

**EMURCE No: 316 – 16th April 2020**  
**WEEKLY EDITION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**  
**EDITED THIS WEEK BY: REVD PETER STEVENSON**

There is a school of thought that suggests that Ministers only work one day per week and over the past few weeks the virus has taken that away from me. As a result I have all the time in the world. So, what can I do with this time?

I have repaired the greenhouse after the winter storms; jet washed the patio and drive with my new Kärcher (bought for my birthday a couple of weeks ago); mowed the lawns; dusted my office; cleaned my shoes; caught-up on must-see programmes on television; made some soup; talked to my wife; had a daily walk; and thought a lot about nothing. So what shall I do next....

Well actually there are the virtual meetings to attend, if I can get the technology to work; prepare some service sheets and get them posted by snail mail and online; make a video and podcast; ring round my colleagues and all the families in the churches; keep up personal devotions; begin to plan for when all this is over; do the background reading for sermons and my sabbatical; talk with my wife in real time and children on Facetime. Oh and I have to fix the desktop, because it has been infected with a virus - not that one I don't think?

Time is a funny thing, when you have it in abundance it can seem never ending, but when you are under pressure to get something done it seems to run out too quickly. Why is that I wonder? Someone said last week that the past is historic and cannot be changed and the future is still to come so why try to foretell it. They concluded that we live in the present, so called because it is a gift and if all else fails I might even tackle cleaning the oven.

*Peter Stevenson*

#### PEOPLE

- It is with regret that we inform you of the death, on 9th April, of retired Minister, **Revd Bernard Chart**, from South Western Synod . He had been suffering from dementia and living in a care home for many years. We pray for him his family & friends.  
Bernard served at Honley 1953 - 58; Heavitree, Exeter 1958 - 63; New Malden 1963 - 75; St Marks, Wimbledon 1975 - 78; Central, Derby 1978 -89; Henleaze 1989 - 94. There are no funeral details at present.
- We are sorry to have to inform you of the death of **Revd Cecil Stewart Ross** from North West Synod who served at: Rochdale 1953-58; Bedlington 1958-65; Swindon 1965-69; Allithwaite & Grange-over-Sands 1985-90.  
There will be a service at the Crematorium for family on Tuesday 21st April at 3pm and there will be a Thanksgiving Service later in the year. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

## FIND US ON FACEBOOK

To help stay in contact during the health crisis and beyond, we are pleased to introduce a new Synod Facebook Page. We hope this will develop into a place of sharing and of celebration. If you are a Facebook user, please feel free to Like and Share both the Page and its Posts.

You will find it by searching “**URC East Midlands Synod**” or following this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/URC-East-Midlands-Synod-102279281444717/>

From today (Thursday 9 April) onward, this Page will host the **Evening Prayers** which our Moderator-Elect, the Revd Geoffrey Clarke, has been leading daily at 9.30pm since the beginning of the lockdown. Geoffrey draws on a variety of resources from several denominations to offer a time of peaceful prayer and meditation toward the end of the day.

## URC RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In response to the current situation, a group of synod-level workers (CYDO+) and Church House staff came together; knowing that people are inundated with online recommendations of things to do while staying safe at home, but at the same time wanting to provide material for those looking for something particularly URC in nature.

They are delighted to bring you the following resources available weekly on the URC website and on Moodle:

<https://urc.org.uk/resources-for-children-and-youth> [1] and URCLÉ

<https://moodle.urc.org.uk/course/view.php?id=208> [2] pages.

FAMILIES ON FAITH ADVENTURES @ HOME is designed to support families of all generations as they experience, explore and express faith together through the week. It is a 'pick and mix' of activities, games, prayers and challenges based around a story from the Bible and draws on materials from our non-uniformed children's groups Pilots and FOFA.

## THE URC WEBSITE - ADVICE TO CHURCHES ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3365-urc-issues-coronavirus-advice-to-its-churches>

The URC website is updated daily with advice and resources from a variety of sources. Many of the questions and concerns of local churches are addressed, along with some uplifting and encouraging articles and prayers.

Please do keep checking for updates.

### LATEST UPDATE ADDED

#### URC resource for funerals during the Covid-19 pandemic

The latest addition to the URC website page on Covid 19 is a resource put together by a task group led by Revd Mary Thomas at education & learning's request.

The URC has published a new resource for use with those who can't attend funerals because of coronavirus <<https://urc.org.uk/images/Communications/docs/Virtual-Funerals-2020.pdf>>.

'Virtual funerals - liturgies and words for our digital world' is a free resource available from the URC website. The 28-page, A4 booklet offers a starting place for those dealing with lockdown bereavement, with texts and ideas for ministers, worship leaders, families and friends, all of which can be tailored to the needs of each situation.

### AN EASTER SERVICE FROM BULWELL URC

All together for Easter - I'm sure we have been blessed by Easter Sunday services but here's an added extra - something a bit different for Bulwell URC that will bless children, families & adults. .

The link below is to a video of a 30 minute All-age Easter Service featuring readings and prayers by children, music, drama, a short message and celebration of communion. The whole project came together really well and we are offering it to the Synod as a refreshing celebration of the Easter story.

To view click this link: [https://1drv.ms/v/s!Au1EbpcNEBC0egtIzT\\_YkHGp3Chyu3w?e=2mAW6i](https://1drv.ms/v/s!Au1EbpcNEBC0egtIzT_YkHGp3Chyu3w?e=2mAW6i)

### NEWS FROM ENDERBY URC

We at Enderby have been keeping in touch with our congregation by email for the majority and printing off for those without internet - delivered during daily walks as well as taking roots handouts to the children.

On Good Friday we had a Meditation service via Zoom and had 12 participate.

For our 'virtual' Easter Breakfast Communion service we had 26 taking part via Zoom and 1 via the mobile phone, One of our members went to visit her son in Lincoln the day before lockdown and has remained there, it was great for her to take part and 'meet up' with us all, it's certainly a great way to connect, proving that we are the church not the building!

### EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD OFFICE CLOSURE

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Synod Office closed on 24th March and will remain closed until further notice as we follow Government guidelines. Whilst we are closed all members of staff will be working from home. If you wish to contact them please e-mail in the usual way. For the list of emails click on the link below: <https://www.urch5.org.uk/synodstaff>

Telephone calls will now be forwarded to mobiles so please call the office in the usual way on 0115 9609241 between the hours of 9am - 3pm, Monday - Thursday, if you wish to speak to a member of staff. Due to the office closure, at this time we have no access to the database for sending out group emails.

Therefore all information will be put on to our website. Please keep checking for updates. All other information will be sent out using our E-Letter provider so if you have not already signed up, please click on this link:

<https://urch5.us18.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7b9491ce2216f1835e4829f87&...>

**Our E-Letter will be sent out weekly for the time being, to help keep you updated and keep in touch, so if you have any information, news, good news stories, etc please send to [training@urch5.org.uk](mailto:training@urch5.org.uk)**

**AND FINALLY:** - This E letter is sent on behalf of The URC East Midlands Synod, 1 Edwards Lane, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3AA. Telephone: 0115 9609241

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