



Goring United Reformed Church

Goring United Reformed Church is part of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom. Since Andrew retired from active ministry we no longer share a Joint Pastorate with Sompting United Reformed Church.

The United Reformed Church has over 1600 churches in England, Scotland and Wales with a total membership of about 46500. It has over 1300 congregations, and 608 active ministers. It was formed in 1972 when the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church of England and Wales united, and it was joined by the Reformed Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland in 1981 and the Congregational Union of Scotland in 2000. The churches of Emmanuel in Worthing, Sompting, Goring and Littlehampton are part of the 'Worthing Cluster' and United Reformed Church Southern Synod, whose affairs are governed by General Assembly.

It was early in the 1930s that Worthing Congregational Church in Shelley Road began planning to build a new church in the rapidly growing area to the west of Worthing. The present building was opened in September 1961 when the congregation became too large to be accommodated in the church building that is now the hall. This first building was opened in 1948. Other churches in Goring with whom we share the Christian faith are English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, St Mary, St Laurence & St Richard Churches of England, New Life Baptist Church and Bury Drive Methodist Church.

We are here to worship God and proclaim the love of Jesus Christ to all



Goring United Reformed Church, Worthing, West Sussex

<https://gurc.net> and on facebook



The Chronicle

Summer 2023

The Magazine of Goring United Reformed Church



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GORING UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

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Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary

10.30am Morning worship - with Holy communion on first Sunday in month.

All services at 10:30am are live streamed and recorded for later viewing on our website <https://www.gurc.net/> and our YouTube channel.



The Chronicle Summer 2023

Farewell to the Chronicle

Well, this was our last Chronicle, Summer 2023.

Starting in 1944 during the 2nd World War and well before our present church building was opened, 674 copies have been produced initially every other month as 'Elm Grove Chronicle'. This was only a few years after Goring Congregational Church was inaugurated in Elm Grove School Hall in 1940 - an outreach initiative from Shelley Road Congregational Church in the centre of Worthing. The Chronicle was issued monthly for most of its life until 2007 when printed quarterly.

Obviously, when the first issue was produced it had to be typed out on a typewriter and sent to a local firm for duplicating or printing. This was the practise until the home computer became readily available when we were able to print our own in conjunction with a Lytho printer. Physically cut and pasting text was usual for quite some time.

It wasn't until the turn of the millenium and the introduction of Desktop Publishing software that it was posible to edit as we know today. Gradually, colour was introduced firstly to the front covers, then later for the whole magazine, as colour printing became more cost effective. The magazine, since the 1990s has also been viewble on our website.

You can read all about the history of this church from the 'Archives Index' page - <https://www.gurc.net/archives-index-page>.

From there can be found: 1. Ministers, 2. Chronicle Magazine, 3 Picture Gallery, 4. About this Church, 5. Archives of Weekly Activities; Clubs etc., 6. Videos, 7. Births Marriages and Death Records and 8. A list of Treasurers, Church Secretaries, Organists and Welcome & Chronicle editors.

As I write this now in the middle of 2023, I am not sure how, when or if there will any other Chronicles - there certainly won't be in this current format, or edited by me.

We have more recently seen changes to our weekly Welcome sheet with the introduction of colour, whether Welcome will become more of a news outlet remains to be seen.

As Editor since 1998, I am very sorry to be saying goodbye to my committment as I have enjoyed it so much, but it has to be. After all, the Church moves on.

A big thank you to those who have helped by tირerlessly proof reading, printing and distributing it by post. Also thank you to all who have helped me with support and contributions over the years as without you there could have been no Chronicle.

Many years ago one of our past members Ron Jordan, brought to my notice various mistakes he had spotted. I said, "Maybe you would like to be a proof reader?" "OK then", was to be the answer.

Graham Redman



The Chronicle

Summer 2023

Vol.80 No. 674

Front Cover

Rev Andrew Sellwood with his wife, Jill on the occasion of their last service at Goring.

This Magazine

Sadly this is the last Chronicle magazine produced in its present format. Read more about this on page 20.

Andrew and Jill

The majority of these pages, however, are devoted to Andrew and Jill, as a picture record of their last day in Goring URC; 18 June 2023

Andrew's last letter - 'The Times they are Changing' Page 2

Andrew commenced his ministry here in Worthing as part of the Worthing Area Team on 13 January 2001.

In May 2005 the Team was disbanded and his ministry was then divided between two churches, St Andrew's in Rustington and Goring.

Goring shared his ministry with Sompting URC from 2018 until his reirement. We will miss them after being with us for about 22 years.

Ruth and Mamy

Ruth and Mamy have moved to North Wales having finished their term in the Congo. Their Newsletter No. 91 is printed on pages 18 & 19.

Editor

The Times: They Are Changing

How did I get here? After four years studying at Westminster College Cambridge, I was released into an unsuspecting world as a fully-fledged Stipendiary minister, a Rev! In our final year the students would think about the kind of pastorate they could see themselves in. In my study of revival and renewal I had been reading about flourishing churches on the south coast and thought that might be an option. Yes, a church somewhere on the South coast. The time came for us to receive the envelope that would pair us with our first pastorate. It was an exciting but nerve-racking time. I cautiously opened my envelope took the pastoral profile out and read Enderby Leicestershire! Where on earth is Enderby? About as far from the sea as you could get! I preached with a view and had a unanimous call to the church. We got on well together and I spent six and a half years there. My moderator at the time thought it would be good to for me to move on to develop my ministry. He had the profile of the Worthing Area Team Ministry. That sounded fantastic.

So, I came into a team ministry. Five churches three full time and one half scoped ministers. Each minister had a specific ministry or gift. I came in as a mission and evangelism enabler. I had just completed an MA in evangelism studies so was fired up for the task. I was informed each of the five churches had a trained up and accredited local leader. Our ministry would be used to lead worship on Sundays but also to equip the

churches with our gifts. Exciting stuff and a model for growth. However, the thinking and structure for this kind of team was not put in place. Sadly, the ground had not been prepared. The churches naturally wanted their own minister just like before. That is a lesson we must learn for any new project or change within the church, there needs to be such an investment in training, communication and sharing the vision.

After Stockholm came the hard work of sorting and packing up Mamy's books and other belongings we've had in storage in Sweden. We waved good-bye to the truck transporting them to North Wales, leaving us a few days to relax with our friends, before returning to Ruth's brother Chris' house in Worthing, England, to pack up our stuff there, and say more good-byes!



Prestatyn High Street with distant sea

Finally, on the 21st July, Chris drove us and our UK stuff to Prestatyn, Wales. We've had a week of unpacking, and organizing our home. It's still a bit chaotic, but we are grateful for our friends Mike & Viv who got the house painted and other work done before we arrived. We love the distant view of the mountains (Snowdonia) from upstairs! We are discovering the many footpaths for getting around Prestatyn, and the good selection of shops in this relatively small town.

So what next? Having taken time out for the move, we are now slowly getting back into work routines with Congo. Mamy continues to accompany the Kituba translators in the final stages of Old Testament checking, whilst Ruth hopes to make progress on two dictionary

databases. A trip to Congo may also be on the cards before the end of the year – both of us this time!

We are looking forward to this **new phase in our lives**, getting involved in a local church and in the community here. We also hope to learn some Welsh - we are getting used to seeing food labels in Welsh, with English only afterwards or in smaller letters!



Welsh milk, eggs & tea

Ruth praises God for some new financial supporters since our last newsletter. However, her support level for the coming (final?) year of working remotely for Congo is still rather low. If you would like to give a one-off or monthly gift, however small, you can click on the link below to set this up with her mission organisation, Wycliffe Bible Translators, at www.wycliffe.org.uk/support/Ruth+Raharimanantsoa. Thank you!

Prayer & praise:

- Praise God that Ruth can walk almost normally again now, after breaking her ankle.
- Praise God for giving us a house in Prestatyn & that our move went smoothly.
- Pray for settling into the community, a church, & remote working for Bible translation in Congo.

Hope you enjoy the rest of the summer, wherever you are! We send you our warm greetings as always,

Ruth & Mamy

Mamy & Ruth Raharimanantsoa

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**Wycliffe
Bible**



Mamy & Ruth's CHAT

No. 91 from Wales August 2023

Please do not post this on a web page without our permission.

We've moved to Wales!

It feels good to be settling in one place, having moved around a lot during the past year.



Mamy had a fruitful **trip to Congo in May** – taking part in a three-week intensive workshop, along with other translation consultants, to do exegetical checking of the book of Romans in 8 different Congolese languages! Together with the translators for each language, they reviewed each verse, making sure the translation still conveyed the same message as the Greek text.



Translation consultants at the workshop

The Apostle Paul's theological argumentation was a lot harder to translate than the Gospel narratives worked on previously! However, they sometimes found idioms in the local language which expressed well Paul's message - for example, "they claimed to be wise" (Rom 1:22) was translated in one language as "they puffed up their bodies", and "agreeing that the law is good" (Rom 7: 16) became "standing back-to-back with the law".

Meanwhile, **Ruth was busy learning**

to walk again with a crutch, trying to track with linguistic work in Congo remotely, and enjoying the fresh blooms of spring in the UK.

In mid-June we travelled to Sweden – Ruth's reduced mobility meant that she got fast-tracked through Gatwick airport in a wheelchair! However, by the return flight, she was walking much better and did not need this service. The metal plates and screws in her ankle didn't even set off the security alarms. 😊



Breakfast on the sun terrace

We had good fellowship and glorious weather for the **retreat with Mamy's missionary colleagues**, at a fabulous site overlooking a lake in Stockholm.



We were not the only mixed missionary couple!



Everyone needs to know exactly what the plan is and how it will work. What are the features and benefits. How will it impact on our community how will it enhance the Kingdom. I remember the interview with the area team Elders it was held in GURC.

The representatives from all the churches formed in a circle. So many Elders I think 24 in all. It reminded me of the references in Revelation. What an ordeal that was. I seemed to get through it though and here I am (or was).

When I arrived all that time ago the church had a choir and a great organist. They still have a great organist. No choir though. It would have been nice if there were a worship band but that was not to be. Many of the folk still remembered the Golden days. They would happily reminisce and tell me of the large membership – formality – tradition – sacrifice - raising money for the various building projects. A thriving Junior church, brigades and so many young people around. The big question is where have the younger generation gone? Back in the day many of our churches missed the opportunities to attract families who would often consist of children. The focus was solely on children. The generation gap widens and what is left is a void that is extremely hard to fill.

Its like that in so many churches, but not all so there is hope. Diminishing numbers can be put down to changing culture and sociological norms. But then you must ask the question why are some churches growing and others not? What is missing? You need to figure that one out. Perhaps concentrating on the demographics is a bit of a cop out.

So many faces becoming absent over the years, folks that have gone home, I often look out on a Sunday and recall them. The first person who arrived on the manse doorstep was a lady called Pheniah. Jill and I were frantically trying to decorate the children's rooms, gosh they were children then, we were covered in paint and very harassed.

I sent Jill to open the door. In a soft Irish accent, she said I have brought you a housewarming gift. I won't stop I see you are busy.



It was a parcel wrapped in tin foil. Later, on closer inspection it was a giant cooked ham very welcome indeed (Jill was still a carnivore back then).

A few minutes later the doorbell rang again. I answered it this time. A lady from Emmanuel introduced herself and handed over a very limp bunch of flowers. She apologised they had been accidentally shut in her car door.

Never mind it was the thought that counted. Another caller was Pat bringing greetings from St. Andrew's along with a couple of their young people.

As many ministers do, I tried to bring the idea of change into the church. The concept of change seems to set off alarm bells, the defence barricades go up. You know dear reader it doesn't have to be like that.

I had so much resistance in those early days. The Congregations seem unaware that their minister has experienced other churches and other congregations. He or more likely she has probably attended dozens of seminars and lectures about how to grow a church. Congregations fail to appreciate or accept the heartfelt teaching, preaching and guidance.

The minister a church calls, if the Holy Spirit is part of the process, has only the welfare of the congregation and God's Kingdom at heart. As for me realising the inhouse prophet is not always listened to I set out to invite various speakers with diverse experiences to share their thoughts on mission and evangelism. To widen the vision.

Thank You

A big thank you for our last Sunday with you all. It was good to see so many folks in church to share in the day. The atmosphere was great. The food excellent, such an amazing spread. Thank you for your extremely generous gift that will enable us to put our mark on the new garden.

We had mixed emotions that day, but we must focus on a new future.

We will have some good memories.

Take care and God bless.

Andrew and Jill



New Here?

If you are new to Goring United Reformed Church and would like to know a bit more about us, then you can very easily do so by either -

Picking up a Leaflet "New Here ?"
ask a 'Welcomer' at the door, or -

From our website <https://gurc.net>,
click or tap on the [New Here?](#) button.



One highlight was a weekend away at Pilgrim Hall. I invited Revd John Proctor, my old year tutor from Westminster. He went on to be General Secretary of the URC (OK I'm name dropping). We shared the weekend with Bible study and worship sessions.



Of course, I can't leave out the festival of light ice-skating event. This was suggested by ... I won't say her name in case there are any belated reprisals she knows who she is.



But thanks Mary all the same. I thought it was brilliant, so left it had to be good.

For three years we had an ice rink in the sanctuary can you imagine that.

It was a way of engaging with the community altogether 1200 individuals came through our doors. A great success but the question must be asked how did we build upon that opportunity? Where are the people now?

The community in which we are placed has changed. Poverty is well and truly on our well-heeled doorstep. When food banks were being established one senior member stated, 'they're not needed here, we should be able to buy our own food thank you very much'.

For many traditional churches here can be a policy of isolation. The church becomes a fortress guarding the gospel or merely a refuge for those challenged by the real world. To be very honest the church would rather preserve the traditions and rituals that have been developed over the years than to engage with our near neighbours. They may have ideas and needs of their own! We can all too easily become like an island in a sea of what is known as 'community'.

Or what we would call those out there. There is a massive mission field opening just over the fence next door.

Don't miss it, there is great potential there. However, there is a new generation emerging within the church, they have some challenging even radical ideas. The current Eldership have a tough job ahead of them. But they are more than capable. Please support them. The LICC initiative we are subscribed to should provide some inspiration and guidance for the future. It will be an unknown future, but God will guide the church if He is listened to.

For the last few years GURC has been linked with Sompting. Now they are a different kettle of fish - in a good way. I had been involved with them several times over the last 23 years. A genuine friendly welcoming church. Such a desire for outreach and inclusivity. I helped them with various projects and ways of worship TGFT (thank God it's Tuesday) etc. They have developed a community garden 'grace spaces' with a prayer tree in the centre. A Wednesday morning worship service I think 37 people attended the latest one. Talk with them, get to know them.

Perhaps hold an event together.





The final shot was of many of Goring's congregation in the Sanctuary on a previous Sunday morning, all waving goodbye.

Presentations of garden vouchers, flowers, a photo frame, small book about retirement, cakes and birthday balloon, together with cards from the congregation were made to Andrew and Jill, and then it was time to chat and mingle over coffee, before being invited through for lunch.



Don't get me wrong, here at Goring we were developing a great vision and plans, some rather radical for the future, but WHAM!! No not the band but COVID hit us, knocked us for six. on 23 March 2020, our country took the unprecedented step to go into national lockdown, in the wake of the WHO (World Health Organization) declaring COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern. To be honest I think the pandemic had an influence over me in my last couple of years here.

I quite enjoyed the broadcast services put together in our dining room with the help of Jill.



The Musings from the Manse weekly letter was I hoped a way of keeping in touch. The Church has had to change to comply with government guidelines.



But the changes we made have been largely beneficial.

The less formal seating layout particularly successful. The way we celebrate Communion different and interesting. Not going round taking the collection, that is a real change for the better on several levels.

In past years our impenetrable ritual, formality, and language used have been a real turn off to those exploring the faith or entering this intimidating building called church for the first time. I know this to be the case for visitors have told me.

In conclusion – the forthcoming period of interregnum can be a blessing. If nothing else, it provides a challenge to change. Swap out the things that are unhelpful and seek those things that will build Gods Kingdom here at GURC.

My journey through the last 22-23 years has been interesting to say the least.

I will go away with a few scars but many more good memories.



I will miss ministry here and hope and pray that you keep going along with God and be open to His Spirit, be positive and care for each other, encourage and support one another.

Remember these words ...

I will come to you and fulfil my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹²Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you," declares the Lord.

Every blessing from Andrew and Jill.

To pray and listen to what the spirit says. To plan our next move under guidance of the spirit, to be passionate about what we are doing, not lukewarm. He warns us to beware of Godless chatter, ie. gossip, and to do our best to present ourselves to God. (These lines are just a small sample of Andrew's sermon and the ones of which we made a note to include in this article).

Andrew ended "May God pour out his blessings on you all. For Jesus' sake. Amen" The final hymn 'Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah' after which Andrew commented that he had stayed by the communion table to be able to feel and hear the power and volume of the music and singing; his reaction, "wow"! He then turned to speak to Jill, thanking her for her help and support over the years.

Geoffrey treated us to the wonderful Widor Toccata on the organ, after which a 'farewell video', made by the members of Junior Church with their puppets, was shown. 'So long, farewell' from the Sound of Music; 'So long, it's been good to know you'; 'Don't you forget about me'; 'Happy trails to you until we meet again'; were all sung, with splendid synchronization from the puppets. Well done everyone!



'Shout To The Lord' begins the service, followed by 'Lord, I Lift Your Name On High' and immediately it is noticeable that with so many more voices praising the Lord, how thrilling it is to hear the increased volume, and the organ music rises and swells, encouraging us to 'sing our hearts out'. This is especially the case we feel in the third hymn 'In Christ Alone', which is very moving and so stirring.



There were readings, Isaiah 40: 17-31 and Jeremiah 29: 10-14 before the third hymn, and Matthew 5: 1-16 after it.

Prayers were offered up by Goring Elders, and also by Maureen from Sompting Church who asked their Elders to join her at the front to pray for Andrew and Jill.

The next hymn 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness' was followed by reading Acts 20: 22-35; and then 'For The Joys And For The Sorrows' with beautiful words, and accompanied on the piano by Mary. Andrew mentions that in difficult times, this hymn has spoken to him and been so powerful. He asks us to think as we listen to those words in the future.

Jeremiah 29: 11 "For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". These words, along with many Andrew quotes from Paul and from Timothy, have been influential in shaping his ministry and theology. He asks us to follow Paul's example.

Weekday Activities

Please refer to our website for up to date information
<https://www.gurc.net/diary>

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The CHRONICLE

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