



HAMPTON HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

Minister – Revd Stephen Lewis email: minister@hamptonhillurc.org.uk Phone 0208 87551 727 or 0739 532 7032

Dear Friends,

A new year - though we are living in a very strange new year! New is a word which we often associate with Christmas presents – new clothes, new music, new books, new stuff! Newness is something very much engrained in faith and God. In the book of Isaiah, the Israelites were promised that God was doing a new thing, at a time when the Jewish people were downtrodden and desperate. In Jesus' birth, the start of a new relationship with God was seen.

There are new vaccines now being given to people. All of us, individuals, churches, businesses, nations, will have to find new ways of living, as we rebuild from the effects of the pandemic. It won't be quick, more like the germination of a seed, gradually growing into a plant, putting out leaves, flowers, seeds and fruits. But we can look forward to new life.

Some of the books I gave as presents this Christmas were not new. I managed to find old books which a friend would enjoy. A seed comes from an old plant. God is old and new, and the love of God goes on for ever. Let's hold on to this hope as we look forward and plan for a new year.

I do wish you a happy and rapidly improving 2021. *Stephen*

Current closure of the church

It has been with much consideration and sadness that the minister and elders have taken the decision to close the church building. It is believed that this is for the safety of all users. We will continuously review government advice and act to open again as soon as it is safe to do so.

Sunday services on Zoom

Hampton Hill URC is currently sharing Zoom Services with Twickenham URC on Sundays from 10.30 till 11.30am. Please see the church website and email us if you would like printed scripts of the service if you find it difficult to access online services. These will be posted through your door. All are welcome to join.

Building Maintenance and improvements

Even though the building is closed we are keeping an eye on it so it will be ready to re-open again. We have recently installed high speed Broadband throughout the church buildings to provide opportunities for greater online access. We have also installed a new heater on the gallery to improve use of the area.

Quiet Space

Members have recently enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of candlelit evening sessions in the sanctuary, for private prayer and reflection. This took place on the 3rd Thursday evening of each month, 7.30 till 9.00pm. Sadly this has now been temporarily suspended but will be re-started as soon as possible.

Sharing Special Moments

We are currently looking into providing a new reflective online service that people can take part in. Please check the website for information.

Sad news

It is with great sadness that we heard the news that Nigel Tunley died on New Year's Day. He was a valued member of our community and organist for 30 years. We will greatly miss his musical talents, as will all of the groups that benefited from his involvement. We hope that we will be able to hold a commemorative service for him in the future.

Community Support Worker

We are very lucky to share Clare Diller, our community support worker, with Twickenham URC. She is working to enable our church facilities to be used for the benefit of all in the Hampton Hill community. Family, youth, elderly, vulnerable, anyone in need of support. If you are in need of support, please let us know. And if you are able to lend a helping hand, we are always looking for volunteers. You can contact Clare on 07930 884019 email: Community.support@hamptonhillurc.org.uk

Elders elections

We currently have 3 elders who need to stand down this year. They have agreed to stay on and help until we can have a church meeting, but we will be looking for new members to join us to run our church in the future. If you would like to consider this, please contact the minister for any information.

Embracing Age

This is a new initiative to support informal carers (unpaid carers who look after a friend or relative), supported with funding from Allchurches Trust.

Lockdown has been particularly tough on carers and we want to come alongside and support them. We are looking for informal carers to participate in our pilot project.

Starting on 21st January we'll be hosting zoom meetings every Thursday at 3pm. Those without internet access can phone in. The idea of the meetings is to give carers the opportunity to chat with others in similar situations for mutual support, in small breakout room groups. They'll also be monthly guest speakers on relevant subjects with discussions afterwards. There will be opportunities for prayer support. The initiative will have a distinctive Christian flavour but be accessible and welcoming to those outside the Christian faith as well.

Those who are interested can email Tina at tina@embracingage.org.uk or phone 020 3778 0035.

For more information: visit www.carerstogether.uk
Tina English Director: Embracing Age