

Immanuel Weekly News
Sunday 12th September 2021

Website: <http://www.immanuelurc.org/>
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Thought for the week: “Faith is a living, daring, confidence in God's grace.” (Martin Luther)

Chaplain today: Anne Farrow

Bible Readings for this Sunday: Mark 8; 27-33 “And what will we mean?”

Anniversary: Tomorrow, Immanuel will be 82 years young. Let us celebrate and commit to keeping the church serving the community as a caring and ever more welcoming church. Lots has been done, and there is still so much that can be done.

Thanks be to God for the challenges ahead.

Family News:

- Our prayers for Josie Hartshorn and Ben Cotton who will be celebrating their wedding today, here at Immanuel at 1.30. After some postponements due to C19.
- Congratulations to Jenny Powley is a great-granny, and she looks younger than ever! Wilder Philip has been welcomed into this world, and the family is overjoyed.

Update

Following government and United Reformed Church guidelines, at Elders' meeting on Thursday, the following guidelines were approved:

Please continue to sanitise your hands on entering.

The security tape has been removed from the pews, though it is still important to respect those people who want to keep a distance from others.

While face coverings are no longer required by law, please continue to wear them if this helps you feel secure, and you are requested to wear them in certain areas of the church, such as the Atrium, corridors, toilets...

All toilets are now in use.

If you do not feel well, please stay at home, and if any COVID symptoms are manifest, please let Steve Brain know.

Elders will continue to monitor the situation and these guidelines will be reviewed according to the development of the situation.

Swindon Half Marathon: On consultation to the Council on this event and the streets that would be affected, and could upset people getting to church on Sunday 19th, we were told that the event has been **cancelled**. This means the church will be full of people, to listen to Mike Walsh tell us all about the Desai School Project.

Prayer Group: We hope to resume our face-to-face meetings soon, meanwhile each week a list of needs is circulated for us to remember in Prayer. If you have any need, or know of anybody who we can pray for, please contact either Anne Farrow or Helen Thomas.

Food-Box: The Swindon Food Collective needs support, and we can help. The Food Box in the Chapel is now available to receive your donations. Each time the Box is full, the contents will be taken to them so they can continue to provide for so many people in need.

World Concerns Committee: You will be pleased to know that Immanuel has donated £1,000 to an appeal by Christian Aid for funds to provide relief to the residents of Haiti who have lost their homes and possessions in this disaster.

Upham Road – Repair Works Swindon Borough Council have informed that as from Monday 6th Emergency Repair Work will take place on Upham Road, for an “estimated” two weeks. Working hours will be 08:00-17:00hs, Monday to Friday. They will block the part of the road where they have dug up, but the other lane is open, and access will be available for worship and on Sunday for the wedding. Access from Drove Road end is the best. If access to carpark is needed during the week, they will open the barrier. Work will be carried out in three separate phases. Access to Immanuel will be maintained. Buses will not run along Upham Road, and the bus stops on Queens Drive and Upham Road will remain in operation.

Old Town Partnership of Churches Project – Next Sunday 19th we will receive the visit of Mike Walsh, who will talk to us about the Desai school in Africa, which was approved as the OTPC project last year and was put on hold due to COVID. The Partnership of Churches will be sharing the effort to help the school. The aim is to reach £6000 between all the churches between now and end of November, closing the project on the joint service for the first Sunday of Advent. It would be great to reach and surpass this aim. **So come along and support this service**

Afghanistan, Rose Earle, Harbour Project.

Over the past month the difficult news about Covid has been superseded by the unfolding tragedy in Afghanistan and my customers, the generous members of the Old Town community, have been troubled by the fate of those still at home and those forced to flee their home.

The Harbour Project in Swindon offers support to refugees and I have spoken to their senior worker Clare about what we in Old Town could do to help.

The facts are that at this moment there are a number of Afghan families in Swindon with 50 children under the age of 18. To be honest, none of these people have very much. Many people will help Harbour but, as a community, we could offer more comfort to the young, for instance, by providing back packs of personal things like coloured pencils and books, shower gel, toothbrushes etc., and maybe a few good toys, not forgetting the odd football. Packs of new underwear, pyjamas and socks would be great, as would lipsticks, leggings etc., to make the ladies feel good about themselves again.

You can contact me on 077168 84506 if you wish to know more. Cash can be left at my Newport Street store and a receipt will be provided. All goods can be left with me and will be sent to the Harbour Project.

Thank you for reading this. Rosemary Earle, 35 Newport Street. The Harbour Project, St. Luke's Church, Broad Street, Swindon.

Climate Change Conference: I'm sure you have heard of this, better known as COP26, which will take place as from October 31st in Glasgow. This is an urgent and necessary time for concrete actions to be taken on the Environmental Crisis we are facing. Climate changes is not something happening in faraway regions: Arctic, Antarctic, Amazon....it is happening much closer to home – we saw the floods in Germany and Belgium, and the streets of London, and in the Southwest heading into this weekend. What is not tackled now, will just add to the damage happening now. So please keep this Conference in your prayers and let us urge our leaders to commit to the changes necessary. WORDS are no longer enough, we need ACTION.

Please Include in your prayers:

- For Josie and Ben who will celebrate their wedding today.
- The Harvest Appeal 2021 in aid of Desai School, as part of the Old Town Partnership of Churches project.
- Haiti and the families who have lost loved ones, and families who have lost all.
- For Afghanistan in the current situation, they are suffering (AGAIN)
- For Highworth URC
- For victims of domestic violence.
- For the hungry, the homeless, the people who have no job.
- For the search for truth when truth may be painful but so necessary and urgent.
- All areas of the world living with violence, hatred, war, famine.
- For Refugees, the difficulties they flee from, the hope they are looking for.
- For COP26, meeting in Glasgow in November – the opportunity to do something urgent on Climate change.
- Those who are recovering from medical treatments.
- All those struggling with mental health difficulties.
- Those who are mourning the death of family or friends.
- The plight of the Palestinian people.
- The Harbour Project
- The Foyer
- The Swindon Food Collective
- Amnesty International and all victims of Human Rights violations
- The vaccination in the world.
- The Prayer Group.
- The Old Town Partnership of Churches: Bath Road, Christ Church with St Mary's
- The Southwestern Synod: Ruth the Moderator, Gwen the Synod Clerk, and all who work for the Synod, and the churches of the Synod.
- Courage of faith to confront injustice, discrimination, hatred, racism.
- For all that brings us joy and happiness.