



FOCUS

May 2024



London Street United Reformed Church

Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 7NU

Tadley (Old Meeting) United Reformed Church

Malthouse Ln, Hants, RG26 3NY

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

This month Beryl Wootten tells us about her involvement with Open the Book.



“Open The Book” first began in 1999 in Bedford when a group of Christians began regular visits to their local primary school using a Bob Hartman Bible Story Book, which he originally wrote for his own children and grandchildren. This initiative was taken up by others in Gloucestershire in 2001 with 6 teams, which has now risen to 170 teams in 2012. The production of the material used has been taken over by the Bible Society and in January 2013 it was recorded that there are 8,439 volunteers nationally going into 1473 primary schools.

For over 15 years volunteers from St Helen’s Church, St Mary’s Church, and Bluntisham Baptist Church have taken the gospel into St Helen’s Primary School and Earith County Primary School in a child friendly way. The stories are narrated and acted out each week, following the strict rules set out in the guidelines provided. Children are encouraged to take part in the short drama’s which is great fun and many of the children enjoy the experience enormously.

We are encouraged in Psalm 78 to ‘tell the next generation about our wonderful God so that in turn they will tell the following generations’. ‘Then they will put their trust in God’. Hopefully the teams are doing just that.

As invited guests in school, storytelling teams use the Open the Book programme to prepare and present a 10 to 15-minute scripted Bible story to a school assembly, involving the children as much as possible. Storytelling teams are made up of trained and safely recruited volunteers from local churches and organisations, who sign up to follow the Open the Book Code of Practice.

Since last year storytellers have used the Open the Book Storytelling Bible and Handbook updated by Bob Hartman, from the Lion Storytelling Bible. The Storytelling Bible includes 90 stories, beginning at Genesis and going all the way through to Revelation. The Handbook provides everything Storytellers need to say in order to create a full

assembly.

A welcome and introduction lead into the story which is read and acted out, followed by a quiet moment for reflection and wonder, concluding with an offered prayer.

Open the Book had been running in Basingstoke for over 10 years and when I moved here I was keen to get involved, as I had heard a lot about it from my daughter. I joined a team in September 22 which goes into Oakridge Infant School on a Thursday afternoon, and is made up of Christians from different congregations. We have lots of fun dressing up as the various bible characters bringing the stories to life and are never short of volunteers from the children who want to join in too.

Often I narrate the stories but I have been known to dress up as, for instance, a disciple. This year we have told stories about Abraham, Moses, David and Jonah, the Christmas stories, and lots of stories about Jesus. This team works in conjunction with teams who go into Marnel Junior and Kings Furlong Infants on different days and times, and this means we can share props and costumes.

(These are currently stored at Trinity and will need to find a new home soon).



Open the Book has been so successful in connecting children with the word of God in this country that Bible Society now uses it around the globe and many Countries have been keen to take part. Albania, Argentina, Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Uganda, Europe and the Middle East, to name just a few.

How does Open the Book benefit schools?

- It gives the school a link with the community
- It provides opportunities to build cross-generational relationships
- It provides a time of quiet reflection that schools are required to build into their school day
- It makes an engaging school assembly
- It has been positively viewed in official school reports
- It is free to the school
- It requires no extra work or planning from school staff
- It is successful in multi-faith contexts Staff in schools value Open the Book because they know exactly what has been said and can answer with confidence any questions they may be asked about the content of the assembly.

A Bible story, well told, has the power to spark the imagination, inspire exploration, give hope, create a smile, teach important lessons, and connect generations.

THE NOTICEBOARD

Information, updates, tips and more.



Eco Tip

God's Gift -- Our World

The Environment -- Our Responsibility



Plan ahead so that you don't need to use a microwave to thaw frozen food; let the food thaw in the fridge overnight where it's chilling effect will leave less work for the fridge to do.

Don't forget, you can recycle the following items at London Street:

Empty Printer Cartridges, Aluminium Containers and Foil, Batteries, and Plastic Milk Bottle Tops.



Church Flowers

The Flower Committee would like to thank Alison Jamieson for donating and arranging the May Flowers.

Can you help to make sure that no one in our local community goes hungry?



Items **urgently** needed: Coffee, Deodorant, Long Life Fruit Juice, Savoury Snacks/Crisps, Shampoo, Squash, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Tomatoes, UHT Milk.

Items needed: Cleaning Spray, Cooking Sauces, Custard and Evaporated Milk, Hair Conditioner, Hot/Cold Desserts (Not Rice Pudding), Loo Roll, Nappies (Size 5 & Above), Savoury Crackers, Savoury Spreads (Marmite, Peanut Butter, Meat Paste etc.), Sweet Spreads (Jam, Marmalade etc.), Tinned Meat (e.g. Chilli, Stewing Steak, Ham), Tinned Ravioli, Tinned Veg, Toothpaste, Washing Up Liquid.

Please **do not** give Baby Food, Hand Soap, Hot/Cold Cereal, Men's Shampoo, Nappies (Size 4 & Below), Non-Dairy Milk, Pasta, Pet Food, Pulses, Rice, Sanitary Pads, Tinned Beans, Tinned Rice Pudding, Tinned Soup, as these are already in surplus.

Donations can be left at London Street URC in the container provided. For up to date lists, or to find other donation points, go to:

<https://basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

FOCUS: Next Issue

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Focus magazine. If you would like to contribute to the June magazine, please contact the editor by **16th of May**.



Sounds of Hope Singers

In Awe & Wonder

An evening of praise
and worship songs

Come and be embraced
in the presence of God

Held at the United
Reformed Church,
London Street,
Basingstoke.

Songs of hope sung by
the "Sounds of Hope
Singers"

Saturday 18th May
Starting at 7:30pm
Free Admission

THE PRAYER CIRCLE

Please remember the following people in your prayers...

David Bennett

Linda Hicks

Zoe Coles and family

Jim and Penny

Seb Allwright

Joan Musselwhite

Jenny McCloy

Carol Tooke

David Swain

Owen Collins

Claire Macro

John & Elaine Coakes

Lou & David Waller

Carys Haywood

Hyacinth Ridguard

Doina Rasnita

Mark & Chris Best

David Corfield

Chris & Leng Ayland and his brother & sister in-law

Barbara Banbury

Karen Bell

Maggie Morgans and Richard

Beverly Harris

The Patterson family

Ted and the family of Isobel Martin

Stan & Sandra Marut

Beverly Cantwell

Eric & Christine Clucas

All our Iranian friends as they reach the final stages
of their 'assessment to stay' and start to find



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

This month's assigned readings.



	Psalm	New Testament		Psalm	New Testament
1st	54	Luke 20: 1-26	17th	61: 4-8	John 3: 22-36
2nd	55: 1-8	Luke 20: 27-21: 4	18th	62: 1-8	John 4: 1-26
3rd	55: 9-16	Luke 21: 5-19	19th	62: 9-12	John 4: 27-42
4th	55: 17-23	Luke 21: 20-38	20th	63: 1-5	John 5: 1-23
5th	56: 1-8	Luke 22: 1-30	21st	63: 6-11	John 5: 24-47
6th	56: 9-13	Luke 22: 31-53	22nd	64	John 6: 1-24
7th	23	Luke 22: 54-71	23rd	65: 1-8	John 6: 25-47
8th	57: 1-6	Luke 23: 1-25	24th	65: 9-13	John 6: 48-71
9th	57: 7-11	Luke 23: 26-49	25th	66: 1-7	John 7: 1-24
10th	58	Luke 23: 50-24: 12	26th	66: 8-15	John 7: 25-53
11th	59: 1-9	Luke 24: 13-35	27th	66: 16-20	John 8: 1-30
12th	59: 10-13	Luke 24: 36-53	28th	23	John 8: 31-59
13th	59: 14-17	John 1: 1-28	29th	67	John 9: 1-17
14th	60: 1-4	John 1: 29-51	30th	68: 1-6	John 9: 18-41
15th	60: 5-12	John 2	31st	68: 7-14	John 10: 1-21
16th	61: 1-3	John 3: 1-21			

EVENT DIARIES



What's on this month at London St. & Old Meeting URCs.

At London Street URC (unless otherwise specified):

Regular Events

Sunday Worship 10:30am			
Mondays	10:15am	Craft Group	
Tuesdays	2:30pm	Take Time Meditation (Exploring Luke's Gospel)	On Zoom. Contact Church Secretary for password.
	5:45-6:45pm	Beavers	In Term Time.
	7-8:30pm	Cubs	All in the Den except Scouts who meet in the Wessex Hall.
	7-9pm	Scouts	
Wednesdays	10:15am	Memory Tree Social Club	
	12:15pm	Lunchtime Prayers	

May Worship Diary

5th	Led by Revd. Josh Thomas; Musician: Joyce Cook.
12th	Led by Brian Risdale from Christian Aid; Musician: Dennis Smith.
19th	(Pentecost) Service includes Holy Communion. Led by Revd. Julian Macro; Musician: Mark Best.
26th	Led by Revd. Mike Burrell; Musician: Mark Best.

Duty Elder for the month is: Tony Patterson.

Next Church Meeting:

13th May (Monday), 7:30pm (in the Hook Room)

Other Events

Weds 8th, 11am	Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Isobel Martin, led by Revd. Josh Thomas.
Sun 12th, Midday	Christian Aid lunch.
Sat 18th, 7:30pm	Sounds of Hope Singers: An evening of praise and songs. (In the Sanctuary.)

At Tadley (Old Meeting) URC (unless otherwise specified):

Regular Events

Sunday Worship 10:30am		
Monday Afternoons	Ladies' Cell Group	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Monday Evenings	Cell Group	Contact Mark Ward or Paul Gross.
Tuesday Evenings	Joint Prayer Time with St Paul's	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Wednesday Evenings	Prayer via Zoom	Contact Mark Ward.
Friday Afternoon	Men's Shed	2pm, once a fortnight. Contact Paul Gross.

May Worship Diary

5th	Led by Rob Lloyd.
12th	Led by Greg Whittick.
19th	Service includes Holy Communion. Led by Mark Ward.
26th	No Service at Old Meeting.

London Street United Reformed Church

London Street URC, Basingstoke seeks to ensure that all content and information published in this issue of FOCUS is current and accurate. The information included does not in any way constitute legal or professional advice and the church cannot be held liable for actions arising from its use.

London Street United Reformed Church is a working name of
Registered Charity London Street (Basingstoke) United Reformed
Church Charity [reg. no. 1130801]