



London Street

United Reformed Church

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



FOCUS
November 2016

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - **www.londonstreeturc.org.uk**

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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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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)

In September, 27 of us from Old Meeting and London Street went on a church weekend away to Lee Abbey in North Devon. The setting of the Abbey is beautiful. It is a very large house with a variety of outbuildings set in 280 acres of estate land. The views from the house overlooked sea and the rugged Devon coastline in one direction and rolling hills in all others. It is a deeply spiritual and restful place. We worshipped together, walked together, had hot chocolate on the beach together and, for those that wished to, we also had some Bible study time together. But none of it was compulsory. For those who sought solitude that could be found too. The staff offered great hospitality and often went out of their way to ensure that all felt relaxed. I pray that the Church weekend away is an event that we will repeat in future years and that more will join us next time.

It can be challenging to go on holiday with a diverse group of people whose only real link with one another is their faith. However, John's Gospel reminds us that people will recognise us as disciples of Jesus by the way we love one another in Christian love. Although I can be anxious about such events beforehand, I generally find time away with my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to be a community building activity, an opportunity to get to know one another better, to listen to one another more, to show more care towards one another. During the 'Paraclesis' course it is just such things that we have been discussing and putting into practice. Encouraging, nurturing, caring for, listening to and being empathetic towards one another.

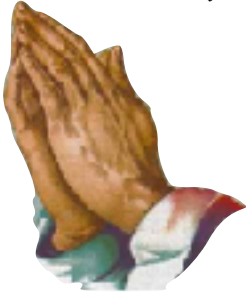
This is the shape of a community of love that is pretty unique to Church. The self-sacrificial giving of oneself to another is a mark of discipleship. But this should come out of our Christ-centred (servant-hearted) living not out of our own need or desire to be loved (for that would be self-centred!). This, I believe, is the culture that churches should strive towards. Of course disagreements and periods of falling out will occur at times but if the overall atmosphere is one of loving one another then forgiveness and learning to compromise for the greater good should be the more dominant themes.

We are all pilgrims on this journey of faith. But this journey of faith has no security of road maps and satellite navigation systems. This is a journey in which we must learn to trust in God for our direction, protection and provision. We should, therefore, be continually moving on in faith, changing and growing as the body of Christ. Growing individually and corporately into the full stature of Christ. I pray that we may continue to journey forward. Drawing closer together in Christian love and closer to Christ individually but also facing out into community, to bless the communities in which we sit. We are here as an expression of God's love for the world. This is a love so great that God sent God's one and only son, Jesus, to live and dwell among us as an expression of that love. A love that even died for us on the cross so that we don't have to. So let us be joyful at the gift of freedom from sin given to us through Jesus and let us radically love others as he has so radically loved us.

Yours in Christ, Kay

N.B Ffald-y-Brenin house of prayer training at St. Leonard's Oakley, Saturday, 14th January, 2017 10am-4pm (bring your own lunch, drinks provided).

CIRCLE OF PRAYER:



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

Short Term: Chris Ayland; Kay Blackwell and family, Kay Cook; Peter Dixon and family; May Honeyball and family; Lesley Harriman and family; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Richard Morgans; Pam Ralph; Doina Risnita; Frank

Tovey and family following the death of Winnie on 21st October; Les and Iris Wenham and family; Joy Williams.

Long Term: Christine and Tony Addis; Judith Best (mother of Mark Best); Annette Bowers (daughter of Sheila Munro); Beverley Cantwell; Morag Hill; Christine and Ron Holt; Marian Kenward; Maggie Morgans and family; Rachel Patterson; Hyacinth and Eaton Ridguard; Helen Rolton; Molly Shaw; Betty Shipway; Gwen Simms (mother of Tina Digweed); Joyce Smith; Fay Spurr; Chris and Suzanne Tolley; Sarah Williams; Katherine Witts (daughter of Sarah Williams).

Prayer Focus

John 3: 1-15

V 9 ‘Nicodemus said to him “How can these things be?”’

I have a soft spot for Nicodemus. Here is this man, a Pharisee, a respected member of the religious ruling class. He was someone who should have had no difficulty in understand what Jesus was saying and discussing it with him, man to man. Yet he appears to have been completely nonplussed. This teaching didn’t fit with the traditional teaching of the Jewish religion and current understanding. The language was quite alien and way out, Jesus saying “you must not be surprised at my saying ‘you must be born again’.” But Nicodemus was surprised, he didn’t know how to relate to these radical ideas. Yet this man Jesus was having an electrifying effect on people, through his teaching and the miracles he performed. Nicodemus recognised that there was something amazing and fascinating here but he was out of his depth.

The next we hear of Nicodemus in the Gospels is when he pulls his fellow Pharisees up when they want to condemn Jesus without a fair trial, a move that was illegal. It would appear that Nicodemus hadn't gone back to the accepted way of seeing this upstart. Later, after Jesus had been crucified, we learn that Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple and Nicodemus had been given Jesus' body to bury. Nicodemus supplied myrrh and aloes to be used in the burial, a vast amount that would have been suitable for a royal burial, not for that of a foolish, misguided young preacher from Galilee.

It would appear that Nicodemus had not ditched this weird, otherworldly teaching. He waited, wondered, maybe talked to others, or heard Jesus teach more and maybe he was at the crucifixion when the penny dropped and he acknowledged that Jesus truly was the Messiah.

Sometimes there are teachings in the Bible that we find difficult to accept, they don't seem to fit with other aspects of the faith, or they don't fit with current ways of seeing life. Perhaps, like Nicodemus, it is better to put our doubts 'on the back burner', acknowledge them and wait until the penny drops into place.

Prayer Loving Lord Jesus, your ways are not our ways, your truths are often so difficult to get hold of, let alone to apply to modern life. But you are the way to life in all its fullness. We pray for the willingness to be patient and open to whatever you want to teach us, so that we can live the life you have given us more fully. Amen

Focus for prayer:

- All those who are confused, disorientated, or disillusioned that they may find the truth to help them move on.
- All people in places of responsibility and authority, men and women like us, that they may be people blessed with integrity, open mindedness and willing to respond gladly to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- All the people of God that they, like Joseph of Arimathea, may be willing to be a friend to someone who is seeking, like Nicodemus and support them in their journey.



Flower Rota -

Nov 6th Joyce Cook
 Nov 13th Remembrance
 Nov 20th Sheila Munro
 Nov 27th Owen Collins (Advent)

Geriatric Thoughts on Uselessness

It's no fun being a 'Has Been'
 when you've passed your 'sell by date'
 and you know your friends are thinking
 'He will soon be called the late!'
 So, what can a 'has been' do then
 to show he's still alive
 and he hasn't lost his marbles
 though he cannot jump nor jive?
 Blind John Milton gave his answer
 in his poem that is great
 in writing that '*They also serve
 who only stand and wait*'



Anon.

The Shipwreck Survivor

One balmy day in the South Pacific, a navy ship espied smoke coming from one of three huts on an uncharted island. Upon arriving at the shore they were met by a shipwreck survivor. He said, "I'm so glad you're here! I've been alone on this island for more than five years!" The captain replied, "If you're all alone on the island why do I see THREE huts." The survivor said, "Oh. Well, I live in one, and go to church in another." "What about the THIRD hut?" asked the captain. "That's where I USED to go to church."

Wessex and South Western Synods' Big Day Out

**Saturday 1st July 2017. The Burgate School, Fordingbridge,
Hants. SP6 1EZ**

“The Big Day Out” – a Joint Synod Day

Welcome to the first of a monthly series of newsletters about “The Big Day Out” – a fun, celebration day out for **all** members, friends, and young people from **all** of the churches in the Wessex and South Western Synods. Put the date – **Saturday 1st July 2017** – in your diary now! This first Newsletter gives you a brief view of what is being planned. Further Newsletters will follow, at roughly monthly intervals, giving more details as they are finalised. In particular, we hope to publish full details of ticket prices, and how they can be booked, in the November Newsletter.

The Venue – The Burgate School in Fordingbridge

This secondary Academy for young people aged 11-18 has a wide range of modern facilities and buildings set in beautiful green space. The whole site is on a single level, so there will be no stairs to climb, and there will be plenty of room for everyone and for all the activities being planned.

The Theme – “Feasts and Festivals”

In line with the URC's national theme for 2017, our theme will be “Feasts and Festivals”.

What will be happening?

There are a whole range of activities being planned for the Day, with something interesting for you and for everyone. You can choose which activities you take part in, which exhibitions you would like to visit, or simply sit down quietly and chat to other people there, from churches all over the Wessex and South Western Synods. The activities listed below are **just some** of those being planned – others will be added over the next few months.

Drama and Dance

We hope to have separate drama and dance workshops running in the morning of the Day, and some of what they do may also be included in the final Act of Worship at the end of the Day. If you wish, you will be able to go and watch some of the morning rehearsals for the drama, as well as seeing the full performance in the afternoon.

Artistic exhibitions

You can contribute to a number of different artistic exhibitions – including such things as painting, photography, handicraft, poetry, hymn-writing, all linked to the “Feasts and Festivals” themes. Create your own art before the Day, bring it with you, and all contributions will be on display during the Day. Details of the various things you could submit will be published in a later Newsletter.

Church Exhibitions

Each church in the Synod is being asked to produce a display, for a small tabletop, of how they celebrated a feast or festival during the year leading up to the Big Day Out. There are around 200 churches in the Synods – and there will be one table for each church. Come along, show us how you celebrate, and learn about your sister churches and what they do.

Seminars/Workshops

There will be a wide range of seminars and workshops organised to learn about and discuss different aspects of the theme. Come along to hear eminent speakers and to give your own views. Workshops will be of a more practical ‘hands-on’ nature, including bread-making sessions!

More details of the various sessions will be provided in a later Newsletter, and once they are published, you will be able to book your place on those that you wish to attend. But book early, as there will only be a limited number of places for each session!

Children’s and Young People’s Activities

There will be a full programme of activities organised specifically for the younger generation and many of the other activities will also be suitable for young people to join in. See a later Newsletter for more details. We want to make the Day one for all the Church Family. So, to encourage young people to come along, the ticket prices for them will be kept to an absolute minimum, and we are inviting churches to cover those ticket costs for all of their own young people.

The Feasts and Festivals Cake

To help make the Day a real celebratory feast, we are asking each church within the Synods to bring a small piece of cake, decorated with the name of the church on it. All of the pieces – one from each church – will be of a standard shape and size, and they will be assembled together on the Day to form the Feasts and Festivals Cake.

This will be on display for a short while at lunchtime for all to see – before we cut it up and eat it as part of our festive celebrations.

Music

Music and choral work has been a part of our tradition since the beginning of our churches, and there will be musical and choral performances for you to listen to, or take part in if you wish, during the Day.

Worship

Our celebration day will end with a formal act of worship, culminating in the sacrament of Holy Communion. We will rejoice, we will remember, and we will respond to the challenges of our Christian faith today. We will worship with all those in our sister churches and we will make a joyful noise to our Lord. At the end we will go our separate ways strengthened and inspired, the better able to witness to Christ in our own local community.

Catering

Everyone who comes to the Day should bring their own packed lunch. Facilities will be provided for you to sit down and eat your lunch with others attending. Tea, coffee, and soft drinks will be provided at the venue.

Who is the Big Day Out for?

It is for everyone in the URC Church family in the Wessex and South Western Synod areas. If you are reading this, then it is for you and all your family.

Updates next month.

The greatest man in history is Jesus!

He had no servants yet people called him Master.

He had no degree yet people called him Teacher.

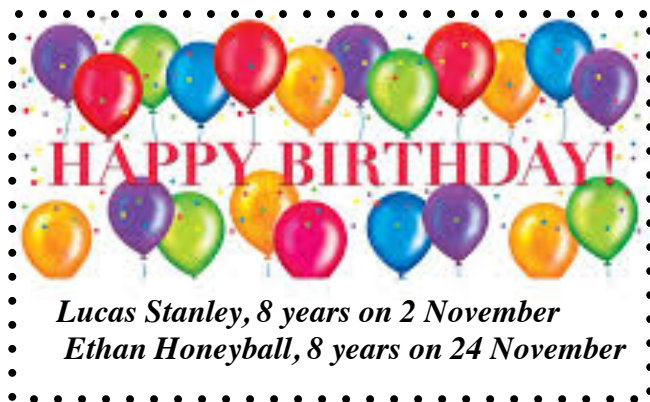
He had no medicines yet people called him Healer.

He had no army yet kings feared him.

He won no military battles yet he conquered the world.

He committed no crime yet they crucified him.

He was buried in a tomb yet he lives today.



Let's celebrate! - A message from the URC

The year 2017 is special in the life of the United Reformed Church - and we've plenty to celebrate! It's 500 years since the Lutheran Reformation, 100 years since the ordination of Constance Coltman, the first woman to enter congregational ministry, 45 years since the URC came into being, more than 80 years since Pilots started and 25 years since Commitment for Life began. These events all played a big part in making us who we are, and also give great opportunities for one or more parties in 2017! So, under the banner of Feasts and Festivals, all churches are invited to celebrate and we'll hear more about this over the coming months.

Prayers for others and ourselves

During the morning service we have become familiar with members of the congregation leading the prayers for others and ourselves. Kay and the elders would be delighted to welcome more members to lead the prayers. You don't have to do it on your own. For example, It would be wonderful to see a family taking part or a couple.

If you would like to be included on the rota, then speak with Owen.

Want to know more before making a decision? Have a word with Kay, Owen or your elder.

Thank you.

Fun Quiz Night !



**Saturday 19th
Nov 7.30pm**

Tadley United Reformed
Church, Immanuel Centre,
Main Road, Tadley,
RG26 3NY

Teams of 4-6

£5/head

Children £3

Cheese Board included,
bring drinks & nibbles

**Raising
funds for
children's
work in the
UK & Africa**

For further information:

George & Ena: 01256 850285

georgeandena@gmail.com

Mark & Julie: 0118 9701125

mandjward@hotmail.co.uk

Join us for Christmas Day



You are warmly invited to spend Christmas Day with us this year. Enjoy good food and celebrate in the Christmas spirit, on this special day.

You will be warmly welcomed at the Immanuel Centre, Tadley URC at 12.00 noon for coffee drinks & biscuits when the festivities will begin.

Afterwards enjoy the Christmas atmosphere with good company, conversation and soft music as Christmas dinner is prepared, served and enjoyed!



Then relax with an afternoon of fun, music and easy entertainment.

Enjoy Christmas with friends

If you are able we would also love to welcome you at our morning Christmas service which starts at 10.30am (and which will of course finish in time for the 12.00 noon festivities!). However, please do not feel that you have to come if you are unable.



You would also be welcome at any of our other Christmas services. Please just ask us for further details of these.

There is no cost for this day. Just come along and be with friends.

If you can make it we would love to hear from you by 11th December (or sooner) so we can organize food and catering!

Reply to or more information from:

Mark & Julie

Tel: 0118 970 1125,
mandjward@hotmail.co.uk



Love from all your friends already discovered.... & those still to know. Be a part of our family this Christmas.



Daily Bible Readings for November:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1st	36:5-12	John	13	16th	71:14-24	1 Thessalonians 3
2nd	68:28-35	"	14	17th	149	" 4
3rd	145	"	15	18th	41	" 5
4th	38	"	16	19th	72	Reflection
5th	69	Reflection		20th	"	"
6th		"		21st	150	2 Thessalonians 1
7th	146	John	17	22nd	1	" 2
8th	107	"	18	23rd	108	" 3
9th	70	"	19	24th	2	2 Peter 1
10th	147	"	20	25th	42	" 2
11th	40:1-8	"	21	26th	73:21-28	Reflection
12th	71:1-13	Reflection		27th	"	"
13th		"		28th	90	2 Peter 3
14th	148	1 Thessalonians	1	29th	111	Jude 1
15th	40:9-17	"	2	30th	3	Revelation

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I was reading a technical magazine about Linux and open source software and came across a reference to a Christian organisation named SIL International (www.sil.org). My interest was piqued. Why might a Christian organisation be involved with open source licensing? The computing world is full of people who would follow Richard Dawkins' ideas, and yet this Christian organisation was getting good press. A little research revealed SIL International's Statement of Faith and Service: "SIL's service with ethnolinguistic minority communities is motivated by the belief that all people are created in the image of God, and that languages and cultures are part of the richness of God's creation." In order to enable language minorities to continue to use their native language in a world of computers and smart 'phones they need fonts to express the characters used in their writing. As part of their work SIL International develop these necessary fonts and then publish them using their own licence terms. These licence terms have been adopted to become the de facto standard for open source fonts of all kinds!

I find it inspiring to discover how human skills can be used in so many different ways to witness to our faith.

John Carrick Smith

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Dates to note at London Street, unless otherwise stated:

November:

Wed	2 nd	1.30pm	Christianity Explored Course
		7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	3 rd	7.30pm	Paraclesis Course
Fri	5 th	2.00pm	CORE Skills training at Petersfield URC (see October FOCUS, page 8)
Sun	6 th	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast led by Ian and Jenny McCloy
		10.30am	Worship – led by The Minister
Wed	9 th	1.30pm	Christianity Explored course
		6.30pm	Talk by Chris Evans (from the Synod) on legal obligations (see October FOCUS, page 8)
Thu	10 th	7.30pm	Paraclesis course
Sat	12 th	10.00am	Night Shelter training for volunteers at Sarum Hill Centre – Repeated at 2.00pm
Sun	13 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Rev Julian Macro - Remembrance Sunday

Deadline for articles for December/January FOCUS

Wed	16 th	10.15am	3Cs
		1.30pm	Christianity Explored course
Thu	17 th	7.30pm	Eco Church presentation AT CHRIST CHURCH, CHINEHAM
Sun	20 th	10.30am	Worship (including Holy Communion) – led by The Minister
Sat	19 th		Synod at High Cross, Camberley
Thu	24 th	2.30pm	Friendship Hour - Speaker from The Falklands Trust – All welcome
Sat	26 th	3.30pm	Top of Town Messy Church
Sun	27 th	10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister, followed by Church Meeting (Elders' Election) inc. lunch

Preachers and dates to note for Tadley:

Sun	6 th		Brian Baldwin
Sun	13 th		Revd Kay Blackwell
Sat	19 th	7.30pm	Fun Quiz Night at Immanuel Centre
Sun	20 th		Andy How
Sun	27 th		Mark Ward
Sun	4 th	Dec	Revd Kay Blackwell

Regular 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 (Term time)
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
7-8.00pm	PRAYER MEETING at Tadley URC or St Paul's

Wednesdays:

10am-1.30pm	OASIS Café in the Concourse
10.30-12 noon	MEMORY TREE SOCIAL CLUB
10.15-11.30am	3Cs on 3rd Wednesday of each month
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

Fridays:

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