

ST. ANDREWS UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Upper Hanover Street, Sheffield, S3 7RQ

MESSENGER

Price £1.25

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SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT ***A Modern Version of the Lord's Prayer***

The Zoom services by the Sheffield Team ministers sometimes use a modernised version of the Lord's Prayer by Simon Copley, not a translation but an interpretation. Simon's thinking is that we should never do away with the original or think we can replace it, but sometimes familiarity breeds complacency and forgetfulness. So this is one to use occasionally to remind us what we might actually be saying when we say the original.

Father and Mother of us all,
May Your name be honoured in the world.
May we perceive and build Your Kingdom
As Your purposes are accomplished in our daily living.

Please give us everything we need each day.
Cover our failings with Your grace
So that grace may overflow to those who hurt us.
Strengthen us when we are challenged
And lead us through difficult days.

And, as we learn to trust
That You order all things
And can accomplish all things,
So may we praise You in all things
As You deserve – **Amen**

Simon Copley

ANOTHER REFLECTION ON THESE TIMES

When I go for my walk, it usually takes me into the woods. There are umpteen paths to wander along so no two walks are exactly the same. When the lockdown began, the trees were still almost bare; the amazing warm sunny April has brought out the leaves very quickly and now the woods are burgeoning with that inimitable shade of fresh spring green. Under the trees, the bluebells are out and vast swathes of wild garlic scent the air. Shapes of trees, patterns of branches, mossy fallen tree trunks, little streams catching the light, all are visual delights.

Sooner or later my route brings me to the allotments. They are extra well tended this spring and are another pleasure to see. Neat boxed beds, wigwams, cloches, green shoots already showing in rows, a hut, a chair - evidence of planning and effort. There are always one or two plots left fallow - bare, smooth and brown. This is not laziness but is intentional; the soil has been left to rest and recover its goodness, in order to nurture next year's crop better. Is this what we are doing in lockdown, maybe? Ready for new seeds, new shoots, new ideas, new patterns - in time?

Elizabeth Draper



A JOURNEY TO SHEFFIELD

After graduating in Sydney I spent four years training to be an obstetrician gynaecologist before sitting the Australian specialist qualifications. All senior colleagues had followed the pattern of then going to England to do the London exams and stay for a year or two to gain more surgical experience in the NHS. I was expected to do the same before returning to specialist practice in Sydney. In preparing for the exams I had begun reading widely and was excited by prospects in the new field of hormones, but disappointed that no-one knew about it or was even interested. I was sure that that was the future and determined to leave and gain more experience wherever it took me.

The following year, having decided to go to London, I arranged to travel as a ship's doctor on a Shaw Savill line cargo ship bound for Hull; there were no passengers. Leaving in late October, 1962 the planned journey of five weeks would allow me to start a two week revision course on 3 December before the exams. A three day storm off the coast of Perth introduced me to gin as the treatment for seasickness and looking after the all male crew was an experience. To cope with the boredom across the Indian Ocean the crew took to watching old striptease films in reverse. Although the sunsets in the Red Sea were spectacular, time hung heavily. By the time we sailed through the Suez canal I had completed Churchill's four volumes of the History of the English speaking Peoples, some compensation for not having studied the subject at school.

A prolonged stay in Malta for a changed cargo would lead to my potentially being late for my course, so by agreement, I left the ship at Genoa, travelled through the fog and snow by train to Zurich and caught a plane to London. I arrived at my prearranged accommodation at Queen Charlotte's Hospital at midnight on the night before the course started with one and fourpence in my pocket, sufficient to buy a tube ticket to the bank.

I sat the first written exam on New Year's Day after a long New Year's Eve party, perhaps not the best preparation. Afterwards, there was a two week gap between the written papers and the oral and clinical exams. I had heard about a South African scientist, who had developed a method to measure the major female hormone of pregnancy, working in Aberdeen. I wrote to him, introducing myself and later, travelled up to meet him. During the day I was introduced to Sir Dugald Baird, the Head of the University Dept, who offered me a job, but without pay, which I declined. I stayed overnight with the

scientist and his wife, both of whom had been hounded out of South Africa for student political activism in Johannesburg.

As he drove me to the station the next morning I asked for more detail about the research I would be doing if I did come to Aberdeen and he described its complex biochemical background. On the train back to London I wrote a grant proposal for a year's support to the University of Sydney to do that research.

Subsequently, I completed and passed the exams. Always having dreamt of travelling in Europe, I bought a new Fiat 500 station wagon for £300, drove to Harwich and had it shipped to the Hook of Holland, near Rotterdam. The next morning I began my drive around Europe which lasted from January to late April, in what was known as the Big Freeze of 1963. I travelled around Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and back to Paris. There were no tourists, I could park anywhere, there were no parking meters, there was snow everywhere. I went to all the major art galleries and to the opera whenever I could. I skied for a month in Austria. After seeing all the sights in each major city I collected my mail from Poste restante, having notified some friends in London of my planned route and schedule. In Paris I learned that I had been awarded the grant from Sydney, so wrote to Aberdeen and enquired whether the post was still available. When the answer was yes, I set off for Scotland.

Working at the Maternity Hospital Research Unit I learnt about hormone measurement and research and I stayed at a post-graduate Agricultural College and Research Institute, The Rowett, just out of Aberdeen. At the end of the first year I was awarded a further year's grant from the Medical Research Council in London to continue the work. During that year I learned about exciting new work in Sweden using hormones labelled with radioactive tracers being used to unravel the complexities of the relationship between the mother, placenta and baby. A Sir Henry Wellcome Travelling Fellowship award gave me that opportunity.

One weekend in Aberdeenshire I went walking with some young colleagues from the hospital. They had asked a young woman called Sheila, who was training to be a GP with her father in Ballater, to join us as we climbed Lochnagar. Some months later, Sheila came to work in the Maternity Hospital to complete her GP education. We worked together occasionally, as I had offered to work on the night and weekend rotas to help cover the labour ward so as not to let my skills get rusty. The friendship blossomed until she agreed to accompany me to Stockholm, not giving her a lot of time to organise the wedding.

Our honeymoon was the journey to Stockholm. We drove in our little Fiat 500 to Athens, then back to Vienna, through Denmark and on to Stockholm, an 8 week adventure. Our accommodation was an apartment in a postgraduate centre for foreigners studying in Sweden, only five minutes walk from the Karolinska hospital, where I was working in the Hormone lab. The Director was Hungarian, a naturalised Swede and there were 20 other post-graduates from all over the world working in that lab, half medical and half scientists with amazing interactions. That year was the coldest for 200 years, the Siberian wind temperature pushing the temperature down to minus 30 centigrade; the British overcoats could not cope. Pickled herring became our staple diet, as we could not afford meat.

After the year we emigrated to the United States, intending to stay, but after two years an opportunity came to return to work in the NHS in a University post in Cardiff, so we moved again. After four years, by which time we had added an American daughter and a Welsh son to our family, we came to Sheffield in 1972. It had been a long journey.

Ian Cooke

[Many of our members are incomers to Sheffield. What was the journey that brought you here ? Ed.]

FAMILY NEWS

By all accounts, most of us are weathering lockdown with equanimity; we are fortunately placed. **John Price** is having some much-needed repairs done to the outside of his house; **Jean Dickson** is getting her sewing machine serviced to be able to make masks; a lot of decorating, mending and learning is going on. Sadly, however, some members continue to be troubled by health problems. **Dorothy Adam** is up and down. **Anita McVittie** is in considerable pain and is under investigation by the ENT and Heart Dept. Some are finding the lack of socialising very difficult. This is when it is so hard not to be able to visit, support and comfort our friends; we assure them that we are thinking and praying about them, and will do our best to support them at a distance with phone calls, emails and cards.

NEWS FROM FRIENDS

Robert Beard is still waiting to move into his flat. His friends gave him a splendid Doctor-Who-themed birthday, and he is working on proof-editing a PhD thesis on Political Theology for the Director of Studies at Wesley House in Cambridge; he hopes this may lead to more work with other doctoral scholars.

Chris Limb (who has led our services quite often recently) sends greetings and good wishes to everyone at St. Andrew's and assures us he is keeping us in his prayers. They are fine as a family - like all of us valuing what is important and getting to grips with technology to keep in touch with family and friends. Chris looks forward to being with us again in the future.

Sarah Hall is another minister uploading worship to YouTube; do google "Rev Sarah Hall" and YouTube if you want to see the results of her labours.

REFORM MAGAZINE

Although you may not get the URC Reform monthly magazine at the moment, they have informed us that, for as long as people are shut up indoors, they are making **Reform free online** and to tell anyone who might like to know about this. It is quite an interesting and challenging read - and you may have more time for reading now !

Free, online copies of Reform can be accessed via the webpage at <http://ow.ly/IBUW50yT73A>.

ROOTS is another excellent online resource for worship materials, provided for every Sunday in the year. When our Worship Group is preparing a service, we always have a look at what ROOTS is suggesting to give us a possible steer (even if we decide in the end to do something else). If you'd like to have a look yourselves, you can currently access each week's ideas for free and without a password at:

For adults

www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome3may (put the relevant date)

For families

www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome3may (relevant date)

FOODHALL - <https://www.foodhallproject.org>

Foodhall is a volunteer-led organisation which is currently using St Andrew's kitchen three days a week to provide meals and food parcels to those most in need, at-risk and isolated in the community during Covid-19.

At the end of April, Bevan Lal of Foodhall reported:

The week before we started using the St Andrews kitchen we made 750 meals and delivered 775 days worth of food (including foodbank style parcels) to just over 200 people. Last week, our first using the St Andrew's kitchen for 3 days, we cooked over **1200** meals and delivered over **1800** days worth of food to around **480** individuals. As you can see demand has risen but we have been able to meet it, partly thanks to having access to the facilities at St Andrews. More generally according to the Foodbank network, 0.5% of all households in Sheffield accessed emergency food support last week. 30 April was a record day - **539** meals produced and **262** of them in the St Andrews kitchen.

During COVID, If you or someone you know is in need of access to food, you can call the **Isolation Food Pack Helpline: 0114 303 6040**. The Helpline is staffed Monday – Friday 10.00 – 16.00
Foodhall can also be accessed at <<https://www.foodhallproject.org/>> where there is information on the project including a **donate link**.

[Foodhall was founded by three students from the University of Sheffield in 2016 as a volunteer-powered community dining space and kitchen bringing people together around food. Their restaurant is at 121 Eyre Street, Sheffield S1 4QW]

OPEN KITCHEN is still providing meals on Mondays in our kitchen, although they are delivering them now instead of making it a social event. If you wish to donate to support them, you can do so at Open Kitchen Social Club account:

Account Number 51633299 Sort Code 54 41 44

CHURCH DONATIONS

As we are all aware, the virus is still not sufficiently under control to enable us to meet again, in fact that day is still a long way off.

Since we last met, people who were using the envelope system for **FWO**, have taken steps to either pay directly into the Church bank account or send me cheques which I then forward to the bank. Thank you for organising that.

If you are still holding on to your **Jars of Change for Water Aid collection**, please could you use the same system, **either** paying directly into the Church Bank Account, using your surname as a reference, **Or** send me a cheque payable to **St Andrew's United Reformed Church Sheffield** with a note telling me that the amount is in fact for Water Aid. After a month or so I will send all the donations to Water Aid.
The Church bank account-

St Andrew's United Reformed Church Sheffield

Sort Code 40-41-18

A/c number 11208942

My address is-

**17, Meadow Bank Avenue,
Sheffield,
S7 1PB**

Please contact me if there are any problems, either by email or my landline 0114 2585426.

Please stay safe and it will be lovely to see you all, once we are able to !

Elizabeth Cousley

UPDATE FROM BUZZ

Please feel free to share and follow us on social media to keep up to date with our Covid-19 response programme.

To download our entertainment packs for older people, children and young people, head to our website.

Email us at hello@buzzsheffield.co.uk to either;

- Request an entertainment pack for someone who can't download and print.
- Add someone (with their permission) to our phone call check in, or essential shopping list.
- Add someone (with their permission) to Friday's food parcel list (Broomhall/Sharro).

Email us at childcontactcentre@buzzsheffield.co.uk to make a referral for our Zoom video contact service or PO Box postal service.

SCAMMERS AND FRAUDSTERS - Advice from Victim Support

Unfortunately, the coronavirus has seen a rise in the exploitation of vulnerable people, and on the unease, uncertainty and anxiety that many of us are understandably feeling at this time. These 'Bad Samaritans' con people into thinking they are helping them, or take advantage of people's good nature and their desire to help others.

Many of these scams are not new, but we may be more likely to fall victim to them given these uncertain times. With more time spent at home, scammers and fraudsters also have more chance to contact us – either on our doorstep, by phone, or online.

If someone offers to shop for you, set some boundaries and stick to them. Ask for ID - eg If someone claims to be from an official organisation like the British Red Cross. Request that you pay when they return. Ask to see the receipt before paying. **You may be shopping online**, perhaps for the first time. Look for a name you know. You can generally trust the larger supermarket chains, but make sure you're on their real website. Check the price is about right. If it is too good to be true, it probably is. Use a credit card as most credit cards provide protection under section 75 of the consumer credit act.

Any requests for payment are a sign that this is a scam. Be wary of any emails saying they are from official sources which ask for money - e.g. health organisations.

Your personal information is valuable. Remember, any data provided to scammers could be used at a later date to try and trick you out of money. Be careful with what you provide, and to whom.

Don't respond to offers of medication and health screening. Scammers may claim they have access to a vaccine, treatment or cure for the virus – of course, at a cost. There is currently no vaccine against coronavirus, and no specific treatment or medication available.

Free confidential Supportline on **08 08 16 89 111**, or visit victimsupport.org.uk

[There's a lot of looking back in this issue, but no apologies for that. When we can't sit and talk to each other about our life stories, this is another way to share them. Ed.]

JEAN'S EARLY SCHOOL DAYS (*continued*)

As there didn't seem to be much of a threat from bombing in Edinburgh, Mum took my sister and me back to Edinburgh in time for me to start back at school in September 1940. By this time the school had acquired a house in Ravelston Dykes where the infants were taught. I think I was taught by Miss Walker; she later moved to Aberdeen. As all seemed quiet the senior and junior school moved back to Queen Street in November 1940. We continued to attend the house in Ravelston Dykes and were escorted there and back from Princes Street by Matron. A little group of us from Corstorphine used to catch the tram into town in the morning and in the afternoon we were escorted back to Princes Street by Matron and met by my grandfather who took us back home on the tram. I don't remember exactly when we, the infants, returned to Queen Street.

In June 1944 the school celebrated its 250th Anniversary. There was a grand celebration in Queen Street Gardens, and the Princess Royal reviewed the school cadet corps. She was in uniform and I remember hearing a voice shouting out during the parade, "She's not a Princess, she hasn't got a crown!" Rumour has it that the comment was made by my younger sister. To celebrate the Anniversary, the school's name was changed to Mary Erskine School and we had new ties and new school badges. The badges had to be agreed with the Lord Lyon King of Arms who was in charge of all things to do with heraldry. Our badge was lozenge shaped rather than a shield. Eventually all the Merchant Company schools became schools, not colleges.

I remember playtimes spent on the roof garden and in the well, the area in the middle of the school open to the skies and enclosed by classrooms. Games for the senior school were played on the fields on Ferry Road, hockey in winter, tennis and netball in the summer. We were taught to swim at George Watson's Boys' School baths one night a week.

When VE was declared my mother took my sister and me on a tram into town. We sat upstairs in the front part with another family. Princes Street was packed with huge crowds and all the lights were on.

The last outstanding memory I have is when my father and mother came to meet me after school, the first time I had seen him since 1940. It must have been late June 1945. My father was home on sick leave because he had sustained a shrapnel wound the day before VE Day. He never went back into the army but went straight into his old job with Edinburgh Corporation Electricity Supply Company. I managed to pass my Highers, got an "Attestation of Fitness" and went to Edinburgh University to study medicine, and that too is another story.

VE DAY

Where were you when the war ended? Did you celebrate? As I was six years old, I didn't realize the full significance of the event, but I do remember the street party.

Friends took me to a street where there was a huge bonfire built up and chairs and tables set out in the middle of the street. This would have been the first real bonfire we had ever seen, so it was very exciting when it was lit. After an hour or so, someone thrust a baked potato into my hand and that was another first. Of all the ways of cooking a potato, this must be positively the best, even though the skin is thick and black and too hot to hold.

Then we were sat down at a table, where we were given tea and buns. I can't imagine it was very much because there wasn't very much food around in those days and rationing was strict, but I think back fondly to the generosity of these neighbours in including children they didn't know.

Next came family games and 'The farmer wants a wife' is the one that remains in my memory, partly because I was too shy to join and apprehensive of being fetched into the middle by strangers and made the bone, which I soon discovered was the position of ridicule. The people treated us kindly but firmly insisted we join in.

I can't guess how long the party continued. It was well past bedtime, that's for sure, when my mother found me and took me home.

Following the bonfire of VE Day, the next landmark I recall is the King's letter.

To this day, I have never found anyone else who recalls receiving such a missive.

I cannot estimate how long it was after the war that we received a letter from the King, but the school stressed the significance of this event.

We were told that we would each be given our letter at the end of the school day. So, as we were leaving school, a teacher presented each of us with a parchment letter from King George VI. We were shown how to roll it gently and told to carry it home carefully.

As home was two minutes away, I managed this successfully and proudly presented it to my mother. We solemnly read it in the kitchen. As I recall, His Majesty thanked us for our efforts during the war and praised the courage of the British people. Especially memorable for me was the King's signature, *George R.* and I had to ask my mother how the King had managed to sign all of the letters. She explained that he had a special stamp to do that. At this point, his Majesty lost a lot of credibility with me. In fact, I never felt the same about him again.

My mother reckoned that the safest place to store it was in the piano stool amongst the music, where it would be flattened out. And there it stayed for many years until one of my parents' many house moves, when it disappeared along with a lot of music, so I can never prove this presentation took place. I missed the music as well.

Monica Hanna

AND MORE

I too well remember the way we celebrated where I lived in Gloucester. It was a sociable suburban area around a big new church and the VE Day party was in the church hall, which was the local venue for activities. Excitement and fun was the atmosphere. Hoarded stocks of sugar and tinned fruit and other delights were brought out of store. Cakes and jellies and sandwiches constituted a party tea in those days. We played games (always Musical Chairs) and sang songs, people who could play the piano did so, the grown-ups may even have danced.

I didn't fully appreciate what this meant after six years of war but the sense of relief, release, and gladness was palpable.

Elizabeth Draper

I was two months old on V E day so have no memory of it. My main war recollection is when sweets came off rationing and my Dad gave me half a crown to spend in the local sweet shop, which was very generous of him.

During an air raid my granny gave everyone a scare when she sent Uncle Jimmy from the shelter back to the house for something she had forgotten. A rumour went round about this strange man lurking about. This was not long after Rudolph Hess had landed nearby so people were understandably scared.

The one health scare I do remember was about polio. My mother took me across the park to Dr Simpson's house where we were taken into a room where he had a Bunsen burner going. He had on a syringe a huge long needle which he sterilised in the flame and I was given the injection. I am sure it must have hurt but all I remember is the sight of that terrifying needle.

Sheila Dunstan

And People Stayed Home

And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived in ignorant ways,
dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

The origins of this poem have been much disputed. Was it written in 1869 ? or was it written during the Spanish flu epidemic in 1919 ? It was actually written this year and published on March 16, 2020, by writer Catherine O'Meara aka Kitty O'Meara, a retired American teacher and chaplain, and posted on her blog, a website called "The daily round".

Everyone has been working so hard in their gardens, and the lovely weather has brought the spring on apace.

We'd love to see the results. Do send us your photos.



WORSHIP BY ZOOM

Although it has been so sad for Kathleen and myself not to be in our usual seats in St. Andrew's on a Sunday morning now that we are all in "lockdown", we have though chosen to do something different on Sunday mornings. It has involved us "joining up" with most of the Christians in the Sheffield URC and this is important to us. We started doing this on Palm Sunday and each Sunday thereafter.

The Sheffield URC team of ministers (Jamie Kissack, Zadie Orr and Simon Copley) have arranged for an online video conferencing type of get-together each Sunday morning at 10:00 am for a 10:30 am start on the ZOOM video conferencing platform. A few St Andrew's members like Elizabeth, Sheila and Ian, Monica, Barbara, Christina, together with Kathleen and myself, join in most Sunday mornings for Worship. The service lasts 40-45 minutes; if you wish, you can see all the other people live on your screen who have tuned in, numbering as many as 140 now.

As well as the Sheffield Team, other church members take part in reading the lessons and composing prayers or reflection. The presentation is dignified, the voices are clear, and you can sing along to the hymns unheard by the rest. Jamie is becoming a skilful technician.

As when you visit another church on holiday, you find things you like or some you don't care for. But there is a real sense of participating in the service, not just watching, of being part of the Christian community. It's worth a try for others.

Of course we know that a few St Andrew's members do join other church services at this time, either online or by listening. Perhaps they were once a member there and they can see old friends or hear old familiar accents. For example, later in the day, Kathleen also likes to watch the service from Winchester Cathedral. One of our granddaughters is personal assistant to the bishop there and she videos the service for online transmission. It would be most interesting to compare notes about how we all respond to these various new forms of worship and how well they meet our spiritual needs.

So to join in, it is just a matter of using an internet search engine like Google or FireFox on a computer device and entering the link for the **Sheffield Team URC** Sunday morning online service, which is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/196150653>

Raymond Smyth



SONNET 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O, no! It is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

THE RED WHEELBARROW

So much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens

William Carlos Williams

How about some more favourite poems from you?