

Jan – Feb
2020

St John's
United Reformed Church

Record

Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts, EN5 1RH

From Denial to Learning

Recently a newspaper columnist held up Pope Francis as a model of how to apologise well. In his New Year's Day address the Pope veered off script and said: "So many times we lose patience – even me, and I apologise for yesterday's bad example." What had Pope Francis done on New Year's Eve that prompted this apology? We may safely assume that he had not engaged in the alcoholic excess, and the uninhibited behaviour, that is the cause of regret to some on New Year's Day. What had apparently happened the previous evening was that while the Pope was greeting pilgrims at the Vatican, one pilgrim grabbed his hand and yanked him towards her, and he had slapped the woman's hand. And it was this action for which Pope Francis publicly apologised the next day.

The columnist commented "...it may sound odd to look to the leader of the Catholic church for tips in contrition." Actually, to me it is not odd at all that a mature follower of

Jesus Christ has learned to apologise quickly and unequivocally. What I find odd is when those who claim to be Christian never apologise, or only do so when all other denial strategies have been exhausted. This is especially odd when one considers that nearly every act of Christian worship includes the 'General Confession', in which all, including those who lead worship, confess their solidarity as sinners. And we are invited to join in this confession even when we don't feel that we have done anything wrong. The point of the General Confession is to inculcate an *attitude* of personal honesty and, when required, contrition. Confession reminds us of our solidarity in fallenness, as a result of which many things are not as they ought to be. Part of the fallen condition seems to be a tendency either to deny that one has done anything wrong and instead to blame others; or to put most of the blame on oneself and make excuses for others.

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Pope Francis's apology is not odd at all coming from one who, even in his elevated position in the Catholic Church, is a follower of Jesus Christ and therefore a fellow learner. The word used by the New Testament translated as 'disciple' also means a *learner* or student. The twelve disciples of Jesus were those whom he called to learn from him, and who most often addressed him as 'Teacher' or 'Rabbi'. The twelve disciples had first to become learners before they could become teachers. Even later, as teachers and preachers, they never stopped learning. One Christian writer asks: "When did we ever not have to repent while we learnt?" That is, learning something genuinely *new* requires being willing to revise false assumptions in the light of evidence and experience.

I write this in the season of Epiphany, when the Church celebrates the arrival of the Magi who applied their learning in such a way that they become the first Gentile representatives to perceive the light of

God's revealed truth in the infant Jesus. Because they wanted to learn and were open to expanding their worldview to do so, they are models for us. What may prevent us from learning as Christians is *not* wanting to learn that which may threaten our vested interests. This is an especially sensitive point in relation to our attitude to the growing realisation of the Climate Crisis. Those of us in the so-called developed world, cumulatively responsible for the majority of CO2 emissions, have benefitted, and continue to benefit, from burning fossil fuels for heating and transport. To learn to change will require denying our immediate self-interest in order to benefit the planet and future generations. If we try to do this in our own strength, self-interest will nearly always triumph. But if we ask God for help to change in union with Christ and in cooperation with others, we can make the transition—in attitude and action—from denial to learning.

Julian Templeton

Carol Service



On 22nd December, we held our traditional Carol Service at St Johns. This year our congregation numbers were swelled by neighbours from across the road as well as many members of the Barnet Christian Fellowship. We were delighted this increase but realised that we need to buy more mulled wine and mince pies next year!

Everyone enjoyed the wonderful sound from the refurbished organ and the choir seemed to rise to the occasion.

Thanks to all those who organised the music, AV, decorations, candles and catering.

A SPOTLIGHT ON THE LONDON CITY MISSION

A brief report by Andrew Mills and Tony Shepherd

Since 1835, London City Mission has been sharing the love of God with the people of London. Working in partnership with Churches in London, their workers undertake a wide range of activities often involved with people who do not, in the normal way of things, have any contact with churches. The LCM's strapline is 'giving hope to the hopeless' and this is through being in regular contact with people of all ages, backgrounds and ethnic groups. Sometimes people who are living in poverty and on the margins of society could be described as 'hidden from view.' The LCM deliberately seeks out these folk and is focused on showing God's love in practical ways and sharing the life-changing Gospel message of Jesus.

For example, the LCM runs a Day Centre in Webber Street near Waterloo providing food, showers and other facilities. Many staff working here are volunteers who are involved in a variety of ways including cooking, cleaning, gossiping the Good News and by spending time with the visitors and longer-stay clients.

St John's URC have had some links with the London

City Mission in the past including providing prayer and financial support. Colin Walker, father of our previous Church Secretary Grace Orr, was a London City Missionary for many years.

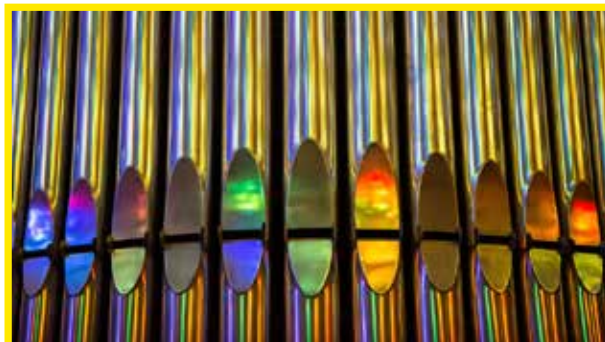
We attended an enjoyable Christmas Carol Service in December at Saint James Church Clerkenwell. In September we also went to a Thanksgiving Service at All Souls Langham Place during which we heard reports from London City Missionaries which were inspiring and challenging.

God is using the activities of the LCM to bring the Gospel to people 'where they are', including, on the street, in cafes, housing estates and day centres. In one video report, a young LCM worker talks about his activities in Tottenham – which he calls a 'beautiful place,' because of the people who he meets, cares for and shares his life with. These video-reports are on the website: www.lcm.org.uk where more details of the vital work for the Gospel in London can be found. The 'LCM Annual Reports' on the website include a number of recent accounts of people being blessed by God through LCM's work.



FULL ORGAN

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**A concert of organ music
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Duration approx. 75 Minutes
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ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, CHIPPING BARNET

ROBIN COXON

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

RICHARD HARVEY

ST JOHN'S CHURCH (UNITED REFORMED), NEW BARNET

DR. ROBERT MANNING

POND SQUARE CHAPEL (UNITED REFORMED), HIGHGATE

DREW SELLIS

ST MARY-AT-FINCHLEY

~ WITH ~

AINE COOK, SOPRANO



St John's URC Fellowship Program for 2020

St John's URC Fellowship welcomes everyone, irrespective of faith or beliefs. We provide a friendly environment where people can meet, enjoy an interesting talk and to chat over a cup of tea and biscuits.

Our monthly talks cover wide variety of subjects, with many being inspirational personal stories.

Date 2020	Subject of Talk	Speaker
15 Jan	Desert Island Discs with Diane Druce of BCF (interviewed by Julian Templeton)	Diane Druce
19 Feb	Murder Most Profitable – Agatha Christie	Geoff Bowden
18 Mar	Grey matters – Retirement Financial Planning	Caroline Romero
15 Apr	Jubilee Sailing Trust	Julia Ladds
20 May	Islands on the Edge – Walking in the Outer Hebrides	Diane Nightingale
17 Jun	Outing to De Havilland Aircraft Museum	
15 July	London's River History	Rob Kayne
16 Aug	Fellowship Garden Party - 67 Belmont Ave	EN4 9JS 1.00 pm
16 Sep	Celebrating the Heritage of London	Dr Susan Skedd
21 Oct	Tearfund – Passionate About Ending Poverty	Sarah Edwards
18 Nov	Footsteps of the Famous in Finchley	Paul Baker
16 Dec	AGM - Christmas Celebration.	6.30 for 7.0 pm

Why not come and join us: Membership is just £6.00 per year and £2.00 entrance each meeting (incl. refreshments). Visitors £3.00. Meetings start at 8pm.

St John's United Reformed Church, Mowbray/Somerset Road junction,
New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH

To see all the activities at St John's -
<https://www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk>

Something to help us identify our focus as a Church

At our last Church Meeting, Julian introduced a statement that he hoped would help to focus the discipleship and mission of St John's Church:

Trusting God by walking the way of Jesus, putting faith into practice, and valuing all people equally

Here he shares some of his thinking behind each part of the statement:

– **Trusting in God** in worship, prayer, Bible reading, fellowship, daily life, and for the future is the most necessary—and also the most demanding—task of the Christian life. We can only do so:

– **by walking way of Jesus.** Jesus Christ is God's grace in person, and his is the way, the truth, and the life God calls us to walk and live by faith. This phrase also connects us with the United Reformed Church's national discipleship emphasis:

**Walking
the Way**
Living the life of Jesus today

Walking the way of Jesus, made possible through the Holy Spirit's inspiration and motivation, involves:

– **putting faith into practice.** We encourage one another to put faith into practice individually in the occasional interviews we include in worship, and communally some of us do so in the Community Garden, Green Christian-Barnet; and the Prayer and Discussion Group. Part of putting faith into practice means:

– **valuing all people equally:** This might seem obvious, but churches have not and do not always value every person as the gospel calls us to do. In the following categories we try to recognise that equality of value requires recognising different needs, and what we are doing to contribute to those needs: *Leaders:* men and women; *Younger People:* Junior Church; Mainly Music; Weds 4 Kids Club; Messy Church. *Older People:* Dementia Club. *Fringe and Core:* St John's Fellowship; Community Café. *Differently-abled:* worship & Causeway. Homeless: Night Shelter. *Hungry:* Foodbank.

This statement is not supposed to a mission statement that we approve and then ignore. I hope it will be work-in-progress that we will use as a reminder of what we are about, and will modify as God guides us through changing circumstances.

I also commend the presentation that Ron Mobbs gave at the last Church Meeting, where he highlighted the many ways we are putting our material resources into mission. The considerable amounts of money that we have raised for the tea point and accessible toilet; audio visual system; solar panels, and organ overhaul have not only made our building and facilities more fit-for-purpose, they have also helped to unify our efforts and direction.

Calendar

January 2020

JANUARY	Sunday 12	11:00am	Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers
	Monday 13	8:00pm	Junior Church Leaders', 34 Lancaster Road
	Tuesday 14	7:00pm	Elders' Meeting
	Wednesday 15	4:00 pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
		8:00pm	Fellowship – Desert Island Discs of Diane Druce with Julian Templeton interviewing. In Sanctuary.
	Thursday 16	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
		7:30pm	North London Local Area Group Meeting, Trinity Church, North Finchley
	Friday 17	2:30pm	Community Cafe
	Sunday 19	11:00am	Worship led by Julian Templeton
		4:00pm	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Songs of Praise Service, Brookside Methodist Church, Cat Hill
	Tuesday 21	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
	Wednesday 22	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Thursday 23	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
		4:00pm	Finance and Managers Committee, Vestry
	Sunday 26	11:00am	Worship led by Valerie and Andrew Mills
		3:00pm	Causeway, Small Hall
	Tuesday 28	2:00pm	Dementia Club
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Group
	Wednesday 29	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	Thursday 30	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
	8:30pm	Men's Group –at the Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Barnet	

JANUARY

Calendar

February 2020

FEBRUARY	Saturday 1	8:00pm	Organ Concert	FEBRUARY		
	Sunday 2	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room			
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting, Vestry			
		11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton			
	Wednesday 5	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club			
	Thursday 6	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary			
	Sunday 9	11:00am	Morning Worship led by Tony Shepherd			
	Tuesday 11	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting			
	Wednesday 12	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club			
	Thursday 13	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary			
	Saturday 15	2:30pm	Fellowship Tea Dance, Large Hall – All Welcome			
	Sunday 16	10:00am	Singing Practice			
		11:00am	Worship led by Julian Templeton			
	Tuesday 18	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park			
	Wednesday 19	8:00pm	Fellowship, Murder most Profitable-Life and career of Agatha Christie by Geoff Bowden. In Sanctuary.			
	Friday 21		Copy Deadline for the next edition of Church Record			
	Sunday 23	11:00am	Worship led by David Paul and Richard Harvey			
		3:00pm	Causeway, Small Hall			
	Tuesday 25	2:00pm	Dementia Club			
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Group			
	Wednesday 26	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club			
		8:30pm	Men's Group –at the Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Barnet			
	Thursday 27	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary			
	Friday 28	2:30pm	Community Cafe			
	MARCH	Sunday 1	10:00am		Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	MARCH
			10:30am		Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
			11:00am		Lent 1 Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Julian Templeton	
		Wednesday 4	4:00pm		Weds 4 Kids Club	
Thursday 5		9:30pm	Mainly Music, Sanctuary			
Friday 6		2:30pm	World Day of Prayer 2020 Annual Service in Sanctuary. ALL WELCOME			

RIP

With regret, we report the death of Denis Reeves in Oxfordshire prior to Christmas, aged 92. Denis's funeral took place on Friday 10 January in Hertfordshire. Denis had a background in the Salvation Army, and in recent years was a worshipper at St John's Church. He latterly attended our monthly Community Cafe and Service. We convey our condolences to his son, Mark, and daughter Lynette, and friend, Joan.

St John's URC Fellowship invite You to a
TEA DANCE
 At St John's United Reformed Church in Large Hall, Mowbray Road entrance/Somerset Road, New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH.



SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2020
 2.30pm – 4.30pm (doors open 2.00pm)
 Entrance £5 (entertainment, refreshments & raffle)
 With popular, local musician, Chris Sausman on keyboards/vocal. Come enjoy music, don't have to dance.
 Have a cup of tea/coffee, sandwich and cake.
ALL WELCOME
 Proceeds: For St John's URC Organ Fund.



Baptism

On 1 December we were delighted to receive Farhad Rasti into membership by Baptism and Confession of Faith. He was supported and prayed for by Julian, Tony, Valerie and Pete.



Also, baby Alice, with proud parents Rachel and James, were introduced to the congregation.

After the service many stayed for a shared lunch. Because it was the first day of Advent, Maryam brought in a traditional Iranian dish for us all to enjoy.

Financial generosity

Tinoush Tazik kindly brought three trays of sandwiches for the congregation to enjoy after the service on Sunday 5th of January. Donations towards the Church Funds, were invited and this raised the sum of **£43.40** On the same day, Michelle Bubb brought in some pumpkins from her garden – and I can testify to their deliciousness! Money from these were added to the **Toilet Twinning Fund**.

St. John's supported the **Rotary Shoe Box Appeal** and gifts of toys to the **Barnet Refugee Service**.

The opportunity to send greetings to members and friends by signing the Crisis Christmas Card made by Junior Church collected the sum of **£111.43**

During the Christmas period a number of collections were held. The Carol Service collection was **£404.44** and on Christmas Day **£221.78** was collected. The Christmas Day collection will go towards the work of Crisis and the Carol Service collection will be announced soon.

Support for our local businesses

The Flower Bank

45a Leicester Road, New Barnet, EN5 5EW



The Flower Bank is a Social Enterprise that collects surplus flowers and plants from supermarkets, weddings and corporate events. These are then given away to care homes and are available to people for affordable prices. They also work with young offenders which allows them to donate weekly flower arrangements to homes, day centres and community spaces.

They also offer flower clubs at residential homes and day centres in Barnet and Haringey. Ursula says "Creating flower arrangements seems to have a restorative effect on residents, especially those living with dementia. Our sessions improve social isolation with residents coming out of their rooms and comfort zones to take part. Listening to them share memories of their favourite flowers, gardening experiences or talking about their gardens is a real pleasure".

Ursula Stone established The Flower Bank after being made redundant as an Events Organiser, and then spending four years re-training at Capel Manor.

After working for a florist in the city, she was dismayed that beautiful and expensive flowers at corporate events and weddings were often only used for a day and then discarded. She also wanted to reduce waste by re-using surplus flowers from suppliers and retailers.

Reducing waste is a real motivator for Ursula. So, as well as recycling flowers from events, she will happily take any unwanted plants if you have a glut. She will also be happy to find a new home for unwanted garden tools that could be used in their cutting garden, as well as planters and pots for recycling and seeds for their new seed bank.

They also offer special events such as, *Foam Free Flower Arranging*; *Make a Valentine Arrangement for Your Special Someone* and *Kids do Mother's Day*.

The readers of the *Record* may be interested to learn that The Flower Bank offers affordable flower arrangements for funerals, weddings and similar events. Ursula works with her colleague, Julie, a gardener, and in 2019 created a cutting garden on



Ursula and Julie with some of the donated orchids

the Tiverton Estate in London N15.

More recently, as well as opening their shop, and collecting surplus flowers, *The Flower Bank* has also been collecting surplus fresh bread, fruit, vegetables and baked food, which is re-distributed by a number of Foodbanks.

Ursula was delighted to learn about the Community Garden at St John's Church, and is keen to work with churches and community organisations.

For more information on this very enterprising woman's projects visit the website:

<https://www.theflowerbank.org.uk>



St John's Men's Group 2020 meetings

St John's Men's Group meets at 8.30pm (8.00pm on Curry Evenings) once a month at Ye Olde Mitre Inne, Barnet High Street or The Railway Bell, in New Barnet. It provides an opportunity for all men, with or without any local URC connections, to meet informally, and in relaxing surroundings, to discuss anything topical.

Please note your diaries, and if you know of any anyone else who might be interested in joining us, please feel free to invite them along too.

This year we are inviting women to join us on two evenings. The dates for all meetings for 2020 are:

Thursday	30 January	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Wednesday	26 February	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Thursday 	26 March	From 8.00pm for those eating. 8.30pm for those not eating.	The Railway Bell Curry Evening
Wednesday	29 April	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Wednesday Joint Men/Women Evening	27 May	From 8.30pm	The Railway Bell
Wednesday	24 June	From 8.30pm	The Railway Bell
Thursday	30 July	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Thursday	27 August	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne
Wednesday Joint Men/Women Evening	23 September	From 8.30pm	The Railway Bell
Thursday 	29 October	From 8.00pm for those eating. 8.30pm for those not eating.	The Railway Bell Curry Evening
Wednesday	25 November	From 8.30pm	Ye Olde Mitre Inne Last meeting in 2020

Citizenship

On 12 December Julian became a naturalised as a British Citizen at a ceremony at Hendon Town Hall. He pledged his allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen and his loyalty to the United Kingdom. The Deputy Lieutenant of Barnet, Martin Russell, welcomed him, along with 45 others. Julian came to the UK in 1993 intending to stay for just for one or two years. I'm glad that the congregation in St John's have been so welcoming and supportive that he has made this commitment at long last.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2020

Praying with Zimbabwe



FRIDAY 6TH MARCH



St John's URC Church,

Junction of Mowbray/Somerset Rd.

New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH

2.30pm

Refreshments afterwards

All Welcome

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