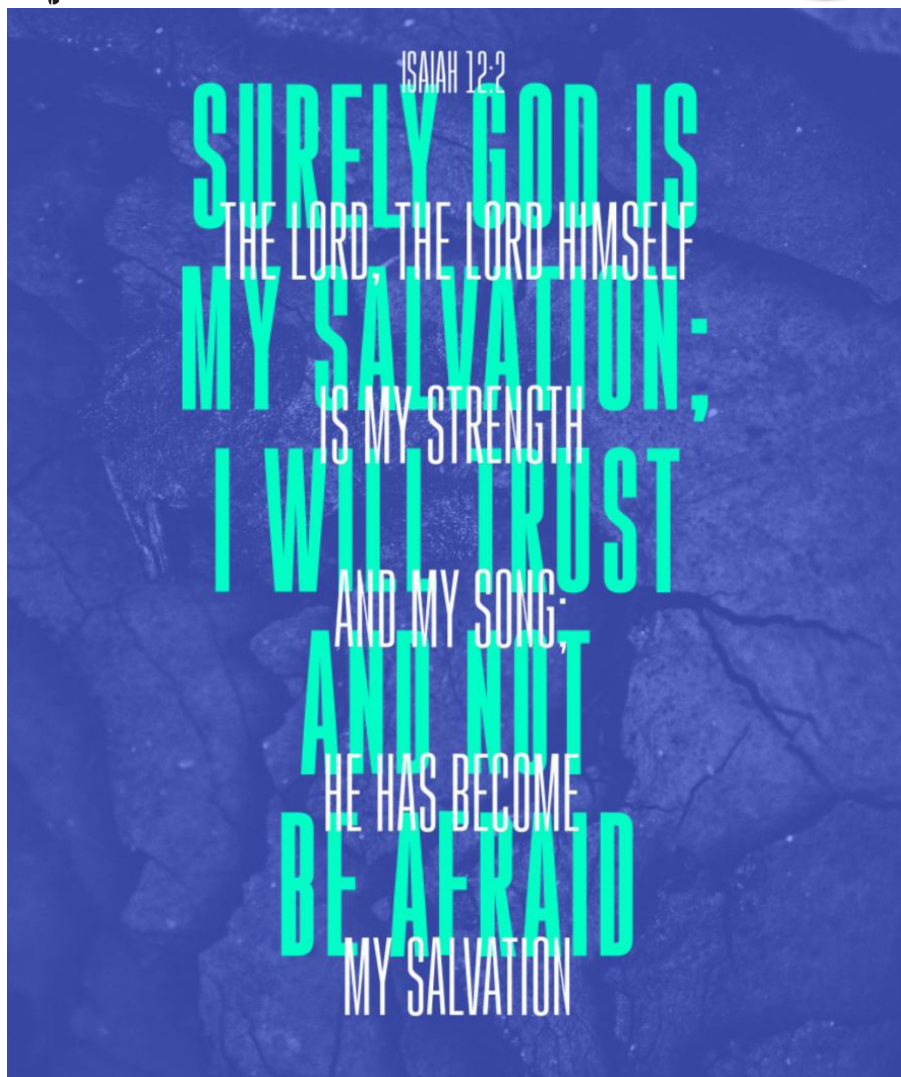




The
United
Reformed
Church

September
2020



Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church
25 Main Avenue, Enfield EN1 1DJ
www.bhpurc.org.uk

Who to contact

Minister

Mark Meatcher	020 8374 0509	minister@bhpurc.org.uk
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Serving Elders

Andrew Caddies	07775 697 255	andrew.caddies@bhpurc.org.uk
Lynda Cook	07949 033 869	lynda.cook@bhpurc.org.uk
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Diann Nicolaides	020 8292 1094	diann.nicolaides@bhpurc.org.uk
Robin Ward (Secretary)	07962 207 256	secretary@bhpurc.org.uk

Youth activities

Boys Brigade	bb@bhpurc.org.uk
Girls Brigade	gb@bhpurc.org.uk

Other activities

Baby & Toddlers	toddlers@bhpurc.org.uk
Book Club	bookclub@bhpurc.org.uk
House Group	housegroup@bhpurc.org.uk

Weekly news sheet	link@bhpurc.org.uk
Newsletter	newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk
Hall & Room bookings	bookings@bhpurc.org.uk
Prayer requests	prayer@bhpurc.org.uk



We are part of a group of United Reformed Churches in the London Borough of Enfield. If you would like to know what we are all doing please subscribe to our NewsShare mailing list at:
<http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>.

Emails are only sent once or twice a month so you can keep up to date without getting too many emails, you can unsubscribe at any time.

*The Bush Hill Park URC Newsletter is published monthly. To receive email notifications please email newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk
Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the whole fellowship or representative of church policy.*

Creation Time

At the beginning of September we enter Creation Time, and over this period I am sure that you will find the topic of creation being covered in different ways at different times in our various church services. But what is it all about? The following is an extract from Eco-Congregation Scotland about this year's observance of Creation Time:

What is Creation Time?

In 1989 the Ecumenical Patriarch suggested that 1 September, the first day of the Eastern Orthodox Church year, should be observed as a day "of protection of the natural environment". Ten years later the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) widened this proposal, urging churches to adopt a Time for Creation stretching from **1 September to the feast of St Francis on 4 October** and this was endorsed by the 3rd European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu, Romania in 2007, which recommended that the period "be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change".

Since 2008 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) has compiled a programme of

resources to encourage and assist churches to observe Creation Time. These include suggestions on a variety of ways in which churches, groups and individuals could choose to focus on a creation theme at this particular time of the year.

Pope Francis made the Catholic Church's warm welcoming of the season official in 2015, using powerful words last year to encourage participation in the ecumenical Season of Creation:

"This is the season for letting our prayer be inspired anew by closeness to nature...to reflect on our lifestyles...for undertaking prophetic actions...directing the planet towards life, not death."

Creation Time 2020

We have known for decades that this time will come. We have been made aware of the rapid extinction of beautiful and unique creatures. Thanks to the

honest and disciplined work of climate scientists, we know (unless we fall victim to fake news) right now, that our lifestyle is unsustainable, and our dominant philosophy of 'permanent growth at all cost' carries the seeds of the destruction of the life that God called good.

Over and above the foolish stewardship of land and resources, yet closely allied to it, is the crisis of values, and of spirituality; a twisted and self-deceptive view of 'profit'.

The whole Christian family now has an unprecedented opportunity and calling: to bring together mission, justice, stewardship, and study: to bring out of our 'treasure' the determinative priorities and values that are so different from those piloting Creation towards catastrophe.

And above all, to take note of, and act on, and trust in, the worth we are given (each and all of us) in Christ. The worth and encouragement we may give to our neighbour, and our fellow creature, in partnership, rather

than exploitation. May we cherish and be empowered by the knowledge of our enduring and transforming worth in the sight of God. Even if, until now, we have indeed pursued 'worthless things'.

The writers of the materials that we will be using in some of our services over this period come from a variety of church backgrounds and pastoral contexts, and, in particular include some good friends of ours, Revd David Coleman (who is the Environmental Chaplain for Eco-Congregation Scotland), Rev Alex Mabbs (URC minister at the Brighthelm Centre) and Rev Andy Braunston (URC minister for the Glasgow Southside cluster and also co-ordinator of the URC's Daily Devotions which some of you may be receiving). If you are able to do so please do check out the wide variety of resources that are available to help us think about creation at www.ecocongregationscotland.org and elsewhere.

Rev Mark Meatcher
& Rev Melanie Smith

Smile Lines

If biblical headlines were written by today's media

On Red Sea crossing:

WETLANDS TRAMPLED IN LABOUR STRIKE

Pursuing Environmentalists Killed

On David vs. Goliath:

HATE CRIME KILLS BELOVED CHAMPION

Psychologist Questions Influence of Rock

On Elijah on Mt. Carmel:

FIRE SENDS RELIGIOUS EXTREMIST INTO FRENZY

400 Killed

On the birth of Christ:

HOTELS FULL, ANIMALS LEFT HOMELESS

Animal Rights Activists Enraged by Insensitive Couple

On feeding the 5,000:

PREACHER STEALS CHILD'S LUNCH

Disciples Mystified Over Behaviour

On healing the 10 lepers:

LOCAL DOCTOR'S PRACTICE RUINED

"Faith Healer" Causes Bankruptcy

On healing of the Gadarene demoniac:

MADMAN'S FRIEND CAUSES STAMPEDE

Local Farmer's Investment Lost

On raising Lazarus from the dead:

FUNDAMENTALIST PREACHER RAISES A STINK

Reading of Will now to be Delayed

Here is the News

Thank you

We were completely surprised and amazed to receive many kind and thoughtful greetings from friends at Bush Hill Park on the morning of our 50th wedding anniversary. Thank you for adding to God's Blessings.

David and Ruth Hamblin

Songs of Praise

If you are able to please do make a note to watch Songs of Praise on Sunday 13th September as this will feature an interview with the new General Secretary of the United Reformed Church, The Revd Dr John Bradbury, that has been filmed in one of our Enfield churches.

Harvest collection

This year we will once again collect items to donate to the North Enfield Foodbank. Please bring your donations to the service on 20th September.

See <https://northyenfield.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food> for the items most in need (they have plenty of beans, pasta, tea, soup, biscuits and cereal).



Prayers

We will continue to hold a Zoom prayer meeting on Wednesday mornings at 10.30 am throughout September, beginning on Wednesday 9th September.

If you would like to join in and pray with us then please do contact me for details.



Stay up to date with environmental news

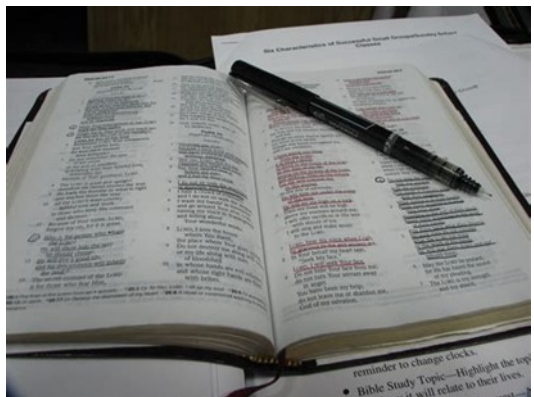
One really easy way to keep up-to-date with major environmental news is to download and set up certain free phone apps on your smart phone or tablet. For example, on the BBC News app - click 'My News', 'Add Topics' and select 'climate change', 'energy' and 'nature', and it will bring any items on these subjects to the top of your personalised news feed to ensure that you are receiving the very latest environmental stories. On The Guardian app, to give another example, you can select and expand 'Environment' on the left hand side menu to add topics including 'Climate Change', 'Wildlife' and 'Pollution' (press the button to add topics - an image of a home with a plus sign). Now you should be able to see related articles in your news feed.

By using free apps in this way, you can be informed - for interest, prayer and action - about the very latest developments - including many good news stories as well as the worrying ones which tend to get prominence on front pages.

Bible Study

On Saturday 5th September and Saturday 19th September we will be holding a Zoom Bible Study on the theme of "The Parables" from 10.30 am to 11.30 am.

If you would like to join in then please do contact Mark for details.





We are inviting you to join My Big Fun Walk, our main event this year, taking place on 12th and 13th of September. My Big Fun Walk is a re-invented version of our flagship event The Big Fun Walk, which had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Last year, this popular event raised over £160,000 for North London Hospice and had 1,600 participants. So help us raise vital funds for our patients!

What's involved?

Celebrate all things North London, by taking on one of our suggested routes or create your own to walk approximately 8.5 miles, on the weekend of 12th-13th of September. Your chosen walk will help raise vital funds and spread awareness for North London Hospice - just like our original Big Fun Walk.

How will you taking part help?

We are encouraging every walker to raise a minimum sponsorship of £25 each, so that we can provide the best level of care to those who urgently need it during these uncertain times. For example, £25 would be enough to purchase a TENS machine to help administer pain relief to patients, or £125 would be enough to fund a nurse for a day. For more information:

What will I get when I register to take part?

A My Big Fun Walk Participant Pack (which includes three suggested routes)

Ticket costs are £12.50 for adults and £7.50 for children between 5 and 15.

When can I complete the walk?

You can walk either on the 12th or 13th of September. We are hoping to see our green army walking through North London, using their own route, their own distance and in their own way.

What do I need to do to get involved?

Visit our website for more information and to register:

<https://www.bigfunwalk.co.uk/>

What has been the impact of Covid-19 on North London Hospice?

With the postponement of the Big Fun Walk, we stand to lose over £160,000. My Big Fun Walk will provide vital fundraising that will help to ensure we can provide compassionate and expert end of life care and support to over 2,500 people who will need us this year.

By taking part in My Big Fun Walk and supporting North London Hospice, you are helping us to continue to care for local people when they need us most this year, and in the years to come.

Please do not hesitate to email us if you have any questions.

The Big Fun Walk Team

Thank you for your support, we couldn't do it without you!



From: Ian Hardie, Treasurer of the United Reformed Church
and John Piper, Deputy Treasurer

August 2020

To: The members and friends of all our 1,400 URC congregations

‘THANK YOU’ for your unique and vital contribution to the life of the United Reformed Church, and for the work of the kingdom which we are able to do together in God’s name

We are living through an extraordinary and challenging time – a very anxious time for everyone; a difficult time for many; and a time of suffering and loss for some. Yet, the main purpose of this letter is to say **‘thank you’** to each of you for all that you have done for the Church in the past; for all that you continue to do even in these difficult times; and for what you will do in the future.

As we are treasurers, you will not be surprised that the focus of this letter is on finance. But we recognise that finance is only a means to the end which is our doing of God’s work together.

‘Thank you’ for your giving to your local church. Financially, this giving is the lifeblood of your own church and of the whole United Reformed Church across England, Scotland and Wales. It is this personal giving that enables your local church treasurer to pay your church’s bills. Typically, the largest of those ‘bills’ is the contribution your local church pays to the URC Ministry and Mission Fund. This Fund meets the central costs of the United Reformed Church. The total budget is around £20 million and is approved each year by Mission Council. Over 80% of this money is spent on ministers and church related community workers – their training, stipends and pensions. But the other 20% also achieves an enormous amount on

behalf of us all. General Assembly 2020 was severely constrained because of the Covid-19 lockdown, but the reports written for General Assembly are available on the URC website, and they paint pictures of all the work that has been done in our name over the last two years and much of that work is ongoing.

‘Thank you’ for your giving and the giving of your local church last year. In 2019, over **£19.4 million was given by local churches and synods to the Ministry and Mission Fund.** The total contributions from local churches reduced very slightly but the average giving per member has, once again and remarkably, gone up by more than inflation.

‘Thank you’ for your continued giving this year. We fully understand that circumstances this year are difficult. Most local churches have been unable to meet for over five months. We have not had the usual opportunities to make our offerings for the work of the Church. But most of the costs of the local church and of the denomination have not reduced and some have increased as a consequence of the pandemic. We are also aware that some have lost income or work this year and are therefore in great financial difficulty. But there are others on fixed incomes who are actually better off than they might otherwise have been. **So, please continue to give what you can in whatever way you can – or save it up until you can hand it over.**

Any giving of ours is a response to the amazing generosity and love of God which we see in Jesus. Nevertheless, **it is important for us to say ‘thank you’ to each and all of you.**

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter then please speak to your church treasurer, who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ, Ian and John

Forest CHURCH

*Gather in our local
'outdoor cathedral'*

Celebrating:

COMMUNITY

Creativity

Creation

and the

Creator



3.30pm Sunday 20th September

The Scout Field
The Paulin Ground
(Top of) Ford's Grove
Winchmore Hill N21 3ER

[what3words ///lands.mute.basis](http://what3words:///lands.mute.basis)

Free Sunday Parking:
Car Park between Ford's Grove and Farm Road
Entrance to field opposite car park entrance

Further info: revd.melanie@gmail.com



Bark Hill Park Christ Church Lancaster Road Palmers Green
Ponders End Trinity Methodist/URC Winchmore Hill

Diary

September

See also Prayer pages and back cover for regular activities

The diary is also online at www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar

Sun 6th	10:00am	Worship with Revd Mark Meatcher
Sun 13th	10:00am	Worship with Revd Mark Meatcher
Sun 20th	10:00am 3:30pm	Harvest Worship with Laura Marlow Forest Church, see page 12
Sun 27th	10:00am	Worship with Revd Mark Meatcher

During September services will still be provided online and through mail distribution with services being provided as follows:

6th Mark and Melanie

13th Revd Jim Gascoigne

20th Anna Erikson

27th Jill Nugent

Please note that there is no communion service above – we hope to be working out how we might do those with the elders over the next couple of weeks so that we can hold some in October.

**Next newsletter deadline:
Sunday 13th September**

All material for inclusion should be emailed to
newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk

Prayer Diary

SEPTEMBER 2020

Finally, all of you, be like-minded,
be sympathetic,
love one another,
be compassionate
and humble.

1 Peter 3:8

Tuesday 1st

Missionaries in Europe

Wednesday 2nd

Clive Road

Thursday 3rd

Staff and pupils at Enfield County School

Friday 4th

The work of Tearfund (we support them through Toilet Twinning)

Saturday 5th

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

Sunday 6th

Thanks for our Brigades as they help local girls and boys to learn useful skills

Monday 7th

Lynda

Tuesday 8th

Missionaries in Asia

Wednesday 9th

Charles Street

Thursday 10th

Staff and pupils at Chace Community School

Friday 11th

Elijah, our sponsored child in Zambia

Saturday 12th

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

Sunday 13th

Thanks for all the benefits we enjoy living in England

Monday 14th

Mabel

Tuesday 15th

Missionaries in the Americas

Wednesday 16th

Chatsworth Drive

Thursday 17th

Staff and pupils at Kingsmead School

Friday 18th

Those in pain, suffering without a diagnosis or cure

Saturday 19th

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

Sunday 20th

Thanks for those who entertain us, make us smile and show us other worlds

Monday 21st

Margaret (both)

Tuesday 22nd

Missionaries in Africa

Wednesday 23rd

Cross Road

Thursday 24th

Staff and pupils at Latymer School

Friday 25th

Children and staff at Al-Shurooq School in Bethlehem who we

support as a church

Saturday 26th

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

Sunday 27th

Thanks for doctors and nurses who go to areas where the people have no access to health care

Monday 28th

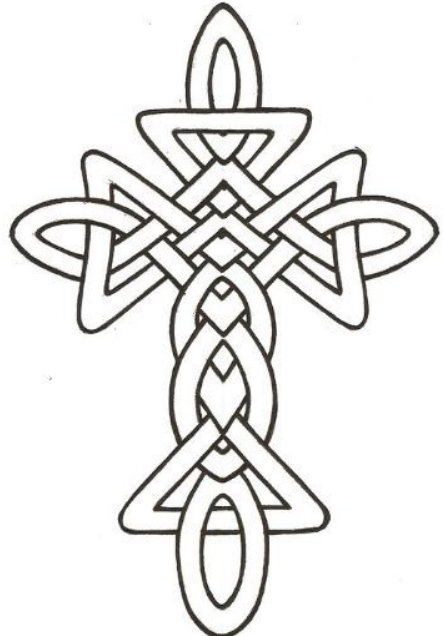
Mark

Tuesday 29th

Missionaries in Australasia

Wednesday 30th

Delhi Road



Helping Christians of Central Asia during COVID-19

What do you do when you are persecuted for your faith during lockdown? Open Doors, which works with the Persecuted Church, has shared a story from their partners in Central Asia.

It's become sadly familiar to hear stories of Christian women around the world who are persecuted by their fathers or brothers. But Zebede is facing attack from her own son.

Like many of us, Zebede has been under lockdown at home in her Central Asian country. Her adult son is bitterly against her Christian faith, and blames her for all the family problems. He threatens her, beats her if he sees her reading the Bible, and even rips it. He doesn't like to see her praying, and he threatens to burn down her church.

So when Open Doors partners recently arrived at her home with a bag of food, Zebede burst into tears. The supplies were vital, but she was even more delighted to see fellow Christians again.

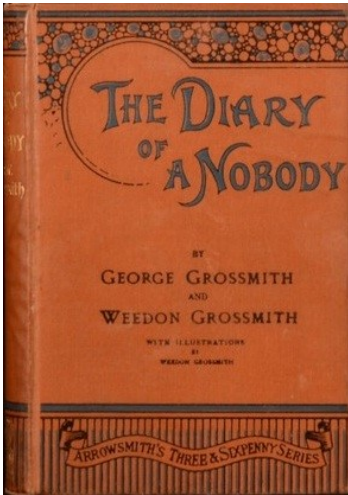
But Zebede is only one example among thousands of Christians across Central Asia. Lockdown has deprived them of income, and then the local government often deliberately neglects them when official COVID-19 aid is distributed. On top of that, they cannot even meet with other Christians, and are instead isolated at home, often with their persecutors.

But Open Doors partners have been hard at work to bring vital relief aid and encouragement. On-going support from British donors has meant that local churches can be resilient voices of hope in their area.

One local church has seen their vision expand by twenty times. "We set the goal to help 100 of our local families," says the church leader, Pjetr. "Frankly, we didn't expect to be able to cover so many families. This is a huge amount of money for us. But today we are helping more than 2,000! This is a miracle!"

If you can help Open Doors reach more isolated Christians, go to:
<https://www.opendoorsuk.org>

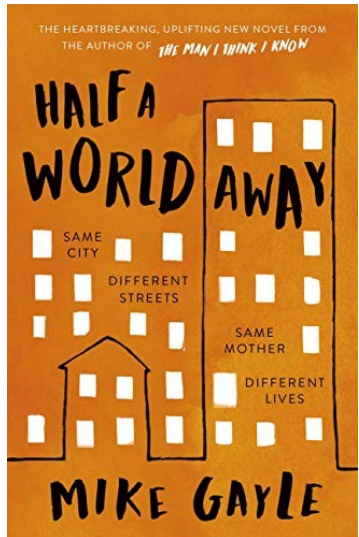
Book Club



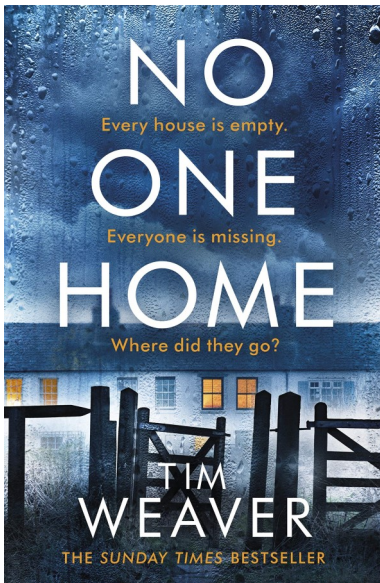
Book Club has met a couple of times since 'lockdown' eased, but in the garden of one of our Members.

In July we discussed 'Diary of a Nobody' by William Goldsmith. This old, somewhat odd, short novel set in Holloway, North London is a gem. The way of life in those days, working in 'The City' his friends and his son

called 'Pooter' is out of this world of 2020. An enjoyable look of the past in the area some of us know so well.



In August we had read 'Half a World Away' by Mike Gayle. This is a good read. Sad in parts but so of its time with single parent families and 'looking for lost siblings'. To be recommended.



'No one home' by Tim Weaver is our next choice. We meet next in Jean's garden on 8th September.

Sylvia

Why Do I Still Struggle with Doubts About My Faith—And What Can I Do About It?

No doubt about it: doubt scares many Christians. They stare into the dark, pestered by uncertainties and questions that make them feel anxious and vulnerable. When those times come, keep this in mind:

- Doubt is not the opposite of faith; the opposite is unbelief.
- Doubt is normal. Virtually every thinking person—regardless of beliefs—at times has doubts.
- Even King David, John the Baptist, and the apostle Thomas doubted—yet they are considered heroes of our faith.
- Doubts are not necessarily destructive; they can actually strengthen our faith.

How should we respond to doubt?

Step #1: Find the root of your doubt.

Is it intellectual, caused by questions in your mind? Or emotional, based on things you feel (or don't feel)? Or does it stem from your will—choices you make that hamper your relationship with God?

Step #2: Ask God and others for help.

When we suppress our doubts, we unwittingly give them more power. But when we admit them to God and to mature Christian friends, it's amazing how their potency dissipates. Don't try to face them alone.

Step #3: Implement a course of treatment.

Do you wrestle with intellectual doubts? Read great books, do extra research, and talk to Christians who have grappled with the same issues. Emotional doubts? Discuss them with a pastor or Christian counselor. Doubts related to your will? Let God guide your daily decisions—really obey him—and you will experience breakthroughs.

Step #4: Take scrupulous care of your spiritual health.

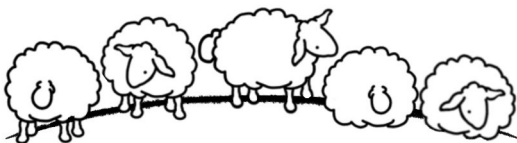
A healthy faith is the best antidote for the virus of doubt. Prioritize the daily habits and relationships that will keep you spiritually strong—prayer, Scripture reading, study, worship, and fellowship.

Step #5: Hold your remaining questions in tension.

Accept the fact that there are always more questions—and rejoice in knowing we'll have an eternity in heaven to get all the answers!

"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - Jesus, in John 8:31–32

From the Lee Strobel devotional via BibleGateway.com



Safeguarding Statement

Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and adults at risk).

We expect all of our leaders, volunteers and those who use our premises to share this commitment and value the support of those who worship here in achieving this. Park United Reformed Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and adults at risk).

Please visit <https://www.bhpurc.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding> for further information.

Interview

How long have you lived in this area?

34 years

What made you choose our church to come to?

Dad was minister, so it made sense at the time!

What makes you go to church at all?

A place to learn, for encouragement, to pray, to worship and to grow together as a community worshipping God.

Do you have a favourite hymn? What is it, and why?

I have several, but top of the list is In Christ Alone. The hymn tells the reasons why I am a Christian and why it all matters. Four powerful verses that explain the Christian Faith and give us encouragement and assurance of faith.

*In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.*

Used with permission, CCLI 7878

Do you have a favourite Bible passage? What is it, and why?

I love Peter, and John 21 is always special to me, especially when sitting by the Sea of Galilee where it all happened.

Peter makes mistakes, he makes hasty decisions, he has a deep love for his Master, he speaks before he thinks. John captures the events that day as Peter and Jesus reconnect. We looked at the passage at Stepwise in August and if you read it in the Amplified Bible the differences in the Greek language (that can't be translated properly

into English because the Greek has many words for different types of love) make the three questions "Peter do you love me ..." make even more sense.

It is great to know that we can and will make mistakes, that we can doubt and that we are still loved by Jesus and forgiven.

John 21 verse 15 Amplified Bible:

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these [others do—with total commitment and devotion]?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You [with a deep, personal affection, as for a close friend]." Jesus said to him, "Feed My lambs."

Again He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with total commitment and devotion]?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You [with a deep, personal affection, as for a close friend]." Jesus said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."

Has your faith in God helped you at different times in your life?

Yes, but I can't remember time before I had faith.

Knowing that God loves me and cares for me is a constant help. Being able to look through situations and see with a positive view and trusting that there is a bigger purpose/reason to everything gives a different look at life.

What would you say to someone who is not a Christian, but would like to know more?

Do the Alpha Course. It gently encourages you to faith. I wouldn't suggest they came to Church on a Sunday as that isn't an easy place to find your initial faith. Having a discussion over a pint is a much safer environment and more likely to encourage a move to faith than being told to turn up at 10am on Sunday!

Martin H

What's in your hand?

September is usually the time when we get back to our normal routines after the summer break. With the current coronavirus pandemic, it's very different this year! However, it is still a good time to consider how God can use us to make a real difference in our workplace, school, family, friends and community. He equips us with everything we need to make His love known.

When God gave Moses the job of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, He asked the question, '*What is in your hand?*' (Exodus 4:2). Moses was holding his staff, which represented his livelihood (what he was good at); his resources (his flock represented his wealth) and his security (which God was asking him to lay down). God asks the same question of us: *What has God given you?* Our gifts, temperament, experience, relationships, mind, education can be used in the work God has given us to do. How will we use them to make a difference in the places where He calls us to serve Him?

John Ortberg, in his book *It All Goes Back in the Box*, speaks of Johnny, a 19-year-old with Downs syndrome. He worked at a supermarket checkout putting people's items into bags. To encourage his customers, he decided to put a *thought for the day* into the bags. Every night his dad would help him to prepare the slips of paper and he would put the thoughts into the bags saying, '*I hope it helps you have a good day. Thanks for coming here.*' A month later the store manager noticed that Johnny's line at the checkout was three times longer than anyone else's! People wanted Johnny's thought for the day. He wasn't just filling bags with groceries, he was filling lives with hope!

What has God given *you* that will help and encourage others?

Canon Paul Hardingham

Prayer

Creation Time Prayer

You asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose, I gave them for a moment, then withdrew them, for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice. I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my life that you might work through me. I gave a small part that I might not get too involved.

Lord, forgive my calculated efforts to serve you only when it is convenient for me to do so, only in those places where it is safe to do so, and only in those who make it easy to do so.

Lord, forgive me, renew me, heal me, nurture me, empower me, send me out as an instrument of your peace and justice that I might take seriously the meaning of servant-leadership.

Amen

(Joe Seramane, Christian Aid Lifelines, South Africa)

Ed: If you have a prayer you would like put in the newsletter instead (or indeed as well as...) do email it to newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk.

If you would like prayer for yourself or family and friends please email prayer@bhpurc.org.uk

He gave us eyes to see them: 'The Madonna of the Goldfinch' by Raphael

The weeks and months of lockdown have been difficult and testing times for many of us, but they have also provided the opportunity to look afresh at the world of nature. With less traffic on the roads, less air pollution, and less noise pollution, the sky has somehow seemed bluer and the bird song more joyful and confident.

It is appropriate that we focus this month on one such bird noted for its liquid, tinkling song – the goldfinch. In this month we also celebrate the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 8 September, and so the painting is 'The Madonna of the Goldfinch' by Raphael.



Raphael was only 37 years old when he died in 1520, but his work is marked by maturity and great beauty. No more so than in this painting which shows Mary with a young Jesus and John the Baptist. You could easily miss the tiny bird which is carefully held by John and gently stroked by Jesus, who has one foot resting on His mother's. It is an intimate, tender scene which was painted in 1505 as a wedding gift for Lorenzo Nasi. It was badly damaged by an earthquake in 1548, painstakingly restored in the early part of this century, and now hangs in the Uffizi in Florence.

As we look, we rejoice in the grace and simplicity of the scene. We look again and ask ourselves 'Why a goldfinch?' The bird has a red

spot on its head, and legend tells that the goldfinch flew down to the cross of Calvary to take a thorn from the crown of thorns. As it pulled the thorn in its beak, its head was splashed with a drop of blood.

And so this painting of gentleness and innocence opens out into a wider canvas of redemptive love. Our thoughts move from infancy to the cross. Mary, sat on a rock, is reading 'The Throne of Wisdom', and the artist is inviting us to ponder where true wisdom is found. Here, as we look at the wonder of nature and new life with a mother and children, but also as we look ahead to the 'wisest love' of Jesus who is our Redeemer.

Rev Michael Burgess



"But did they plough the fields
and scatter at a safe distance?"

Wordsearch

The Church gives thanks for angels in September: the 29th is the feast day of Michael and All Angels. Since the days of Genesis, these messengers of God have been sent many times to intervene for the good in human affairs. Angels guarded the Garden of Eden, they led Lot away from Gomorrah, they helped Gideon, they stopped Balaam, they closed the mouths of lions for Daniel, and, most important, the archangel Gabriel was sent to tell Mary that she would mother the Messiah. Angels sat in the empty tomb of Jesus, and told of His Resurrection. Revelation is teaming with angels, sent on all sorts of missions by God in the last times. Today, many Christians in the world's hot spots report having had angels help them when in mortal danger.

Thanks	Angels	Church	Feast	Michael
All	Genesis	God	Sent	Messengers

Intervene

Garden

Eden

Lot

Gideon

Balaam

Mouths

Lions

Daniel

Archangel

Gabriel

Mary

Mother

Teaming

Revelation

danger



Other local church activities

Activities are not taking place this month but this gives you an idea what goes on each week in the area.

Weekly

Day	Time	Activity	Location
Sun	6.30pm	Service (1st of the month is Café style, 4th of the month is Contemporary with the band)	Lancaster Road
Mon	10am	Ladies Bible Study	Living Room
	7.30pm	English Conversation Club	Living Room
	7.45pm	Prayer at Betty's (Fortnightly)	BHP Methodist
Tues	10am	Tots and Toys	Gospel Hall
	10.30am	United Prayer (1st and 3rd of the month)	Winchmore Hill Baptist
	1.30pm	Open House (Coffee and Chat)	Living Room
Wed	9.45am	Bible Study (Fortnightly)	Lancaster Road
	10am	Prayer (Fortnightly, alternates with above)	Lancaster Road
	2pm	Wednesday Fellowship (Talks from a variety of speakers, see Margaret Barbour for detail)	BHP Methodist
Thurs	1pm	Back to Life (Support Group / Board Games) starts with lunch	Living Room
Fri	10am	Shoppers Coffee Morning	Lancaster Road
	4pm	EPIC (Club for kids in years 3-6)	Gospel Hall
Sat	9am	Breakfast Club (1st and 3rd of the month)	Christ Church

Weekly Activities

Monday 6.15pm Boys' Brigade Junior Section
7.30pm Boys' Brigade (Company Section)
8.00pm Book Club (Once a month, see inside for date)

Tuesday 8.00pm House group (2nd & 4th Tuesday)

Wednesday 9.30am Baby & Toddler Group
6.15pm Girls' Brigade

Thursday 7.30pm Boys' Brigade Company Section circuit training (when advised)

Friday 10.00am Baby & Toddler Group
6.00pm Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys

Sunday 9.30am Prayers (3rd Sunday)
10.00am Worship with groups for children and young people (Communion 1st Sunday)

We are starting some activities again in September, please check the church website to confirm if the activity you want to go to is going ahead. www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar

