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| ALLERTON  CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH |



October/November 2024 Newsletter

Dear Friends

The Apostle James begins his New Testament letter with the following words, “Count it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.” (James 1:2-3) There are two basic teachings in this short sentence. Firstly, the Christian life is not always easy – we should expect difficulties to come along some of the time. Secondly, even these difficult times and circumstances can and will be used by God to teach us and help us to grow in maturity, wisdom and faithfulness.

Life can be tough for various reasons. We can experience health issues, whether it’s a bad cold, a broken arm or something life-threatening. Those we love and care for may also have health problems about which we can do nothing. We have troublesome neighbours or problems with our own family members. Perhaps we are struggling financially with the ever-increasing cost of living, income that doesn’t keep pace with inflation, taxes to pay and then cuts to benefits that we’ve previously enjoyed. As Christians specifically we might be shunned by others because of our faith, or even persecuted because we stand up for following Jesus.

As you likely know, my time as pastor of Riddlesden URC ended last May, and so I have only been employed quarter time. This has been a bit of a struggle financially for us as a family. Danielle has been working as a lunchtime supervisor at a primary school for a few hours each week, but there have still been times when we’ve struggled to make ends meet over the past year and a bit. Nonetheless, God is good, and we’ve managed. However, it has meant that I have been looking for an additional part-time job to supplement our family income.

A position came up in July/August with the UCCC (Unaffiliated Congregational Churches Charities) for which I applied. The interview took place in Manchester on Tuesday the 17th of September, and a few days later I was offered the position of Executive Officer, which I have accepted. I begin officially on the 1st of November, working alongside the current Executive Officer, Frank Wroe, until his retirement in January. This role is for three days a week, so I shall be continuing as your pastor alongside this new position. In many ways this new role brings together a lot of my background, education and past experiences. As a family, we are very thankful to God and to the trustees of the UCCC for this opportunity.

In practical terms this will make very little, if any, difference to how I am able to serve you as your pastor. I will remain committed to leading the fellowship group on Thursdays, leading worship twice a month (on average), various other meetings and pastoral care. There may be the odd occasion where I may not be available, but this should be rare. I want you to be reassured that I remain committed to serving this church, its members and the local community.

Ultimately, though, I want to point you towards the words of Scripture with which I started this letter. Even through tough times, God is at work preparing us for what He has planned for us. It is through trials and difficulties that He builds our character and our reliance on Him for all things. God challenges us and builds us up into the people He has called us to be in Christ. Through our faithful following of the Lord Jesus, we are good witnesses and examples to one another and to others. Let us continue to live out this life with God’s help!

Fred

**Secretary’s Thoughts**

Many of you will have wondered on Sunday why we needed a Deacons Meeting. Well, as I assume you read your newsletter starting at the front, you will now know. We felt the Deacons needed to know first and they were asked not to pass on the information. The Finance Committee will have been given the same information at their meeting on Tuesday.

Throughout our lives as Christians, we experience all the same problems as everyone else, whether it’s relating to health issues, finance or relationships.

Over the past year or so, Fred and Danielle have had their share of difficulties, Danielle’s father, Paul, died, Danielle was unwell and needed a spell in hospital and Fred has had his struggles as well, all impacted by the fact that income was drastically reduced when Fred’s term of office came to an end last May.

All these things are common to a great many of us but, as Christians, we believe God gives us strength to continue and become stronger. As Fred has explained, his new part-time position will not impact on his work and commitment to Allerton Congregational Church. If any problems do arise with meetings clashing, then David and myself will be there to step in if necessary.

Please check the diary dates list so you don’t miss anything.

**Harvest Supper**

The Harvest Supper went really well. A big thank you to Jenny, Chris and Carole for all the hard work they put in. The food was lovely, there was definitely something there for everyone.

We enjoyed the quiz too. Thank you Irene.

Janet

**Dates for your Diary**

Saturday 12th October – Coffee Morning – 10am-12noon

Tuesday 15th October – Deacons Meeting – 10.00am

Sunday 20th October – Church Meeting – 12 noon after service

Saturday 23rd November – Christmas Coffee Shop – 10am-12noon

Sunday 15th December – Carol Service 10.30am

**Finance Report**

The high winds of August damaged a tree in the Church grounds and blocked Allerton Road. This was cleared by the Council to allow traffic to flow again but we have to sort out the resulting damage. This is being progressed.

Tuesday 24th September was an important date in the planned electrical works, this was the date the electric meters were to be switched to Smart Meters. The appointment for this work has taken a long time to sort and since first requesting a day for these works 10 weeks. Unfortunately, when the engineer finally arrived he confirmed, as had been anticipated, this was no straightforward job, and the works need to be rescheduled.

This was most frustrating as we had requested a pre installation survey, which the suppliers said was both not necessary, nor something they carried out. The saga continues.

Chris Ing Financial Secretary

**Flower Rota** – flowers provided by:

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| October 2024 | | November 2024 | |
| 6th | Mr & Mrs P Barfield | 3rd | Mrs J Holdsworth & Mr A Jones |
| 13th | Mr & Mrs B Haley | 10th | Mrs I Relton |
| 20th |  | 17th | Mr & Mrs I Hastings |
| 27th | Mrs A Henderson | 24th |  |

On Sundays not listed, silk flowers will be used.

**Preaching list**

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| October 2024 | |  | November 2024 | |
| 6th | Rev Fred Rich |  | 3rd | Mr Trevor Kershaw |
| 13th | Rev Fred Rich |  | 10th | Rev Fred Rich |
| 20th | Rev Fred Rich |  | 17th | Mr Trevor Hippey |
| 27th | Mr David Robinson |  | 24th | Rev Richard Lewis |

**Coffee Rota**

As we have returned to having coffee after services, it would be really helpful if those on the rota could come a little earlier to set things up. You will not need to bring milk.

The coffee rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

**Bible Reading Rota**

If you would like to offer to read the Bible for Sunday services, the Bible reading rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

**Note from the Editor**

The next newsletter is due on 24th November 2024 – please let me have any items for inclusion by 17th November 2024.

Thank you – Carole

Sundays - Services at 10.30 am.

Addresses:

Pastor: Secretary & Treasurer: Editor: Fredrik Rich Janet & David Muschamp Carole Brook

01274 542859

01535 531966 07837 441784 (Janet)

07570 801863 07530 727616 (David)

[Frich107uk@sky.com](mailto:Frich107uk@sky.com) [david.muschamp47@btinternet.com](mailto:david.muschamp47@btinternet.com)

## Website: allertoncongregationalchurch.org.uk

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