



Beulah Update: Weds 28th July

This week's theme: Crossroads

1. Worship resources.

- Our service on **Sunday 1st August July will be at Beulah at 11 a.m. and will be led by Rev Ruth Wollaston.** We hope as many as feel able will join us for this service, which will include Communion. We are asking people to bring their own items for Communion for this service, but we hope to resume our traditional way of serving it in September. We will continue to offer refreshments after the service- outside if we can. It has been lovely to meet face to face again and to share a chat.

- The service on **the 8th August** will be led by the Leaders and will include a reflection from Dan Dupree, who with his wife Annie, serves BMS in Albania. They have visited us in the past and are part of our Link Missionary Partners.

- On the **15th August** we are joining the service at **Macedonia URC Church**, Holt Lane, Failsworth M35 9QG, led by Sheila at **10.30 a.m.** There will be no service that day at Beulah. Please do support this service, which should boost both congregations.

-On the **22nd August** the service will again be led by the Leaders- we have deliberately got more "home grown" services in August as several folk have holidays booked.

On the **29th August**, Sheila will be leading the service at Beulah at 11 a.m.

Looking ahead the services in Sept will be led by Judith Haughton; Liz Dean; Ben Roachford and David Ireland.

-The usual NWBA online service will be replaced from the 1st August by Summer sermons (around 20-30 minutes and following a series from Ephesians) rather than the usual full service.

-Sheila's weekly services continue from the Macedonia website: <https://macedonia-urc.org>

-Thanks to Dorothy for the weekly Vine.

2. News from our fellowship and issues to pray for:

We are asking everyone to set aside 20 minutes on Saturday mornings from 10.00 until 10-20 and pray together for all the members of our congregation in their different situations.

Pray for all those we know who are grieving after the recent deaths of loved ones, especially Phil, Lynn and their families after the death of Betty just after the last newsletter had gone out. We recognize the enormous contribution she made to the life of Beulah and the funeral service mentioned her steadfast faith, which shaped her life. She offered great hospitality and her buffets were legendary. She did a huge amount of fundraising, which included feats such as abseiling and going down the zip wire! We hope we can continue her legacy and reflect her creativity, generosity and willingness to try something new. The family has suggested that donations in her memory be sent to the church she had been going to in Ireland- St Catherine's. We suggest that people might want to pass this to Jane and we will transfer a donation in one amount, since it will involve a different currency! Phil has also been in touch to ask about a memorial service for Betty at Beulah, so we will let you know details of this as soon as it is finalized.

Julie thanks everyone for their prayers and support.

Pray for Fred, who is very poorly in Dr Kershaw's; for Bob B and the results of the scans ; for Millie; for Ian Wh and the results of his scans, which seem to be taking an age!; for Wynne, who is hoping that new medication will help resolve her health issues; for Vera, who has moved to Park House Care home this week for an initial period of 6 weeks; for Irene; for Peter; for Mavis Pr who is making progress; for Elaine Joynes; for Carol's sister-in-law who has kidney problems; for Faith as she applies for jobs; for all those who are housebound for whatever reason. Pray for Azeena as she looks for a job after finishing her degree. Pray for those with other anxieties- for Carol and her housing situation- she has had no further news about the court case.

David Joynes will be 90 on the 15th August. He doesn't want any presents but has asked if relatives and friends might donate to BMS. Chrissy has set up a just giving page www.justgiving.com/fundraising/david-joynes or you can send a cheque to BMS World Mission, PO Box 49, 129 Broadway, Didcot. OXON. OX11 8XA



If anyone can record a simple greeting and pass on to Ali that would be much appreciated, so they can be combined into one video!

The URC have been publishing weekly prayers during the Pandemic.

Dear Lord, we

Pray for our hurting world,

Ravaged by Covid. We

Ask that as we journey slowly through this phase of relaxation of restrictions, unsure of the way forward, that

You will walk alongside us, guiding and

Enfolding us in your loving arms, giving us strength and

Reassurance that no matter how long and arduous the journey may be, you will always be by our side.

This we ask in your name, Amen

By Eva Bangle, Secretary, Newport Pagnell UR

3.Message from the Leaders

- The Leaders met last week and discussed the approach we should take now that restrictions in England have been lifted. We are very aware that some members can't wait to break free of all the restrictions that have been imposed on us over the last 16 months, whilst others are quite anxious about what this new freedom will mean when cases are rising fast. We felt it was

important to make sure that no one felt uncomfortable or anxious about coming to the building, when we are in the process of trying to build back up again. We decided therefore that we will still ask people to wear masks for the next two weeks, but we will encourage them to sing out from behind their masks! There will no longer be the need to sign in or to follow a one way system so enter by any door you wish! We will keep the chairs in their current positions for the next two weeks, but we will put the hymn books and Bibles back on the seats. We will continue to ventilate the church as much as we can and wipe surfaces down. Tea and coffee will be served outside if the weather is Ok- just because we felt this was nice and some sort of witness that the church is open! Any help with this would be much appreciated! We know this will not suit everyone but think it is the safest option at the moment and the right balance. We will review all this on the 1st August so please continue to share your views with the Leaders.

- There has been a whole host of maintenance carried out recently or in the pipeline- roofing repairs after the recent rain in; re-plastering; Internet installation; boiler service; new window in the disabled toilet which was rotten; a new fire alarm system; re-sealing of the Hall floor... Thanks to Ian for all his ongoing work liaising with Contractors and to Steve for all his "handyman work!" The jobs carried out behind the scenes are immense!
- The newsletter will revert now to a monthly publication unless there is important news to share! The next newsletter therefore should be published towards the end of August.

4. Message from Sheila **Thoughts from a Vestry somewhere**

Have you ever gone for a walk in a place you don't know, or don't know well, and come to a crossroad or a junction of paths and have no idea which is the right way to go? (Obviously not on one of Graham's Dawdles!) It happens quite a lot in our family and is known affectionately as 'one of Ken's short-cuts' - in my sister's family they are known as 'adventures'. Sometimes it's exciting as there are things to discover along the way, sometimes it's frustrating because you might now be late! And there's always the worry that you might pick the wrong direction and end up hopelessly lost - though Mr Google and Mrs Satnav can be useful friends to have on your journey.

Life can often be like a walk in a place you don't know because we never really know what's round the next corner or which is the best decision to make when there are options to choose from. Maybe we are in one of those quandaries right now. We have battled our way through lockdowns and restrictions and, for some, devastating turn of events for over a year and are now faced with the choice of what do we do now?

There is lots of talk about Hybrid Church being the way to go forward, and whilst I don't disagree with the approach, I do wonder (well, I think I know) that there are some folk sitting there thinking 'that's all very well but we don't have the technology, the funding for the technology or the people with the necessary skills to operate it

even if we were given it! And maybe they're left feeling that they might as well give up.

Then a verse from Jeremiah 6 cropped up in a discussion:

Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. (Jeremiah 6:16)

and at first glance, it seems this might be saying go back to what you used to do, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". But I guess that depends on whether you think it's broke or not. But is that what God is saying through Jeremiah? And how might that be relevant to us in our church/community. Maybe it might go something like this:

Stand at the crossroads, and look - you're at a crossroad, a decision point so take time to stop and look around - physically, socially and spiritually. What do the different paths seem to offer? How far ahead can you see?

and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; - what is the purpose of the church in this place? What are you doing when you feel God is pleased with you? What are the words or pictures in the Scriptures (ancient paths) that tell you this is a 'good way'.

and walk in it, - is there a path which looks like it might be a 'good way'? It may not be the prettiest way, or the easiest way, it may be dark and scary, there may be boulders and potholes to negotiate, you may not be able to see very far ahead at all. The path will not be the same for every fellowship - some will already be getting on board with some technology, some will not see that this is appropriate for them at this time, some would love to have a go but haven't got the wherewithall to get started, some may feel their journey is coming to an end. As a partnership, we are there for each other, to support the prayerful and careful decisions taken - we can't avoid the 'valley of the shadow of death' but we can 'fear no evil' (Psalm 23) and therefore we can: ***find rest for your souls.***

The remainder of that verse says ***But they said, "We will not walk in it."*** The people of God thought they knew better and ignored God's instructions - they ended up in exile! Let's not follow their example, let's walk in it - together - with each other and with God.

Sheila Coop July 2021

5. Message from BMS

I received a letter from BMS this week about recent donations made after the General Assembly and thought it was important to share so you could see the impact of any money we send to BMS

Nepal...
each project are stories of real lives...
one of those stories overleaf.

Amount raised:
**Over
£200,000**



How your gifts made a difference

Projects supported in Nepal:

- £74,300 given so far to provide medical equipment and vital vaccination training, food parcels, hospital running costs, additional medical support, hygiene and Covid-19 awareness training. We plan to spend another £25,700 to support Nepal's ongoing fight against Covid-19.

Equipment bought: 50 oxygen cannisters (refilled every second day), hand sanitiser, PPE, vaccine storage boxes, vaccine fridges, and ten oxygen concentrators.

Other places you brought aid: Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka

- You gave enough for: PPE, Covid-19 first aid kits, and oxygen concentrators in India.
- You also made it possible for thousands of masks to be delivered to Sri Lanka, and provided equipment for a hospital there.
- And in Bangladesh, one of the most fragile contexts in which we work, you provided community programmes to help people struggling with stress and bereavement in the wake of Covid-19.

And it's not over yet. Because you gave so generously, we're able to keep £50,000 available in an emergency pot for partners like Dipak, or whoever needs it most in this ever-changing situation. Your generosity means they will be ready.

