

Central United Reformed Church Hove



Good Newsletter

14th February 2021

Volume 2 Issue 1

One in a million shot ... A smile from Heaven...



February + March 2021

It happens once every 823 years....

This coming February will never come again in your life. Because this year February has 4 Sundays, 4 Mondays, 4 Tuesdays, 4 Wednesdays, 4 Thursdays, 4 Fridays and 4 Saturdays. It happens once every 823 years.

FEBRUARY 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

CENTRAL FINANCIAL UPDATE

After probably a year without 'normal service' and any update in church meetings, we wanted to give you an update, and reassurance, of Central's financial position.

We have completed the accounts for the year to December 2020 and they are in for inspection. We are in a good financial position, despite covid and being closed for 33 weeks in 2020 as a result. We ended the year with £35.5K of reserves, a reduction of £9.9K in the year. In 2020 we did spend £10.3K on refurbishing the Fellowship Room ceiling, carpets and lighting (it looks fabulous!) but underlying we managed the reduction in income (especially letting income) by agreeing with the Synod to reduce our M&M contribution. We also saw a big switch from free will offering envelopes to bank standing orders/transfers from members and friends which was incredibly helpful and essentially maintained your giving near 2019 levels.

Thank you for your support, I hope the brief summary above is helpful and reassuring, but do contact me if you have any questions prior to the fuller report being issued in due course.

Chris Hill, Treasurer



Dear Friends,

Have you seen your first snowdrops yet? I saw a beautiful array of them in a garden very close to where I live. I have also seen spring bushes and trees beginning their burst into life. Spring is coming. That means we have much to look forward to! My conversations with people have opened my eyes to the value of tiny things that have the effect of lifting our spirits, especially in nature. Like the snowdrops, they are found in surprising places and the treasure they bring is so good for us.

*"God's splendour' is a tale that is told, his testament is written In the stars. Space Itself speaks his story every day through the marvels of the heavens. His truth is on tour in the starry vault of the sky. Showing his skill in creation's craftsmanship. ² Each day gushes out its message to the next, night with night whispering its knowledge to all. ³ Without a sound, without a word, without a voice being heard, ⁴ Yet **all** the world can see its story. Everywhere its gospel Is clearly read so all may know." Psalm 19 v 1 - 4 (The Passion Translation)*

Doesn't that fill you with a sense of awe at God's creative abilities and bring a sense of warmth to your heart. When we see creation around us, we can feel intimately connected to it, in unexpected ways. Sometimes, what we experience takes our breath away. For us in lockdown, God is still working, and revealing himself in the Spring, which we are waiting to experience again. We know; roughly; what to expect but every year is different even in our own gardens or local parks. The spring flowers, especially daffodils and tulips seem full of sunshine and energy as they sway in the breeze. Their freedom of movement can encourage us to be free, to be open to the wonder of the springtime. You may have your favourite spring flower; I love daffodils because although they are in a group of bulbs there is the reassurance and confidence of each individual flower to make us smile and bring us joy.

In our front garden we have a tree and around the tree are bulbs that Celia Elliot planted when she lived at the Manse at Goldstone Crescent. She was given the bulbs by her friend, Ann. Both these ladies have died in the last few weeks but the legacy of bulbs will be shared for years to come. We never know what small act of kindness might give a sign of joy to others, in the journey of life.

I pray for you and your families to be safe and well and hope that if you are hoping for the vaccine, that you will have the two doses and give thanks to God for your health and the wonderful spring to enjoy.

Sue X



FAMILY NEWS FROM CENTRAL

The past two months have been dark and difficult for many and here, in Central, we, too, have suffered our share of loss, bereavement and anxiety with the deaths of four of our long-standing and beloved friends: Celia Elliott on 15th December, Ruth Scott, on 20th December, Ann Beach on 22nd December and Tebello Sibanda on 27th December – and none from the corona virus.



Celia Elliott made it clear, even before she and Peter moved to Central that she was NOT the minister's wife – an appendage, a two-for-the-price-of-one. She was Celia, who had married a deck chair attendant cum bus conductor cum teacher cum, eventually, a minister, but someone who was a person in her own right and a very active member of Central URC and a helpmate to Peter – a team. Celia loved to live life fully. She travelled widely from Iceland to Australia, not forgetting her beloved Samoa; walked or cycled great lengths of Britain and enjoyed driving fearlessly anywhere and everywhere – a journey to France was like a trip to the supermarket. She embraced each new adventure in her life fully, whether it was teaching people how to use their new electric ovens, boarding and training girls in Samoa, teaching domestic skills and cookery to girls in Borstal or letting halls in Central.

Celia had a great capacity for love and friendship from which we all benefited. She was hospitable and would help anyone she could, sometimes opening her home to help someone convalesce, always happy to entertain and the kettle was always on. Coffee, cake and a chat with laughter and warmth, lipstick, rings, bric-a-brac, dogs, but above all Love.

Ruth Scott was, by her own family's description, an eccentric enthusiast. She had wanted to become a doctor but eventually followed in her father's footsteps and became a pharmacist, which she loved and which also led her to Brighton where she was sent by the War Office to work in Brighton General Hospital. This, in turn, led her to Hove, where she started attending Cliftonville Congregational Church, where she met and married Tony Scott. Both she and Tony had a strong faith, which was the framework of their life together as they read The Bible together every morning. She was very active enjoying drama, cycling, badminton, table tennis, which perhaps explains her svelte figure, which led in her fifties to a new career in films and as a model.



Whilst the chemical formulae of pharmacy came easily to Ruth, the intricacies of recipes and cooking did not, which, perhaps explains why her daughter, Keren, studied the culinary arts as a means of family survival. Nevertheless a favourite memory of Ruth in her later years is of her sitting at Keren's dining table dunking Viennese fingers in chocolate, for sale at a church fair. Always interested and cheerful, despite her deteriorating health and memory loss, she discovered in her care home a new joy in life – having her finger nails painted. She was "living it up", almost to the end, which to Ruth was a new beginning.

Ann Beach was an elegant, gracious and faithful member of Central for many years. Regular in attendance every Sunday until her health began to fail and she was in increasing pain, she nevertheless tried to support the church in whatever way she could, whenever she could – behind and in front of a stall and in persuading her neighbours to "contribute" foliage for flower arrangements - and she always took a keen interest in all its activities and its people. She belonged to the Tuesday Fellowship and also attended the Methodist church Guild, as it was just along the road from her home. She had a unique gift for friendship and took pleasure in keeping in touch regularly with people by phone. Ann had many interests but the centre of her life was her family of whom she was so proud and whom she loved so much.





Tebello Sibanda survived her husband Reuben to whom she had been married for 48 years by only a few weeks. Tebello was brave, loving, kind, long suffering, softly spoken, with a warm smile which lit up her eyes until Parkinsons took that light from her. She was a gentle spirit. Born in Zimbabwe where she qualified as a nurse, Tebello moved to Britain where she continued to nurse as well as bring up her family. As a nurse she was highly respected and loved by both her colleague and patients and was affectionately known as Sister T. As a mother/grandmother she was the warm loving centre of the family. Even when struck down by her debilitating illness, she showed amazing resilience and her home was always full of visitors, family and friends. She gave love in abundance and received it back in turn. A faithful Christian, she led her life loving others and the opening hymn of her celebration service “Sing Your Song in Me” explains it all.

Tebello is best summed up by her granddaughter, “I loved granny as much as I love chocolate and I *really* love chocolate.”

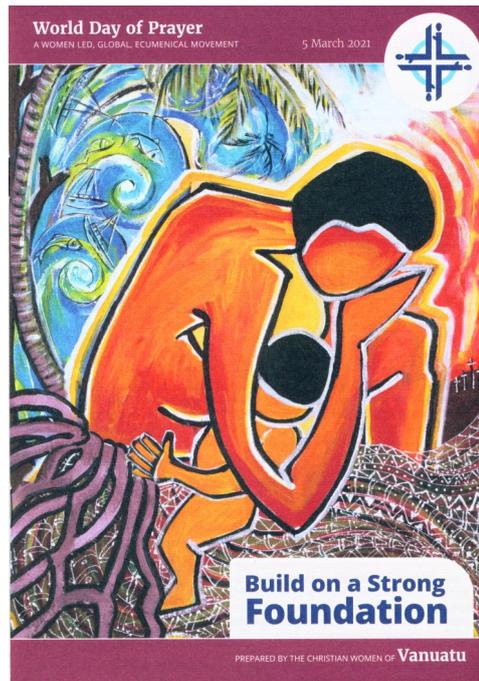
All of these four women: Celia, Ruth, Ann and Tebello were very different and yet very similar. They embraced life with its difficulties and sorrows as well as its joys and beauty; they shared their talents, they had faith and followed its teachings; and above all they had LOVE.

We were blessed to enjoy the friendship and company of each one of them and will miss them very much. They each leave a gap in our fellowship. The greater and deeper loss is, of course, felt by their immediate families and we hope they know that they are surrounded and upheld before God with our love, sympathy and prayers. May He comfort and strengthen them each and every day. God bless.

Fellowship of Prayer:

Wendy Blackburn, Betty Briggs, Mary Cochrane, Peter Elliott, Molly Fraser, Peter Gear, Pam Macaulay, Gift Mubanga, Willi and Agit Ghoshal, Tebello Sibanda, Dorothy Welsh.

The families of Celia Elliott, Ruth Scott, Ann Beach & Tebello Sibanda.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

5TH MARCH 2021

Unfortunately, due to the corona virus pandemic and the restrictions of lockdown, we have had to take the decision to not cancel but postpone the service which would have been held in All Saints Hove on Friday 5th March.

All the representatives are very eager that the service, written by the Christian women of Vanuatu, should be held at a later date, when we can meet safely. No specific date has been decided but some time in June or September or have been suggested.

We appreciate that whenever we hold it that it will not be the same as feeling part of that global tidal wave of prayer on *the Day*, so may I suggest that you can do all or some of the following:

1. STOP. Make time to pray for and with the women of Vanuatu and other churches. The reading on which the service is based is Matthew 7 vv 24-27, a story we have known, loved and sung about since childhood but which, for the people of Vanuatu has a literal and physical meaning as well as the teaching of Jesus.

When you have finished, lift the phone and call a friend who belongs to a different church or denomination. Reach out and build the connection. This replaces the exchanging of pebbles in the service.

2. Watch the video of the worship service led by WDP Vanuatu Committee. The video will be posted on 5th March on WDPICYOUTUBE channel. Visit the WDP website for further information.

3. I have copies of Build on a Strong Foundation Order of Service, which we would have used and would happy send you one. Just phone or email me by 23rd February.

FINALLY may I remind you that the only income WDP has to fund its work is that received from the service offerings on that day. If you would like to make an offering

- a) you can send a cheque to World Day of Prayer, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR
- b) donate on line through the website <http://www.wdp.org.uk>
- c) by text message: text 2021WDP5 to 70085 to donate £5 (you can donate up to £40 this way. Simply change the number at the end.)

Rosemary Brice

A few thoughts on Lockdown!

LOCKDOWN

I'm not too keen on lockdown
 No big fan of staying in
 Much rather get into my car
 And go off for a spin!
 I'd drive up to Portstewart
 And walk along the strand
 Listen to the waves roll in
 Then sit on golden sand.
 My eyes would feast on blue
 The blue of sky and sea
 The music of the lapping waves
 Would soothe and comfort me.

But I am stuck in lockdown
 Can't pop out to the shop
 Someone else must browse the shelves
 Leaving me to wield the mop!
 Can't meet with other people
 Just two who live with me
 I'm missing all the friendly chats
 With those I used to see.
 It feels a bit like prison
 Exercise just once a day
 Orders that we have to keep
 Visitors kept at bay!



But then I think of Noah
 In lockdown on a boat
 Eight people isolated
 Hoping their ark would float.
 Their situation worse than mine
 In lockdown for a year!
 I wonder were there moments
 When their faith gave way to fear?
 When everything they ever knew
 Lay beneath the waters deep
 Their homes, their friends, their way of life
 Did they ever sit and weep?
 They saw, when all was over,
 And the rainbow curved above
 That lockdown was salvation
 An act of heavenly love.

So help me, God in Heaven
 Not to rage or to complain
 Not to see these days of lockdown
 As nothing but a pain.
 Help me see my isolation
 As a gift from God above
 An ark designed to keep me safe
 An act of heavenly love.
 So I will be content to rest
 Live life a different way
 Be grateful that in lockdown
 I have time to read and pray
 And may it draw me closer
 To the One who is my King
 May I see Him ever clearer
 And my praises louder sing.

Gloria Kearney
 Lockdown April 2020

* Portstewart is a small town on the North coast of N. Ireland. Its “strand” is a beautiful 2 mile long sandy beach with the breakers coming in from the North Atlantic.

THANK YOU FROM FRESH START

Hi Adrian

Happy New Year, hoping that you are all well and you had a blessed Christmas. It is always really nice to reconnect in the lead up to Christmas. We so value your connection with Fresh Start.

As the New Year begins, we at Fresh Start reflect on what we accomplished this Christmas through your generosity.

This year we empowered a record number of families, (please see table below) who may otherwise had a vastly different Christmas. Thank you for supporting our Christmas Cheer project.

Thank you personally for donating but please forward our thanks on to Hove URC for their generous gift, we so appreciate your generosity and continued support to this project.

There was a significant number of new families receiving hampers this year as Fresh Start reaches out into other communities. Many families found as they approached Christmas, they were facing the prospect of redundancy or significantly reduced hours of employment. Receiving a hamper had an enormous impact on their lives.

Here are a few of the family's responses.

Family 1

Thank you to everyone at Fresh Start for everything that you have done for me. It has been greatly appreciated and has helped take a HUGE pressure off me.

Family 2

Mum could not stop crying when she saw the food and hadn't at that point seen anything else. She said, 'this has been the worst year ever, thank you ever so much for your kindness, I honestly appreciate it more than you will ever know'.

Family 3

I just want to say thank you it means a lot to receive this help for me and my children Its really appreciated!! It has made my Christmas.

Family 4

My daughter asked for the very gift that was in our hamper thank you so much, I am wrapping all the gifts, so overwhelmed by your help and support. You put in so much to help other people's families we are more than grateful for Fresh Start.

Family 5

"absolutely made my Christmas, I can't believe my luck, this really is my lucky day."

Family 6

Mum was teary and lost for words when she saw the hamper. When she could speak, she said, "this will make so much difference to our Christmas" and she couldn't stop saying thank you.

Family 7

Dad was totally overjoyed, very, very, very happy and said, "is this all for us, really, wow, wow, wow?"

I trust you can see the impact you made on people's lives this Christmas.

As you can see from the table, we were also able to distribute 30 Christmas Dinner hampers, this was made possible due to;

- Organisations/individuals donating financially to Christmas Cheer.
- Asda (Hollingbury Store) donating vegetables, chocolates, mince pies, biscuits and many other food items to complete a Christmas dinner.
- Malpass Butchers allowed us to purchase turkeys at a very reasonable price.

Thank you for making this possible.

Christmas Cheer 2020	Christmas Cheer 2019
101 boxes of gifts	85 boxes of gifts and food
76 Bags of food	
Delivered into 62 homes	Delivered into 55 homes
Directly impacting 235 people	Directly impacting 206 people
30 Christmas Dinner hampers	30 Christmas Dinner hampers

Please take a look at our new website for further information on who we are and what we do.

<https://www.freshstartbrighton.org.uk/>

Regards

Julie

.....
 Julie Warner
 Project Manager
 Tel - 07813258274

Fresh Start Community Centre

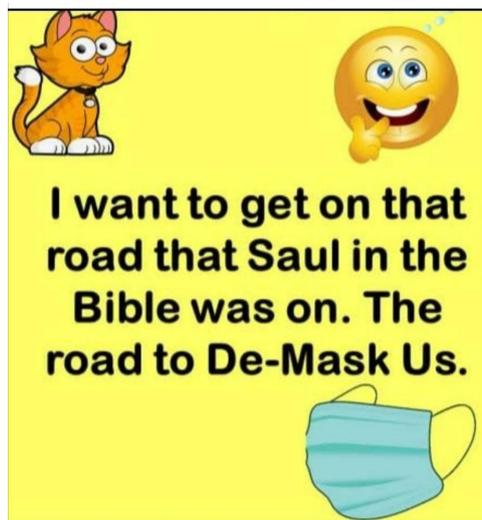
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THINGS CAN ONLY GET BETTER! BURNS NIGHT 25TH JANUARY



THEN: Do you remember back in the day, when, on the Saturday nearest 25th January, Central used to celebrate Burns Night? Then people of all ages and all four UK nationalities joined together to create and hold a Burns Supper. It was an amazing effort. On Thursday bags of potatoes and swedes were distributed to various households so that they could be peeled, chopped, cubed and brought to the church kitchen by 12 noon on Saturday. Saturday morning the New Hall (now the Fellowship Room) was a hive of activity as chairs and tables were erected so 90 people could be squeezed in. The tables were then laid and prepared for the evening. The chef, armed with his tools, secret ingredients and The Timetable would arrive around 1.00 pm to take over the kitchen and everyone left. The kitchen was his. Saturday evening the guests assembled; many of the men, resplendent in their kilts and sporrans, outshining the ladies in the glamour stakes. The ritual of a Burns Night would begin. The Selkirk Grace was recited, the haggis was piped in and addressed then slashed open so that its “warm reekin” contents could be exposed. The menu consisted of Cock a Leekie Soup, Haggis, Neeps and Tatties, trifle (which was later changed to fresh fruit salads), shortbread with tea or coffee. These courses were served most ably and efficiently by the members of the Boys’ and Girls’ Brigades. They were indeed one of the highlights of the evening. The members of Central, who were there, were so proud of and got so much pleasure from meeting and talking to them and visitors were always impressed by their good manners and the fact that they were young people giving up a Saturday evening to help. After the meal the speeches: The Immortal Memory, To the Lassies and, because it was Central, the lassies were allowed to reply To the Laddies. A break so that four teams of six could clear up, wash and dry dishes etc. they were to work for twenty minutes at each task before moving to the next. Then the Ceilidh began. Reels, Strathspeys, demonstrations of Scottish sword dancing. An enjoyable but exhausting evening.

NOW



Some hae meat and canna eat, -- And some wad eat that want it; But we hae meat, and we can eat, Sae let the Lord be thankit. Wee bit aw the Bard. Cheers

BURNS SUPPER in a BAG! Ready meal



10TH BRIGHTON (HOVE) BOYS BRIGADE COMPANY



While current restrictions apply due to the corona virus pandemic, the Company cannot meet for normal sessions; instead they meet online on Mondays, according to their sections. This creates a lot of work, amusement and frustration for the Staff – so nothing new there!

Before Christmas each of the Boys received a small, beautifully wrapped gift delivered to his home by the Staff.

The monthly Church Parade is still taking place via Zoom and the Company would be delighted if you would join them.

Look out for the invitation to the following dates – 22nd February and 22nd March at 7.00 pm.



BB STAFF ZOOMING with Boys at a MONDAY MEETING

This was a favourite recipe of Celia Elliott and her family, so, if you are tired of baking banana bread in lockdown why not try this?

PEANUT COOKIES

- From CELIA'S MUM

INGREDIENTS

4oz margarine or butter!
 4oz sugar!
 1 tablespoon Camp Coffee!
 4oz salted peanuts!
 5oz self-raising flour!

METHOD

Cream together sugar and margarine.
 Add coffee, peanuts and flour.
 Combine altogether.
 Place in small heaps on a greased baking tray - makes about 12.
 Cook for 15mins at 350F or gas mark 4.
 Leave for a couple of minutes on tray to harden.

LET'S PLAY THE GLAD GAME

Remember Pollyanna? The little girl who wanted a doll from the missionary barrel but who got crutches instead. Her father taught her the Glad Game which is basically to look for reasons to be glad or count your blessings no matter how dark the situation or times seem to be. Pollyanna was to be glad she didn't need the crutches.

The past few months in lockdown have been pretty grim at times: separated from family and friends, darks cold days, illness, bereavement, no social life, masks, social distancing, no touching, no singing, the list goes on. One of the saddest things I heard before Christmas was someone saying she just wanted a hug for Christmas. She could cope with everything else.

So between now and Easter let us share our glad moments. Can you please let me have your Glad moment(s) by March 22nd in time for the April-May edition. You can email, phone or post them as and when they happen. By sharing you will encourage others.

Here's some to start: in the Bible God tells us 365 times not to be afraid. Once a day for a year.

"Tomorrow will be a good day," Captain Tom Moore

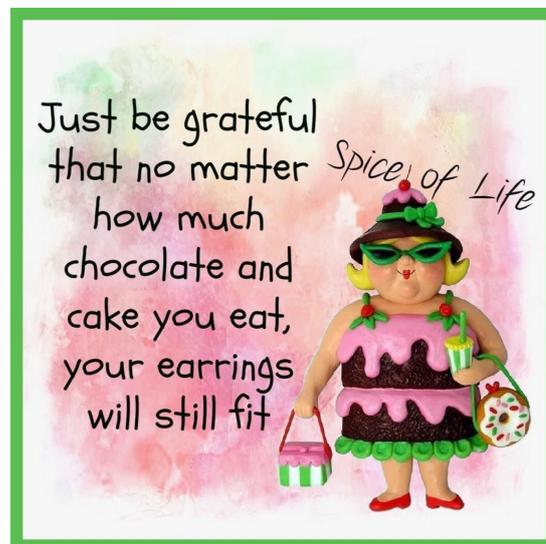
We have the NHS.

The vaccination campaign is meeting its targets

We can always phone a friend

Pancake Tuesday is coming

There's always chocolate....



All contributions to the April- May newsletter should be with the editor by 22nd March. Please send your thoughts, ideas, announcements, plans, photographs, poems to rosemarybrice@yahoo.co.uk