



# Royal Wootton Bassett United Reformed Church



## Nov 2020 Newsletter

### Services

Sunday services begin at 10:30am

- 1<sup>st</sup> Terry Riches
- 8<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday  
stay at home and watch a service from Sarah on YouTube
- 15<sup>th</sup> Andrew Crown from our congregation will lead the service
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Martin Osman
- 29<sup>th</sup> Joy Mattis from our congregation will share  
a service that Sarah is leading in Cricklade

We are sorry that while we adhere to Covid safe guidance we are unable to have tea and coffee after the service. Please wear face covering in the church.

---

### Murmurings from the Manse

It seems a very long time since I have written those words – and I cannot help but think as I write now, that when I wrote my ‘murmurings’ at the beginning of this year I expressed my delight at being able to live through the 20’s, how long ago that seems and how much has happened since. The year 2020 is reaching its conclusion, a year that no one expected and one which will keep historians occupied for some time, and yet for those of us who have lived through it, any analysis or academic comment will fall short of what has been the reality. Much documentation has already been collated for future generations, much more is in the process but the space for personal thoughts, feelings, observations is limited and what has been my experience may not be yours. That doesn’t make one experience right and one wrong but it is a warning to those who will read and think what they see is a majority view.

We are now back worshipping and approaching the time of Advent and Christmas; Advent begins on November 29<sup>th</sup> and in order to achieve something resembling the rhythm of church life we prepare ourselves once again to live through this time. A time when we enter a period of darkness and uncertainty; wrestling to see and grasp the glimmers of light that tantalise and torment us as we wait and wait and wait.

Will this Advent be different? Are we now more patient, have we stopped trying to convince God to work to our timetable, and are there some lessons from these last months that we can transfer to our understanding of this important but complex time in the church calendar?

Do we fear the darkness as much as perhaps we once did? Are we resigned to living with some degree of ‘darkness’ in our lives now? The prophet tells us “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light”, his words are meant to give hope in dark times and we need hope now, in a way not seen for many years.

So keep looking for the light, the flickers as well as the full beams; the glimpses as well as the glares and give thanks each time light appears.

Yours in Christ,

**Sarah**

## 96<sup>th</sup> Meeting of South Western Synod Report from Andrew Crown

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October I attended the 96<sup>th</sup> meeting of the South Western Synod which was the first one to be held virtually using Zoom. This meeting had originally been planned to be held in March of this year at Taunton URC, with the opportunity to visit the new Synod offices. However, with the developing situation with Covid-19, it was cancelled.

The virtual meeting started at 9.30 with an act of Worship led by Revd. Dr. Susan Durber, the Minister of Taunton URC, and included Memoriam during which Madge Sutton, who preached at RWB on many occasions, was mentioned. Following the service, the Synod business started with the acceptance of the minutes of the last Synod held in October 2019. Changes in personnel and responsibilities in the Synod were announced.

Procedures for the meeting were explained and the Safeguarding Strategic plan was mentioned. We then moved to finance where the Synod voted to accept the target proposed for the 2021 Ministry & Mission fund contribution. Dick Gray discussed the vacant position of Deputy Treasurer before providing an update on Church pensions, which is likely to involve the Synod making a contribution approaching 3 million pounds to the fund to satisfy the Pensions Regulator. Further resolutions for annual data and role nominations were passed and there was an announcement regarding the open nomination for the Moderator of General Assembly 2022-23.

Following a coffee break, we split into virtual breakout rooms (though not without a technical error which resulted in them initially lasting just 1 minute rather than 30 minutes) to discuss how life had been for you and your Church since March 2020. I was joined with the Revd. Gary Gotham of the Wiltshire United Area based in Devizes and Jean, the Church Secretary of Axminster URC. We returned to the main meeting for a wrap-up and then the meeting finished at 12.45 with a closing prayer and saying the Grace.

Just under 70 people attended the meeting which included our Minister, Sarah, and Mary Coole, representing Cricklade, and Terry, representing Malmesbury.

### Our Covid style rota for November

	<b>Welcome and show to seats</b>	<b>Notices</b>	<b>Readers</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Jenny and Joy	Andrew and Fiona alternating, when notices are required.	Jenny
8 <sup>th</sup>	No service in church		
15 <sup>th</sup>	Fiona & Eileen		TBA by Andrew
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Ron & Margaret		Nicky
29 <sup>th</sup>	Jenny & Joy		Fiona