

The Broadsheet

Broadway URC

October/November 2024



To know Jesus better and to make Him better known

YoURChurch

During lockdown, Lawrence Moore (now Lawrence Heath-Moore) and a group of like-minded folk set up the phenomenon that is YoURChurch, and it has gone from strength to strength. At 6:30 on a Sunday evening, I tune into Zoom on my iPad, and join in worship with folk from all over the UK, and some further afield. Kristin (originally from Norway) joins us from Spain, Sarah from Taiwan (at about 2 am local time), and others from elsewhere. We also have occasional joint services with the Church in the Palatinate, which our former Minister, Martin Henninger, helps to organise, and when possible at Christmas we link up with Munther Isaac from the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

There is a different theme for the worship every week, often based on the lectionary readings. Worship is often led by different members of the leadership team, some of whom are ordained ministers, but a diversity of other folk is invited to lead, too. We listen to music – hymns and songs – but because of sound issues over the internet we don't sing aloud together. But we do unmute to share in The Lord's Prayer and the words of The Grace. Usually twice during the service we are 'put into breakout rooms', so that a small group of us can firstly greet each other and then discuss questions posed by the worship leader. We have developed a way of sharing communion on a regular basis, too.

Over the last year, the YoURChurch digital worshipping community has been accepted by General Synod as an individual 'local church' of the URC, and we come under the umbrella of the North Western Synod. Folk have been received into URC membership, and a way has been found for those who wish to remain members of their original URC church but also be members of YoURChurch to do so. Some have become members because they live a long way from a local URC building; one couple in particular have transferred membership from their local church because health issues render them housebound. We are also in the process of nominating the church's first Elders.

Personally, I am finding it very helpful to take part in worship on which I can fully focus, without needing to be getting ready to play the next hymn or piece of music. And it is a real joy to be with so many URC folk who have become friends. Driving across country on a Sunday evening early in September, I was able to listen in to the service as I drove, and I really appreciated the company.

Want to know more? Ask me for the Zoom link, and give it a try!!

Marion

Church Life Review

After an article in Reform Sept 24 Mark has written what he imagines/hopes his future self would be sending back to his current self:

Podcast from 2030 : Brought to you from Broadway URC in Worcestershire.

"It's not about helping Broadway URC to survive. It's all about helping the Kingdom of God to thrive."

When we realised that fact, we were able to start thinking less introvertly and consider the possibilities more expansively.

Then came the hard work. Discerning what God was calling us to do, out of the many options that we'd identified we could do.

Our wake-up call happened when the September 2024 edition of Reform hit the doormats. Looking back, it's obvious that we were ideally positioned to do more to help grow the Kingdom of God. We'd managed to convince ourselves we should be disheartened.

Times were hard, we were operating at a deficit, we hadn't got the people or the energy anymore, we'd stopped all of our work with children and young people, our ministry in local schools was lost when we stopped doing Open the Book, no one wanted to be an Elder, we hadn't got a part-time minister to ourselves anymore, URC churches were shrinking and closing all around us, for that matter all Christian denominations were in trouble, and we were on our own, West Midlands Synod was a burden not an asset. Or so we thought.

We were in the process of coming to know our new minister and our sister churches in the newly formed North Cotswolds Pastorate. Synod had broken boundaries when they listened to our suggestion that, as a rural church down south in Worcestershire, joining forces with four churches in Gloucestershire was a better fit for us. They were right.

Some of our congregation attended the Stepwise taster at St Andrews and some attended the Lead Your Church into Growth taster session in our hall. As did members of the other churches in the new pastorate. What an eye-opener.

It was humbling. They congratulated us on our well-equipped, right-sized, well-kept facilities, on our church garden and artwork, on the number in our congregation, on the fact that our congregation hadn't reduced over the last 10 years, on the number of different outreach groups and the number of participants, on how long these groups had been running, on our peace card for visitors, and our flier about what we do and why, and on our financial health, particularly our large reserves of money. And that was before the session had even started.

We Prayed. We realised the value of the process that LYCIG provided in helping a church, as a whole, to have informed discussion, to prioritise, to plan, to review and, to adjust plans. Stepwise showed us the value of discipleship development sessions. We engaged with the Church Life Review and West Midlands Synod. And this is what happened.

Mark

Following on from the session on LYCIG run by the Rev Ashley Evans at our church in August, two church members have asked to attend the next stage in November.

LYCIG for those who have forgotten is Leading Your Church Into Growth.

Butterfly Count



Thought you might like to know... Great to see the garden flourishing

One of our church objectives when we embarked on the regeneration of the garden was to increase plant biodiversity and encourage insect life.

This year I counted 9 butterflies at one time.

This is up on last year bucking the UK trend although I guess we are a "start up" so the base was maybe low until the plants were more established?

With 2 brimstone and a tortoiseshell adding to the large whites and small whites and coppers it was a pleasure to wander round for a while.

Exploding the myth of men being unable to multitask

I also noticed a good number of bees spread around including on the spear thistle which was a bit of a surprise and three were hunting round the holes on the hotels which I found interesting. No tree bee this year though.

So lots to be grateful for as we seek to help regenerate God's creation. Mark

Christmas Tree Festival



At the September church meeting we agreed to hold a festival of trees inside the church this year after an offer of trees from the Fosseyway Garden Centre. There will be 9 trees for invited groups to decorate, a main central tree, prayer tree and 2 outside the doors which we will decorate. The church will be open for the public to view on the evenings of Friday 29th November and 6th

December to coincide with late night shopping. Stewards will be required and if there are sufficient we may open on the Saturday mornings so please try to keep one of these dates free.

News from Signpost

This year Signpost is celebrating 25 years of service to Broadway and the surrounding area. To remind you of what is available at various times at the Signpost Office: training courses for CPR and First Aid, a Relate Counsellor, Citizens Advice, a Dementia advisor plus of course our help and information service open on Tuesday – Thursday between 10 – 1pm. We aim to help find a solution to any problem by signposting clients to the appropriate service.

We can help with completing forms for bus passes, attendance allowance and blue badges and we can receive goods for the food bank.

We are delighted to announce that Signpost will be hosting a Bereavement Café at the Jubilee Room at the church every Monday at 10 – 11.30 starting on 7th October. It will be open to all who have been bereaved, however long ago, and think they would benefit from meeting others in a similar situation. In our experience the chance to talk helps in so many ways. It will be led by Signpost members who are trained in this work.

Posters for the Café can be found in the church vestibule.

If you need further information speak to Pat Wallace or Sue Jones or phone the Signpost office 01386 859029

Sue Jones

Mugs for Sale

We have recently had to order some more of our church mugs as numbers were inadequate and of course there was a minimum order as they are specially produced

for us. So we now have a surplus. They are the same as the earlier version minus one outdated motif and are of the same high quality china. We would be delighted to sell some of the extra mugs to members and friends at £7.50 each. To obtain yours see Sue. Sue Jones

Services for October and November

Sunday services start at 10.30 and everyone is invited to stay for refreshments in the hall after the service

October Duty Elder Kathryn

6th Rev John Sutcliffe

13th Rev Dr Brierly-Jones

20th Anna Gobbledale – Commitment for Life

27th Rev Martin Henniger Holy Communion

November Duty Elder Chris

3rd Rev Iain McLaren

10th Remembrance – no service

17th Rev David Laurence Church meeting

24th Rev Jo Williamson

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Please send articles for the next Broadsheet by 21st November
to Christine at wta@cawyld.co.uk