



London Street

United Reformed Church

BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE RG21 7NU
and
TADLEY (OLD MEETING) URC



FOCUS
March, 2016

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.londonstreeturc.org.uk

MINISTER:

Revd Kay Blackwell (Day off - Monday)
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Tadley (Old Meeting) URC

10.30 every Sunday

“TASTE” Youth Event at 7pm in the Immanuel Centre

Minister:

Revd Kay Blackwell

Church Secretary:

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Treasurer:

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View from The Manse:

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35 NRSV

Having seen the shops filling up with hearts, flowers and all things romantic, it is easy to see that Valentine’s Day has become just another opportunity for commercial exploitation. However, the image of love it sells us is romantic, transient and over-sentimental. As we journey through Lent I am also mindful of the Love that Jesus Christ came to bring us. His was a practical and serving love, a radical and, at times, fierce love. In Jesus we find a gritty and real love that was to face the pain of betrayal and desertion yet chose to remain loving. We must also love one another in that same way that Jesus loves us, that is, in a self-sacrificial way, but knowing that, however much we try, and sometimes fail, God’s love for us is always greater.

“Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver—let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”

(Psalm 22).

God delights in us and wants us to be free in His Love. All the world can condemn us, but when we choose to abide in *his* love, through Jesus, God delights in us. Seb Allwright came and spoke to the congregation at London Street recently and talked about ‘abiding in God’s love’. Abiding isn’t just being in the presence of God’s love. Abiding is choosing to make our home **always in** God’s love.

Lent is a time in which we prepare our hearts and minds to once more re-tell and re-hear the agony of Jesus’ betrayal, arrest, trial and crucifixion. I have often wondered what I might have done if I had been one of those disciples. Would I have been stronger, more committed, more faithful than the other disciples who let him down so badly? I don’t honestly know that I would have displayed more courage or love than them if I too was faced with that fearful situation. Perhaps with their failure came a very necessary humility. From that point of failure they would have become totally dependent on God’s love to restore them. God’s love of us is so much greater than our love of God can ever be. Three times Peter denied even knowing Jesus only hours after saying to Jesus that he would never leave him. At the resurrection Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves him. Peter answered each time “*yes Lord*

you know I love you". Each time I have a sense of Peter being a little more indignant at being asked the question again. Yet each time Peter pronounced his love of Jesus I also have a sense of his discipleship strengthening. It was as if his previous denials of knowing Jesus were being reversed, eradicated. Peter was restored to abiding in the love of God through his own expressed love of Jesus. Peter became the rock upon which the Christian church, the Church of Jesus Christ, was built. Jesus is the cornerstone, Peter was the rock. He remained rock solid in faith and abide's in God's love for eternity.

We as Christian disciples today, need to again prepare our hearts to remember just how amazing Jesus' love is for us. He paid the terrible price for human sin. Not just sins of the past or of His present but for all time. He died for all who come to him and humble themselves before him, who choose to love him and keep on loving him. Choosing to love Jesus and accept him as Lord in our lives is how we abide in God's love. Abiding in God's love helps us to love others, for as we accept Jesus into our hearts, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us. The Holy Spirit comes to transform us into more Christ-like people and as Christ is an expression of God's love so we should become too. So let us love one another, just as Jesus loves us. Let us love when it is easy and love when it is not. In human terms it is so easy to criticise and emotionally or verbally knock others down. What is harder is to choose to sacrificially love those who criticise and emotionally knock *you* down. Not to retaliate, try to dominate, or crush with harsh words and actions, but to love them. You cannot change who other people are, but you can change how you respond to them. As I said at the beginning, loving is hard; like Peter, we often have to learn the hard way that love needs to be at the heart of who we are as people of the loving and life-giving resurrected Jesus Christ.

'And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts'
(1 Corinthians 13:13-14:1a)

Happy Easter to you all. May your Easter be filled with faith, hope and, greatest of all, Love.

Yours in Christ, Kay

A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act,

Mahatma Gandhi

CIRCLE OF PRAYER:



Please remember the following in your prayers, together with their families, friends, carers, doctors and nurses:

Short Term: Elena; Beverley and John Cantwell; Richard, Antonia, Grace and Zach Holland (Claire Macro's family in Canada); Christine and Ron Holt; Claire Macro; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Peter Major and family; Helen Rolton; Mary Silver; Beryl Welbrock and family following the death of David, a former Minister at London Street and Old Meeting.

Long Term: Christine and Tony Addis; Judith Best (mother of Mark Best); Annette Bowers (Daughter of Sheila Munro); Harry Bowers; Morag Hill; Marian Kenward; Maggie Morgans and family; Rachel Patterson; Hyacinth and Eaton Ridguard; Molly Shaw; Betty Shipway; Gwen Simms (mother of Tina Digweed); Joyce Smith; Fay Spurr; Chris and Suzanne Tolley; Rachel Walker (granddaughter of Les and Iris Wenham).

Remembering the Reverend David Welbrock

Many of us will remember the Reverend David Welbrock with affection. He was our Minister here at London Street, with oversight of Tadley Old Meeting during periods when they were without a minister, from 1967 to 77.

He and Beryl lived in the Manse (then at 93 Cliddesden Road) with Tony, Peter, Michael and Ruth, their four children. He was always totally supported by Beryl, who herself became very involved in the life and work of the Church, as they played a large part in the life of Basingstoke through their various interests.

David was a very caring gentleman, easy to talk to, always ready to listen and to help wherever he could. His pastoral visits were always appreciated, especially by the housebound and older members of the congregation. The time of quiet prayer during worship was a comfort to many. He also had an affinity with the young people. His ready smile, love of music, patience, consideration and sense of humour will be remembered.

He had a great influence on David (my husband) and I. He conducted my mother's funeral service and afterwards my father found it a great help to be able to talk to him. After their move from London Street to Roker URC in Sunderland we went to visit them one afternoon and went with them to the evening service conducted by David. Several years later, after they had retired to South Shields, we went to see them again while we were on holiday nearby. Following my David's untimely death I received very kind words from David and Beryl.

It was good that, following major refurbishment of our premises between 1994 and 96, they were able to come back and see the new building. Later they were also part of our 200th Anniversary celebration weekend.

During their Farewell Evening I remember a comment that David Welbrock had taught us what a caring Church was all about – caring for individuals. The people who spoke that evening, and the many contributions sent by members and friends for the composite appreciation in Focus at that time, are a great testament to his Ministry here and his Christian sincerity.

Jean Holton

LOVE is a fruit in season at all times, and within the reach of every hand. Anyone may gather it and no limit is set. Everyone can reach this love through meditation, spirit of prayer, and sacrifice, by an intense inner life.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Prayer Focus:

Hebrews 12 v 2 “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

In my kitchen I have a bag for waste and if I am on the other side of the room and an item is suitable for throwing I will try to get it to land in the bag or bin. I have found that if I really focus my eyes on where I want the item to go it often lands just where I want it to. If I just toss it vaguely in the right direction I might be lucky but probably not and it results in a splat. Other times I think I have fixed my eyes on the target but just at the critical moment something happens – I lose a little bit of concentration and my hand/eye coordination is messed up. The miss may only be by a couple of centimetres but I’ve missed and have a splat to clear up.

Faith is all important in our Christian walk. It is a gift from God which stirs in us when we first begin to wonder if there is something in this Jesus thing and grows as we make that step to confessing him as our Lord and Saviour and joining a church. That is possibly the biggest step of faith we make but it is only the beginning. Jesus lived his whole life on earth by faith in God his loving Heavenly Father and he looked forward to the joy he would once again experience with him when it was over. He finished the course. He has sat down. His work is done. Jesus is our only hope – he is the author and perfecter of our faith so we need to keep our eyes fixed on him if our faith is to grow stronger and our witness to him and his love and faithfulness demonstrated in sometimes, perhaps often, difficult situations.

During his ministry Jesus seems to have found people’s lack of faith surprising but then, suddenly, he would find the kind of faith he was looking for in the most unlikely people. We have an advantage over his contemporaries in the sense that if we are open and alive to him the Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirits the truth of God’s promises in the Bible. Jesus said if you have faith as small as a mustard seed God is able to do mighty things. Nothing is impossible for him but have you discovered that yet? Have you been brave enough to take him at his word for those small steps so that you are ready for the bigger ones if he asks it of you? We can all pray but is the mustard seed type faith behind it? The story is told of a very severe drought in Africa. A group of Christians met together outside the village to pray for rain. An observer reported that not one took an umbrella!

Daily Bible Readings for March:

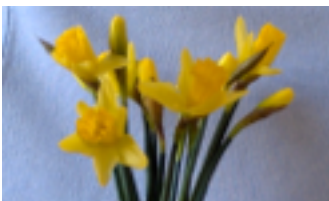
<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>
1 st 81: 1-10	Acts 27	16 th 51: 1-13	Hebrews 10
2 nd 95	" 28	17 th 84	" 11
3 rd 119: 49-64	Hebrews 1	18 th 97	" 12
4 th 15	" 2	19 th 119:113-128	Reflection
5 th 119: 65-80	Reflection	20 th	Reflection
6 th	Reflection	21 st 18: 20-30	Hebrews 13
7 th 16	Hebrews 3	22 nd 119:129-144	Galatians 1
8 th 50: 1-15	" 4	23 rd 18: 31-42	" 2
9 th 82	" 5	24 th 52	" 3
10 th 96	" 6	25 th 119: 145-160	" 4
11 th 119: 81-96	" 7	26 th 85	Reflection
12 th 17	Reflection	27 th	Reflection
13 th	Reflection	28 th 98	Galatians 5
14 th 119: 97-112	Hebrews 8	29 th 119: 161-176	" 6
15 th 18: 1-19	" 9	30 th 19	James 1
		31 st 54	" 2

Happy Birthday

Daniel Bentall, 16 years on 7 March
Sylvia Reynolds, 84 years on 12 March
Les Wenham, 85 years on 20 March



Flower Rota - March



6th Jean Hooper
 13th Julie Bath
 20th Eileen Poulter
 27th EASTER

An Appeal from Jenny McCloy:

I am sure that, like me, you enjoy a cuppa and a chance to catch up with friends after worship. This is only possible thanks to a small group of friends who volunteer to be on the tea/coffee rota.

Unfortunately, there are not enough volunteers to make an easily workable rota. At the moment, the same small group of people have to prepare and serve drinks and wash up afterwards very frequently. Most of these volunteers are already committed to other duties too! If there were more people on the rota then it would be possible to spread the load and volunteers would not be on the list so often.

It has been difficult to find volunteers for some Sundays and it may become necessary to say there will be no drinks served on a particular Sunday – as Owen said on a recent diary: No Volunteers equals No tea and coffee!! It would help if you could even do one Sunday each quarter, the more helpers the better. Don't worry if you are inexperienced in our kitchen, I will partner you with somebody who knows the ropes.

Please have a word with me if you can help.

Sit down for breakfast and stand up for farmers!

'Before you finish eating breakfast in the morning you've depended on more than half the world.* That is quite a thought and never mind the rest of the day. The Fairtrade movement has been around for some time and has achieved quite a lot but there is still a way to go. So come and support the farmers this **Fairtrade Fortnight (29 Feb - 13 March)**, on Sunday 6th March at church at the prayer breakfast at 8.30am or/and at the morning service at 10.30. And when you go shopping next try, if you can, to buy Fairtrade.

* *Martin Luther King Jr - A Christmas sermon on peace 1967*

A Plea for Moderation



How often do we proclaim
The wonders of the human frame
The way we run and leap and walk
And see and hear and touch and talk?

How often are the praises sung
Of kidney, liver, heart and lung,
And most intriguing of them all,
The alimentary canal

Which copes, a quite amazing feat,
With everything we choose to eat
And seldom fails in this presumption
Despite our profligate consumption.

The miracle of reproduction
is yet another awesome function
And what controls this linked up chain?
That great computer called our brain.

Its permutations reach infinity
And tune these organs with agility
Day and night without our knowing
in harmony, they all keep going.

We need to nurture this creation
Not damage it with exploitation,
Use health and talents with propriety
God's unique gifts in their variety.



Be mindful of the body's beauty
And see it as our simple duty
Not to consume to such excess
We jeopardise the N.H.S!

Maggie H. D. Morgans

News from Old Meeting, Tadley:

Preachers:

6th March – Mark Ward
13th March – Revd. Kay Blackwell
20th March – Penny O’Bee
27th March – Tadley will be joining London Street.

Welcomers:

George & Ena
Mandy & Dave B
Ladies Cell

FAITH, HOPE & FANTASY: ARTWORK BY KAREN J. JONES

5th March–16th April 2016

**Willis Museum & Sainsbury Gallery, Market Place,
Basingstoke RG21 7QD**

Hampshire-based artist, Karen J. Jones, presents a selection of her most recent acrylic, pastel and mixed-media artwork. Her work spans several genres including Christian, spiritual and angel art, landscapes, flora and fauna, sealife and seascapes, as well as abstract and contemporary art.

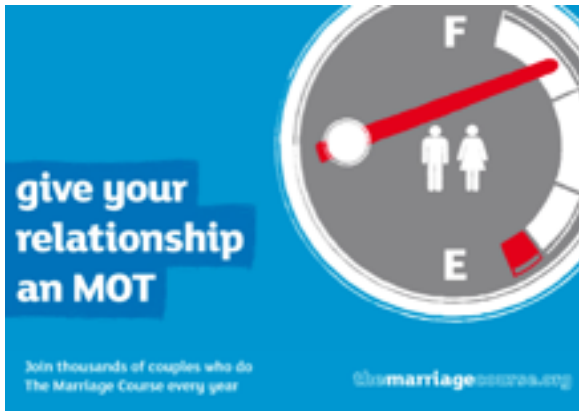
OPENING TIMES:

Saturday 10am–4pm
Tues–Fri 10am–5pm

FREE ADMISSION

Contact venue 01256 465902

www.hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/willis-museum
www.karenjjones.co.uk



**Give your relationship an 'MOT': Join Thousands of Couples who do the Marriage Course Every Year.
Starts Saturday 23rd April 2016**

We will be running The Marriage Course again for 7 weeks from Saturday 23rd April to Saturday 11th June 2016 (excluding 28th May) at the Immanuel Centre, Tadley United Reformed Church, Malthouse Lane, Tadley, Hants RG26 3NY, 7.15pm for 7.30pm meal. This is a great opportunity for couples to relax, have fun and give their marriage an 'MOT'.

The Marriage Course is for any couple who wants to invest in their relationship, whether you've been together for one or sixty-one years, whether you feel you have a strong relationship or are struggling and whether you are married or living together. The Marriage Course is based around a romantic table for two, giving you the space to relax and chat over a candlelit meal, dessert and coffee, with background music. You'll be given the time to talk on your own as a couple. Through private discussions as a couple around specific topics, you will discover new things about each other and grow in your understanding of each other. There is a small cost of £50 per couple for the full 7 evenings to help support some of the costs of meals and course materials (please speak to us if this is a problem).

For more details or to reserve a place contact:

**Mark & Julie Ward, Tel: 0118 970 1125,
mandjward@hotmail.co.uk,
Paul & Janet Gross Tel: 0118 970 0809
paulg@silchester.org**

A memo from God:

To: YOU
Date: TODAY
From: THE BOSS
Subject: YOURSELF
Reference: LIFE

I am God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help.

If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD [something for God to do] box.

All situations will be resolved, but in MY time, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold onto it by worrying about it: instead, focus on all the wonderful things that are present in your life now.

If you find yourself stuck in traffic: Don't despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work: think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad: think of the person who has never known what it is like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend: think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed her children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance: think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new grey hair in the mirror: think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what life is all about, asking what is my purpose?: be thankful. There are those who didn't live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities: remember, things could be worse. You could be one of them!

14.

Your Town Needs You!

Basingstoke Street Pastors needs more volunteers – we need more Street Pastors, Safe Hub Pastors and Prayer Pastors.

Why not join us for an Introduction Evening, with no obligation, to find out more about what it entails. Hear others talk about this exciting initiative and the impact it is having on our town and take the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

When: Thursday 3rd March at 7.30pm

Where: Sarum Hill Centre, Sarum Hill, RG21 8SR

If you can't make the night but are interested to find out more, please email us at Basingstoke@streetpastors.org.uk or call Malcolm Murray on 07899 913220

Called to *Serve*

Dates to note at London Street, unless otherwise stated:

March:

Wed	2 nd	2.00pm	Lent Study Group
		7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	3 rd	7.30pm	Lent House Group at Crossborough Gardens
Sat	5 th	10.00am	Elders' Away Day at Hook Life Church
Sun	6 th	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast led by Isobel Martin
		10.30am	Worship led by The Minster – Mothering Sunday
Wed	9 th	2.00pm	Lent Study Group
		7.30pm	Church Meeting
Thu	10 th	7.30pm	Lent House Group at Crossborough Gardens
Fri	11 th	7.30pm	Messy Church preparation meeting
Sun	13 th	10.30am	Worship led by The Minister and the ABC
			Closing date for articles for the April edition of FOCUS
Wed	16 th	2.00pm	Lent Study Group
Thu	17 th	7.30pm	Lent House Group at Crossborough Gardens
Sat	19 th		Synod at United Church, Winchester
Sun	20 th	10.30am	Worship led by The Minster – Palm Sunday (Parade Service)
Thu	24 th	2.00pm	Friendship Hour – Communion Service in the Sanctuary, followed by Refreshments in The Hook Room
		7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Service at Old Meeting, Tadley
			Last day for Oasis and Youth Café – reopening on 11 th April
Fri	25 th		Good Friday
Sat	26 th	3.30pm	Messy Church
Sun	27 th	6.30am	Easter Sunday Service on Tadley Common, followed by breakfast at Old Meeting
		10.30am	Worship led by The Minister – including Holy Communion

Regular Weekly Events and Meetings

at London Street unless otherwise stated

The Sanctuary is open for prayers every weekday from 9.30 to 10am and again from 12.15 to 12.30pm

Mondays

10am-1.30pm	OASIS Café in the Concourse
10.15am	Craft Group
2.30-4pm	HOME GROUP normally at 39 New Road: prayer time, Bible exploration and fellowship
3-5.30pm in Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students

Tuesdays

10am-1.30pm	OASIS Café in the Concourse
10am-12 noon	'LITTLE ANGELS' pre-school Club
3-5.30pm in Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students
5.45pm	(BEAVER SCOUTS — 8 th Basingstoke Colony
7pm	(CUB SCOUTS — 8 th Basingstoke Pack
7pm	(SCOUTS — 8 th Basingstoke Troop

wednesdays

10am-1.30pm	OASIS Café in the Concourse
10.30-12 noon	MEMORY TREE SOCIAL CLUB
12.30	Lunch time worship and prayer meeting
3-5.30pm in Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students

Thursdays

10am-1.30pm	OASIS Café in the Concourse
9.30-11.30am	TADLEY LITTLE ANGELS in the Immanuel Centre
10-11.30am	CCBBies Parent and Toddler Group at Christ Church, Chineham
2.30-3.30pm	FRIENDSHIP HOUR — 4th Thursday of each month
3-6pm in Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students
7.30pm	PRAYER MEETING at Tadley URC

Fridays

8-9.30pm	TGIF Youth Club at Christ Church, Chineham
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Saturdays

8-9am	PRAYER MEETING at Tadley
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London Street URC, Basingstoke seeks to ensure that all content and information published in this issue of FOCUS is current and accurate. The information included does not in any way constitute legal or professional advice and the church cannot be held liable for actions arising from its use.

**London Street United Reformed Church is a working name of Registered charity
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