



London Street

United Reformed Church

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



AND



FOCUS
DECEMBER, 2018/JANUARY, 2019

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.basingstokeurc.org.uk

MINISTER:

Revd Kay Blackwell (*Day off - Monday*)
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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@basingstokeurc.org.uk

TREASURER:

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47 Tobago Close, Popley,
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HALL LETTING:

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FOCUS:

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1208 Skyline Plaza, Alencon Link,
Basingstoke RG21 7AZ
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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 Community Centre)

Minister:

Revd Kay Blackwell

Church Secretary:

Paul Gross
22 Pelican Road, Pamber Heath RG26 3EN
Tel: 0118 970 0809
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Treasurer:

Mark Ward
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View from the manse:

'I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.' (Luke 1:3-4)

I just wonder what God makes of our foolishness! Does God laugh or cry in exasperation and anger at the faithlessness of his people? The words of the ancient prophets can feel eerily relevant to modern society at times.

The celebration of Christmas has become almost completely secular....how have we let this happen? The other day I visited some local garden centres as they are often the best sources of Christmas decorations. I was trying to source some bits and pieces for craft activities during advent. However, the more I looked, the more my heart sank at the lack of reference to anything to do with the birth of Jesus. For your festive tree you can hang any assortment of weird and wonderful things from plastic cows to sparkly dogs and to shiny shrimps. But the 'pièce du résistance' this year, amongst the tree hanging ornaments, has to be the glittery unicorns! What on earth have unicorns got to do with Christmas?! Hold on..... lets just rewind this!!! The atheists in society have campaigned hard to remove symbols of Christianity from public life because they deem it to be untrue. In their thinking, faith in Jesus is a fantasy based on the fabrication of an all-powerful God who, in their minds, just does not exist. For them the whole story of Jesus, the chosen one of God, born in a stable, is just a lie, and a dangerous one at that. Yet for some reason mythical creatures such as unicorns are acceptable. Mythical unicorns can be brought in all shapes and sizes and at great expensebut to sell *that* lie to our children is ok. What a weirdly distorted world we live in. Luke, at the start of his Gospel wanted to investigate 'everything carefully from the very first'; his concern was that through eyewitness accounts and going back to sources close to Jesus we 'may know the truth concerning the things' .

My daughter's friend comes from France. Her mother likes to come to England to celebrate Christmas now because it feels like a 'proper' Christmas. In her hometown you are not permitted to put up Christmas lights outside or in your windows because the secularisation of their society has gone to such an extreme that to publicly display any celebration of Christmas is deemed offensive to others! I pray that we are not blindly heading that way too. To be honest, I do not believe that Jesus was actually born on the day we celebrate as 'Christmas day', but I do celebrate that Jesus was born, that he came, the Holy one of God, born in a stable for ordinary people like you and me. Christmas without Christ is nonsensical! Christ is the 'truth' that I live for. Jesus came as God's light into an often-dark world. So, let us display our lights and nativity scenes and Angels (angels not fairies!) with joy and hope in our hearts. Let us celebrate that Jesus came and hope for His return, his second coming, that all things may be made new and his truth and justice will reign forever.

Throughout Advent, on Thursday evenings at the manse we will, with the help of Tom Wright's book 'Advent for Everyone', be exploring Luke's Gospel. If you can't come along, why not do the study in your own home and discuss what you find with others in the congregation. In the new year we will start looking at, and working through some of the 'Holy Habits' outlined in Andrew Roberts' book of the same name. So why not treat yourself to that book for Christmas in preparation for 2019. In the new year, on Thursday evenings, from 14th February, we will be running an eight week Bible course, so mark the dates in your diary and details will follow.

So, Christmas is coming! May yours be filled with the truth, joy and peace of Jesus Christ, and be unicorn free!

Blessings to you and your families for this festive season.

Yours in Christ, Kay





CIRCLE OF PRAYER:

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

Short Term: Barbara Banbury and sons Richard, Michael and Paul; David Corfield; Penny

Dilley; Aubrey Dommett (granddaughter of Beverly Cantwell); Claire Macro; David and Patricia Oakley; Hyacinth Ridguard; Betty Shipway; Sandie and Matthew Small; Joyce Smith.

Long Term: Jan Blight and family; Beverley Cantwell; Christine Clucas; Brian and Carys Haywood; Gus and Noorie Khatkur; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Maggie Morgans and family; Patterson family; Molly Shaw; Fay Spurr; Rev John and Marion Whitton.

Sadly, we report the death of Iris Brixton in the early hours of Thursday, 1st November. A Thanksgiving Service was held for Iris on 23rd November. Please remember Corrine, the family and friends in your prayers at this sad time.

Please also remember Doina Rasnita and family. Doina's husband died recently in hospital.

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• A big thank you to all the members of London Street congregation who
• sent messages of love and support to us after Vernon's death. They
• were a great help to us all. Special thanks also, to Kay and all those
• who attended the service of Thanksgiving. It truly was uplifting to have
• so many friends surrounding us. *Jan Blight and their*

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Prayer Focus:

Matthew 6: 6 'But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you'

A Bible reading note that I hope you will find helpful and hopeful, a way of leading into Christmas and the start of a new year?

"We usually place value on prayers being answered, but in the opening verse, Jesus places value on prayers being rewarded. What is the nature of the reward Jesus is talking about?"

Jesus gives three significant ways in which prayer is rewarded. First is that it brings us into intimate communion with God. The Lord's Prayer begins, 'Our Father in heaven..... (Matthew 6:9). This is the first time in Scripture that God is addressed as 'Father' in a personal way.

The second reward is that prayer brings us into alignment with God. The communion with God in the first two clauses – 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name' – leads to alignment with God in the second two clauses – 'Your Kingdom come, your will be done On earth' (Matthew 6: 9-10).). This is not about finding a middle road between our will and God's will, but about being totally aligned with the will and purposes of God.

The third reward is provision from God. The Lord's Prayer includes three personal requests: 'Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil' (Matthew 6: 11-13). This comprises today what we need for today.

Intimate communion with God, alignment with God and provision from God are received from Him as a reward. Answered prayer is secondary to the blessing of knowing and experiencing Him this way"

From 'Living Truth' notes a media ministry of The peoples Church Toronto

And so as we bring ourselves into his presence we go on to intercede for the world we live in;

Focus for Prayer:

- Those who have no security of a roof over their head.
- Families who are refugees. Parents desperately trying to look after their families, young and old.
- That the message of the 'Good News' of God's gift of Jesus gets through the hype of commerce to many folk.
- Youngsters caught up in gang culture and the communities they live in.
- Integrity and wisdom for the peacemakers in our world.

Daily Bible Readings for December:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1 st	119:113-128	Reflection		16 th 56	Reflection	
2 nd	18:20-30	"		17 th 23/24	Revelation	13
3 rd	119:129-144	Revelation	3	18 th 87	"	14
4 th	18:31-42	"	4	19 th 100/101	"	15
5 th	52	"	5	20 th 124/125	"	16
6 th	119:145-160	"	6	21 st 25:1-10	"	17
7 th	85	"	7	22 nd 126/127.	Reflection	
8 th	98	Reflection		23 rd 25:11-22	"	
9 th	119:161-176	"		24 th 57	Revelation	18
10 th	19	Revelation	8	25 th 102:1-17	"	19
11 th	54	"	9	26 th 128/129	"	20
12 th	86	"	10	27 th 26	"	21
13 th	121/122	"	11	28 th 130/131	"	22
14 th	99	"	12	29 th 27	Reflection	
15 th	20	Reflection		30 th 60	"	
				31 st 89:1-13.	Rejoice!	

Ffald-y-Brenin

What a dilemma:

What a dilemma for a slimmer
 Eating all that Christmas fare,
 Getting fatter, what's it matter?
 It's only once a year.

Now the party has begun,
 Crackers and cheese and party hats
 Turkey with trimmings, presents with ribbons,
 Figgy pudding – do we still eat that?

Food a-plenty, plates all empty
 Waistbands bursting, no room left,
 Soon we'll reach for the Alka Seltzer
 That's the truth, I do not jest.

Celebrations, assignations, party frocks with lots of bling,
 But the reason for the season
 Is the Baby in the manger, came to earth as a stranger
 Peace on earth and joy to bring.

by Megan Carter

#Christingle50 campaign

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Children's Society bringing Christingle to this country with a service held in Lincoln Cathedral in 1968.



To celebrate this landmark anniversary, the Children's Society is running its #Christingle50 campaign, which aims to support vulnerable young people through raising funds at Christingle events and a collaboration with The Royal Academy of Music.

Some 200,000 10 to 17-year-olds in the UK are experiencing emotional neglect on a regular basis, and many are also struggling with other difficulties at home. The charity found that:

11% of 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect also do not have their own bed; 21% 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect had also been homeless in the last five years; and 20% of 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect also lived in a household that had used a food bank in the last five years.

Matthew Reed, Chief Executive of The Children's Society explains: *'Too many young people will wake up on Christmas morning like any other - feeling alone and unable to cope.'*

The Children's Society has created an original song for schoolchildren, congregations or community choirs to include in their Christingle services. The song, 'Light a Candle', is available to download and listen to or learn for free from The Children's Society website.

You can support young people by donating to the #Christingle50 campaign, or by attending a local Christingle Service. For more information, visit www.christingle.org.



Flower Rota -

DECEMBER:

Christmas/Advent
arrangements

6th
13th
20th
27th

JANUARY:

Christmas/Advent
Christine Holt
Ian Scott
Rob Williams



for supporting the Christian Aid
Indonesian Appeal which enabled us to
send £230.

Happy Birthday

Emma Bentall, 17 years on 9 December
Dick Davey, 85 years on 11 December
Amos Grant, 3 years on 25 December
Barbara Taylor, 96 years on 27 December
Daniel Moavu will be 4 on 5th January
Amelia Ann Green, 8 years on 19 January

House Group:

There is to be a house group established in Hatch Warren in the New Year. It will start on Wednesday 16th January, 2019 at 7.30pm, meeting at the home of Ian and Carol Scott. You can find their address in the Church Directory. How often it will meet is to be determined by those attending. Bible study will be based around the Swedish Method of study and that will be explained at the first session. For further details speak with Kay or Ian and Carol Scott.

Association of Interchurch Families House

1968-2018



One dark, stormy evening in November 1968 Ruth and I, with two young children, arrived at Spode House near Rugeley for a small weekend gathering to talk about personal experiences of Catholics married to Christians of other denominations. Who would have thought then that as a result, fifty years after the Association of Interchurch Families (AIF) was founded, over 60

members and their guests met at the Hayes Centre in Swanwick on 13-14 October for a weekend to celebrate their Jubilee year.

Central to the celebrations was an ecumenical service of Evensong that paid tribute to the vision of the founders of AIF; the service was led by the Anglican Bishop Tim Thornton (Bishop at Lambeth) assisted by the Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham and co-chair of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), Bernard Longley and the Moderator of the Free Churches, Revd. Dr. Hugh Osgood.

Back in 1968 Canon Martin Reardon, his wife, Ruth, and Fr John Coventry SJ recognized that couples from different church traditions who shared the sacraments of baptism and marriage often need a particular kind of pastoral understanding from their churches. They brought together a number of such interchurch couples for mutual support. From this group grew an association that has also become a forum through which interchurch couples can share with their churches their experience of living together in love across the denominational divide.

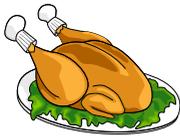
Their experience of sharing Christ's love across that divide, despite the challenges it presents, is a precious example of unity and a gift to the churches, summed up by Saint John Paul II in York in 1982 when he addressed interchurch families, saying, "You live in your marriages the hopes and difficulties of the path to Christian Unity".

In a keynote speech Archbishop Longley spoke of the role that AIF has played in making the churches aware of the pastoral needs of interchurch families, and of what it had taught many church leaders about the joy and the pain of their situation. Speaking of their immense gratitude to the Association, one couple at the weekend gathering declared that without the support of the Association and its members they doubted that their marriage would have survived the difficulties they had faced.

After 53 years of our own marriage, Ruth and I echo those thoughts.

Peter Bentall

Christmas Day Lunch at London Street:



There are still places at the table for the Christmas Day Lunch and if you find you are going to be alone on the day, why not join us for this fun occasion. It will have the atmosphere of a traditional family Christmas meal – great food served to you, attractive tables, entertainment and a warm welcome. Just ask

Jenny for a Registration form so that your name can be added to the guest list.

We have lots of volunteers to help at the event but, if you feel you would like to help, you can still offer – again, just have a word with Jenny. If you are unable to actually help on the day, you can help by offering a donation to help the day run smoothly – maybe a packet of serviettes (red, gold or green), a jar of cranberry sauce, or maybe a gift for one of the guests (e.g. socks for male or female or a fun mug). Have a word with Jenny if you are unsure.



Looking forward to hearing from you.

Jenny

jennymccloy@hotmail.co.uk / 01256883689 / 07834559541)

Smile Lines...

What did Adam say in the Garden of Eden on December 24? *It's Christmas, Eve.*

Why do turkeys never go hungry at Christmas? *They're always stuffed.*

Which Christmas carol is most popular with new parents? *Silent Night!*

Where does mistletoe go to become famous? *Holly-wood*

Why is turkey so popular at Christmas? *Because the weather is a lot warmer over there.*

What is the best Christmas present in the world? *A broken drum – you just can't beat it!*

How do snowmen get around? *On their icicles.*

I sent my girlfriend a huge pile of snow. I rang her up and asked, *'Did you get my drift?'*

You are warmly invited to join us in Tadley on Christmas Day



You will be welcomed at the Ambrose Allen Centre, Franklin Avenue, Tadley at 12.00 noon for coffee, drinks & biscuits when the festivities will begin. Afterwards enjoy the Christmas atmosphere in good company, with conversation and soft music as Christmas dinner is prepared, served and enjoyed! Then relax with an afternoon of fun, music and easy entertainment. There is no cost for this day - just come along and be with friends old and new. If you can make it we would love to hear from you (hopefully by Mid-December so we can organise food and catering!)

You will be welcomed at the Ambrose Allen Centre, Franklin Avenue, Tadley at 12.00 noon for coffee, drinks & biscuits when the festivities will begin. Afterwards enjoy the Christmas atmosphere in good company, with conversation and soft music as Christmas dinner is prepared, served and enjoyed! Then relax with an afternoon of fun,



If you are able we would also love to welcome you at our morning Christmas service which will be take place at the Ambrose Allen Centre starting at 10:30am.

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

To book or for more information: **Mark & Julie**
Tel: 0118 970 1125, mandjward@hotmail.co.uk



Wordsearch - Jesus is born

h	k	n	h	t	h	f	a	m	i	l	y
s	t	a	b	l	e	n	e	b	d	h	m
g	p	z	u	c	j	h	g	s	a	n	a
e	m	a	n	g	e	r	u	y	v	b	r
y	v	r	c	l	u	i	e	r	i	r	y
w	o	e	h	e	n	s	s	i	d	o	v
b	j	t	r	i	r	t	t	a	j	o	p
v	e	h	r	y	p	b	a	u	o	m	b
b	s	i	u	h	o	m	e	x	s	s	e
f	u	l	i	v	i	n	g	d	e	q	a
q	s	e	m	p	i	r	e	w	p	s	n
v	i	s	i	t	o	r	s	s	h	n	u

baby

living

Nazareth

Quirinius

family

bed

Mary

Bethlehem

joy

everyone

home

visitors

Augustus

space

Joseph

Empire

guest

born

David

room

Jesus

manger

Syria

taxes

stable

December Diary

at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Sat	1 st	10.00am	'Table Top Sale' with coffee and cake event
Sun	2 nd	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast
		10.30am	Worship – led by Revd Mike Burrell
Wed	5 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	6 th	7.30pm	Advent Study Group at the Manse
Sun	9 th	10.30am	Worship – Gift/Parade Service – led by the Minister
Thu	13 th	7.30pm	Advent Study Group at the Manse
Sat	15 th	6.00pm	Carols for All, followed by mince pies and mulled wine
Sun	16 th	10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister and including Holy Communion
Thu	20 th	7.30pm	Advent Study Group with a bring and share supper at London Street
Sun	23 rd	10.30am	Worship, including Christingle – led by the Minister
Mon	24 th	4.00pm	Living Nativity at Tadley URC
Tue	25 th	10.30am	Christmas Day Worship
Sun	30 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Joy Williams

Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

December Preachers

2 nd	Rev. Kay Blackwell
9 th	TBA
16 th	TBA
23 rd	Derek Clarke
24 th	4.00pm - Rev Kay Blackwell
25 th	Joining with Main Road Methodists
30 th	TBA

Welcome

Ena and George
Mandy and Dave
Ladies Cell
Julie and Mark
Living Nativity



January, 2019 Diary

at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Sun	6 th	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast
		10.30am	Worship – led by
Wed	5 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Sun	13 th	10.30am	Worship – led by The World Mission Group with Ollie Durant from the Bible Society
Sun	20 th	10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister and including Holy Communion and Ordination of Elders
Wed	16 th	10.15am	3C's (Coffee, Chat, Company) in the Oasis Café – All welcome
Sat	27 th	3.30pm	Top of Town Messy Church
Sun	27 th	10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister

Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

January, 2019

	<u>Preachers</u>	<u>Welcome</u>
6 th	TBA	Ena and George
13 th	Rev Kay Blackwell	Mandy and Dave
20 th	Kayla Harlow	Ladies Cell
27 th	Christine Watson	Elaine and Brian

ECO TIP

Remember, always switch electrical items off at the wall socket (except your router) and avoid leaving things on Stand-by.

**God's Gift – Our World
Our Environment – Our Responsibility**



*Best Wishes for Christmas
and
The New Year*



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 Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time 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 Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students
5.45pm (BEAVER SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Colony)
7pm (CUB SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Pack)
7pm (SCOUTS — 8th 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 Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time 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
3-6pm in Youth Café for secondary school and college students
Term Time

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
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