



London Street

United Reformed Church

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



**Focus
September, 2021**

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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

What is the view like from the manse this afternoon? Well, pretty empty! I am writing this from the sofa, one of the only seats left in the manse. The walls and most of the rooms are now empty (apart from cobwebs and dust!). So, this weekend will involve some cleaning and more sorting out and then early Monday morning the final lorry loading and we are away. What an epic roller coaster of a journey this has been! Two months ago, I tentatively put in an application for a job as team lead chaplain for a secondary school in Oxford, not seriously expecting it to go any further, and within the week I had been offered the job after two long days of meetings, interviews and testing the 'call' for both myself and the school. Over the last two months I have had to brutally go through well over twenty-five years of gathering and creating resources for my various roles along with so many folders full of education, from teacher training, two degrees and so many work-related professional development courses. This all amounts to a lot of stuff!! I said to Andrew, as I filled up yet another wheely bin of paper from yet more modules of study, "I really need to stop studying. Surely I must know enough by now!" But to be honest, I am already expecting to be on two courses next term alone. Learning and spiritually growing really is a lifelong journey for me. Perhaps because, as I have always experienced, the more I learn, the more I realise how much I still don't know or understand! Don't get me wrong, I am not just chasing knowledge for the sake of growing my own intellect. No, for in that way lies pride in self. Besides, I realised a while ago that I am probably not that bright. For me it is about doing the best I can for God and if that means studying more, then that's what I have to do.

During my sorting through documents and photos I have naturally been reflecting on what has happened since my ordination eight years ago. Some projects and events had slipped my mind I confess. But really a lot has happened in these years both personally and professionally. There has been a lot of hard work and challenges yes, but also much laughter, much dressing up and many mountaintop moments as well as profoundly moving moments. I am sad that the last year and a half has been consumed by the narrative of Covid 19; not a way in which I envisaged my final days of ministry with you ending. Yet in another

sense, I pray it may make my leaving less important. Your focus now is rightly on returning to the building and learning what the new normal might look and feel like at London Street. I will just not be part of that new normal. As you start to gather, meet and greet more in person I pray that coming physically together again as the body of Christ at London Street will bring you great joy. But do not forget those who will still find the gathering in person problematic, for those who enjoyed being more included in church **because** of it being online. Blended church is here to stay I think (that is both live and online) and for some that could be a real blessing.

So, as I say farewell, you too may be starting to assess the pros and cons of my ministry with you. In truth a minister can only hope to journey with a fellowship for a while. What each minister brings is a unique set of gifts and skills and particular anointing from God for a particular phase of a church fellowship's life. Thank you for calling me to journey with you for these last eight years. It has been a great honour.

I am going to close this 'view from the manse' with some words from the apostle Paul. Of course, Paul frequently needed to say 'farewell' to congregations he had been preaching and teaching with in order that he could then travel on to new places in which to carry the Gospel. His final exhortation in 2 Corinthians seems to fit what my final greeting would be for you....

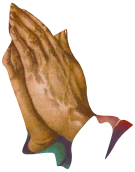
'Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.'

(2 Corinthians 13:11-13)

And I say to that....AMEN!

*Yours in Christ
Revd Kay Blackwell*





CIRCLE OF PRAYER

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

London Street: David Catterall, Hyacinth Ridguard; Betty Shipway; Joan Flint; Tony and Gillian Patterson and family; Jean Young; Maggie and Jeffery Morgans and family; Liz and Brian Foster; Yvonne and Billy Thornton; Jo Tremarco; Rob Williams, Sarah Williams; and Revd Kay Blackwell and family.

Tadley: Linda and Oliver; Rachel and Trevor; Martin; Elaine, Brian and family and Kerry.

Topics for Prayer

As we give thanks for the gifts and skills Kay brought to London Street and Old Meeting over the last eight years, we pray that the new phase of her journey and ministry will continue to be blessed.

Also, please pray for:

The Elders and Office-bearers as we enter the period of interregnum and the reopening of the church building and activities.

All young people in education as they start their academic lives again.

All those experiencing continuing difficulties in the current pandemic and economic climate, especially accepting changes.

The situation in Afghanistan, especially the refugees and those left behind.

Those who are victims of natural disasters and violence in so many parts of God's world, and for those agencies trying to help them.

Thank God for his creation as we think of Harvest Time.



Clara Nicholson, 2 years on 16th September

12th September - deadline for articles for October FOCUS

ELECTION OF ELDERS

We shall shortly be considering the nomination and election of members to be called to serve as elders. Being an elder is a ministry to which a church member is called by God. This call can come through you as a church member when considering another for nomination and election because of what you discern about that person.

Procedure for nomination and election as provided for by the constitution of London Street

Church meeting shall determine the maximum number of elders whose election is sought. A list of those eligible to serve as elders shall be handed to those on the current church roll. Each member will be entitled to nominate up to two more church members than the maximum to be elected. All those nominated by at least 4% of church members shall be considered validly nominated. They will be visited to ascertain whether they are willing to accept nomination.

All of those who have accepted nomination shall be listed on a ballot paper, which will be made available to all on the current church roll, for election to serve as an elder for a term of 3 years. The ballot shall normally take place at the November church meeting.

What does it mean to be an elder at London Street and within the United Reformed Church?

Being an elder means that a church member has been called to be part of a 'team', since an elder is someone who joins with others to form the Elders' meeting of London Street. It is important though to remember that in accepting a call to serve as an elder, that person is not just an elder of London Street but an elder of the United Reformed Church. A person can only be nominated for eldership if they are on the church roll of members for a minimum of 12 months. As a church member they will have an understanding of the constitutions of the United Reformed Church and that of London Street.

What does an elder do?

The functions of eldership in the United Reformed Church have been laid down in the Basis of Union. The list appears daunting. They include ensuring that public worship is regularly offered and the sacraments are duly administered, to ensuring pastoral care for the congregation; to be responsible for the institution and oversight of work among children and young people, to recommending to the church

meeting arrangements for the proper maintenance of buildings and general oversight of all financial responsibilities.

Who do you see as being called to carry out these functions?

Your current eldership is, as a team, already fulfilling the functions of eldership to a greater or lesser extent. When nominating or electing a person to serve as an elder, you are being asked to consider prayerfully who God is seeking to join them in continuing with this work. When praying you are not seeking to find an individual who is gifted in all the functions of eldership. This is collective work. Some responsibilities are ongoing, others are more dependent on circumstances. Some may be done by small groups, some by everyone.

An elder is no different from any other church member in that we are all called to develop and grow in faith, through prayer, worship, sacraments and learning. The call to eldership is a renewed call to these things as well. So the faith required is the same faith that makes us a Christian. But, at times we all feel lacking in faith, or commitment, or ability. We all feel inadequate in our various callings and service to the church. That is when we need the support and the faith of the rest of the church around us, as well as the grace of God. That is why it is so important to take your time through prayer when considering who to nominate and elect as an elder.

Memory Tree

We are looking forward to welcoming our guests back to Memory Tree on Wednesday 22nd September at 10.30am **(time to be confirmed)**.

If you know of anybody who might like to join our group---either somebody who is coping with dementia or their carer, please tell them about us. We also welcome carers whose partners may be living in a Care Home, they find they feel great support from others who understand their situation.

We are always happy to welcome volunteers to help at our group too... so, if you enjoy chatting to others, doing jigsaws, sharing a joke, playing a game or maybe just eating home made cake, please come along and see us.

Please speak to one of the volunteers if you would like more information: Isobel, Joyce, Jenny, Ian, Jean, Jo, Louise or Doina.

RIDE + STRIDES

H - Hans F. (rev. March 2021)

for the heritage of churches

SATURDAY
11 SEPT.
2021

Over 400 churches & chapels in Hampshire & the Isle of Wight will be open.



join us

- Have a family fun day out and discover the beautiful churches and chapels on your doorstep, by taking part in a sponsored cycle or walk.
- Enjoy a warm welcome along the way!
- Help to preserve our churches for future generations.

Sponsor forms and more information are available from:



or contact the County Coordinator Team at rideandstride@hihct.org.uk

find out more at

www.hihct.org.uk

HAMPSHIRE & THE ISLANDS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST
Registered Charity No. 1181370



The Future of Traidcraft

UNEXPECTED CLOSURE

When the Covid-19 pandemic struck last year the London Street Traidcraft stall was well stocked with all the items that you would have seen on the stall. With our opportunity to sell them suddenly taken away we, ourselves, bought all that we could reasonably use. Some of the congregation requested items which we delivered and the rest of the food stock was passed to the Community Food Link / Foodbank / Oasis kitchen as appropriate.

TRAIDCRAFT plc

The mail order business for Traidcraft surged at the start of lock-down as people ordered directly. So the organisation is still there and, as far as we understand, on a sound footing. This is a quote from last year's annual report (dated August 2020):

"The principal short-term risks are clearly associated with the ongoing consequences of COVID 19. The closure of many businesses across the globe for three months, the concomitant fall in incomes for many people and the fear or expectation of a second wave in the autumn has had its due impact on the overall economy. As an online retailer of ethical food products, detergents, and household goods, Traidcraft did at least have a fighting chance. We have made use of the government's furlough scheme to reduce costs where appropriate and have sustained our sales by redirecting our marketing focus to new customers. The ongoing and potentially increasing risks of continued demand weakness are the focus of a lot of planning. Our customer profile has shifted decisively since March, with end consumers now making up the bulk of sales, and our traditional Fairtrader community stymied by the closure of many churches and local markets.

Brexit - and its potential to add further disruption to international trade by introducing cost and delay - remains the second most immediate risk to the company. Brexit offers no potential upsides for Traidcraft: all our markets are domestic; all our products are

imported. Brexit will involve additional cost, additional delay and potentially, a further weakening of the pound against the dollar. The specific risk is that a COVID-19 damaged economy multiplied by the consequences of a badly implemented Brexit may prove too much for many businesses to survive, thus weakening an already difficult environment."

Traidcraft's continued presence shows how hard the team there have been working to keep going.

The need for a business like Traidcraft is still there. A number of retailers are diluting the "Fair Trade" idea by doing their own version. They won't, however, be able to use the familiar Fair Trade logo, but are likely to come up with their own. Traidcraft works with people who are, at present, unable to access markets which would enable them to earn a reasonable living. The training from Traidcraft Exchange and other parties, the possibility of advanced payment for goods and other assistance allows them to develop their businesses and skills.

TRAIDCRAFT AND LONDON STREET

Now back to the local situation: the London Street Traidcraft stall now has no stock apart from a few craft items and a tub of coffee for use by the church. Fortunately, however, the Traidcraft stall account has enough money in it to re-stock the stall to an adequate level. Factors affecting our decision when, or whether, to restart the stall will take the following into account:

- Until the church starts serving refreshments in the concourse after service we see no point in re-stocking the Traidcraft stall.
- How many people will choose to join in the refreshments, and how likely they are to buy from the stall?
- There have been slowly declining sales in the church. So what products would be popular enough to make it worth our while? Whilst we are personally committed to Fair Trade, running a Traidcraft stall is not effortless.
- There is a balance between buying in bulk and getting a small discount (which allows us to sell to you at a lower price but carries the risk of stock going out of date) and ordering smaller quantities which would have to be sold at a slightly higher price. So there is a judgement to be made. We would expect that a more expensive item would not sell as frequently.

- We have always tried to have a stall every week so that customers could rely on it being there. Perhaps another pattern would work as well. Please note that as London Street URC provides cupboard space the goods are at church, so even if the stall is not in the Concourse the goods are still available.

So please talk to us and let us know your attitude toward and, expectations of a Traidcraft stall. It would be so sad if we didn't restart because people didn't tell us what they would hope for. Would a stall once or twice a month selling the most popular lines like chocolate and cookies work for you? Is it time to close the stall? Any other ideas?

We look forward to hearing your views.

John and Margaret Carrick Smith

—ooOoo—

Can you help?

We all enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and fellowship shared after worship. It is always a great way of welcoming those who are new to our church family and chatting to old and new friends. We are grateful to those who provide this opportunity for us.



However, it is always good to have lots of people on a regular rota or as emergency 'stand by' people. It would be good if we could have more help, as this would spread the load and ensure that the same people are not on duty too often.

Could you volunteer to be on this important rota? Don't worry if you would be new to our kitchen, you would always have somebody who is experienced alongside you. If you are interested, please speak to me as soon as possible as I will soon be compiling the rota for 2022!!

Thanks in advance

Jenny (jennymccloy@hotmail.co.uk or 07834559541)

Bible Readings for September:

		Psalm	New Testament	
Wed	1st	62	2 Corinthians	7
Thu	2nd	104:24-35	"	8
Fri	3rd	139	"	9
Sat	4th	32	Reflection	
Sun	5th	63	"	
Mon	6th	140	2 Corinthians	10
Tue	7th	33:1-12	"	11
Wed	8th	65	"	12
Thu	9th	141	"	13
Fri	10th	33:13-22	1 Timothy	1
Sat	11th	66	Reflection	
Sun	12th	105:1-11	"	
Mon	13th	34:1-10	1 Timothy	2
Tue	14th	67	"	3
Wed	15th	143	"	4
Thu	16th	34:11-22	"	5
Fri	17th	68:1-10	"	6
Sat	18th	144	Reflection	
Sun	19th	36:5-12	"	
Mon	20th	68:28-35	2 Timothy	1
Tue	21st	145	"	2
Wed	22nd	38	"	3
Thu	23rd	69	"	4
Fri	24th	146	Titus	1
Sat	25th	107	Reflection	
Sun	26th	70	"	
Mon	27th	147	Titus	2
Tue	28th	40:1-8	"	3
Wed	29th	71:1-13	1 John	1
Thu	30th	148		

Ffald-y-Brenin

2022 Prayer Handbook

Please will you inform Jenny if you would like the Prayer Handbook for 2022 called "Jubilee Freed to Live", in celebration of the formation of the URC in 1972, it costs £5.49.

Or, if you would like a Jubilee celebration pocket diary (£6.99) or desk diary (£9.99), please let Jenny know by 22nd October.

DANDY-WALKER SYNDROME - AN ARTICLE BY JO TREMARCO

As a reasonably new member of our church, I wanted to share something with you all. It may help people to understand me a little better and in return I hope not to feel so self-conscious.

I have a rare and serious hidden disability known as Dandy-Walker syndrome, a congenital brain malformation involving the cerebellum (an area of the back of the brain that co-ordinates movement) and the fluid-filled spaces around it. The key features of this syndrome are an enlargement of the fourth ventricle (a small channel that allows fluid to flow freely between the upper and lower areas of the brain and spinal cord), a partial or complete absence of the area of the brain between the two cerebellar hemispheres (cerebellar vermis), and cyst formation near the lowest part of the skull.

The cerebellum is the area of the brain that helps co-ordinate movement and it also involves cognition and behaviour. I attend the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London.

So this affects me in many ways. Most of them hidden and I have learnt ways to disguise them. The huge cyst in the back of my brain has grown over the years. This is degenerative. Some of my physical issues include being partially sighted, deaf in one ear, different types of fits, weak core muscles, etc. Mentally I tire easily, can suffer irritability, problem word finding and information processing. I have to concentrate with my balance all the time. I feel stable but the world and its people are moving. Standing still feels like I'm a new born giraffe.

I have mild hydrocephalus which causes increased pressure within my skull, nystagmus when I am tired or concentrating. This is where my eyes wobble from side to side, eye movement being controlled by the cerebellum. This year things have got worse and as the cyst takes up more room in my brain, more things fail to work.

You may think why am I sharing this with you all? It might help you understand me better. I know I'm managing it well and at the end of the day I am me - Jo. But that's not the main reason. I am sharing this with you to say how grateful I am. Grateful to be able to walk, grateful to be alive. Thank you God. Amen.
Blessings Jo.

A Marathon Fundraising Time

For all you supporters, here is a brief update on our attempt at running the Hampshire Hoppit Trail Marathon in Kingsclere on 20th June 2021 to raise funds for a deep water well in Uganda at a Children's home.

It was after about a mile I realised I should have picked a shorter race. Still I thought, it's a bit late now... I'll have to carry on.... for a further 25 miles. Luckily my friend John was with me to encourage me on. Team members Tom and Phil were well ahead already... but then again so were most of the other runners.

In order to encourage you to sign up to this race the organisers promised amazing views from the top of the Kingsclere downs. Unfortunately the day started off misty - so the views were a bit lacking... but as it turns out that was probably for best as I'd never have done the race if I'd have seen the hill we had to come up at the finish! Phew! It was practically vertical! (Well it seemed like that to me!).

Anyway... you'll all be pleased to hear that all of the team did manage to finish the marathon. I was pleased with my 5 hours 48, John was just ahead of me, Phil ahead of him (by about an hour) and Tom ahead of Phil (by about another hour). So if we take an average of the individual team members times for finishing as the Teams average... then my time looks a lot better!

A big thank you goes to all you sponsors and supporters... I probably wouldn't have done it with out you all! Together we raised an amazing sum of over £2,222! That's much more than I expected! (I think I budgeted about £1,000)... so we've effectively gone more than twice the distance.... and it certainly seemed like that during the marathon! Well done everyone.

I really enjoyed being a part of this team to raise funds for the Adonai water project! I just need to recover from it now! I'm still struggling with doing exercises! Staying in bed seems a much nicer option!

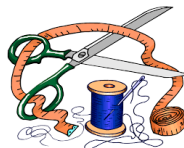
Thank you everyone!

Mark and Team, John, Phil and Tom



3Cs - Everyone welcome for Company, chat and a Coffee (or tea) on the third Wednesday of each month (beginning on 20th October) in the concourse.

Craft Club



I am pleased to let you know that Craft Club will begin again on 6th September in the Hook Room at 10.30.

Please come along and join us while we knit, crochet, do our colouring and chat (mostly), Please feel free to wear your mask and find your own comfort zone, you will be welcome.

No membership forms, no fees, a small donation to church funds if you wish. Refreshments will be available.

Any questions please contact Isobel on 07979054199.

Eco tip for September:

Keep your freezer as full as possible: it takes more energy to chill empty space. If necessary you can always slip in a loaf of bread to fill empty space.

Diary for Old Meeting, Tadley

- Sept 5th visiting MWE Chapel - TBC
- 12th Rev Kay Blackwell (last service)
- 19th 'alternative' activity - possibly a woodland walk
- 26th visiting preacher - TBC

Other regular activities from September -

Monday evening Cell group - contact Mark Ward or Paul Gross for details

Tuesday evening joint prayer time with St Paul's - contact Penny O'Bee

Wednesday evening prayer - 7pm via Zoom - contact Mark Ward

Friday afternoon 2pm (once a fortnight) - Men's Shed, - contact Paul Gross

Saturday afternoon - Ladies Cell group - contact Penny O'Bee

Diary - September, 2021

at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Wed	1 st	12.15pm	Lunchtime Prayers
		3.00pm	Wellbeing on Zoom*
		7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	2 nd	5.00pm	Midweek prayers on Zoom*
Sun	5 th	10.30am	Worship, inc.Holy Communion led by Revd Kay Blackwell
Mon	6 th	10.15am	Craft Club
Wed	8 th	12.15pm	Lunchtime Prayers
		3.00pm	Wellbeing on Zoom*
Thu	9 th	5.30pm	Midweek prayers on Zoom*
Sun	12 th	10.30am	Worship led by Joy Williams
Mon	13 th	10.15am	Craft Club
Tue.	14 th	5.30pm	Beavers - in the Wessex Hall
		6.30pm	Cubs “
		7.30pm	Scouts “
Wed.	15 th	12.15pm	Lunchtime Prayers
		3.00pm	Wellbeing on Zoom*
Thu	16 th	5.30pm	Midweek prayers on Zoom*
Sun	19 th	10.30am	Worship led by Vivien Gerhold Last day for Elders' nomination form to be returned
Mon	20 th	10.15am	Craft Club
Tue.	21 st	5.30pm	Beavers - in the Wessex Hall
		6.30pm	Cubs “
		7.30pm	Scouts “
Wed	22 nd	10.30am	Memory Tree (time to be confirmed)
		12.15pm	Lunchtime Prayers
		3.00pm	Wellbeing on Zoom*
		7.30pm	Church Meeting in the sanctuary
Thu	23 rd	5.30pm	Midweek prayers on Zoom*
Sun	26 th	10.30am	Worship led by Sydney Shore
Mon	27 th	10.15am	Craft Club
Tue	28 th	5.30pm	Beavers - in the Wessex Hall
		6.30pm	Cubs “
		7.30pm	Scouts “
Wed	29 th	12.15pm	Lunchtime Prayers
		3.00pm	Wellbeing on Zoom*
Thu	30 th	5.30pm	Midweek prayers on Zoom*

* Zoom invite code can be found on the church website basingstokeurc.org.uk

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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