



London Street

United Reformed Church

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



FOCUS
March 2017

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.basingstokeurc.org.uk

MINISTER:

Revd Kay Blackwell (*Day off - Monday*)
6 Camberry Close
Basingstoke RG21 3AG
Tel: Vestry - 01256 242152
Mobile - 07582 056286
e.mail - revkblackwell@gmail.com

CHURCH SECRETARY:

Mr Owen Collins
15 Cyprus Road
Hatch Warren
Basingstoke RG22 4UY
Tel: 01256 477425
e.mail - secretary@londonstreeturc.org.uk

TREASURER:

Karen Bell
47 Tobago Close, Popley,
Basingstoke RG24 9PX
e.mail - treasurer@londonstreeturc.org.uk

HALL LETTING:

Mr Peter Bentall
43 Cliddesden Road,
Basingstoke RG21 3EP
Tel: 01256 475547
e.mail: phbentall@hotmail.com

FOCUS:

Mrs Christine Robertson
1208 Skyline Plaza, Alencon Link,
Basingstoke RG21 7AZ
Tel: 01256 869968
e.mail: christina774robertson@btinternet.com

Tadley (Old Meeting) URC

10.00am Prayer Time followed by Worship at 10.30
every Sunday

“TASTE” Youth Event at 7pm at the Point (behind the Community
Centre)

Minister:

Revd Kay Blackwell

Church Secretary:

Paul Gross
22 Pelican Road, Pamber Heath RG26 3EN
Tel: 0118 970 0809
e.mail: paulg@silchester.org

Treasurer:

Mark Ward
10 Hartleys, Silchester, Reading RG7 2QE
e.mail: mandjward@hotmail.co.uk

View from the Manse:

“How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” (Psalm 82: 2-4)

This week I went to the cinema to see a new film called ‘Lion’ which is based on an amazing true story. It was a brilliant film that had me weeping all the way through. I recommend that you take a good supply of tissues with you should you wish to go and see it! It is the story of a little boy (around 5 years old) who was raised in a loving family of mother, younger sister and older brother. The family lived in a remote and poverty stricken part of India. Through a series of unfortunate events the little boy ended up lost, thousands of miles away from his family and was eventually adopted by a loving Australian couple living in Tasmania. This could have been the happy ending. The boy was loved and well educated and living comfortably as Australian. However, as a young man in his twenties, the call back to his past life and family became an obsession that he could not shake off. The void left by his birth mother drove him to seek her out in the most impossible of circumstances. This film contained issues of poverty, both economic and social; of global inequalities; of society’s treatment of children and more specifically orphans; and it also dealt with people’s personal sense of spiritual lostness.

The ‘Night Light Winter Shelter’ will come to an end on the last day of February. They have been a huge success. They have been running since 1st December. It took a little while to build up relationships and trust amongst the street homeless community. However, since Christmas the shelters have been pretty busy. They have provided food, beds, entertainment, company and safety for up to fifteen street homeless for five nights a week. It has been hard work but it has also been very rewarding work. Since the shelters started, around six have moved on to more permanent housing and one has returned to work. Of the regular night shelter attendees we have noticed many looking healthier and several have reduced their intake of alcohol. It has been a privilege to journey with them over these three months and to learn more about the daily struggles and often chaotic circumstances of their lives. Amongst the street homeless the sense of spiritual lostness is often quite profound. We have been able to express the love of Jesus through offering this hospitality, to show in a tangible way that we, and Jesus, care about them.

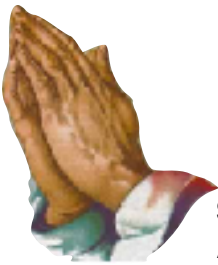
The more I read the Gospels, the more I get a sense of Jesus calling us to minister to the least, the lost and the lowly. To the orphans, widows, poor and oppressed. What Jesus demonstrated to the world turned the world's expectations upside-down. The Pharisees, scribes and Sadducees, had studied and worked hard at maintaining spiritual holiness and ritual cleanliness, which often demanded separation from those in society regarded as sinners. Their quest for religious purity brought them respect and good standing in the community. Their role gave them status and security. But in their human desire for righteousness with God they seemed to have lost sight of love. Jesus put together the command of '*Loving the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul*' with the law of '*loving your neighbour as yourself*'. Jesus radically placed one alongside the other as the greatest commandments. Then Jesus taught that your neighbour was anyone you meet, especially when they need your help. Especially those neighbours who are among the least, the lost and the lowly in society. That is those who feel oppressed, lonely, isolated, voiceless, powerless or feel spiritually lost. Jesus showed that in the topsy-turvy world of the kingdom of God such folk are the ones that will become blessed.

As we journey into the season of Lent let us be mindful of those whom the Lord wishes to bless. Perhaps rather than giving something up over Lent, as many do, we as a faith community could engage with the Christian Aid '*Count your blessings*' Lent challenge..... '*Based on the beautiful hymn "When I needed a neighbour, were you there?", our Lent calendar Count Your Blessings guides you through to Easter with daily ways to give thanks for life's blessings. You'll find inspiring opportunities to give, act and pray for your global neighbours*' (from the Christian Aid website). These are some of the neighbours that we can help through sponsorship, action and prayer. But there are many '*neighbours*' around us every day within our community here that we need to bless too. Let us together seek out those who most need the love and the healing touch of Jesus. All of us have the ability to pray for our neighbours.

Yours in Christ, Kay

Eldership: Non-serving Elders are invited to the Elders'

Away Day at St. Leonard's Church, Oakley on 29th April, 2017. Please let Kay know if you will be attending.



CIRCLE OF PRAYER:

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

Short Term: Katherine Davey (daughter-in-law of Anne and Dick); Tina Digweed and family following the death of Tina's mother on 31st January; Richard, Antonia, Grace and Zach Holland (Claire Macro's family in Canada); Claire Macro; Richard Morgans; Pam Ralph; Doina Rasnita; Hyacinth Ridguard on the death of Eaton on 9th February; Suzanne Tolley on the death of Chris on 17th February; Mark and Julie Ward.

Long Term: Annette Bowers (daughter of Sheila Munro); Beverley Cantwell; Eric Clucas; Christine and Ron Holt; Maggie Morgans and family; Rachel Patterson; Helen Rolton; Molly Shaw; Sarah Williams; Katherine Witts (daughter of Sarah Williams).



Daily Bible Readings for March:

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

Flower Rota - March



5th E. Ridguard Funeral
12th Julie and David Bath
19th J. Hooper
26th Eileen Poulter

Anyone wishing to help with the flower arranging or by donating towards the cost of the Church Flower Decorations, please contact Liz Lindsay. Thank you.

I'd like to thank everyone who prayed for and sent good wishes to Annette during the whole of 2016 when she was receiving treatment for bowel cancer. On 9th February she was given the good news that she is now cancer-free. Thank you all for your support.

Sheila Munro



Daniel Bentall, 17 years on 7 March
Sylvia Reynolds, 85 years on 12 March
Les Wenham, 86 years on 20 March

Memorial Service for the Life of Winnie Tovey

Everyone who knew Winnie is welcome to join Frank, Winnie's husband, and their daughter Jenny at a Memorial Service to celebrate Winnie's life which will be held in the chapel at the Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital on Wednesday 15th March at 12.00 noon. The Service will be followed by refreshments in the ARK Centre, a short walk from the chapel.

Prayer Focus

1 Cor. 1: 26-31 Brothers (and sisters) think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many..... But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.....

The year is gathering pace, it is Lent and will soon be Easter, spring and then it will be May, June and then the 'Who Cares' mission starts. With our fellow Christians in the town we will have the opportunity to help with the survey, to ask, listen and then hopefully be able to respond to friend or stranger in whatever way seems appropriate; words, actions, silence, a hug, a prayer or an invitation to coffee, Memory Tree, or an information event. I imagine for many of us the whole idea of this up front approach feels quite daunting; not our normal way of doing things. Yet we are called to be witnesses in a hurting world that does not now automatically come to the church for help, support and a different way of seeing things. Very many of us would, I am sure, love the folk we meet to share the joy, the assurance and the hope we have in knowing that the God of love loves us and so also loves everyone else too. It's not rocket science. You don't have to be clever, or eloquent, or be able to quote chapter and verse, to witness, we just have to say it as we know it.

When I was working at the hospital some years ago I had a patient, an elderly man who was physically frail and had dementia. The plan was for him to go home to live with family but he was very depressed and could see no positives in life. No amount of saying that his family loved him and wanted him home and that the hospital staff, who he had got to trust also felt it was the best possible option would sway him. I knew he needed to know someone cared. And I couldn't think of anything else to say, so I took a deep breath and said "There is someone who loves you" and he said quite belligerently "Who is that?" And I said "God loves you and sent his son" and waited expecting a derisory laugh or remark but instead he said quietly. "Yes, he suffered too didn't he?" With which it was as though someone had switched the light on in him. His whole demeanour changed and he became alert and positive. I nearly fell off my chair! The dementia didn't go away. The following morning he couldn't remember our conversation but his outlook

remained positive and every one could see the change. He went home a happy man. I wasn't in the habit of talking about my faith at work, unless someone raised the subject. I have to be honest, I didn't expect a positive response but it was all I had to give him. It was a real joy to see that man so changed.

That event really taught me a lesson. All I can give is what I have known of God's grace in my life, the rest is up to Him. We can't know all the answers but God does and he knows who he wants to bring us into contact with.

Can I encourage you this Lent to pray and think and ask God how he wants you to be a part of 'Who Cares?' It doesn't have to be lots, it can be a little. If you want to know more look out for more information or ask Kay or one of the Elders.

Prayer – Loving Lord Jesus, you know me, you love me and I would love others to know you too. Please give me the courage to share that knowledge with others, as you bring them into contact with me. Amen

Focus for prayer:

The Night Shelter - for guests as they return to sleeping rough every night. Pray for their safety, health and that plans to meet their future needs may be formed and come to fruition.

One Church Basingstoke – for a coming together of the different congregations, in working together, in worship, witness and fellowship. Pray for the executive and for the church leaders that they may truly commit the time to fellowship together.

Youth Café – For the development of the work with the youngsters, to meet their varied needs and increasing interest in the things of faith.

The 'Who Cares?' Mission – For all the congregations in North Hampshire as they consider and plan their part in the survey and their response to this. Pray for all the members that they would want to play their part.

Parents, One parent families – Pray blessings on them that they may know love, patience, understanding, forgiveness, a listening ear and enough sleep and anything else you think is needed.

HANG ON . . . IT'S GOING TO BE AN ADVENTURE.

**Come and get involved. We meet on a
Tuesday evening at...**

Beavers - 17:45 to 18:45

Cubs - 19:00 to 20:30

Scouts 19:00 to 21:00

8th Basingstoke

United Reformed Church

London Street

Basingstoke, RG21 7NU

Call us on 07783 639216

or email join@8thbasingstoke.org

www.8thbasingstoke.org



Excitement:

A boss wondered why one of his most valued employees had not rung in sick one day. Having an urgent problem with a main computer, he 'phoned the employee's home number and was greeted with a child's whisper, 'Hello?'

'Is your Daddy home?' he asked.

'Yes', whispered the small voice.

'May I speak to him?'

The child whispered 'No.'

Surprised and wanting to talk to an adult, the boss asked, 'Is your Mummy there?'

'Yes.'

'Well may I speak to her, then?'

Again, the small voice whispered 'No.'

Hoping there was somebody with whom he could leave a message, the boss asked, 'Is anybody else there?'

'Yes,' whispered the child, 'a policeman.'

Wondering what the police would be doing at his employee's home, the boss asked, 'May I speak to the policeman?'

'No, he's busy,' whispered the child.

'Busy doing what?'

'Talking to Mummy and Daddy and the Fireman,' came the whispered reply.

Growing more worried as he heard a loud background noise coming down the phone, the boss asked, 'What's that noise?'

'A helicopter', answered the whispering voice.

'What's going on there?' demanded the boss, now really apprehensive.

Again, whispering, the child answered, 'The search team has just landed a helicopter.'

Alarmed, concerned, and a little frustrated, the boss asked 'What are they searching for?'

Still whispering, the young voice replied with a muffled giggle... 'ME!'





CALLING ALL SINGERS!

As a follow on from the Easter Walk of Witness we have permission to do a **Flashmob this Easter Monday morning** in Castle Square at 11.00am and again at 12.00.

We need singers who will perform the Flashmob, it will be fun and a witness to the people of Basingstoke. All abilities welcome.

We are having a meeting to organise, plan and rehearse this event on Tuesday 7th March, 7.30pm at Buckskin Evangelical Church.

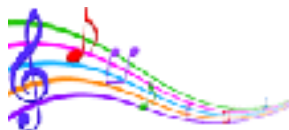
We will also have to have other rehearsals before the event and these dates can be agreed at our first meeting.

Please let me know by email if you can take part, or if you need more information.

Blessings,

Bob Smith.

On behalf of Onechurch.



Email: pastor.bob1@btinternet.com

**Croydon Philharmonic Choir
and**

**Basingstoke Choral Society
present**

**Bach ST MATTHEW PASSION
at THE ANVIL, Basingstoke
on**

Saturday, 8th April at 7.30pm

*Evangelist: **Timothy Langston**
Jesus: **John Lofthouse***

*Box Office: 01256 844244
Or book online at anvilarts.org.uk*

Although the following article refers to a new season of Autumn sport, I think it is just as relevant throughout the year:

Time to be as passionate about religion as they are about sports.

by Paul van Essen (greaterlife.org.uk)

‘.....for many of us the anticipation of a new season of sport fills our thoughts and our conversation. We often hear it said “their sport is their religion!”

‘That’s an interesting thought. I have taken a little time to isolate five key attributes of people whose friends might suggest that sport is their religion. See if you agree.

1. Those involved are enthusiastic and often raise their hands and voices.
2. They do not have to be pressured into attending. The Game (or “service”) is a priority and other things take second place.
3. They part with money and are willing to travel as part of their “religious experience”.
4. They really enjoy it especially if they win. But win or lose they will be back.
5. The meeting up with others who feel the same way is a very important part of the experience.

‘We all know people whose life looks just like that in regards to a particular sport.

‘But when we say “their sport is their religion” we are intimating that this is exactly what “God and real Christianity” should look like. Wow!

‘Could it be that we humans are wired in such a way that we need something in our lives to incorporate those five attributes? Is it possible that rugby or football has become a religion because that basic need was not met in the “venues” that represented God? And if “God” and “Church” were presented differently - excellently and passionately - might people even change their religion?’



Here's a question...

How much food does the Basingstoke Foodbank give out monthly?

Answer...

We have averaged just under 3 tonnes of food (2.8 tonnes) each month over the past 6 months.



We need your spare plastic bags!

We go through SO MANY recycled supermarket bags when packing up food for clients. If you have a bag filled with bags looking for a home, please drop it off at our centre in the Trinity Methodist Church hall.

The Reverend Chris Tolley died on 17th February. He and Suzanne were active members of London Street prior to Chris training for the Ministry, and he went on to minister at churches in Cheshire and Pembrokeshire. He sent a letter which was displayed on the Christmas card board in December. If you didn't manage to read it then and would like to do so now, please have a word with Jean Holton (322301) who has a copy.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Suzanne.

Directory Amendment:

The Knoll family telephone number is **416276**

March Dates to note at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Wed	1 st	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Sat	4 th	10.00am- 2.00pm	Elders' development training part 3
Sun	5 th	8.30am 10.30am	Prayer Breakfast led by Jenny and Ian Worship – led by The Minister and Trevor Rolf
Tue	7 th	7.30pm	Onechurch Meeting at Buckskin Evangelical Church for Singers for Easter Monday Flashmob (see p.11)
Fri	10 th	7.30pm	Messy Church preparation meeting
Sat	11 th	8.00am 9.30am- 4.00pm	ABC Breakfast Who Cares? Project Training
Sun	12 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Dr Andy Taylor
Wed	15 th	10.30am 12 noon	3C's Basingstoke Hospital Chapel - Memorial Service for Winnie Tovey.
Sat	18 th		Synod Meeting at The Beacon Church, Canford Heath
Sun	19 th	10.30am	Worship, including Holy Communion – led by The Minister
Thu	23 rd	2.30pm	Friendship Hour – Tea/Coffee from 2pm What's been happening at London Street recently?
Fri	24 th	3.30 for 4.00pm 7.00 for 7.30pm	Care for the Family (Parenting Course) Do. Do
Sat	25 th	3.30pm	Top of Town Messy Church
Sun	26 th	10.30am	BRITISH SUMMER TIME BEGINS Worship (Mothering Sunday) – led by the The Minister

**ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF FOCUS SHOULD
BE WITH CHRISTINE ROBERTSON BY SUNDAY, 12TH MARCH**

Tadley Dates for March:

	Preachers:	Welcome/Coffee:
Sun 5 th	– Peter Bentall	George and Ena
12 th	– Revd Kay Blackwell (Café-style Church)	Mandy and Dave
19 th	– Andy Dickens	Ladies Cell
26 th	– Brenda Baldwin	Janet and Paul
Apl 2 nd	– Revd Kay Blackwell	

and for Easter:



Thu 13th April, 7.30pm – **Maundy Thursday** service at Old Meeting

Fri 14th, 9.30am – **Good Friday Walk of Witness** – walk from Tadley Common Methodist Church, ending at St Paul's with a service at 11am.

There will also be a '**Prayer Labyrinth**' from 11am to 4pm at the Immanuel Centre, suitable particularly for families. Drinks and refreshments will be available.



Sun 16th, 5.45am **Easter Sunday Dawn Service** at Tadley Skate Park followed by a hearty breakfast in the Immanuel Centre at 8 am.



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
12.15pm	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
----------	---

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
London Street (Basingstoke) United Reformed Church Charity [reg. no.1130801]**