causes you pain. Sit up straight, close your eyes and feel the grace of God flow over you like a warmth of the sun. You are pardoned, liberated and whole.



11 The Pearl of God

Cup your hands around the pearl. Imagine that it is God's hands which are cupped around you. God says, "Thank you for sharing this walking-tour with me. The journey is not yet over, it never ends".

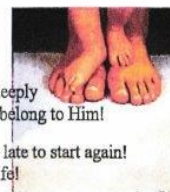
"And surely I am with you always, even to the very end of the age".



4 The Baptism Pearl

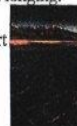
In baptism there is a promise about unlimited grace and forgiveness. The Baptism Pearl helps us to think deeply about that God gives us a context in which we always belong to Him!

Have you lost you grip? God never has! It is never too late to start again! Please feel free to light a candle for the next stage of life!



5 The Desert Pearl

Sooner or later you will encounter life's desert, which no one can avoid. The world around us is barren and desolate, a place of loss and longing. The desert brings everything to its extreme. What do we really need to survive? To travel through the desert can be difficult, but we can condition ourselves to exist there. We can search for that which is hidden while teaching ourselves about what is most important in life.



Have you found a pearl in the sand? Does light exist in the darkness?

6 The Pearl of Serenity

This is a place of rest in the journey of life. In this place you may receive the zest for life and the courage to face it re-created and growing. See that you find rest in: a place, a person, an experience or a moment. It can take place in a church, in the forest, on the beach or in the mountains.

If you wish, you may sit here or even lay down and rest a while.



7 The Pearls of Love

Love is a part of every living thing, those you love and those who love you. To love is one of life's abundant gifts. The same goes for receiving love and being open for it when it comes to you. Love becomes the gift that you pay forward.

Hold the two Pearls of love in your hand and reflect upon the love in your life that has come to you and the love that you have given away to others. Paint, draw or write something about what love means to you.



The Pearls of life



Welcome!

A pilgrimage is about life at its fullest in spite of the fact that we are walking on a small area.

Feel free to borrow an bracelet with the Pearls of life and walk along this meditation path.

As you are walking allow your thoughts and ideas to reflect upon the texts that you will find at the different stations/pearls.

Allow peace to reign and do not speak unnecessarily. Take deep long breaths and just be you.

The texts that are placed horizontally are adapted for children. Is someone cannot read then please read the text for them.

May you journey with God and your fellow human being.

Svenska kyrkan
GAMLA UPPSALA FÖRSAMLING

TEA ROTA– August to September 2024

August	4 th	Joan Hall
	11 th	Trish Holden
	18 th	Rita Dunn
	25 th	Lindzi Torrance
September	1 st	Mary Bromley
	8 th	Sue Swannell
	15 th	Rachel Cronshaw
	22 nd	Cheryl Johnson
	29 th	Joan Hall



If you are unable to manage any of the above dates please arrange to swap with someone else on the rota. Thanks, Carol

Sunday Flowers Rota

Thank you to Karen Anderson for taking over the flower rota. Please feel free to add your name to the rota or donate flowers in the memory of a loved one.



Please pray for those unable to attend church for whatever reason;

**Jean Harfield and family
Pat Rea and family
Barbara & Paul Adam
Barbara Good
Pat Morrison**

DUTIES – August 2024 to October 2024

Date *	Elder	Reading *	Reader	Preacher *
Aug 4th	Steve Swannell	John 6: 24-35	Rita Dunn	Adrian Yapp
11	Rachel Cronshaw	John 6:35,41-51	Karen Anderson	Rev Walt Johnson
18	Peter Crook	John 6:51-58	Joan Hall	Rachel Cronshaw
25	Ian Topping	John 6:56-69	Peter Crook	Rev Father Bill Baldwin
Sept 1st	Steve Swannell	Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23	Rachel Cronshaw	Rev Walt Johnson
8	Peter Crook	Mark 7:24-37	Jane Austin	Ian Huddleston
15	Rachel Cronshaw	Mark 8:27-38	Doreen Healey	Adrian Yapp
22	Rita Dunn	Mark 9:30-37	Stuart Bromley	Rev Barnabas Shin
29	Sue Swannell	Mark 9:38-50	Rachel Cronshaw	Rev Mark Cowling
Oct 6th	Ian Topping	Mark 10: 2-16	Karen Anderson	Leo Roberts
13	Lindsay Torrance	Mark 10:17-31	Jane Austin	Rev Walt Johnson
20	Rachel Cronshaw	Mark 10:35-45	Rita Dunn	Danny Wilson
27	Peter Crook	Mark10:46-52	Joan Hall	Rev Mark Cowling

Do you have a good news story? (for the next edition)

Share your thoughts and prayers through our newsletter.

Sunday Worship and Sunday School

10am with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of every month

Minister: Rev Walt Johnson

Church Secretary:

Mrs Roma Hooper

Church Treasurer:

Mr. Ian Topping

