



London Street

United Reformed Church

BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE RG21 7NU

and

TADLEY (OLD MEETING) URC



Focus
March, 2018

CHURCH DIRECTORY

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Website - www.basingstokeurc.org.uk

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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

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View from the manse:

'Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today'

'For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God' (Romans 8:19)

In the church sanctuary at London Street we have a second large cross hanging by the vestry door. This was produced as part of a group art project by the attendees of the art and theology course called 'Imaging the Word' that was held in Old Basing last year. The cross is made up of bits of broken, hand-painted tiles. I love the shadows that are cast on the wall behind by this fragmented cross. Being hung against a plain white wall means that you can see it more clearly. Gill Sakakini, who ran the art course will, hopefully, be running it again either later this year or some time in 2019 in Tadley as she will become the new curate at St. Mary's Church there in July. I would highly commend this course to all. You don't have to be a trained artist but just someone with a creative eye and spirit wanting to explore the Bible in a refreshingly new way. Because of this I do not want to tell you too much about how the cross was made other than to say it was a powerful experience!

However, simply looking at the cross itself reveals that it contains within it much symbolism that seems pertinent to the Easter message. The fragmentation of God's creation and our lives are somehow made sense of at the cross. The symbol of the cross was, in Roman times, a thing of torture, death and fear. This is what it was intended to be for Jesus too as they nailed his hands and feet to it and left him there to die. Yet God used that place of death in Israel and turned it into a symbol of life for all the world. Our shattered and fragmented cross in the Sanctuary could be seen as ambiguous in some ways. Are the broken pieces being drawn together to re-create the cross? Is that what Jesus does with us through faith, drawing us together despite our brokenness to collectively become a symbol of Christ and life through Christ for others? Or perhaps the pieces are being sent out from the cross into the world? Graham Kendrick's beautiful, if somewhat lamenting, hymn 'Beauty for brokenness' contain the words 'beauty for brokenness, hope for despair, Lord in your suffering world this is our prayer, bread for the children, justice, joy, peace, sunrise to sunset, Your kingdom increase'. As we enter into this season of Lent Christians around the world reflect upon their Christian walk, taking stock of their spiritual journey. Many use this period to deny themselves something that has become perhaps too dominant in their daily lives whether it be chocolate, alcohol, social media or bad language. In doing so they re-focus upon their need for Jesus and renewal/restoration through the cross.

Another approach is to prayerfully commit to taking up new things, perhaps being more aware of the random acts of kindness and service that God gives us opportunities to perform throughout the day. Either by abstaining from something that has perhaps become an unhealthy habit or committing to adopting more Holy habits in our lives we draw closer to Lord Jesus in prayer. It is only through prayer, scripture and living every part of our lives as Jesus' disciples that we become more in tune with Christ's will and transformation in the ordinariness of our often broken or cracked lives. We are all beautifully designed and hand-crafted parts of God's creation, yet we all become broken in some way through sin, our own and those of others. Jesus came to break that cycle, that burdensome weight of sin we can carry. On the cross he paid the price of our sin and the world's sin. He shattered the work of Satan by nailing sin on that cross. He broke the hold of death when he rose again. The work of the restoration of all creation started at the cross through Jesus and when Jesus returns it will be complete, and all of heaven and earth will be made new! That is why Jesus came, to reconcile all people to God. We, as Jesus' disciples, and like his first twelve apostles, are commissioned to continue in this cosmic restoration project, creatively, joyously and with hope in our hearts in the knowledge that our head designer is perfect and seeks to create perfection in us even when we cannot see it in ourselves. One day the beauty of this divine tapestry will be revealed and we will be part of its creation. Have a wonderful Easter of restoration through Christ!

Yours in Christ, Kay



Who Cares?

Response phase news

The Life explored course commences at 7pm (*please note earlier time than previously shown*) on Thursday evenings at London Street URC from 12th April to 24th May and will include a light supper, a film and discussion groups. This course is open to all. We will be needing church members to help in producing the meals, to host at tables and be involved in the discussions each week. Please also consider **who you** might invite along and if you invite someone you will then need to support them, in prayerful companionship during the course (see page 10).



CIRCLE OF PRAYER:

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

Short Term: Tish Catterall; Aubrey Dommett (granddaughter of Beverley Cantwell); Sally Friday; Christine and Ron Holt; Claire Macro; Sandra Marut; Doina Rasnita; Ian Rees; Carol and Ian Scott and family.

Long Term: Annette Bowers (daughter of Sheila Munro); Beverley Cantwell; Christine and Eric Clucas and grandson, Colm McCulloch; Gus and Noorie Khatkur; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Maggie Morgans and family; Sheila Munro; Patterson family; Molly Shaw; Betty Shipway; Fay Spurr; Les and Iris Wenham; Sarah Williams and her daughter, Katherine Witts.

We have to report that Beryl Gazard died, peacefully, in the early hours of 15th February. Our prayers are with Beryl's family at this sad time.

Prayer Focus:

Mark ch 8 vv27-30

'He asked them, but who do you say that I am?'

After the first part of His ministry Jesus and his disciples came to Caesarea Philippi at the foot of Mount Hermon in the north. The rock-grott there is one of the sources of the River Jordan.

His disciples had been with Him for a long time, had seen the miracles of healing, feeding and command of demons and climatic elements. All this led to the nagging question amongst them and the population at large 'Who is this Man?' Demons had identified Him and been told to keep quiet!

So here, at the point that His ministry was about to change course and become His journey to Jerusalem, He tested His disciples. The first question was easy 'Who do others say that I am?' But then the direct and personal question 'Who do you say...?' That question is still personal to each of us...a question we all have to face and answer.

The period of Lent gives us another opportunity to reaffirm our own answer or to take another step towards our own answer.

The disciples did not know the end of the story. The first question was easy – 'Who do others say that I am?' But then the direct and personal question – 'Who do you say...?'

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The disciples did not know the answer because they did not know the end of the story - Peter made an inspired declaration and was then accused of being Satan!

We know how it ended with the triumph of the resurrection so we can understand better who Jesus is and why He died so that each one of us could be reconciled to God and be assured of Eternal life. Give time in Lent to continue our own Spiritual journey.

Pray

- That each one of us can acclaim like Peter 'You are the Christ!'
- For those areas of the World still suffering violence, terrorism and deprivation
- For the millions of refugees and displaced people
- For the homeless on our streets as the Night Shelter programme has ended
- For all those preparing for the Easter Services and celebrations

Flower Rota - March:

4th Jean Hooper
11th Eileen Poulter
18th David and Julie Bath
25th Liz and Sandy Lindsay

April:

1st. EASTER SUNDAY
* If you wish to contribute towards the cost of the Easter Flowers please contact LizLindsay (01256 363685) – Thank You.





Daniel Bentall, 18 years on 7 March
Ron Martin, 82 on 11 March
Sylvia Reynolds, 86 years on 12 March
Les Wenham, 87 years on 20 March

Bereavement Care Awareness Day

Saturday 21st April

10.00 am–4.00 pm £15 per person

St Leonard's Centre, Rectory Road, Oakley, RG23 7ED

Contact 01256 782724 or

church.office@oakleywithwootton.org.uk

Book online www.oakleywithwootton.org.uk

Daily Bible Readings for March:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1st	96	Acts	28	16th	98:12-23	Hebrews 11
2nd	119:81-96	Hebrews	1	17th	119:161-176	Reflection
3rd	17	Reflection		18th	19	"
4th	119:97-112	"		19th	54	Hebrews 12
5th	18:1-19	Hebrews	2	20th	86	" 13
6th	51:1-13	"	3	21st	121/122	Galatians 1
7th	84	"	4	22nd	99	" 2
8th	97	"	5	23rd	20	" 3
9th	119:113-128	"	6	24th	56	Reflection
10th	18:20-30	Reflection		25th	23	"
11th	119:129-144	"		26th	87	Galatians 4
12th	18:31-42	Hebrews	7	27th	100/101	" 5
13th	52	"	8	28th	124/125	" 6
14th	119:145-160	"	9	29th	25:1-10	James 1
15th	85	"	10	30th	126/127	" 2
				31st	25:11-22	

LIFE EXPLORED COURSE –

This begins on Thursday 12th April at London Street. The evening will commence with a shared meal. Can you help please by contributing food or preparing a dish at home (main or dessert)? Offers of help to Jenny McCloy. Thank you. *(see pages 4 and 10)*

The clothes rack near the Elders' vestry is once again gathering unwanted items. Any items left on the clothes rack by Tuesday 3rd April will be taken to a charity shop. Thank you.



See 'View from the Manse, p.3

ONE CHURCH BASINGSTOKE

We are pleased to announce that we are having a Choir in Castle Square on **Easter Monday at 11.30 and 12.30**. The timing means that after the event we still have time for other Bank Holiday activities!

We will be having **rehearsals at the Church of the Good Shepherd on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.00pm, on the 6th, 13th and 20th March.**

Please join this growing event and let Peter Saint know by email (pbsaint@btinternet.com) if you are willing to join us in this exciting OneChurch outreach event.

News items from the Wessex Synod:

Secretary for Church and Society. The URC has a new Secretary for Church and Society, to work with the URC Mission Team and the Joint Public Issues Team. Simeon Mitchell started in his new role on 8th January and brings to it rich experience of working with Christian Aid, All We Can (the former Methodist Church Relief and Development Fund), Results UK and the Fairtrade Foundation. In these varied roles he has been involved in campaigning and education work on national and international social, political and economic issues, major policy research, strategic leadership and marketing and developing resources. Simeon can be contacted on simeon.mitchell@urc.org.uk

Safeguarding Training. Information about safeguarding can be found on the synod website. Training is for all those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is also important for Ministers and Elders. The next training event is scheduled for Saturday 26 May 2018 at Andover URC from 10am to 4pm.

Mental Health Awareness Day. Following the success of the recent Mental Health Awareness Day in Poole, the day is being repeated in the northern part of the synod. At Woking URC, on Saturday 28 April 2018, 10am–4pm. Speaker, workshops, market place resources. Isobel and I attended this day and it was excellent. Please do go along if you are able

Synod Quiet Day. Scheduled for Saturday 19 May 2018 at Wisdom House, Romsey. To be led by Revd Clare Downing. Theme: “Wait here” - preparing for Pentecost.

Further information on all these events can be found on the Synod website. Thank you. Owen.

Life Explored – shows how our deepest desires for happiness can only be satisfied in one person, Jesus Christ. The best gift God can give.

It is a 7-session series and features a combination of short films - shot around the world - and Bible interaction. It's an exposé of the little gods that promise us so much happiness, yet deliver so little.

First session Thursday 12th April, 7pm to 9.30pm beginning with supper.

(Timings and supper may be adjusted for subsequent sessions as required)

Who is it intended for?

Life Explored has been designed to speak powerfully to those who don't consider themselves religious and never read the Bible. But it will also provoke good discussion among followers of Christ too.

What's distinctive about Life Explored?

Because in the West, particularly among the millennial generation, we can no longer take any level of biblical literacy for granted, LE gives people the context they need to be able to understand who Jesus is and why he came. A panoramic view of the Bible is given – creation, fall, redemption and new creation – rather than just a narrow slice of the picture.

Because we can no longer assume that the God many have rejected is actually the triune God revealed in Scripture, each session emphasises a different aspect of God's wondrous character and work like this:

1. The Good God.
2. The Trustworthy God.
3. The Generous God.
4. The Liberating God.
5. The Fulfilling God.
6. The Life-Giving God.
7. The Joyful God.

A typical session is like this:

Meal, Film 10 mins, Discussion 5 mins, Bible reading 2 mins, Film 15 mins, Bible reading 3 mins, Discussions 25 mins.

(See page 4)

Please note a big fundraising event being held at London Street URC.

A 'Conserveatory' supper club with entertainment! You pay a set fee per head and have a lovely sociable evening with good and tasty vegetarian home-cooked food. If you are not vegetarian you may well be surprised at just how delicious vegetarian food can be!

The food will be locally and ethically sourced. There will be good food, good entertainment and good company and we will also be raising some much-needed funds for the growing mission and life of London Street URC! Save the date, tell your friends and details will follow!



ECO TIPS

Are you needing to replace any items of your wardrobe? If so, stick to natural fibres – wool, cotton or silk. Try to avoid artificial fibres such as polyester and nylon; these are made from petrochemicals in a process that uses large amounts of energy, water and synthetic lubricants. The production of nylon also releases nitrous oxide into the atmosphere. What's more, both of these are stubbornly non-biodegradable.

Though made from bamboo or wood pulp, rayon and viscose fabrics should also be avoided as the manufacturing process uses large amounts of water and hazardous chemicals, including caustic soda and sulphuric acid.

One artificial fibre that is an exception is lyocell (Tencel®), a biodegradable textile made from wood pulp, the production of which uses non-toxic, recyclable solvents.

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All that Plastic!

At present we can only recycle a limited amount of plastics through the Council collections. There are other collecting points around the town, for other sorts of plastic and other items, but these are not so easy to use. So, we are setting up a collection point for these in the Concourse at London Street URC; the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts of the 8th Basingstoke Troop will be taking them to the main centre. This initiative will be starting at the beginning of March.

So no need to throw away those plastic tops, yogurt and dessert pots, food trays and juice, milk and soup packs – just wash them and get collecting!

Mystery Worshipper:

Since 1998, Ship of Fools has been sending Mystery Worshippers to churches worldwide. Travelling incognito, they ask those questions which go to the heart of church life: How long was the sermon? How hard the pew? How cold was the coffee? How warm the welcome?

The only clue they have been there at all is the Mystery Worshipper calling card, dropped discreetly into the collection plate. In August last year a 'Mystery Worshipper' attended morning worship at London Street. Their report can be found on shipoffools.com and is titled *Wonderful welcome at London Street*.

This report was the subject of Kay's View from the Manse in the October Focus. It included comments on all parts of the service and was discussed at the Elders' meeting in January. The views of the eldership were that the report was overall very positive, in particular the Mystery Worshipper was very glowing in her report about the welcome she received. The Greeters do an excellent job of welcoming friends old and new each Sunday. If you would like to help in this way please have a word with Jean Holton who organises the rota.

There is always a need as well for additional volunteers in handing out and collecting the hymn books as well as serving refreshments after the service. If you can help then please have a word with Joyce Cook who organises the steward rota; or Jenny McCloy who organises the rota for refreshments.

HIDDEN

ENTREPRENEURS

The World is full of Hidden Entrepreneurs.....

These are the people who have the talent and determination to succeed, but lack the opportunity. They don't run international businesses, but they have the raw ingredients to create something special.

But while talent, ingenuity and skill are distributed evenly across the world, we know that opportunity is not. Not everyone is able to access a decent education – or an economy that supports their ambitions. Not everyone even eats three meals a day.

We want to break down the barriers that keep hard-working people living in poverty – and you can help.

Through the Hidden Entrepreneur appeal, which runs until 11th April, we're offering you the chance to invest in entrepreneurs in some of the world's poorest regions. Your support can unlock their future.

With your help, these entrepreneurs can learn the skills they need to turn their potential into profit – and use that to feed their families and educate their children.

Make double the impact.....

Donate to Traidcraft Exchange (the charity part of Traidcraft) between 12 Jan and 11 April 2018, and the UK Government will double your donation. That means we can reach twice as many people – and your gift will have twice the impact.

There really isn't a better time to invest in hidden entrepreneurs in some of the world's poorest regions. With your help we can support even more people as they build businesses and create a better future for their families and communities..

If you would like to donate you can do that via; the donation box on the Traidcraft stall on the Sundays; over the phone, call on 0191 497 6445; on line at www.traidcraft.org.uk/hidden

A Traidcraft article

Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

March

Flowers: Julie Ward

Welcome and Coffee Rota

Sun	4 th	Sydney Shore	Ena and George
	11 th	Rev Kay Blackwell	Mandy and Dave
	18 th	Seb Allwright	Ladies Cell
	25 th	Mel Euerby	Elaine and Brian Cole
Thu	29 th	Maundy Thursday Worship including Holy Communion at 7.30pm	

April

Sun	1 st	Dawn Service at 5.45am, followed by breakfast at 8.00am in Immanuel Centre and Easter Worship, including Holy Communion, at 10.30am at London Street.
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Alpha – Old Meeting URC will be joining with the Main Road Methodist Church to run an Alpha on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm from 10th April to 17th July, this too will involve a supper, a film and discussion groups. We will be needing church members to help in producing the meals each week and hosting at tables. Please also consider **who you** might invite along, and how you could best support them on the journey.



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 — Last Thursday of each month
3-6pm in Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students

Fridays:

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

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