

Stainbeck Church (United Reformed)

OUTLOOK

October 2021



Please worship with us:
Sunday Morning at 10.45am
Thursday Evening at 7.30pm

<https://stainbeckurc.org.uk>

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OCTOBER 2021

Dear Friends,

As I write this we are looking forward to **HARVEST**, held this year on **CLIMATE SUNDAY**, as we focus on the COP26 Meetings in Glasgow next month. I suspect we don't need reminding of the consequences if we fail to address this issue. It is an emergency and the need is immediate. And yet, not surprisingly, we continue to feel inadequate.

With me you may look back with fond nostalgia to harvests of old – the smell of fruit and flowers, the fresh loaf on the sanctuary table, a sheaf of wheat, a bunch of grapes, the familiar hymns as we gave thanks together. You may also remember the years when we focussed on the harvest of industry – the factory, the mining of coal. Or perhaps those years when we recognised the global nature of our current world.

But now in 2021 we are asked to take a longer look as we recognise our responsibility to care for our world and our constant failure to look beyond our own need. The call is urgent to look afresh at our lives and how we live.

As ever we feel nothing that we can do that will make any significant difference. But we do remember that the ocean is made of tiny drops (Mother Teresa) and that the only way to eat an elephant is bite by bite (Desmond Tutu).

So, what can we do? What are we doing?

And perhaps when we have found some changes we can make, however small, we can share them with one another? Perhaps we can grow the wider conversation until we find that together we have made changes maybe more significant than we realise. Indeed we may discover that we all have a part in this – looking at what we buy and why – cutting waste – sharing the message – being generous with what we have as we support one another.

This Harvest we take a fresh look at how we live in God's world (also see page 11).

In so doing may we each find blessing and encouragement

Angela

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Where there is tender care and love, God is present

We continue to send our love and prayers to all our Church Family and friends who are coping with ill-health and big changes in their lives. We remember especially those who have had to move into care homes because of declining health.

We remember also those in the Church Family who are suffering from Covid-19 and others who need our prayers at this time. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

We continue to hold in prayer all those within our local community who are experiencing difficulties and those friends and volunteers who work so hard to support them – **GOD LOVES YOU ALL.**

Congratulations to **Sylvia and Peter Webster** who celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary and **Brenda Craven** who has one of those ‘significant big 0’ birthdays!

**Birthday Congratulations in October go to
six of our young people: you know who you are!**

HERE AND THERE

Looking back

How good it has been to continue to **Drop In** to church on a Thursday morning for coffee *and* toasted teacakes if that is what you fancy. Over the month there have been increasing numbers and returning familiar faces, both young and old. Particular thanks are due to **Kellie Mara** and **Janet Harrison**, our community friends, who have done sterling work in the kitchen.



Ness and **Maureen** are always in regular attendance together with **Angela** all of whom supply valued and much-needed support. *Thank you!!* Further thanks to those who set tables and chairs and clear away so willingly. If you would like to join the rota of providers in the Café, please speak to Avril - she would be pleased to tell you what is involved. We are currently open from 11am to 1pm.

Hymns on the Green, co-ordinated this year by Chapel Allerton Methodist Church, replaced Hymns in the Street with great success. We



met on the grass outside St Matthew's. Our focus was 'DREAMING GREEN', the sun shone, we sang with gusto to live music – **Nick Seddon** on keyboard with a small band including **Helen Booth** and her trumpet. How good it was to see so many familiar faces once again. It was a happy, faith-filled morning.

Now, excitingly, the technology is all in place in church and, at the time of writing, Angela has led the first service in our building whilst we all shared with her on Zoom. It must have felt very strange to her, alone in the space with just Adrian, Richard and Helen for technical support but all went very well. We look forward to joining her next Sunday.

Post Script Monday 27th September! A few teething issues yesterday with the sound and video. Don't be distracted! - it is being sorted. Eds

Grateful thanks are due to all the team who have worked so hard to get everything in place, to **Dan Morrell** for his advice and installation, the **Synod Mission Fund** for the grant, and of course **Adrian, Richard** and **Liam** for their expertise and involvement.

We continue to deliver weekly **Fun Bags** devised by Emmanuelle to our families. It is good when we are able to see them and have a little chat. Some of the children have started school this year so that has been exciting for them. *Please speak to Angela or Emmanuelle if you would like to help us keep in touch with the families in this way.*

September's **MESSY CHURCH** gathering in our church garden was great fun - again the focus on **Creation and Climate Change**. There were lots of fun activities, games and singing; there were cakes and drinks, much chatting and the sun shone warmly despite some pessimistic weather forecasts.

All future meetings of **MESSY CHURCH** will now take place at Stainbeck and we do hope to see many more families and friends sharing with us. *Do please invite others*. These are fun afternoons as we discover church in a new way.

Our Lunch Club has re-opened again! Brian and I cannot quite believe that this has happened after all the ups and downs of the last eighteen months. Our wonderful volunteers have come together again to work to provide a safe and happy environment for our members. Sadly, we are much depleted due to the fact that three of our members have died; three are now living in care homes and others are too frail or unwell to be part of our club. We are still in contact with them and they are fondly remembered by those still attending.

There have been some changes due mainly to us having to follow the Covid-19 guidelines. Members arrived wearing masks and only took these off when they were seated at the table. However, to say there were only seven people, two of whom were new members, the volume of 'noise' in the room was high! We are now buying our meals from another source 'COOK' at Moortown Corner. The cottage pie was delicious and, along with rice pudding, followed by tea, coffee and a biscuit went down very well.

Hopefully our numbers will begin to rise over the next few weeks. The pandemic has caused many people to rethink carefully about going out and about again and mixing with others. The Lunch Club volunteers, as always, worked very well together and everything was left 'ship shape and Bristol fashion' as they say. All this happened following Covid-19 guidelines.

DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2021

Sunday Worship at 10.45am will be once again in Church and now also on Zoom. Zoom and the Church will be open at 10.15 am. The ‘New Normal?’

We look forward to seeing you in person or on Zoom – the choice is yours.

Sun	3rd	10.45am	Harvest/Climate Sunday Worship led by Revd Samantha Sheehan, Christine Robson and Helen Booth.
Wed	6 th	7.30pm	Churches Together
Thu	7 th	11.00-1.00pm	Drop In for Coffee, cakes and teacakes
		11-12noon	Zoom Drop In Coffee
		6.30pm	Synod meet on Zoom
		7.15pm	Zoom Open for Thursday Prayers led by Hilary Wilson
			Synod Session 1 on Zoom
Sat	9 th	10.00am	Synod continues on Zoom from Dewsbury
Sun	10th	10.45am	Worship led by the Minister with <i>Holy Communion</i>
Thu	14 th	11.00-1.00pm	Drop In for Coffee, cakes and teacakes
		11-12noon	Zoom Drop In Coffee Time
		7.15pm	Zoom Open for Thursday Prayers led by Avril and Brian
Sun	17th	10.45am	Worship led by the Minister. Preacher Prof. Haddon Willmer
		3.30pm	MESSY CHURCH
Wed	20 th	7.30pm	Mission and Care
Thu	21 st	11.00-1.00pm	DropIn for Coffee, cakes and teacakes
		11-12noon	Zoom Drop In Coffee Time
		7.15pm	Zoom Open for Thursday Prayers led by Ann Coates
Sun	24th	10.45am	Worship led by the Minister
Tue	26 th	7.30pm	Elders’ Meeting on Zoom
Thu	28 th	11.00-1.00	Drop in for Coffee, cakes and teacakes
		11-12noon	Zoom Drop In Coffee Time
		7.15pm	Zoom Open for Thursday Prayers led by the Minister
Sun	31st	10.45am	Worship led by the Minister

Looking Forward.....

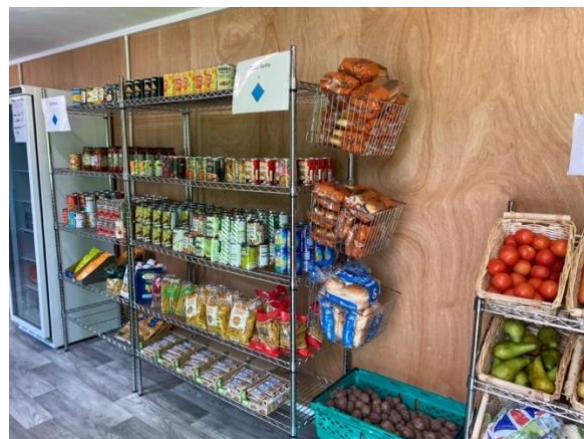
As we move from September further into Autumn, I imagine we are all looking forward to that ‘new normal’ which of course includes our **return to worship** in church, which after all these months may well feel a little unfamiliar.

We will still be socially distanced and will wear masks unless we are seated. We are asked to wear masks when singing too. Sadly we are not serving coffee after worship for the moment. We hope the weather will be fine enough for us to catch up and chat *outside*. Windows and doors will be open to allow the best ventilation – we want you to be aware of this as you decide which coat to wear! Also, a plate will be provided in church for those who wish to leave an offering; it will not be passed around as before but of course all offerings will be blessed as they are used to support the mission and ministry of the church.

Whatever happens it will be so good to meet face-to-face after all this time. If for whatever reason you are not yet ready to come to Stainbeck, fear not– the same service will be broadcast, live via Zoom, so as Angela has often said “We will be together though apart”. This truly is a new beginning for us all. Let us give thanks together.

The proposal for the **Leeds United Reformed Church Partnership** was presented and accepted at the Special Church Meeting after the service on 26th September. All members had received notice of the details and of the process which has been gone through to reach this stage. We pray now for continuing progress as we seek the way forward for us all under the sure guidance of God. Any further questions about this please talk to Avril or Angela.

For our **Harvest service**, to be led by Christine, Helen and Samantha you are asked, if you wish, to bring gifts which will be used by the **InterACT Food Pantry** at Meanwood Community Centre and in our own **pantry at church** for supporting any who are currently in need. *Please see the list below of suitable items(no fresh food).*



Harvest gifts for our Local InterACT FOOD Pantry and Church Pantry

This list is not exhaustive, just an indication for food items that are needed. (We don't need absolute basics like tinned tomatoes, baked beans *etc* just now, but things to make diets more interesting.) **No perishable goods please.**

Tea, coffee, hot chocolate, sugar (different sizes to suit different size households).

Long Life fruit juices, squashes and cordials.

Child friendly cereals (not branflakes or similar).

Spreads - honey, jam, peanut butter, Nutella.

Corned beef or tuna

Sauces - Tomato sauce, brown sauce, salad cream, mayo, spicy sauces.

Treats for old and young - chocolate, biscuits, crisps, microwaveable sponge puds, custard. (Maureen Lillywhite visits elderly people)

At the recent Elders' meeting it was agreed that our **charity** during the Autumn months should focus on the lives of people affected by the crisis in Afghanistan and to that end we are supporting a local charity as they offer support to Afghan families in need:

<http://www.baharwomen.org>

This group is based in Little London (Leeds) and is currently helping families and individuals from Afghanistan who have arrived in Leeds to have some of the basic needs met. If you wish to contribute to this there is a basket in church each Sunday.

A further **request** comes from the Elders' meeting: *We are looking for recommendations for an efficient, preferably local, handyman / woman on whom we can call for a variety of straightforward DIY jobs which arise from time to time.* Please contact Avril in the first instance and she will pass on any information to MAP (Management and Property Group).

Unfortunately it has not been possible as yet to engage a builder to do the required work on the outside of the church. It seems that they are all busy with 'big' jobs so the search goes on.

Do you remember when we replaced the prickly rush bottomed church chairs with the wooden ones? Members, friends and church groups sponsored chairs and some bought plaques to name their gift, in memory of someone or to remember their organisation. When we replaced the heavy wooden chairs with the recent blue ones all the plaques were safely stored away.

They can now be seen on a board beautifully made by **Andrew Wilson**, son of Emmanuelle and David, which is placed in the back alcove to the right of the entrance to church. They make a fascinating read and for me brought back memories of many of the family of Stainbeck now long gone. Please have a look at it. Thank you Andrew!



An **advanced date** for your diary which causes me to mention **Christmas**but yes, it will be here before we know it !

On **Saturday December 11th** there will be a **Christmas Market at Meanwood Urban Farm.**

As part of the above event, organised by the farm, there will be the opportunity to create a **nativity scene**. This will be overseen by AGE UK who will facilitate a series of workshops across the area. It would be good to have one at Stainbeck – look out for further details. After these months of isolation the hope for this event is that people will be brought together and maybe new friendships made as well as past ones renewed. And look at all those skills we've found during the lockdown weeks! And have you any ideas for **decorating the outside of the church?** Remember last year – many of us made symbols of Christmas to hang on the railings. *Thinking caps on for ideas for 2021 please!*

SOMETHING NEW: Every week **Network Leeds** publishes a blog written by different Christians across Leeds. You may recognise some of the writers – why not have a look each week? Different thoughts, reflections, perspectives. Always good to hear. In September one of these came from **Haddon Willmer** and it seemed worth sharing more widely.

‘Intercessions in church can get too near to being a media-shaped list of needs dressed in pious language. So, we pray and move on, without noticing that nothing has really been done.

Can we make a helpful change in the way we pray?

Start with the conventional sequence of perfunctory petitions and then break off sharply, by saying:

So God, in your presence, we pause in our prayer, to think and talk together about what *we* are being called to *do, here and now*, as we stand between You and the world.

Pause, because we need to think and talk and venture in experiment together, as people called to be ‘Church’, a community, a group of groups, who are called to witness to God in shared cooperative service in the world.

It might be a rather long pause, the conversation demanding.

It is tempting to exempt ourselves from such down to earth talk, and to go back to finish giving God the list which we think falls on his plate, and then, go home. But to do that would be to forget we are in the presence of God, the God who presses upon us and hems us in; we would cease to be even a rough sketch of ‘Church’.

Such a pause bears fruit when together we hear God’s call to a specific work, to go this way rather than that, so that our prayer becomes concrete, closer to God and world.

When a way has been marked out for us, pray for grace to get going on it. Pray both for courage and strength to persevere in good work until it is completed and the grace to go on learning, open to revising our plans and methods in the light of experience. Pray to be kept walking on the earth which was ‘good enough for Jesus’ (Dietrich Bonhoeffer).

Pray *and* act. Then action becomes prayer.

SNAPSHOTS OF OUR LIFE:

We have had some great photos sent over the past 18 months and they have been one of the ways that we have kept in touch with one another. Thank you!

This month I'm sharing a few of my highlights starting with a pleasant surprise last week when preparing for in-church worship. The rolls of carpet in the pulpit had gone – all was neat and trim. Trust me this is far more exciting than it looks! I eventually discovered that this was the work of Glenn. Our thanks!



And maybe this is a good time to mention the now completed, newly decorated, office. Thank you to the MAP Team – in particular Peter and Doreen and Adrian. Worth a look one Sunday morning

Looking wider I have noticed work on the new estate is underway. Maybe it's time for **Team Beckhills** to consider reconvening?



And are you all aware that there have been changes at Mill Field now an academy, **Alder Tree Primary**. Changes all round.

This month has also seen many of the groups that use our building return – including the **Beavers** and **Explorer Scouts**.

Finally, on the last Sunday afternoon of the month, the opportunity to welcome **Alex Walker** as he was commissioned by our Synod Moderator as an '**Elder in Local Leadership**' at the URC in South Leeds. Please hold the church and Alex in your prayers as we all move forward together in partnership.

Views expressed by individuals are personal and not necessarily those of Stainbeck Church.

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