



JULY 2021 Newsletter

July is the heart of the summer. If you think back to childhood, you may well remember long, hot, sunny days. If you are old enough, you may recall the drought of 1976, when there was a nation-wide water shortage and every household had to take special measures to save water.

I'm writing this in the final week of June and the long-term forecast suggests only one day of this week will not be affected by rain. The summers of our childhoods are no longer matched by the summers of today. Whilst on average summers are now hotter than in years gone by, they are also much, much wetter.

In the UK, this has implications for farmers, trying to determine when they can harvest crops dry enough to be safely kept through the winter. It affects the kinds of plants we might be able to grow successfully in our gardens. It affects whether we might contemplate a large outdoor event with no possibility of a wet weather alternative. A friend has just had to postpone his daughter's wedding, because due to Covid restrictions, it would not be possible to move indoors should the weather turn



In other countries around the world, this change in weather patterns, or climate, have much more serious implications. Rising sea levels, allied to extreme rainstorms, make low-lying land too unsafe for housing. Some islands in the Maldives and other island chains are now too dangerous to live on or for holiday makers to visit. In Bangladesh, whole communities have been displaced as the marginal lands on which they live have become sea or swamp.

Why does this matter? In Genesis, it is made clear to Adam and Eve that the world does not belong to them. As the Psalmist wrote – the earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it. We are to steward the world, to pass it on for the coming generations in a condition fit for human (and animal and plant) habitation. We can all do our bit, even if it seems small.

This is why it is timely that the Baptist Union has set up an Environmental Network, BUEN. It is a joyous coincidence that in Spanish, 'buen' means 'good' and reminds us that God looked at what He had made and declared it 'good'. So, as we move into summer and perhaps dream of the time when we could almost guarantee day after day of sunshine, take a little time to reflect on how small changes might help make a big difference:

- Recycling all materials that the council accept
- Taking a shopping bag with you instead of buying plastic ones
- Reusing things and repairing, rather than replacing, broken things
- Borrowing things you only use every now and then, rather than buying one
- Plan meals to minimise food waste
- Consider whether you need a car (some will) or whether the money you spend to maintain it could be used for taxis or public transport

If you can, think of more things to add to the list! God Bless us all. *Sarah*



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TRIBUTE TO GWEN MASON

Gwen was the widow of Ron Mason who was the minister at GLBC for twenty five years during the period from the early 1980's to 2008.

Gwen supported Ron in numerous ways in church life and always ensured that she spoke to each member of the fellowship before they left after a church service by standing by the main door at the rear of the sanctuary.

She chaired the Women's Committee which catered for social events; each year she organised the Passover Meal; she was a founder member of the Church Fund Raising Committee and always manned the household stall at the Christmas Fayre (both Ron and Gwen attended nearly every committee meeting and took part in numerous fund raising activities); she and Joy Williams ran the Mother & Toddler Club on Wednesday mornings; she and Ron also instigated and attended the Family Night (when on a weekly basis all members of the family were invited to come along and take part in social activities) and later on line dancing on Monday evenings. Some of us remember with a smile when Ron and Gwen used to dress up and entertain us with some of their sketches in an evening concert.

For the last thirteen years Gwen has been looked after very well by the staff at Netherton Green nursing home.

She passed away aged 93 years on Monday, 3rd. May, 2021 in the arms of Roxy, one her three daughters.

Her funeral service, a very moving occasion, was led by the Rev. David Tennant, a long-time friend of the family, at Stourbridge Crematorium.

"Well done thou good and faithful servant."

John Jenkinson

"Because I Live, You Also Will Live"

These three remain, faith, hope and love,

But standing round the Cross,

Disciples see their Master die,

And suffer bitter loss;

Their faith is lost in hopeless gloom,

And love lies buried in the tomb.

But Thomas, wait! on Sunday's eve,

Those doubts will come no more,

The Lord appears, reveals His wounds,

Invites you to adore;

Your faith will rise to greater height,

And bless us too, who ne'er had sight.

Sad Cleopas, look! The Stranger whom

You meet along the road,

Will teach you more of Scripture's truth,

And lift your heavy load;

Till round the table, breaking bread,

Your hope shall live, which once was dead.

And Peter, see! The unknown One,

Who stood upon the shore,

And gave you food, shall soon revive

The love you had before;

You'll leave the Galilean deep,

To feed His lost and hungry sheep.

Thus we, whose faith and hope and love,

Are oft betrayed and lost,

Can thank God for the empty tomb,

Receive its gift to us;

The Cross and grave an open door,

To lead us higher than before.

By Rev. Fred Stainthorpe