

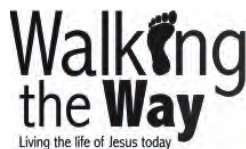


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# Taunton United Reformed Church



**AUGUST 2022**  
Magazine



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## TAUNTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MAGAZINE

NO. 597

August 2022

### MINISTER:

Vacant

### Pastoral care

For concerns that go beyond mutual pastoral care, please see the note on page 7.

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NB The views expressed within the pages of the magazine may not always express those of the Editor, the Minister, the Taunton Churches, or the United Reformed Church. Copy is always gratefully received; however, inclusion & amendments are subject to the editor's discretion. Any copyright permissions should be obtained before copy is submitted.

## From the Editor



The theme this month is Coming Home, and the editor has come home from his summer holiday. (Turn to page 16 to discover whether I have resisted the temptation to share the odd holiday photo.)

For me one of the benefits of going away is the simplicity of life and the discipline of living with a just a few possessions. So a return marks the end of that and often entails the slight worry that the freezer might have broken down in the interim (this did happen once).

For many home has more positive connotations. There is a strand of biblical thinking that sees salvation as a coming home. For certain Israelites this was a return from years in exile. More widely there is the hope of a return to something like the idyll of the garden of Eden. I have seen gravestones and heard mourners speak of someone who has gone home; though the Bible ends with a picture of God making the move and making a home among mortals (Revelation 21:3).

Meanwhile life goes on, and for some home may be a place of threat or a pile of rubble. Sue Ingham offers us prayers to use on life's journey, with something for you however hard or easy that may be.

On page 16 Clare Callanan reflects on what coming home means for her.

Franks tells on page 10 where we are with the church's plan to provide a home for a Ukrainian family. It was both apt to follow this with a John O'Donohue blessing for a new home, included at Clare's suggestion.

The big event since the last issue has been the church Open Day, part of our marking of the 50th anniversary of the forming of the United Reformed Church. You will find a report on page 9 and photographs in the centre pages. Among the attractions, inviting people to make a home among us even temporarily, was the display of Gethsemane Garments loaned to us for the event; Clare gives us a guided reflection on these on page 18.

Looking ahead, in September is the season of creation-tide, with our harvest service on the last Sunday. So the theme for the next issue will be: Sustainability - stewardship of the Earth, our home.

*Peter Henderson*

Cover image: detail of Rembrandt's The Return of the Prodigal Son

## Forthcoming Church Services

Sundays at 10:30am at the United Reformed Church, Paul Street unless otherwise stated

- 7 August Three Churches united service at Temple Methodist Church
- 14 August Morning worship led by the Revd Phillip Jones
- 21 August Morning worship led by the Revd Phillip Jones
- 28 August Morning worship led by the Revd Clare Callanan
- 4 September Morning worship led by the Revd Viv Henderson (includes The Lord's Supper)

## Weekly Activities

at the time of publication these are:

Wednesdays 9:30am - 12:30 **Work-Wise** in the church hall: offering support with all aspects of job seeking

Other mid-week activities are under consideration.

## Other Notable Dates

*including some you may not have noticed*

- Thursday 28 July *Commonwealth Games began - ends on 8 August*
- Thursday 4 August *International Owl Awareness Day*
- Friday 5 August *Feast day of St Oswald of Northumbria (605-642)*
- Saturday 13 August *Left Handers Day*
- Monday 15 August **Magazine deadline**
- Monday 31 August *Summer Bank Holiday*
- Feast day of St Aidan of Lindisfarne (d.651)*
- Thursday 1 September Elders Meeting
- Saturday 3 September 3pm Strawberry Tea

## Pastoral letter



Dear Friends

'Summer suns are glowing over land and seas'. I find that I cannot sing any more of that verse; to me it describes a world I do not see. It was written by Revd William Walsham How in 1871. He was known as the 'poor man's bishop and the children's bishop due to his work with destitute people and in the slums. Since 2002 this hymn no longer appears in hymn books, for obvious reasons. I wonder if this hymn was

his ideal of what the world should look like.

Like all life, it consists of constant change, and at times difficult to keep up. As the Synod Moderators reported to the General Assembly, we can't keep doing things the way they have been done. Change is drastically needed and this involves risks. Are we as a congregation ready to take risks?

At our Church Meeting we were asked to give ideas as to what we would like to see happen in the church. Ideas included were: re-opening discussion on Same-Sex Marriage.; have some form of mid week worship.; have a varied Arts and Crafts programme. Our biggest task is to care for each other and it was asked at our Church Meeting that each of us in our Bubble contact someone else in the Bubble on a regular basis, just to say hello and how are you. Also send a card saying that we are thinking about you. If we each do this it shares the load.

Sharing and caring is part of our Christian ministry, for those we know and those we don't. We have seen the out-pouring of care for the people of the Ukraine, who have lost everything, but have you given a thought to the families of Russians who have been killed, injured or taken prisoner? Surely we should have duty of care for them.

It is hard to miss the immense pressure that are hospitals are under. At times I wish I was in the Department of Health and I could knock some sense into ministers giving orders regarding patient care and other matters. They seem to have forgotten that no available beds means just that! Saying that, they have put millions into the Health Service, but yet again they seem to think that hospitals have expandable sides, and beds can be put anywhere. I must stop and come off my soap box.

We must not forget that in any care we receive or give, the Lord is with us. He is there for us to lay our cares and worries at his feet, and He will answer us. We have to wait patiently for his answer.

May His love and care be with you all during this holiday season.

Sue

The whole of verse 1 of Walsham How's hymn is as follows:

Summer suns are glowing  
over land and sea;  
happy light is flowing  
bountiful and free.  
Everything rejoices  
in the mellow rays;  
all earth's thousand voices  
swell the psalm of praise.

*Relating to Sue's letter:*

An article in *Nursing Times* on 20th July 2022 quoted analysis by The Health Foundation. It stated that the government set a target of recruiting an extra 50,000 nurses over the five years from 2018-19 and appears to be on track to meet that target. However, that would still leave a shortage of 38,000 nurses relative to expected demand.

The Health Foundation projects a persistent shortfall in the Full Time Equivalent number of GPs and general practice nurses. (Many are part-time so the simple total means little.) The worst-case scenario is that there will be only half the GPs needed by 2030.

## Prayers for the journey of life

God who sets us on our journey  
to discover, dream and grow,  
lead us in our journey inwards,  
lead us in our journey outwards,  
so that we may explore the way  
you want us to go.

In the sunshine, in the rain,  
May we know your love again.

Lord Jesus,  
we thank you that you meet with us each day,  
we thank you that you speak to us – help us to listen,  
we thank you for all that you have given us – help us to share,  
thank you for your tender loving care – help us to care  
for those we love  
and for those we find hard to love,  
for those who are unloved.

Living God, giver of hope,  
May I glimpse your gift of hope in times of bewilderment, despair and  
struggle.  
May I be open to receiving your gift of hope, in your unexpected  
presence, in your patience and in your love.

Through all the changing scenes of life,  
in trouble and in joy.  
May we know that you are always near  
and waiting for us.

Prayer suggestions are offered to us by Sue Ingham

## Revised Common Lectionary for forthcoming Sundays

7 August	14 August	21 August
Genesis 15:1-6 Psalm 33:12-22 Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16 Luke 12:32-40	Jeremiah 23:23-29 Psalm 82 Hebrews 11:29–12:2 Luke 12:49-56	Isaiah 58:9b-14 Psalm 103:1-8 Hebrews 12:18-29 Luke 13:10-17
28 August	4 September	11 September
Proverbs 25:6-7 Psalm 112 Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 Luke 14:1, 7-14	Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Psalm 1 Philemon 1-21 Luke 14:25-33	Exodus 32:7-14 Psalm 51:1-10 1 Timothy 1:12-17 Luke 15:1-10

### PASTORAL TEAM

Our aim is to foster care and concern for each other in the congregation.

However, If you have a emergency and need help or concern, do not hesitate to contact a member of the Pastoral Team.

Mrs Isobel Tosh Robb, Mrs Meg Cardy, Dr Eryl Harris,  
Mrs Sheena Helliart, Miss Sue Ingham, and Revd. Janet Sowerbutts.



## Church Family News

### Carol welcomed into membership



On Sunday 5th June, during a communion service led by the Revd Clare Callanan, Carol Rowswell was welcomed into church membership.

At Clare's invitation Carol told the congregation how, during a low period, God had spoken to her and pointed her towards our church.

Carol received the Right Hand of Fellowship from Sue Ingham.



## Birthday Corner

We offer special greetings to those in our wider fellowship who have a birthday in August. May God bless you all ...

- 2 Susan Durber
- 17 Janet Sowerbutts
- 20 Diana Holmes
- 25 Andrew Powell



## Social and Arts events

Firstly a huge thank to you all for the help given in so many ways for the Open Day on July 2nd.

It didn't turn out exactly as we hoped and we will blame the weather in part for that but everyone's contribution made an delightful day that was creative, exciting and the church really felt inviting. Those who did come inside found a big surprise by enjoying tea and cakes to the sound of Daniel's Cuban quartet and the chance to admire the needlework in the form of magnificent garments that told a story. The history of what happened to form the United Reformed Church in 1972 was told visually and in print. We were richly rewarded by the guests who did join us and several returned to worship with us on Sunday. It was a pleasure that Heather's son and his wife responded so willingly not only to lend their barbecue but to cook the sausages and onions.

We really hope that we could repeat such a day, inviting the community to join us again. Not just yet!!

Do come up with some different ideas, remembering that we are sharing with the community and not just ourselves. Our concerns, looking forward, are for our recently attractively refurbished church and how it can meet the needs of the community

For the rest of the year:

**Saturday 3rd September** at 3.00pm Strawberry tea in the garden  
(hall if wet)

### Sunday 6th November

Following a snack lunch Sue Weightman will be speaking about her work at the Taunton Food Bank. Sue's talk will be informative and give us an insight into what is happening in Taunton amongst many with rising needs.

**Sunday 4th December** Pub Lunch (Ideas welcomed)

*Janet and Sheila*

## Our Ukrainian family

The Baryk family, (from right to left in the photo opposite) Mum Svitlana and daughters Antonina (16) and Daryna (14), live in the city of Kolomyia which is in the south of Ukraine. Kolomyia lies 125 miles south of Lviv and 320 miles south-west of the capital Kyiv.



The family is waiting for their visas to be issued; the original applications were submitted on 8th June. Current updates are that Daryna's visa has been issued but we still wait for Mum's and Antonina's to be approved,

The issuing of visas and permission to travel has become a bit of a lottery with some applications taking three to four weeks and others up to three months. It would seem that the Baryk families' applications have fallen into the latter category!

Realistically the Baryk family will probably arrive in mid August.

Finding suitable accommodation has been challenging but in this last week, mid July, more positive offers have come through. The majority of accommodation available will be unfurnished so if anyone can offer any of the items below, I would be extremely grateful.



The plan is of course to complete furnishing the accommodation prior to the Baryk family arriving.

The main items required are:

- Beds: two single beds; one double bed. Bedding for both.
- Bedside tables. Bedside lamps.
- Living room furniture. Table lamps.
- Kitchen utensils. Cooking equipment.
- TV and radio.
- Ornaments to brighten up the accommodation.
- Any other items you feel may help.

Please do not worry if you cannot help with items on the list. Your prayers for their safe arrival would be very much appreciated.

I already have some items and others were offered some time ago but may not still be available.

*Frank Callanan*

Map by Yakiv Gluck reproduced under licence from  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=65872124>

There are suggested prayers for refugees on page 24 in the Commitment for Life section.

## Blessing For A New Home

May this house shelter your life.  
When you come in home here,  
May all the weight of the world  
Fall from your shoulders.

May your heart be tranquil here,  
Blessed by peace the world cannot give.

May this home be a lucky place,  
Where the graces your life desires  
Always find the pathway to your door.

May nothing destructive  
Ever cross your threshold.

May this be a safe place  
Full of understanding and acceptance,  
Where you can be as you are,  
Without the need of a mask  
Of pretence of image.

May this home be a place of discovery.  
Where the possibilities that sleep  
In the clay of your soul can emerge  
To deepen and refine your vision  
For all that is yet to come to birth.

May it be a house of courage,  
Where healing and growth are loved,  
Where dignity and forgiveness prevail;  
A home where patience of spirit is prized,  
And the sight of the destination is never lost  
Though the journey be difficult and slow.  
May there be great delight around this hearth.  
May it be a house of welcome  
For the broken and diminished.

May you have the eyes to see  
That no visitor arrives without a gift  
And no guest leaves without a blessing.

From *To Bless The Space Between Us* by John O'Donohue.

## Church Open Day



Food there was a-plenty,  
with a barbecue and cakes.

Above: The history of the URC was  
set out in this jubilee display.

Below: A video recording of the  
inauguration service of the United  
Reformed Church played on a large  
screen. Can you spot Phillip Jones?

Ted took an  
interest in any  
crumbs that  
were dropped.



The Daniel Pogorelski quartet  
played jazz



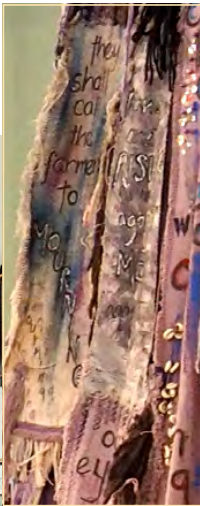


# Gethsemane Garments

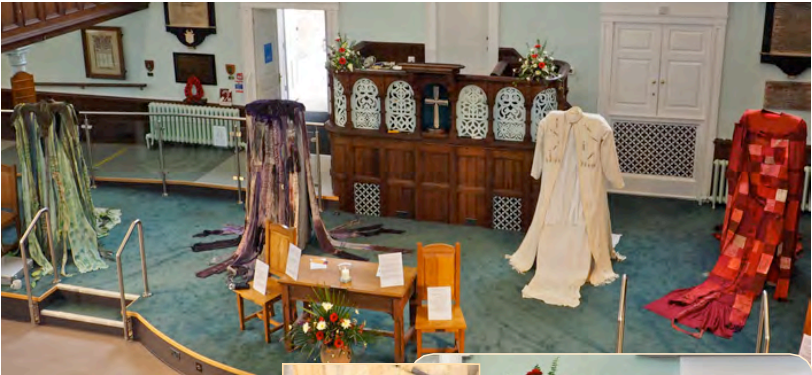
Here are photographs of the textiles loaned to the church for the Open Day. They are set out in the order that Clare Callanan refers to them in the accompanying article on page 18.



Inset: detail of purple garment



Close-up showing intentional tears in the red garment.



Note the nails stitched into the white garment.



Photos by Sheena Helliard and the editor

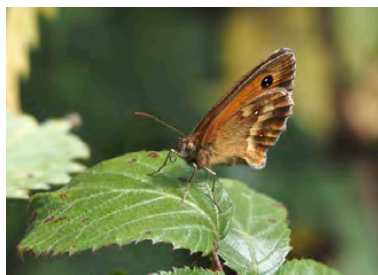
## Home and Away



Above Dunkeswell aerodrome



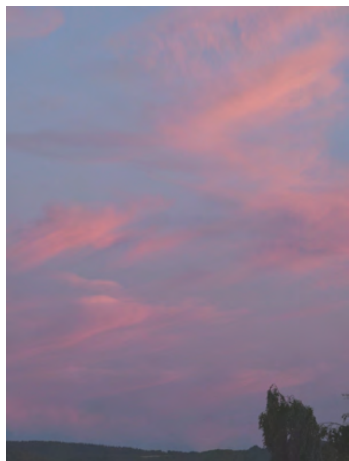
White Stork nest at the Knepp Estate in Sussex



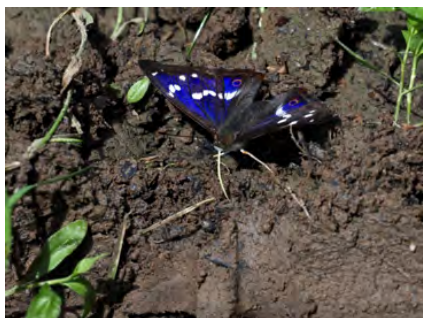
There's still time to participate in the Big Butterfly Count (ends 7th August)



The Sir David Attenborough research/survey ship, following a refit, seen off the Suffolk coast



Rare Purple Emperor butterfly at Knepp



## Campaign for the Real Living Wage

Do you - or someone you know - give or receive care?

Do you work in the care sector - or are you a carer?

Are you paid a salary below the Real Living Wage £9.90/hr?

If so, you are invited to come to

## The Real Living Wage COFFEE MORNING

**THURSDAY 25th AUGUST, from  
10.30am**

**ROWBARTON CHURCH HALL,  
Greenway Road, Taunton, TA2 6LA**

**Plenty of cake and good conversation!  
Children welcome**



- Meet members of Citizens Somerset,
- share your story with others who are experiencing similar issues
- struggling on a salary below the RLW,
- and who are committed to making a change

## Gethsemane Garments

These four imposing pieces of textile art, on loan from the Westhill Endowment Trust, were created by the Reverend Peter Privett, a self taught textile artist. (<https://www.westhillendowment.org>)

See pages 14 for photographs of these.

The RED garment shows PAIN, and is made of cotton, silk, beads and gold paint. Different fabrics pull against each other revealing splits, gashes, and wounds like mouths crying out in pain. The pain of hunger, exile, exploitation has dire consequences for all of us. But it is not only human society which disintegrates in pain - the earth itself feels the weight of our actions. Indeed, the whole of the created order is affected.

Where can we see these rips and pain in our world, in our country and in our community today? How do we express our pain today? Why is it important to tell our stories? How far do we see our stories entwined with God's story? Sometimes there are those who can't, or don't feel able to, speak out. This can be because of personal or national situations, perhaps because fear and danger. What is our personal and community responsibility in this?

The PURPLE garment shows SUFFERING. Made with ripped linen, cotton and muslin, there are also beads, bones and shells. This garment reveals the feelings and emotions as suffering is experienced; life is shredded. Many of the difficult and hard quotes are from the psalms and the prophets. The culture of people ripping garments as signs of sorrow, repentance, shame or despair is not only an emotional or spiritual one, as the body is also affected.

Are there times we have felt shredded or broken; perhaps we've felt damaged, a failure, useless, unbeautiful ... perhaps unworthy? How can we see beauty coming out of brokenness and damage? How far could the shredding really be part of our own making? Uncomfortable emotions are expressed with suffering. How can we safely express these uncomfortable emotions? What are we clothed with?

When others are suffering what can we do to help? We often talk about 'being there' for someone. What does that actually mean? If someone is 'there' for you what does that look like practically, what does it express? Safety? Acceptance?

The GREEN garment shows HOPE. The artist used recycled clothes, curtains, string, and hand printed leaf prints. Promises and hope for renewal can be explored; the texts are sometimes hidden, and you have to search for them. Hope does not stand apart from the others. Hope does not deny pain and suffering, but it recognises and accepts it, and we wait for those green shoots of hope.

Can you recall moments when you have witnessed those first green shoots in your life after a difficult time?

What are the signs of hope we look for? Sometimes it can just be that you found the energy to get out of bed that day. Maybe it's in a smile, a motivation, perhaps it's making a decision that has been hanging over us. Maybe we may be able to re-assemble ourselves following the brokenness.

Can we think of experiences where in the process of reassembling yourself you recognise a new, richer, fuller self? Does the green garment show us any of the 'new thing' - the richer, fuller, perhaps wiser self? The new self that has the experience and empathy to offer others who are hurting.

The WHITE garment shows RESURRECTION and RENEWAL. It is made like a coat from strips of white high quality linen. With its scarf of nails we recognise that there is no cheap resurrection. Yet the joy of resurrection is not in spite of the suffering - it is because of it. A space is created inside the garment with its front opening...a tomb...a womb...waiting to receive. It speaks of hospitality, an ability to use our experiences to offer understanding and safety to others.

If this white garment expresses Jesus embracing all of our experiences of pain and suffering and hope, how does this make us feel? Safe, forgiven, clean, accepted, held, loved? The scarf of nails represents being wounded and the artist says "it's being wounded that creates the new thing". The opening offers hospitality...extravagant hospitality, which keeps opening and welcoming.

Can sharing our stories in the right places, with the right people, at the right time, offer them hospitality? Yes, certainly with tea and cake, but also with the hospitality of a safe space, of a listener who has empathy, of a listener who is honest, a listener who admits to being imperfect, a listener who has found hope and meaning not in spite of, but often because of the things they have been through and are going through.

Can we ask for new opportunities to connect with others, and to share God's hope, renewal, and hospitality with them?



## Taunton Foodbank

The food bank, which this church had a vital role in helping to set up, is now ten years old. What might not have been foreseen in 2012 is that the need for it is greater than ever.

Over 90% of the food distributed by food-banks in The Trussell Trust network is donated by the public - that's why your food donations are absolutely vital to our ability to give everyone referred to us a balanced and nutritious three day supply of food.

### Food donation points: Urgently needed food items

(correct at going to print)

The warehouse is open for donations on weekday mornings between 0900-1200. You can leave your donations on the ledge outside the warehouse door where our small band of volunteers will be working.

A list of other points, probably including you local supermarket, is available at <https://taunton.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

- PRIORITY ITEM - Tinned Rice Pudding
- UHT whole and semi skimmed Milk
- Instant Hot Chocolate tubs (to make with hot water)
- Tinned Ham
- Tinned Fruit
- Savoury Snacks e.g. protein bars, cereal bars
- Sponge Puddings
- Long life Fruit Juice
- Nappies (Size 5 and 6 only please)

### The wider picture

Taunton is one of more than 1,400 food bank centres in the UK supported by the Trussell Trust. (By comparison McDonalds has about 1,300 branches.) In addition, many other food banks exist: the Independent Food Bank Network (IFAN) has identified at least 1,172 of these; FareShare, which operates in a different way, distributes to over 170 organisations in the south-west alone, including the House of St Martin.

The Trussell Trust reports a 81% increase of in demand in the last five years. Recently, many of its food banks, including Taunton, have changed their policy of providing only 3-day food parcels to deliver 7-day parcels to some. This has been to improve operational efficiency. So the amount of food given has seen a greater increase.

## Thanks from URC treasurers

The Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer of the United Reformed Church, have again written on behalf of the URC Finance Committee thanking churches for their contributions to the Ministry And Mission (M&M) Fund. This is an edited version.

Financially, things were extremely tough for churches in 2021.

If this had been replicated in giving to the M&M Fund in 2021, we might have been faced with a serious financial crisis last year.

But no, through the generosity of individuals, churches and Synods, we can report that income only fell by 4.4%. With a similar reduction in expenditure the M&M Fund result was a deficit of only £80,000 (less than one-half of one percent of income), a deficit that can be comfortably covered by reserves.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2021 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

With churches and individuals under financial pressure, 2022 is not going to be an easy year either. The M&M Fund budgeted income (based on Synods' projections) will not be sufficient to cover expected costs and we are reconciled to dipping into our reserves more seriously as a result.

However, if we "ordinary Christians" are to fulfil the call of Jesus to be His witnesses in the world around us we need ministers and other workers "on the ground" and we need shared resources which are often best created centrally. That all comes from the M&M Fund.

### MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Contributions for the September 2022 magazine should be with the Editor

Peter Henderson - 14 Somerset Avenue, Taunton, TA1 5HU

Telephone: 01823 254668 - e-mail: [tauntonurc.mag@gmail.com](mailto:tauntonurc.mag@gmail.com)  
by MONDAY 15th AUGUST 2022 (or earlier) please.

The theme will be: **Sustainability** - stewardship of Earth, our home

# Coming Home

My first home was my mother’s womb, as it is for all of us. A warm, fluid, safe place from which we emerge into a whole new environment, surrounded by overwhelming stimuli. For my first three months after birth, my home was that of my grandparents in Melksham, Wiltshire. From there I went to Nigeria, and thus began my rather peripatetic life. I have tried to add up different homes through different stages of my life, but it was hard, and I’m sure I have missed some!

Early years to college: 2 houses in Lagos plus 3 rented houses home on leave, Sanderstead (London), Northwich (Cheshire), Parkstone, (Hampshire) Ringwood (New Forest), Edinburgh.

College and Bristol: 5 houses or flats.

Early marriage and with young children: 1 house in Faringdon (Oxfordshire), 2 in Germany (Goch and Wildenrath)

Army Chaplaincy and later: 5 houses (Paderborn, Cyprus, Gutersloh, Blandford) and Hove).

Currently: Creech St Michael.

That is approximately 20 locations. Consequently, I do not feel that I have roots anywhere and that has been interesting to reflect on since my retirement as I realised that ‘returning to my roots’ as part of reframing my identity was not an option. For many, this mobility has become part of the natural course of a life. It’s not necessarily a bad thing. But in spite of everything, on some level we do recognise the importance of place. The first thing we ask someone when we meet them, after their name, is where they are from, or the much more interestingly-phrased “where’s home for you?”

Coming home - and really knowing I am there - is also about the memories of my senses: familiar sights and sounds, scents and tastes, and of course touch, like the feeling of the sheets on ‘my’ bed. This was brought home to me when I was serving in Afghanistan. I was frequently visiting forward bases and staying at them up to a week at a time. The helicopter flight back to Bastion was invariably at night due to security, and the overwhelming feeling when the lights of Bastion lit up the sky as we flew closer was always a deep sense of ‘coming home’... the daily rhythms, all things familiar that had become the essence of my ‘normal’ in those six months.

So what does coming home really mean?

It’s a feeling that’s hard to describe... a collection of things, tangible and intangible, that feed your soul. It’s that sense of calm and peace, that the world is ‘right’ as you step through the doorway. It’s that feeling of comfort, like a favourite pair of shoes. It’s where nothing needs to be said, no-one needs to be there, but you know you’ve just been greeted by your best friend. It’s that one place in the universe where you can just be ‘you’, surrounded by the things you love, the memories you have, and where the people you care about are allowed ‘in’. At the heart of it, coming home is where you can be most vulnerable because you feel safe, and all your senses are fed.

In his poem, *Blessing for a New Home*, John O’Donohue writes it beautifully...

May this house shelter your life.  
When you come in home here,  
May all the weight of the world  
Fall from your shoulders.

Clare Callanan

Q U O T E	<p>Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.</p> <p><i>Jesus, as reported in Matthew 8:20 and Luke 9:58</i></p>
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Q U O T E	<p>Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.</p> <p><i>Jesus, as reported in John 14:23</i></p>
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# Commitment for Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Helping United Reformed Churches work for a fairer world and for peace with justice, recognising that change and response starts with each one of us.

Envelopes for your donations and Information Leaflets are available in the Dora Cox Room. Please feel free to put in what you can, when you can, no amount is too small.

*Revd Dr Kevin Snyman - Commitment for Life Programme Officer,  
Suzanne Pearson - Commitment for Life Administrative Assistant*

## Moving Stories

*News from our Partners around the World*

### Reflection on refugees

Amnesty International reports that in 2019, more than two-thirds of all refugees came from just five countries: Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

Syria has been the main country of origin for refugees since 2014 and at the end of 2019, there were 6.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by 126 countries worldwide.

In 2019, only half a per cent of the world's refugees were resettled. Over the past decade, just over 1 million refugees were resettled, compared to 3.9 million refugees who returned to their country.

Wealthier countries aren't doing nearly enough to share the cost of

protecting people who have left everything behind. Appeals for humanitarian assistance for refugees are consistently - and often severely - underfunded.

In short, the world urgently needs a new, global plan based on genuine international cooperation and a meaningful and fair sharing of responsibilities.

#### Prayer for Refugees

Lord of the journey, we ask for your protection on all who have fled their homes.

Give them strength on their journeys and grant that they may find places of compassion at which to rest.

Ease their fear as they throw in their lot with strangers and keep alive their vision of finding a secure and welcoming home. Amen.

## News from Bangladesh

### 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!' THE ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS

To mark World Refugee Day tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh staged demonstrations (the Bari Cholo' or 'Let's go home' campaign) to demand repatriation back to Myanmar. Most have had to flee a brutal military crackdown in Myanmar. People came out despite a ban on rallies since 2019.

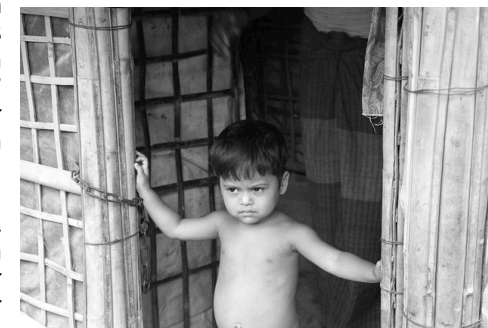
Almost a million Rohingya are confined to bamboo and tarpaulin shacks in thirty-four unsanitary, inadequate camps. They have no work, poor sanitation, and little access to education.

"We don't want to stay in the camps. Being refugees is not easy. It's hell. Enough is enough. Let's go home," Rohingya community leader Sayed Ullah said in a speech at one rally.

More than 890,000 Rohingya refugees are sheltering in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar region, the biggest cluster of refugee camps in the world.

About 92,000 Rohingya refugees reside in Thailand, 21,000 in India, and 102,000 in Malaysia. The Rohingya also make up a portion of Myanmar's 576,000 internally displaced people.

Please pray for an end to the brutal suppression of the Rohingya people so that a speedy and safe return of refugees might be possible. Thank you for your continued support through Commitment for Life for the work of our partners in the region.



Zimbabwe

THE ZIMABWEAN REFUGEE CRISIS      harassment from locals.

There are almost 3.4 Zimbabwean refugees, roughly a quarter of the population. Most have gone to South Africa and Australia, with over 400 000 now living in the UK. Zimbabweans leave their homes because of poverty, climate change, and repressive government policies.

South Africa deports many of those who cross the border - over 14 000 every week. Most Zimbabweans crossing at Beit Bridge are turned back. Some attempt to swim across the Limpopo and are attacked or killed by crocodiles and hippos.

Many Zimbabweans seeking refuge in South Africa are children. They are vulnerable to abuse and sex trafficking. The large number of refugees has contributed to xenophobic attacks and



Much of Zimbabwe is financed by money being sent back by refugees to family members, who use the money to pay for groceries and school fees.

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The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees.

*Psalm 104:16-17*

ROTAS FOR AUGUST

CHURCH FLOWERS

*Unless otherwise stated flowers are arranged by Sheila Woolvin and Pam Elliott*

- 7 Aug Pamela Bamber
- 14 Aug Sheila Rudofsky
- 21 Aug -
- 28 Aug -

MORNING COFFEE ROTA

- 7 Aug Chris Trott & Sheila Rudofsky
- 14 Aug Heather Parsons & Isobel Tosh-Robb
- 21 Aug Pamela Bamber & Carol Rowswell
- 28 Aug Pamela & Alan Bamber

Sunday duties

using information at the time of print

	Duty Elder	Communion Elders		Zoom host
7 Aug	Three Churches United Service at Temple			
14 Aug	Stuart	Sue	Meg	Ron
21 Aug	Eryl			Peter
28 Aug	Sue			Frank
4 Sept	Meg	Stuart	Sheena	Ron

## OFFICE HOLDERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF TAUNTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Car-Park..... Eryl Harris  
 Christian Aid..... Sheila Rudofsky  
 Church Heating ..... Church Administrator (see page 1)  
 Church Secretary..... Sue Ingham (07818 637155)  
 Commitment for Life Contact..... Sue Ingham  
 FINANCE - Treasurer..... Eryl Harris  
 FINANCE - Covenant Collections..... Paula Powell  
 Flowers ..... Pam Elliott, Sheila Woolvin  
 Letting Secretary ..... Church Administrator (see page 1)  
 Magazine Distributor ..... Dawn Wright (01823 331800)  
 Magazine Editor..... Peter Henderson (01823 254668)  
 Prayer Handbook.....  
 Property ..... Stuart Trott  
 Pulpit Supply ..... Church Administrator (see page 1)  
 Reform Magazine ..... Pamela Bamber  
 Social and Arts Group ..... Janet Sowerbutts, Sheila Rudofsky (01823 617411)  
 Sound ..... Frank Callanan  
 Sunday Coffee Organiser ..... Pamela Bamber  
 Sunday News-Sheet ..... the Church Secretary  
 Synod Representative ..... Sue Ingham  
 World Day of Prayer .....

### SERVING ELDERS

<b>Sue Ingham</b> <i>Secretary</i> 07818 637155	<b>Meg Cardy</b> 01823 443245	<b>Frank Callanan</b> 07789 071935
<b>Sheena Helliard</b> 01823 333382	<b>Stuart Trott</b> 01823 281551	

## Taunton United Reformed Church

### Vision Statement

**For the sake of the Gospel, we will be:**

- ✦ **a church that welcomes, whoever you are**
- ✦ **a church that cares and responds with action**
- ✦ **a church that works with others and plays its part in the community**
- ✦ **a church that knows and shares the love of God**
- ✦ **a church that is growing in faith and knowledge of God**
- ✦ **a church full of hope and joy**