

WARMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

(Methodist/URC)

George Street, Warminster BA12 8QA

Summer - June – August 2020

**“The church is closed”....no “the building is closed”.
We are the church.”**



**“The Church isn’t empty, the church has been
deployed”**

Minister: Rev David Coppard

Tel: 01373858805

email: david.coppard@yahoo.co.uk

Booking/ room hire: 07986491612

Web site www.unitedchurchwarminster.org.uk

A Prayer in Lockdown

The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked. (John 20.19)

Ever present God,
be with us in our isolation,
be close to us in our distancing,
be healing in our sickness,
be joy in our sadness,
be light in our darkness,
be wisdom in our confusion,
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,
that when the doors reopen
we may with the zeal of Pentecost
inhabit our communities
and speak of your goodness
to an emerging world.
For Jesus' sake.
Amen.



CarryTheLight.io

"THE WONDERFUL THING ABOUT PRAYING IS THAT YOU LEAVE A WORLD OF NOT BEING ABLE TO DO SOMETHING, AND ENTER GOD'S REALM WHERE EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

HE SPECIALIZES IN THE IMPOSSIBLE. NOTHING IS TOO GREAT FOR HIS ALMIGHTY POWER. NOTHING IS TOO SMALL FOR HIS LOVE." ~ CORRIE TEN BOOM

Dear Friends,

These thoughts are being compiled on Ascension Day, when we remember Jesus returning to the Father in Heaven. At the end of Matthew's Gospel is the powerful promise of eternal presence which he says just before leaving, "I am with you always even until the end of the age."

In this time of pandemic and lockdown to be reminded of God being with us is important, not least because many are finding it tough, not least the isolation and the way in which the pandemic has so greatly impacted on our day to day lives. Things we once took for granted like being able to meet and greet people, to go on holiday, or on a Sunday to attend church we now realise are all a huge privilege.

We are not only having to adapt to a different lifestyle but also a different way of being church in the here and now and I am so grateful for people's efforts, be that via the Internet or simply phoning a church member. Each of you are playing your part!

Some of you may be aware that I'm currently spending two days a week as a hospital chaplain, primarily working in Intensive Care with patients who are seriously ill with Covid-19. I've been involved with hospital chaplaincy for the past 5 years and Intensive Care has always been a ward I've worked in but now it is very different. We have to wear full PPE - Personal Protective Equipment which is designed to help protect an individual's health. We also wear stickers saying our name and role, that's also important because otherwise you simply are unrecognisable. It is not an easy environment to minister in and I am so hugely grateful for your prayers, thank you.

I take with me prayers and readings in sealed plastic bags, which can be left with the patient or stuck to a wall by the bedside. Recently I took words from Mark's Gospel of Jesus stilling the storm. Sometimes I add a sentence reflection and, on that passage, simply put, "Remember God not only stills the storm but is with us in it." Many of the nursing staff would not call themselves people of faith but they tell me how they read those Biblical passages to the patients we visit. One of them said how they liked the words about Jesus being with us. They might not personally know God but I truly believe God is at work in and through them, likewise with countless others who are doing so much to help so many in this time.

May each of us personally know the truth of Jesus' promise, "I am with you always" May we also seek to demonstrate it in our lives.

David Coppard

When this is over



**May we never again
Take for granted
A handshake with a stranger
Full shelves at the store
Conversations with the neighbours
A crowded theatre
Friday night out
The taste of communion
A routine check-up
The school rush each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself**



**When this ends
May we find
That we have become
More like the people
We wanted to be
We were called to be
We hoped to be
And may we stay
That way – better
For each other
Because of the worst.**

Laura Kelly Fanucci

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**Hello Everyone**, from this strange new world we're living in it's so lovely to learn that many of us can connect via the internet or mobile phone. With a new Whatsapp group looked after by Joan J, a Facebook page administered by Claire and a website managed by John and Rev David providing us all with Worship each Sunday our church is well connected. Although we're taking advantage of technology whilst we are unable to meet in person, it seems that all of us are supporting each other with a phone call and a chat. There may be some friends who are less fortunate who have no-one to do their shopping or collect their medication so please pass on the following information:

Churches Together Helpline 07960 221663

Or

Warminster in Action (WAG) 01985 250081

Warminster Foodbank is operating and available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 until 11am 01985 214463

Or Emergency No 0785 5627945

Should anyone need support the Mental Health Trust has opened a 24 hour Helpline on 03300 303 1320

And Silverline is available 24hours, 7 days a week on 0800 4708090

I recently had a conversation with Roger who now lives in Wilton having moved from his cottage in Heytesbury. He is safe and well and wishes to be remembered to all.

Please remember David, Abi and Ethan in your prayers as well as Cynthia, John and Stella and Betty, Joan in Worthing and Joan in Imber Court and our friend Barbara who moved to Hampshire some years ago. Like all of you, I long for the time when restrictions are lifted and we can gather together again but that could be some while yet. In the meantime, look after yourself and each other, praying for all our safe keeping,

*Marion B*



There will be a continuing need for people to support the work of Churches Together Warminster and Warminster Action Group as well as the Warminster Food Bank and Cornerstone as our community faces the challenges ahead through the tough times of economic changes. Much of our local work relies upon tourism, Longleat and Centre Parks to name just two, and without them there will be many people facing hardship. Giving time is as beneficial as giving financially; sitting at home and chatting to someone on the phone to alleviate their fears and loneliness can make a huge difference.

We all appreciate a phone call from a friend so how about reaching out to someone beyond our immediate circle? If you wish to offer your time, call one of the numbers and ask how you can help.

## JOINING TOGETHER – APART

### SUNDAY MORNINGS :

10.30 a.m. **An on line service via Zoom** – led by either Rev David Coppard or Rev Heather Morgan. Contact Paula Johnson [pjmjack1017@gmail.com](mailto:pjmjack1017@gmail.com) for details of how to join in this service. If you could download the zoom app on your device and then send her your email details , she can include them in the distribution of the order of service and the invitation to the service.

9 – 10 a.m. “ **Rise and Shine**” with John Alpin and a Sunday service from various Warminster Town churches. Warminster community Radio WCRFM 105.5FM , or on internet from Web site home page.( be sure to search for Warminster as Wolverhampton comes up first on Google and has same identity and frequency!)

**Wednesday evening 7 p.m. – A Bible Study via Zoom** – contact Marion Hornby for details [marionhornby@gmail.com](mailto:marionhornby@gmail.com)



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

**Rev David Coppard is producing a weekly service sheet** , which hopefully your have been receiving, for private use in your home. If you have not been receiving this please contact Marion Barton. The prayers from this are often used in the Sunday Zoom service.

**Roots**, (the resource material which we usually use with the children and also produces resources for all ages) , are making their Worship at Home resources available to all on their website ( usually it is necessary to pay subscription to access their material )

[www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/adultsathome) or

[www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/familiesathome) - put the date of the Sunday at the end of the web address eg. 17may

**Christian Publishing and Outreach** are producing “Thy Kingdom Come” packs for families, couples and single people , look on their website for details of this and other resources .

[www.cpo.org.uk/products](http://www.cpo.org.uk/products)

Our church now has a **Facebook** page run by Claire Johnson. If you have any difficulty accessing it contact either Claire or Joan J and they can invite you to join.

Our **webpage** is being kept up to date by John Alpin and is a good source of information [www.unitedchurchwarminster.org.uk](http://www.unitedchurchwarminster.org.uk)

We have a **WhatsApp group “ News and Natter”** on mobile phones for informal chat and sharing news – currently 14 participants . If you would like to join this contact Joan Jones on 07986 491612 and give her your mobile phone number. You need to have Whatsapp installed on your phone .

**It is wonderful to know that there are so many ways to stay in touch with people during this time of isolation. But however great the technology, I am left, over these weeks, with the sense that the most wonderful thing is to know that God is with us. Whether we are technologically skilled or not, we can know God’s presence in quiet awareness and gratitude, in reading God’s word, and in prayer. In times of grief or in times of joy God is with us – with or without technology ( Ruth URC Moderator)**

#### **MESSAGE FROM TREASURER**

I am pleased to advise that our finances are looking good. Thanks to everyone for your support, especially those paying by Standing Order, which we are still receiving despite no services. I can inform you that our offerings for the last 3 months are as follows:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>February</b> | <b>£1737.71</b> |
| <b>March</b>    | <b>£1634.00</b> |
| <b>April</b>    | <b>£1420.00</b> |

I look forward to us all meeting together again for a service when we can.  
Blessings to all *Hilary*



## CHRISTIAN AID

We have , so far, sent £360 towards the £600 each church has pledged to raise per year

The Christian Aid website has a variety of ideas for fund raising and has a huge site showing all the hundreds of ways they support the poor in the world, from challenging governments to develop fair trade, to campaigning to support the nations that are unjustly affected by climate change (seeing as the rich nations cause is but the poor nations are suffering) to economic support through training, health etc. Everyone should go onto the site and have a good look at what they are doing.

There will be no Christian Aid coffee morning or other events this year but if anyone wants to send me a cheque (labelled Christian Aid ) I will deposit them via our church's paying-in book and we can keep a record of how much as a whole we have donated.

Thank you *Karen*



**World Vision** is responding to the impact of COVID-19 in more than 70 countries, helping to reach 72 million people of which 36 million are children. Refugees and those displaced from

their homes due to war and conflict are amongst the most vulnerable and 30 million children's lives are at risk from the direct health impacts of the virus. In low income countries, many children are also likely to have serious underlying health conditions such as malaria or malnutrition and lockdown is making it even harder for families to earn an income to feed their children. Despite the scale of the response needed we are not discouraged and two months since our global COVID-19 health response began we thank God that your prayers and donations have helped us initially reach 24 million people. Globally, almost 700,000 people have received information, education, and materials about the Coronavirus. And over 500,000 children have had age-specific health education to help limit the spread of the disease. World Vision has provided food to over 2 million children and their families, and 600,000 families have received cash and voucher assistance to help protect children from malnutrition.

But a pandemic of this scale needs an ongoing global response, ordinary people, making an extraordinary impact. And prayer is at the heart of World Vision's response, so please continue to join us as we pray for children around the world in the days and weeks ahead.

[www.worldvision.org.uk](http://www.worldvision.org.uk)

## **A PRAYER REFLECTION**

**It's difficult to live with uncertainty.  
However bad a situation, knowing what you have to face  
means that you can start coming to terms with it,  
facing your fears, planning your strategy.  
When the 'big picture' is too big or too blurred and indistinct,  
it's easier to focus on small details, to try to control what you can.  
The world has changed, how does that affect our living in the  
meantime?  
How do I need to change? How do I want to change?  
Is it possible to live each day as a new opportunity,  
while knowing that it feels the same as yesterday?  
I need your help, God, to listen for you in the clamour of voices  
calling for my attention,  
to focus on you in the midst of competing priorities, to trust you in  
this time of uncertainty.  
Amen.**

*(From Roots on the  
web resources)*



## **A Vision for the Future**

**A long time ago (or so it seems) there was a Church AGM. At a previous meeting we had been discussing possible alterations to the building, but at this meeting we agreed that the proper way forward was to think about how we might want to use the building, what our mission to the local community and to our members might be and we recognised that once we knew how the church was being called to serve, then the design of the building would follow. We planned to have a Vision Day: a time to reflect, discuss and pray together; to listen to the needs of our members and the local community; to listen, above all, to what God is asking of us.**

**And then one day the world changed and all our plans were put on indefinite hold.**

**Covid19 has changed the way we live and the way we worship.**

**We have found new ways of being together - through phone calls and social media, a weekly service sheet, Zoom meetings for the Church Council and now Zoom services.**

**Some of us are now able to meet outdoors, one-to-one, and we look forward to being able to meet in small groups soon, even though we must be 'socially distanced'.**

**It may be a long time before we can return to meeting as we used to, socially or for worship, so we need to start thinking now about how we 'Are Church'. We can continue with the things we are already doing, and develop new ones from these. Suggestions are being looked at of additional services and Bible study, for example.**

**Using the building will have to be introduced gradually, with appropriate restrictions and procedures in place.**

We all have a part to play, we can all make suggestions and proposals for how we move forward together.

At this stage, the fight against Covid19 is the predominant factor in our planning, but I would ask you to also take time to think and to pray about our longer term development.

Then when we come together as a physically, as well as a spiritually United Church, we will be ready to move forward with whatever God has planned for us.

Keep notes of any thoughts or ideas you have – it is only too easy to forget a good idea! You may want to share them with other members, or pass them on to a Council Member. Or just continue to reflect and pray on your own for the time being. Whatever you do, you will be helping the church on its journey forward.

The following is an extract from the URC's document "Preparing for the 'New Normal'".

I hope you find it helpful.

***For reflection** We are on a journey through a pandemic, not knowing our destination, but aware we follow in a line of saints of old, who have set off before us in the footsteps of Jesus, walking the way. Like those before us, we may travel with faith and doubt, hope and fear, and, perhaps, have a holy encounter along the way. That we travel at all will mean that we are changed. Pilgrimage is about taking and risking such a journey, faith is knowing that we are accompanied by God, hope is in a Kingdom destination, and love may be experienced with companions.*

Stay safe and Dream Big !

*Erica*

Things/questions to start help you thinking and praying post Covid 19....

- Where do we see the role of the United Church in the future of Warminster?
- Are we all-inclusive or selective in the people / groups we support to use our building?
- What types of worship should we offer? On what days of the week?
- Should we be 'traditional' or think outside the box?
- What are our strengths? – what can we do more of together and for others?
- What are our weaknesses? Or limitations?
- What opportunities (for change or continuation of what we do now) are presented by a post Covid 19 lockdown world?
- What threats can we identify which may require us to step out in faith to realise our dreams of hope?

Think. Pray. Dream. Share.

WE are the church.

- Perhaps throughout June you could spend time in personal thought and prayer and discussion with each other
- Then send ideas / thoughts / considerations to Erica ([ericacastle@gmx.com](mailto:ericacastle@gmx.com)) or Paula ([pnjack1017@gmail.com](mailto:pjnjack1017@gmail.com)) or Marion Barton (07851 800509 [barty.warminster@btinternet.com](mailto:barty.warminster@btinternet.com)), or post to church, by Sunday 29th June for us to prayerfully collate and share back to the wider church (you all!) for further consideration.

God bless. *Paula.*

## WHAT NEXT FOR OUR CHURCH

The URC Synod Moderators have produced a booklet 'Ready for the new "normal" a discussion paper for a pandemic recovery and resumption plan'. The booklet is split into three parts; the first offers encouragement to start thinking about the journey ahead, the second deals with practical issues and the third provides some wider questions to think about. Topics such as what activities must resume, what shouldn't, and what things churches and ministers might do differently, are discussed. Dealing with trauma, planning the use of space, what to do to ensure social distancing is maintained for the months to come, and many more topics are also explored. There is no hurry to start changing anything, of course the overall message from the Government is caution as we start to come out of lockdown, and we know that many of our churches are places where vulnerable people meet, but when you are ready to begin thinking, you can access the booklet here <https://urc.org.uk/new-normal.html>

Or on the Synod website here <https://www.urcsouthwest.org.uk/preparing-for-the-new-normal-advice-from-urc-synod-moderators/>

I hope that when the time is right for you to look at this you will find it helpful, though at 24 pages it might feel a bit overwhelming at first glance (which is why we have broken it down a little on the Synod website).

I was recently reading the account of Jesus walking on the water in John chapter 6 (v16 21). I realised I am much more familiar with Matthew's account, where Peter attempts to join Jesus on the water, or Mark's account, where Jesus climbs into the boat and the storm subsides; and of course Mark also tells us the story of Jesus asleep in the boat and woken to still the storm. This account in John chapter 6 feels more like the situation we are in at the moment: the storm is raging and we cannot help feel afraid. We know we need Jesus to help but we might also wonder how that help will come to us. When Jesus appears, walking on the water and speaks to reassure the disciples, they are 'ready to take him on board' and immediately they reach the land they were headed for. They never actually have the absolute reassurance of having Jesus safely inside the boat with them, yet he helps them be where they need to be. This speaks to me of what our readiness for the next phase of church life needs to look like. We cannot be sure what the other shore of the future will look like, and we doubt our ability to get there by our own strength. So, like the first disciples we need to be realistic about the dangers, alert to the presence and power of God in Jesus, and ready to travel forward with Jesus at the heart of what we do. Acting together, we will find ourselves where God needs us to be for the next stage of our journey of discipleship. If it would help to talk through your plans as you 'prepare for the new normal' don't hesitate to contact me, or your Synod Pastoral Advisor. May the close presence of God's love and power strengthen and guide you.

Yours in Christ,

*Ruth Whitehead*

URC Moderator Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Bristol, Swindon, Wiltshire

## ECHO CHURCH AWARD SCHEME

Some good news to share... With all the focus on Coronavirus, it is good to be able to share some progress being made by United Reformed Churches across the South Western Synod. We are delighted to report that 31% of our churches are now registered with the Eco Church Award scheme, seven churches have achieved Silver Awards and six have achieved Bronze Awards. This is encouraging and we look forward to more churches receiving awards; for further advice contact Rob Weston on 01566 784990. Registering with Eco Church only takes a few minutes and Rob can help you with this process, even if you don't have a computer. The Eco Church programme is run by ARocha UK and here are a few words of encouragement from Andy Atkins (CEO of ARocha UK) from his blog: 'Many people are experiencing a sense of neighbourly care and community, that they have not known previously. A generation who have never given a thought to God's book of 'works' in nature, are amazed at the birdsong – now they can hear it above our usual motor traffic. Urban air pollution, which in a normal year kills 40,000 people in the UK alone, has plummeted, making the basic act of breathing much easier for hundreds of thousands of people. While some will say 'this is no time to talk about the environment' others are waking up to its importance for them individually like never before. Scientists too are making the connection between environmental and public health at big picture level: they warn that pandemics, caused by pathogens 'jumping' from animals to humans (believed to be the origin of Covid-19 itself) will increase in frequency if we continue to destroy wild animal habitat.'

May God guide us as we seek to reduce the climate crisis and increase.

*Rob Weston and Chris Baillie – "Green Apostles" for South Western Synod*



Dear All,

The Warminster Action Group, in conjunction with other local voluntary groups, are asking local people to sew colourful bunting. The idea is to get all sections of the Community involved, especially during this lockdown period, thus improving wellbeing and bringing a sense of collective purpose. After lockdown measures have been broadly eased, we wish to display all the bunting in the Town Centre to bring renewed hope, optimism and vibrancy. We are sure local people will wish to try to find their particular bunting, while enjoying the Community cohesion it will generate. We have created a bunting pack, which contains all the materials and instructions; it costs just £4 and supports a local business. If you would like a pack, please contact Nic Noble on 07974 723949.

Or you wish to make your own flags using colourful recycled material. If bias binding tape is needed to connect the flags, this can be purchased from Tracey at Stitches 4 U (High Street) who is contactable via text on 07340 525974. While we are still in lockdown, we would prefer everyone to enjoy the benefits of the bunting at home. After lockdown, we will be contacting everyone with details of a central repository, where it will all be joined together and displayed in the Town Centre.

Thank you so much in advance.

Kind regards

Simon James      Warminster Action Group



The Community Hot Meals service is available for lunchtime deliveries to your home on every day of the year and has been specifically created for older people living in Wiltshire and Swindon. From Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May the service is available to customers living in Warminster, and can be requested for any day. The service delivers meals at lunchtime between about midday and 2pm and the cost for the delivery for a heated main meal and a dessert is £6.50, which is payable in arrears at the end of each month. The service is provided as a welfare service and as such they would need to speak to any potential client to complete a simple assessment process to ensure that it is appropriate.

Telephone: 01380 727 767

Email: [communitymeals@ageukwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:communitymeals@ageukwiltshire.org.uk)

[www.ageukwiltshire.org.uk](http://www.ageukwiltshire.org.uk)

## Arthur John PIMM

Arthur was born on Christmas Eve 1928 in Bethnal Green

He started his National Service in June 1946 (5<sup>th</sup> Regt Royal Horse Artillery) and continued until 23 June 1958 / 12 years total service. His military conduct was recorded as Exemplary and he was described in his record as being a very capable and reliable man, who was loyal, honest and completely trustworthy.

Arthur held a number of jobs including working in Curry's and as a rubber worker at the Avon in Melksham. However, his last job was a total change of direction as a Hospital Porter in Warminster, which progressed to him becoming a nursing auxiliary. This allowed him to show his caring nature, which was acknowledged by the Matron when he retired in 1989. One memory of him from his time at the hospital was taking on the role of Father Christmas every year and handing out presents to patients. He later became re-acquainted with one of his hospital colleagues in 2015, as she was the person who greeted him and showed him around Ashwood Care Centre!

Arthur met his wife, Beryl at her brother Geoff's wedding and went on to marry her on 1 March 1952. They celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in 2012, although by this time, Beryl's health had declined. He was devoted to Beryl and was devastated when she passed away in 2013.

He enjoyed cycling, swimming, music, films, photography, history, steam trains, travel and the church and his family were the main focus in his life: son Keith, daughter Carol and grandchildren Stephen and Sarah .

Arthur moved to Ashwood Care Centre in August 2015, where he enjoyed a new lease of life. His religious beliefs continued to be extremely important to him and he continued to attend church and get fully involved with the Sunday service. He died on 3<sup>rd</sup> March .

Arthur will be remembered as a caring, gentle and loving person, who brought much pleasure to all who knew him. His memory will be cherished always.

## POT LUCK

(contributed by Marion Barton , just for fun! Answers in next Newsletter!)

|                                                                                          |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Which Christmas decoration is a parasite of the apple tree                            |  |
| 2. Who was the comic strip character married to Andy Capp                                |  |
| 3. Which ology is the art of bell ringing                                                |  |
| 4. Which London Borough is the G for GMT                                                 |  |
| 5. What other name for the constellation The Plough is a fairground ride?                |  |
| 6. What is the highest rank in the Royal Navy                                            |  |
| 7. Which King built Windsor Castle                                                       |  |
| 8. What is a group of sparrows called                                                    |  |
| 9. Who invented frozen foods                                                             |  |
| 10 Botulism (food poisoning) comes from the Latin Botulus.....what type of food is this? |  |
| 11. What part of the human body would a phrenologist study?                              |  |
| 12. What savoury ingredient is included in a Sputnik                                     |  |
| 13. Which animals in London are associated with Edwin Landseer                           |  |
| 14. Which British car sold over a1 million models                                        |  |
| 15. Which city had the 1 <sup>st</sup> underground railway                               |  |
| 16. Which city was a Roman fortress called Diva                                          |  |
| 17. As what did Beau Brummell achieve fame                                               |  |
| 18. After what is Fleet Street named                                                     |  |
| 19. Where are the Quantock Hills                                                         |  |
| 20. What was Mozart's middle name                                                        |  |



**As we go on in lockdown there may be some people getting to the end of their personal library - if you have books to swop or lend please let Marion Barton know and she will send out a list to everyone of what's available and who to contact?**

Celebrations of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE day were somewhat quieter than had been anticipated for obvious reasons. Two of our church family here share their childhood memories of VE day – one in the Netherlands and one in Wales. If anyone else has memories they would like to share please let me have them and I will try to include them in our next Newsletter.

(Editor [iantojo@virginmedia.com](mailto:iantojo@virginmedia.com) 07986491612)

**OVER THE HILLS AND O’ER THE MAIN – the story of Dana Butler’s war years in the Hague.**

Dana remembers when German Occupation began on 10 May 1940 when she was 5 years old. Her mother was terrified of the bombing attack on the nearby airport and hid in the lavatory under the stairs. She has many memories of the occupation and her son has written a little book of her memories which makes interesting reading.

The Occupation ended on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1945 when the Hague was liberated by the Canadians. Dana says her Father was drunk for a week! The children were out in the streets all day and the Canadians gave them rides on their motorbikes and their first taste of chewing gum. Food parcels, airlifted from Sweden, came down from the skies like manna from Heaven , after many years of extreme hunger. All manner of foods which the children had never seen before – they didn’t know how to peel a banana! Dana was able to return to school after this and recalls a Jewish girl arriving at the school with a shaven head and the teacher asking them to be kind to her as she had been in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where she had escaped the gas chamber but lost both her parents. Dana took charge of the little girl, whose name was Ruth and they became close friends, and remain so today.

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Heather Morgan and her parents VE Day 9th May 1945

RAISING THE FLAG IN WALES - Evan Jones' memories of VE Day in Tregaron



Evan and family 1945

“My memories of the war are very vague, being only 5 when it ended, but I do recall many American troops arriving in convoy and ‘bivouacking’ in the cattle ‘mart’ grounds in our little Welsh town of Tregaron, also a British aircraft force landing in a field at the edge of town. However I clearly recall the

morning of the 9th May 1945 as if it was yesterday. I was having my breakfast when my uncle, from next door who was also my god father, came in and said , in Welsh, “Come on Evan, we are going up to the church.” This happened ever Sunday as he was the caretaker and bell ringer and I always went with him, but as this was a week day I wondered why we were going. However I followed. Half way to church the local blacksmith ‘Dan Go’ was leaning on the window ledge outside his house enjoying a cup of tea and his pipe. On arrival instead of me getting ready to hand out hymn and prayer books and my uncle to start ringing the bell we climbed the stone steps to the top of the tower. Here he unfurled a flag which he attached to the flag pole and told me to hold the rope and pull it with him. When the flag reached the top and was fixed he turned to me and said that in future I would be able say that I had raised the flag on the church to celebrate the end of the World War. On looking back I can now see the significance of this. In the evening the family including my sister Eleanor were going to the celebrations in the square, but because of the loud fireworks I refused to continue and ‘Mam’ had to take me home. These are the first events in my life that I can put an actual date to.”

A FRIENDLY WELCOME

Our granddaughter Tara and husband Brad are settling into their new life in this country - very different from Durban, South Africa. They are very positive and doing well but we were so pleased to hear that over the VE Day remembrances they went outside with their neighbours and were made so welcome, someone giving them a bunch of flowers. Brad fixed someone's mower for them and they took a neighbour's dog for walk the following day. It can be hard to make friends especially at the moment in a new place. They are so enjoying long walks and the beautiful spring countryside - they live in largish village a few miles from Stafford. Brad has been working all the time so there is a great deal to be thankful for. *Pam and Derrick*