



London Street

United Reformed Church

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



Focus
October, 2018

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.basingstokeurc.org.uk

MINISTER:

Revd Kay Blackwell (*Day off - Monday*)
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Mobile - 07582 056286
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CHURCH SECRETARY:

Mr Owen Collins
15 Cyprus Road
Hatch Warren
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e.mail - secretary@basingstokeurc.org.uk

TREASURER:

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9 Montague Place
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1208 Skyline Plaza, Alencon Link,
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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:

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10 Hartleys, Silchester, Reading RG7 2QE
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View from the manse:

We do not get to choose which attributes or characteristics we inherit from our parents. It wasn't until much later in life that my mother finally confessed to both me and the Doctor that she very much had a 'glass-half-empty' character and, like Churchill, she wrestled with 'Black dog' days. At the time, the bleakness of my mum's mood was hard to deal with so I knew she was quite depressed, but up until that point mum had never named it as such. Even when she approached the topic, she avoided the word 'depression' by giving it a different name. The irony was that my mother also had a very intolerant view of depression. She was the youngest of seven children (though one died in childhood), born in London just four years before the outbreak of the Second World War, so her upbringing was a pretty 'no nonsense' affair. As a consequence, my mother would have no time for me feeling low. I was told I was being a silly girl, I had to pull myself together, stop being so sensitive and go and **do** something. This attitude stuck with me so I am cautious never to give the same advice to others. In hindsight, I now realise that that was how she had dealt with her 'black dog' days. Her advice was quite damaging to me. I would not consider myself a 'glass-half-empty' character, but I recognise that I am quite sensitive to others' pain, absorbing it within myself, and so I too struggle with 'black dog' days. My own days are not frequent but they are hard, dark and pretty private (I think I learnt to keep such days very hidden). In joy I wear my heart on my sleeve, in despair I hide away. The difference is that I have faith in a God, who I know loves me, warts and all. Faith does not prevent me having my 'black dog' days, but does help me to centre my thoughts and actions around something other than myself, my feelings and the situations that I am dealing with.

As we move through autumn into winter, into the colder weather and shortening days, many more folk wrestle with low mood or even clinical depression. Some connect this with the lessening of sunlight, a condition called SAD. The truth is that all of us are on the spectrum of mental wellness and throughout the seasons of our lives we move up and down that spectrum.

At a recent prayer day, I attended a talk led by a mental health chaplain working in a specialist mental health hospital (similar to Parklands here). She spoke about those who are mentally ill needing to rediscover how they had found their hope in previous times. For people of faith this may be in prayer or their relationship with God.

People grow roots, and when the storms come, it is the roots that hold them firm. The stronger and healthier the roots the more storms can be endured. Humans are like trees, but if their roots get damaged or fail to form properly, when the storms of life happen, that person starts to wobble, become unstable and may even fall. So what are the roots that keep us stable? Having the support of family or friends, having purpose, having a sense of self-worth, an awareness of creation around them, belonging in a wider community, having patterns, structures and frameworks to live by. These all fit into four categories: connections, purpose, perspective and hope. All of these, faith can speak into in a very real way.

This Chaplain spoke a lot about Julian of Norwich and the way in which her contemplative ancient Christian writings have helped her to see the sufferings of mental illness in a new way. A contemporary of Chaucer, Julian was the first female author to be published in Britain in 1395 with 'revelations of divine love'. At the age of 30, in 1373, Julian became gravely ill. She was given the last rites and was expected to die. As she prayed and prepared for death she experienced fifteen visions of both Mary and of Jesus as he went through his trial and crucifixion. After these visions, and once restored to good health, Julian of Norwich dedicated the rest of her life to solitary prayer and contemplation over the visions that God had revealed to her. She became an anchoress, walled up in a cell with food and drink brought by nuns. As she reflected on these visions, she became a spiritual guide to others, especially around her understanding of pain and suffering. One of her revelations of God's divine love, was around the vision of a simple acorn. The acorn falls to the ground, it is so small and insignificant that it could just die and be lost forever, yet in God, it is loved forever as we are. She also spoke of being in the womb of God, a place of enclosure, exclusion and suffering, yet equally a place of God's all embracing love....'All will be well'.

Recently I watched a Grayson Perry (the contemporary artist) documentary about the sacred womb-like space of a premature baby ward. In the documentary, he was deeply moved at the separate second womb of protection created for the most precious and fragile of babies with tissue paper skin. For a time they live in a place of exclusion and separation in a place where the division between life and death, joy and grief is but gossamer thin. Life is not always easy or as we would like it to be, but it is sacred and Jesus is with us in the depth of all such sacred moments of both the joy and the despair.

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); Christine and Ron Holt; Claire Macro; Hyacinth Ridguard; Lucy Nathan (daughter of Carol and Ian Scott); Betty Shipway; Joyce Smith.

Long Term: Beverley Cantwell; Christine Clucas; Brian and Carys Haywood; Gus and Noorie Khatkur; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Maggie Morgans and family; Sheila Munro and family; Patterson family; Molly Shaw; Fay Spurr; Les Wenham and family.

Welcome

On Sunday, 15th September, we warmly welcomed the following new members at London Street:

On confession of faith: Jean Young, Alison Grant, Beverley Cantwell, Jason Dudley, Doina Rasnita, Louise Waller, Lilian Meredith and Roger Pike

By transfer: Gill Miller from Freemantle URC, Southampton; Janet Parr from the Church of Scotland; Kengjise (Ken) Moavu and Rita Kahdoh from St. Andrew's URC, Reading

On re-affirmation of faith: Sarah Williams.

We pray they will continue to find love, fellowship and strength to pursue their faith and service in Christ.

'In the glad morning of my day,
My life to give, my vows to pay,
With no reserve and no delay,
With all my heart, I come.'

Mary Ann Hearn

(Scripture reference: Matthew 19:14)

Prayer Focus:

James ch3 vv7-10 '.....but no man can control the tongue'

There seems to be an increasingly common trend for people in all areas of society, from prominent personalities to more humble 'tweeters' and students, to make spontaneous, ill-thought remarks. When such remarks upset, cause offence or are published far and wide in the media there is often a profuse apology, a hasty retraction, an assertion that the remarks were 'taken out of context' and so the perpetrator justification or innocence. But of course the damage is done.

There have been so many recent examples from, for example, leading politicians in many countries, sports men/women, media commentators, and celebrities that one cannot help wondering how much of it is deliberate provocation rather than innocent carelessness of speaking before thinking. People use social media to say things they would not say face-to-face. Certainly, the impression is of young people being ready to tweet constantly without considering the effect the words might have. On the other hand, some leading politicians, whose job it is to weigh their words carefully, are more likely to be guilty of deliberate provocation. On reading the letter of James it seems, perhaps, that this is not a new phenomenon! The unbridled tongue has been with us since the time we learned to speak. I imagine James had some situations in mind when he wrote 'no man can control the tongue'; it is just too easy to say things without thinking and once the words are out there they cannot be retracted. However hard we try to explain or apologise, the damage is done. Good idea to read James regularly!

Pray for

- Those students from our area who are starting their University courses this month
- All our activities at London Street as our programmes get into full swing
- Particularly our Youth Café activities and the new students we shall be welcoming
- For our Elders' nominations as they respond to the call to serve
- For our recently bereaved families coming to terms with their loss
- For our Minister as she leads us as our plans start to look towards Christmas

Thank you -

We would like to thank the congregation for welcoming our new grandson - Oliver Charles Nathan - on his baptism on the 19th August, and for making our family feel welcome at the church. We had a marvellous and enjoyable day.

Also, we would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support while Lucy has been poorly. She has now had her operation and is on the road to recovery.

Thank you.

Carol and Ian Scott

Apologies to Daniel Bentall, wrongly reported last month as going to Leeds University. Daniel is off to Southampton to read Mechanical Engineering.

50th Anniversary:

It was very moving to be able to mark the 50th Anniversary of my Ordination with the event at London Street which gave us the opportunity to renew friendships made throughout my ministry. Dorothy and I are most grateful to all involved, particularly Jean Holton for preparing a year-by-year display of memorabilia. As I said, I am deeply appreciative of the support and encouragement of so many people during my ministry, not least in coping with my mistakes: if only I had known 50 years ago what I have learned since! May we all know God's guidance and strength to continue our Christian service for quite a while yet. Julian

Congratulations to Revd Clare Downing.

Clare is a member here at London Street and is Moderator of the Wessex Synod. Clare and Peter Pay, who is known to many in our congregation, were both elected as the Moderators of General Assembly 2020-2022 at the General Assembly held in Nottingham in July. Congratulations to both!

—oOo—

Pages Charity Trust

The Trustees of Pages Charity hereby give notice that we have two vacant bungalows and invite anyone with connections at London Street and/or Tadley Old Meeting to apply for a bungalow if they so wish. For an application form or further information please contact either me, Liz Lindsay (Secretary), or Ian Scott (Treasurer). The bungalows, located in New Road, are currently being refurbished and will not be available until next year.

Owen Collins
(Chairman, Pages Charity Trust)



Flower Rota - October:

7th Pat Oakley
 14th Alison Jamieson
 21st Karen Bell
 28th Jenny McCloy



Jamie Richards, 18 years on 20 October
Grace Springthorpe, 95 years on 23 October
Esther McElvenny, 17 years on 26 October
Vernon Blight, 91 years on 28 October

Daily Bible Readings - October:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1 st	40:9-17	1 John	3	16 th 4	John	2
2 nd	71:14-24	"	4	17 th 43	"	3
3 rd	149	"	5	18 th 74:12-23	"	4
4 th	41	2 John	1	19 th 91	"	5
5 th	72	3 John	1	20 th 113	Reflection	
6 th	150	Reflection		21 st 5	"	
7 th	1	"		22 nd 115	John	6
8 th	108	1 Peter	1	23 rd 6	"	7
9 th	2	"	2	24 th 46	"	8
10 th	42	"	3	25 th 75	"	9
11 th	73:21-28	"	4	26 th 92	"	10
12 th	90	"	5	27 th 116	Reflection	
13 th	111	Reflection		28 th 7:1-11	"	
14 th	3	"		29 th 117/118:1-14	John	11
15 th	112	John	1	30 th 8	"	12
				31 st 47	"	13

Visit of General Secretary

I'm very pleased to inform you that the URC General Secretary, Revd John Proctor, will be sharing morning worship at London Street on Sunday 7th October 2018. It is expected that a number of visitors from the synod will attend.

As General Secretary, John is responsible for maintaining a strategic overview of the development, order, and wellbeing of the URC. This involves being an ex officio member of all the committees, liaising regularly with the synods through their moderators and clerks, and working to ensure the vibrant health of the councils of the Church, significantly General Assembly. John is also responsible for enabling the Assembly-appointed staff to work together collaboratively. He takes a personal role in fostering healthy relationships with partner churches at home and abroad.

John has spent many years studying the New Testament and teaching at Westminster College, Cambridge, and has written a number of books which are available to purchase on the main site for the URC:

www.urch.org.uk

We shall have the opportunity after the service to enjoy a meal together. To help with catering please sign the form on the church notice board.

Thank you, Owen.

FOCUS Publications 2018/19:

	<u>Deadline for copy</u>	<u>Publication date</u>
November,	14th October	28 th October
December/January, 2019	11th November	25 th November
February	13th January	27 th January
March	10th February	24 th February
April	17th March	31 st March
May	14th April	28 th April
June	12th May	26 th May
July/August	16th June	30 th June
September	11th August	25 th August
October	15th September	29 th September

I hope this is helpful to everyone who might want to include an article in a particular month and especially to regular contributors. It would certainly be helpful to me if the deadline dates could be kept but I will always try to make adjustments to include important 'last-minute' items.

Editor

The United Reformed Church's Statement of Faith

I was interested to read the letter from Andy Braunston in September's Focus. Andy is quite right that the URC does not use the Apostles' Creed in worship – it wouldn't be appropriate to do so since the URC does not corporately profess that particular Creed. Some URC members would feel able to recite it, whilst others could not, with integrity, do so. Nor are we required to. The URC, in its Basis of Union, which is its primary governing document, acknowledges that the Apostles' Creed has borne witness to the catholic faith. But we have our own confession of faith or "creed". When it was formed in 1972 the United Reformed Church confessed its faith in the words of the following statement:

We believe in the one living and true God, creator, preserver and ruler of all things in heaven and earth, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Him alone we worship, and in him we put our trust.

We believe that God, in his infinite love for men, gave his eternal Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who became man, lived on earth in perfect love and obedience, died upon the cross for our sins, rose again from the dead and lives for evermore, saviour, judge and king.

We believe that, by the Holy Spirit, this glorious Gospel is made effective so that through faith we receive the forgiveness of sins, newness of life as children of God and strength in this present world to do his will.

We believe in the one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church, in heaven and on earth, wherein by the same Spirit, the whole company of believers is made one Body of Christ, to worship God and serve him and all men in his kingdom of righteousness and love.

We rejoice in the gift of eternal life, and believe that, in the fullness of time, God will renew and gather in one all things in Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.

It is a pity that in general we are not more familiar with this statement. In fact, the whole Basis of Union is worth reading. It includes an alternative version of the above statement, and much more besides. It can be found at:

https://urc.org.uk/images/the_manual/A_The_Basis_of_union_18_10_17.pdf

Margaret Carrick Smith



Can you help?

Christmas is coming!

We are once again organising a celebration lunch for those who are going to be alone on Christmas Day. We are hoping to have vouchers to spend in various supermarkets and we are looking for somebody who would be able to do some food shopping with these vouchers. This is a way in which you could help with the meal even if you are unable to come on Christmas Day.

Please speak to Jenny if you think you could help in this way. Soon we will be distributing volunteer forms which itemise all the ways in which you can help make this event a success, either on the day or before.

Speak to Jenny McCloy on 07834 559541 or e.mail jennymccloy@hotmail.co.uk

Would you like to order...

URC Pocket Diary for 2019

These are being produced in bright blue or green this time and will cost £7 each.

URC Desk Diary A5 size. This is blue and will cost £9.99

Prayer Handbook for 2019

'Seasons of the Spirit'. This will cost £6.50

If you are interested in any of these items, please would you speak to Jenny McCloy and/or sign the notice on the noticeboard by 28th October.

“When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.”

Alexander Graham Bell

From A Bucket of Surprises, J. John and Mark Stibbe , Monarch Books

'2019 Church annual get together' - Have your say.....

In the past we have had a variety of get togethers: barbecue, garden parties, Senior Members' outings and car treasure hunts. Recently we have had garden parties and this year we had a barbecue one Sunday, shared with our 'Old Meeting' friends. What are we going to do next year?

What would you like to see?

An all-ages event that the whole church family is welcome to;

Something that is not too complicated to organise;

Something that we can share with 'Old Meeting';

A summer venue relatively easy to get to;

Food you would like to have;

Time of day to meet.

What would build up our community and help us to get to know each other better; old and young; newcomers and those who have been here for generations?

Please think about these issues, they are important.

Let your Elder know your views or, better still, come to Church meeting to share in the discussion.

Would **YOU** like to be a 'Greeter'?

During November I will be compiling the 2019 Rota of Greeters.



Do YOU feel you could serve the Church in this way by giving a warm and friendly welcome to members of the congregation as they arrive for worship? If so, please have a word with me at Church, or give me a ring on 01256 322301, and I will be pleased to give you more information about the duties involved.

Many thanks.

Jean Holton

Navigating Life Together

Life Skills for Couples



Navigating Life together as a couple can be both exciting and exhilarating. In today's hectic, 'roller-coaster' world, committed, loving relationships offer us all a safe-haven in which to find fulfilment and fun!

This course offers the life skills to couples, old or young, in which to discover and develop the special intimacy of a truly close relationship. Suitable for married and co-habiting couples alike, 'The Marriage Course' is a series of seven sessions, designed to help you invest in your relationship and get more out of it.

The course was developed by Nicky and Sila Lee (authors of the book 'The Marriage Course') to provide couples with practical, intelligent support to assist and enable them to strengthen and develop their relationship. The course will help you build strong foundations together, learn to communicate more effectively and resolve differences with a positive approach to problem solving. Discover the 'tips' and 'tricks' of enhancing your relationship.



The next course starts Wednesday 10th October for 7 weeks in Tadley, Nr Basingstoke, Hants, RG26 3NY

For more details or to reserve a place contact:

Mark & Julie Ward, 0118 9701125, mandjward@hotmail.co.uk

Paul & Janet Gross, 0118 9700809, paulgross3107@gmail.com

ECO TIP

Keep pests away

Try natural alternatives to chemical repellents. Many insects have an aversion to basil; ants dislike cucumber peel or peppermint and weevils can be kept out of rice, cereals and flour by just adding bay leaves to their containers.

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

Charities Christmas Card Sale

Saturday 6th October

9.30am till 2.30pm in the Concourse

A warm invitation to you all to visit the Charities Christmas Card Sale when a number of Charities will have a wide selection of Christmas cards and small gifts for sale. The charities include Christian Aid and Traidcraft, RNLI, St Michael's Hospice, Holdsworth Hospital in South India and several others

Refreshments will be available all day including light lunches. Look forward to seeing you then.

Many thanks
Elspeth Anthony

ALL free!

The nursery teacher decided to tell her class about democracy. 'We live in a great country,' she began. 'One of the things we should be happy about is that, in this country, we are all free.'

One little boy stood up and looked indignant. 'I'm not free,' he protested. 'I'm four.'

October Diary

at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Wed	3 rd	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Sun	7 th	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast
		10.30am	Worship – led by Revd John Pactor (General Secretary of the URC), followed by Lunch
Sun	14 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Sidney Shore
DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR NOVEMBER FOCUS			
Wed	18 th	10.15am	3C's (Coffee, Chat, Company) in the Oasis Café – All welcome
Sun	21 st	10.30am	Worship – led by The Minister and including Holy Communion
Mon	22 nd - 27 th		Minister on Leave (Reading Week) Youth Café closed for Half Term
Sat	27 th		British Summer Time ends
Sun	28 th	10.30am	Worship - led by The Minister
Mon	29 th		Minister on Annual Leave till 3 rd November

On Sunday 11th November we will have our Service of Remembrance, led by Revd Kay Blackwell. If you have served in the Armed Forces or have connections with the Armed Forces and would like to take part in the service, please let Kay know. Kay will source the material for you.

Sunday Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

October	<u>Preachers</u>	<u>Welcome</u>
7 th	Andy Mahers	Ena and George
14 th	Revd Kay Blackwell	Mandy and Dave
21 st	Joy Williams	Beryl and Steve or Ladies Cell
28 th	Mel Euerby	Julie and Mark

Church Fund Raising:

Book now for your fun evening of Skittles at Basingstoke Town Bowls Club on **Saturday, 17th November from 6.30pm**
Speak with Joyce Cook for more information
(Tel: 01256 466996)



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

Monday's:

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

Tuesday's:

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

Wednesday's:

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

Thursday's:

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 Term Time	Youth Café for secondary school and college students

Friday's:

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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