

Ministers:

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Rev Stephen Willey  
Deacon Sheila Dawson

October 2021

Dear Members of Central Hall Church Family,

As we write to you, we are approaching a season of remembrance. All Saints Day and All Souls Day on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November will be followed by Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday on 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

This time of the year may throw up all sorts of thoughts about our own mortality as well as memories of loved ones who have travelled beyond us. If you have lost anyone over the past year and, as a church, we have lost several of our friends and members, this may be a chance to quietly give thanks and remember them.

Faith in a God of love may not prevent us from feeling grief and sorrow at times of loss or sorrow, especially after many months of the pandemic, but the love in God's heart is also touched by the deep suffering of Jesus' passion and death. God's love shows us we are not left on alone. We are able to reveal, in the life of our church, God's passionate love for all people, so that all who meet with us can discover they are loved and nurtured.

Perhaps at our next healing and wholeness service on the third Sunday of November (21<sup>st</sup>) at 4pm, we could light candles to remember loved ones during the service? That might also be a good occasion to read out the messages from the remembrance books in the Aldersgate Chapel. (The remembrance books are available to write in at any time).

Apart from our healing and wholeness service our main Sunday services continue to attract worshippers online and in person. Happily there will be a return of our Junior Church on some Sundays of the month so if you are interested for your children or grandchildren, nephews or nieces, keep an eye open for announcements in the messenger. As we write to you today, our children, young people and their leaders are about to go to 3Generate 2021. They will meet with hundreds of other Methodist young people, getting together to talk about faith and life.

Our 9am morning prayer continues almost every weekday. It's good to meet on Zoom, or in person, and consider the day ahead, and any concerns we might have. The prayer is usually held in the Aldersgate Chapel on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Talking of the Aldersgate chapel, you will have noticed, if you have been in there recently, that the Methodist Modern Art collection, on the walls during September, has been replaced by our own banners, with a few window additions from people who attended

Nikki's (artist in residence) batik sessions in the summer. Members of our congregation have also used their artistic gifts to decorate the chapel for the Harvest season and now on the theme of Remembrance. Do pop in have a look next time you are at Central Hall.

Our artists in residence also continue to make a difference with interesting and vibrant art. Emily's and Nikki's visual art is having a real impact on the foyer and stairs. You will see Mark's origami (no plastic) roses appear soon, and Seb's orchestra, and Emilie's poetic events, are also enhancing our outreach and our life and work.

At the same time as you look at the art, stop in at the café run by Urban Goodies, and ask them about their work. They are beginning to settle in and may want to recruit volunteers if you are interested. The church is also often in need of volunteer support and it would be great if our members would let us know how their gifts could be used to help us.

Alongside the café, many events are returning to Central Hall including, recently, a vigil for a young refugee who died in a Coventry mental health unit. The event was visited by the famous puppet Amal, and our local MP, who has also heard about our property project and has written a letter of support.

As we start to raise funds (in addition to those already set aside from the sale of Macdonald Road) we would appreciate help looking at the fundraising. Thanks to Nikki, Mahandra and Andy for their work so far. As you know, we have an ambitious scheme, and work on the back of the building will be focused on making a sustainable arts and community hub with plenty of space for community activities. An arts and community hub office is now operating which will help us develop outreach to the communities we serve. If you would like more information about the property project or the hub, please get in touch.

Talking of property, please spare a thought for those on the Resources Group. We have a major concern at the moment about our heating system which seems to have sprung a leak, but we're not sure where. Our property demands a lot of maintenance, and part of the purpose of the property project is to reduce the time spent on this. However, whilst we develop the project and raise funds, the building is still in need of attention so you may see us having to do work on the building even before the property scheme really gets going. If you have practical gifts you may like to share them to keep the property in good shape.

That's probably enough about property for one letter, the church is, after all, the people! So, one last thing to note, please remember, if you feel isolated or you'd like one of us to get in touch, you can contact our pastoral secretary, Doreen, our senior steward, Elaine, Deacon Sheila, or Rev Stephen.

With love and prayers,

*Stephen*

*Sheila*