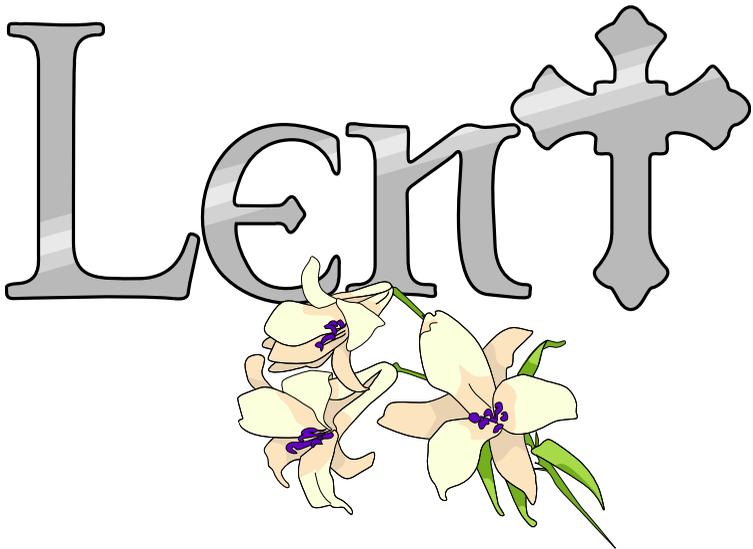




London Street

United Reformed Church

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



FOCUS

February, 2016

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.londonstreeturc.org.uk

MINISTER: Revd Kay Blackwell (Day off - Monday)
6 Camberry Close
Basingstoke RG21 3AG
Tel: Vestry - 01256 242152
Mobile - 07582 056286
e.mail - revkayblackwell@gmail.com

CHURCH SECRETARY: Mr Owen Collins
15 Cyprus Road
Hatch Warren
Basingstoke RG22 4UY
Tel: 01256 477425
e.mail - secretary@londonstreeturc.org.uk

TREASURER: Karen Bell
47 Tobago Close, Popley,
Basingstoke RG24 9PX
e.mail - treasurer@londonstreeturc.org.uk

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Basingstoke RG21 3EP
Tel: 01256 475547
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FOCUS: Mrs Christine Robertson
1208 Skyline Plaza, Alencon Link,
Basingstoke RG21 7AZ
Tel: 01256 869968
e.mail: christina774robertson@btinternet.com

Tadley (Old Meeting) URC

10.30 every Sunday

"TASTE" Youth Event at 7 pm in the Immanuel Centre

Minister: Revd Kay Blackwell

Church Secretary: Paul Gross
22 Pelican Road, Pamber Heath RG26 3EN
Tel: 0118 970 0809
e.mail: paulg@silchester.org

Treasurer: Mark Ward
10 Hartleys, Silchester, Reading RG7 2QE
e.mail: mandjward@hotmail.co.uk

View from the Manse

Walking in faith

'A person's steps are directed by the LORD. How then can anyone understand their own way?'

(Proverbs 20:24)

London Street URC is, I believe, being taken to a new level of faithfulness. I have preached and written about Joshua and the walls of Jericho (*Joshua 5:13-6:16*) in relation to the journey into prayer happening at the URC church, especially in London Street. Since that letter, I feel that God, with regard to the Youth Café in London Street, has taken our prayer life to a whole new level of commitment and faithful expectation!

The Youth Café work has always been held in prayer before and after each session but I was concerned that those beyond the Youth Café teams themselves did not know either what to pray for or what was actually happening at the Youth Café. In order to deal with this, the Café management team put three new processes in place. Firstly, regular e-mail newsletters are now being sent out to all of the main community Café supporters. Secondly, we are holding monthly prayer meetings in the church on the last Friday of the month from 10am to 12.00 to which all supporters and interested parties are invited and a record is then kept of the key Bible passages, prophetic pictures and prayers that come out of each session. Finally we are holding a commissioning service for the Café at the start of each academic term, which again, all supporters and staff are invited to.

Having had a small group of rather troubled boys for some time as the main users of the Youth Café, it seemed that many other young people felt unable to use the facilities. However, good and intensive work was done with this group over several years and **all** of them are now moving on into the world of work or universities. This is a real answer to our prayers as, at many stages, some could have taken much more negative roots in life and certainly would not have considered university as a path open to them. This then left the café with no new members to fill their shoes. Numbers were becoming very low and we often had no young people coming into the Youth Café at all. The Youth Café staff used this quiet time to do some in-house training. Just before the summer holiday we also organised some fun street activities outside the church over three consecutive Wednesday afternoons during the Basingstoke festival (a circus skills workshop, a drumming workshop and an art workshop). This was done in order to raise the profile of the Youth Café whilst the children went past on their way home from school. In September, our numbers of attendees to Youth Café

were still sadly very poor and staff morale was becoming low. In the October Prayer session, a few of the team met, but they were, to be honest, feeling quite despondent. However, during that prayer session, through prayer, scriptures and discussion, we realised that God had actually been speaking to each one of us again about the walls of Jericho. Some time ago we had had a prayer walk around the local Costello school as there had been a problem with the head teacher in that school. Was this what we were being asked to do again? No! This time we felt that we needed to be **more** faithful. This time we felt called to do seven weeks of Friday marches around the Costello School and on the seventh week, following the model of Joshua around Jericho, we needed to walk around the campus grounds seven times! We checked our diaries then and there. There were of course exactly seven Fridays until the School broke up! This was going to take very faithful commitment from us all and, especially on the last Friday, quite a lot of energy and determination as the seven walks around needed to be completed before the School broke up for Christmas at around 12.30pm. So a team of us met faithfully every Friday to march and pray and sometimes sing around the School grounds. We blessed that School for seven weeks and we pronounced the authority of Jesus over that site and on the seventh week we did so seven times around. We were faithful.

So what happened? After the first Friday walk, on the Monday afternoon (the first Youth Café opening since the walk) two new boys, not met before, came into the Café and seemed to make themselves at ease. After the second walk, two young girls walked in and asked the staff what they needed to do to become Christians. They were both led through prayer of commitment that afternoon and gave their lives to Jesus. After the third walk, one member of the Café from a while ago returned with a new cohort of boys who stayed all afternoon and enjoyed using all of the equipment. After the fourth walk, the new cohort of boys attended and a group that had not attended for at least a year and a half returned. After the fifth and sixth weeks of walks the group who come into the Youth Café on the way to Basingstoke youth orchestra came with new friends too and the new cohort of boys started coming to Youth Café on other days and bringing also a new group of girls. So, what about the seventh week? Well, after the seventh week was the Christmas break. We came back in January wondering what God may have in store for us as terms are often quiet in the first couple of weeks. On the first Monday of opening we had sixteen visitors, on Tuesday we had twenty one, on Wednesday we had thirteen and on Thursday we had sixteen visitors.

As it now stands, Youth Café is now back to numbers that used to attend several years ago! What we desperately need now is more volunteer staff. If you like working with teenagers, or would like to give it a go, please call or e-mail me at London Street.

So what has this taught us? Well, to increase our attention to what the Holy Spirit is telling us and to literally step out in faith! What next? At the moment we are taking delight in what the Lord is doing here. God has given us the desires of our hearts in a renewed and revived Youth Café. We are going to see where God is leading us next by continuing to pray and serve in faith. Watch this space!

‘Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him and he will do this’
(Psalm 37: 4-5)

Just a reminder to you all that London Street URC opens its church doors at 9.30am every weekday morning for half an hour of prayer. They open again at 12.15 for around fifteen minutes’ lunchtime prayer (half an hour on Wednesday). We are using the Ffald-y-Brenin Rhythm of prayer and psalm cycle as our structure. So, if any of you happen to be in town at those times please do feel free to join us, we’d love to have you with us. On Fridays we pronounce together blessings over the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane. This feels like a very profound thing to be involved with. Not all prayer involves the physical fitness required for things like our prayer marches around the Costello School but just coming, sitting and praying with your brothers and sisters in Christ feels powerful.....come and join us and step into a faith journey that could transform both you, us and this town!

Yours in Christ, Kay



CIRCLE OF PRAYER:

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

Short Term: Elena; Beverley and John Cantwell; Doreen Dudman and family following the death of her husband, Ray; Richard, Antonia, Grace and Zach Holland (Claire Macro's family in Canada); Claire Macro; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Helen Rolton; Beryl Welbrock and family following the death of David on Saturday 16th January, a former Minister at London Street.

Long Term: Christine and Tony Addis; Judith Best (mother of Mark Best); Annette Bowers (Daughter of Sheila Munro); Harry Bowers; Morag Hill; Marian Kenward; Maggie Morgans and family; Rachel Patterson; Hyacinth and Eaton Ridguard; Molly Shaw; Betty Shipway; Gwen Simms (mother of Tina Digweed); Joyce Smith; Fay Spurr; Chris and Suzanne Tolley; Rachel Walker (granddaughter of Les and Iris Wenham).



Flower Rota - February:

7 th	Mrs M. Carrick Smith
14 th	Mrs Rosemary Martin
21 st	Mrs Leng Ayland
28 th	Mrs Liz Lindsay

Liz Lindsay, Convener

Happy Birthday

Kay Cook, 82 years on 8 February

Cade Martin, 16 years on 14 February

Nathan Cox, 17 years on 14 February

Alannah O'Neill, 18 years on 20 February



Directory changes:

Christine Jones – 63 Pitman Close, Berg Estate, Basingstoke, RG22 6LU. Tel: 350014.

Grace Springthorpe – Basingfield Court, Huish Lane, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7BN. Tel of the home is 01256 321494.

Request from Owen for photographs:

If you have any photographs of Louise and Paul's wedding, particularly inside the sanctuary, I'd be very grateful if you could forward them to me at my Email address. Louise and Paul were let down just 24 hours before their wedding by the photographer they had booked and they have very few photographs that are good enough to showcase in an album. Many thanks, Owen.

Daily Bible Readings for February:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		
1 st	113	Acts	6	16 th	93	Acts	17
2 nd	5	"	7	17 th	118: 15-29	"	18
3 rd	115	"	8	18 th	9: 1-16	"	19
4 th	6	"	9	19 th	119: 1-16	"	20
5 th	46	"	10	20 th	79	Reflection	
6 th	75	Reflection		21 st		Reflection	
7 th		Reflection		22 nd	48	Acts	21
8 th	92	Acts	11	23 rd	80	"	22
9 th	116	"	12	24 th	94: 12-23	"	23
10 th	7: 1-11	"	13	25 th	119: 17-32	"	24
11 th	117/118: 1-14	"	14	26 th	12	"	25
12 th	8	"	15	27 th	119: 33-48	Reflection	
13 th	47	Reflection		28 th		Reflection	
14 th		Reflection		29 th	13	Acts	26
15 th	77: 1-14						



Stamp Recycling:

Someone recently asked my wife why I collected stamps at church. About 3 years ago Frank Tovey and his wife moved away to Lymington and gave up collecting the used stamps for the LEPROSY MISSION, so I volunteered to take the job over. Any stamps put into the large box in the Concourse marked 'USED STAMPS' I take home and trim them so that there is no more than 5mm of a single thickness border round each edge and then sort them into various categories such as UK 1st and 2nd class, large UK, Christmas stamps, special issues (Olympic etc) and foreign. They are then parcelled up and posted to the LEPROSY MISSION. I recently posted a package of about 4.1/2 lbs; goodness knows just how many stamps there were in the parcel!! I hope this explains why I collect stamps in church.

Les Wenham

Prayer Focus:

Psalms 42 verse 5: 'Why are you so cast down, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your trust in God for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God...'

The turn of the year is a time to take stock, to look back at the year past, with many mixed emotions no doubt, but more importantly, looking forward to the uncertain future.

Does it seem that the world is in even greater turmoil than it was a year ago?

Refugees and asylum seekers; terrorist atrocities; natural disasters; historic child abuse revelations; increasing need for food banks; housing crises and homelessness...the list seems to lengthen. Where is God in all this? Not a new question, if you read the Psalms; men and women have been asking it over many generations.

Jesus was born, lived and died to assure us that, if we believe and put our trust in Him, we are forgiven; we are renewed, and we have the hope (promise) of a future life with Him.

From the middle of February we again enter the period of Lent, a great opportunity to refresh our spiritual life, to read those Psalms that wrestle with this perplexing question and perhaps to meet with others to deepen our knowledge and understanding of where God is in our lives and what He wants from us...for He has a purpose for each of us individually as well as for us as a Church. Lenten resolutions should be more serious than those at New Year as they could influence that hope for the future that we are promised. '...those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles....' (Isaiah 40 v. 31a). That's a promise worth holding on to unless, I suppose, you have no head for heights!

Lighthouse Church:

The Wessex Synod is inviting all local URC churches to register as Lighthouse Churches and share in the ministry of helping those in the UK caught up in natural disasters.

Whenever disaster strikes Samaritan's Purse is ready to respond at a moment's notice. Previously this has been internationally but earlier this year that experience enabled us, working with both local authorities and, more importantly, church volunteers, to help those affected by flooding on the Somerset levels, and we have now set up a UK Disaster Response Team (The Team).

Natural disasters can hit with little or no warning. In a matter of minutes, the unforgiving power of wind and storm can destroy homes and rob people of their most treasured belongings, turning lives upside down. The Team, made up of trained Samaritan's Purse Disaster Responders and Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Rapid Response Chaplains together with local church members, can show God's compassion through practical support and care. The Team aims to serve the most vulnerable victims, typically the elderly, those with low or no income or no insurance. Sometimes the best help we can give is to take time to talk and listen as they tell of their nightmare experience being a light in the midst of their darkness. The Team believe that responding to the needs of those who have been devastated by disasters is fulfilling the role of the Good Samaritan and is in keeping with Christ's command to "go and do likewise" (Luke 10).

The Team are now seeking churches within the Synod to partner with them to create a locality-based ability to respond wherever disaster or need occurs. The Team brings trained assessors, together with tools and equipment, but it is local church volunteers who can provide a volunteer workforce, showing practical love and care, the ability to connect with victims and be there for them in the long term.

Could we at London St. be part of this exciting project, helping our neighbours and community if a local disaster happens? A church that partners with the Samaritan's Purse and Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Disaster Assistance Response Programme is referred to as a Lighthouse Church. To become a Lighthouse Church, The Team are looking for the following support:

- to be the eyes and ears locally to inform The Team of situations that may be relevant in the context of a potential Disaster Response;

Connect to our Synod

As well as being Synod Clerk, I am, of course, a member of a local church. And so I'm very aware that sometimes what is going on in the Synod seems a bit distant. Our focus, quite rightly, is on our everyday discipleship as we seek to follow Christ and serve him in and through our local church community and in the wider world.

But I also believe that the Synod can help us in all of this. The Synod, after all, is just "us". As individuals we gather to support and guide one another within our local church family; as local churches we gather into Synods for support and guidance.

But that connection is much harder to sustain because of the physical distances between us. However, technology can help us!

I hope you know that last September we launched a new Synod Website (if you didn't know before, you do now!). On this website you will find amongst other things:

- Practical advice
- Details of the people you can contact for help
- A calendar of all the events happening in the Synod and how to take part
- A Newsletter which is published twice a month and includes news of our churches

So next time you go on-line to check your e-mails or shop, why not enter: <http://wessexsynod.urc.org.uk> and add it to your favourites. Visit often. Stay connected!

Of course, some of you won't have internet access. So perhaps someone in the congregation who does, would be willing to print out the Newsletter, watch out for website information which is of interest to your church and help to keep us all connected.

With love and best wishes

Sue Brown
Synod Clerk

Tadley 'Old Meeting'

Services every Sunday morning at 10.30 am
Prayer time before the service from 10.00 am

Preachers list for February

7th Rob and Jan Lloyd
14th Rev. Kay Blackwell.
This is a café-style service.
21st Sydney Shore (Communion)
28th Seb Allwright
6th March – Mark Ward.

Welcome Rota

George and Ena
Mandy and Dave B

Ladies Cell
Janet and Paul



Really? – “9 Qs To Ask The Man You Want To Marry”!

I recently read an article that appeared on the “Your Tango” website by Author Carly Spindel titled “9 Qs To Ask The Man You Want To Marry, BEFORE The Wedding”. Now, I have to confess that I don’t usually go around reading articles about marriage advice. However, I was intrigued by the title and so I read a little further on. In the article Carly asks (and answers) a number of intriguing questions such as: “Why do you want to spend eternity with me?” Of course my normal male response to this question would be to answer “because I do” smile sweetly and hope I can get back to whatever it was I was doing before the question came up as soon as possible.

On the other hand it *is* an interesting question. Why *do* I want to spend eternity with my wife? It may come as a surprise to some but primarily I think it’s because I genuinely feel that, after 32 years of marriage (or is it 33? I’ll check with Julie later on – she’ll know!), we are pretty inseparable (or, to paraphrase Genesis ‘*two individual people that were separate, have now become one*’) but it’s also because she, after all, is my best friend, my confidant, my lover, my soul mate, my best supporter and my encourager..... and she is also willing to cook my tea and do the ironing too! Talk about devotion!

You know, we still have fun together, we still spend time together, we pray together (every day) and we always share our hopes and fears with each other (although normally, as a man, it does take me several hours longer to pluck up the courage to do this than it does Julie). The funny thing is, I'm pretty sure that if you asked Julie the same question, she would say pretty much the same thing! Now, it's certainly not because there is anything superhuman or special about either me or my wife Julie (although personally I think she is both special and must be superhuman to put up with me). No, rather it's simply because we have, and we continue to take time every day, every week and every month and year, to invest in each other and in our marriage. We treasure what we have and we don't want to lose it – but we also know that we can continue to improve it and make it better (and we have!). We take time to find out how we are each doing, we forgive each other and ourselves when things go wrong (we make quite a few mistakes along the way – mostly mine of course!), and we both take responsibility for having fun. That's partly why we have always enjoyed helping to run the *Marriage Course* with our close friends Paul & Janet and Pam & Lionel. It's just such a great opportunity for us to remind ourselves about all the things that should go into making and maintaining a great relationship over a whole lifetime (eternity?) of marriage.....and to be able to share that with all of the many other great couples that we have met since we started running the courses very many years ago.

If you are interested in attending a marriage course, we will be starting a new course in April this year. For further details email contact@tadleyurc.com.

Mark Ward

Christmas Charity Offerings at London Street: The total collected over the three services and since is £593.92.



OPEN THE BOOK

Informal Gathering

Friday 5th February 2016 7 – 9pm

*Christ Church, Chineham, Basingstoke Hampshire
RG24 8LT.*

Come and meet other team members delivering OtB in our area. An evening to celebrate, and to share experiences of delivering OtB and to encourage each other in taking this into more schools.

Local teams will be giving feedback of their experiences including:

Starting up with a small team

The effect on churches of a multi-church team

An after-school presentation of OtB to parents – 90 adults and children attended!

Multi-church team(s) in multi-schools – a serious admin job this!

New OtB material. Currently being road tested with an expected 2016 release.

Time to share; time to ask questions; time be excited!

Not in a Team – come and hear what is happening – if this excites you we will find you a Team to join!

Drinks and nibbles provided

RSVP to David Josey: david.josey@bcen.org.uk

BCEN: Basingstoke Christian Education Network
Supporting schools in student spiritual, moral, social, cultural development

Dates to note at London Street, unless otherwise stated:

February:

Fri	5 th	7 – 9pm	'Open the Book' at Christ Church, Chineham (see page 14)
Sat	6 th	6.30pm	Barn Dance at Sarum Hill Centre in aid of Basingstoke Food Bank
Sun	7 th	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast led by Ian and Jenny McCloy
		10.30am	Worship – The Minister and Seb Allwright
Wed	10 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	11 th		Last Day for Youth Café
Fri	12 th	7.30pm	An evening with Seb Allwright at Tadley Old Meeting
Sun	14 th	10.30am	Worship – Mrs Vivien Gerhold DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR MARCH ISSUE OF FOCUS
Wed	17 th	10.15am	3C's meet in the Oasis Café
Sun	21 st	10.30am	Worship – Revd Ian Bentley , including Holy Communion
Mon	22 nd		Youth Café reopens
Thu	25 th	2.00pm	Friendship Hour – Guest Speaker, Margaret Hayes – Exotic Holiday Photographs
Sun	28 th	10.30am	Worship – The Minister
		3.00pm	Doug Horley's crazy science concert (see page 10)

Forward Dates:

March:

Wed	9 th	7.30pm	Church meeting
Sat	26 th	3.30pm	Messy Church

April:

Sun	17 th	10.30am	Worship including communion followed by Annual Church meeting, including lunch
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Mission Statement

"To Live God's Love in Church and Community"

Regular Weekly 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 Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students

Tuesdays

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse
10am-12 noon 'LITTLE ANGELS' pre-school Club
3-5.30pm in Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students
5.45pm (BEAVER SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Colony)
7pm (CUB SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Pack)
7pm (SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Troop)

Wednesdays

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse
10.30-12 noon MEMORY TREE SOCIAL CLUB
12.30 Lunch time worship and prayer meeting
3-5.30pm in Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time 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 — 4th Thursday of each month
3-6pm in Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students
7.30pm PRAYER MEETING at **Tadley URC**

Fridays

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

Saturdays

8-9am PRAYER MEETING at **Tadley**

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]