



London Street

United Reformed Church

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

**FOR
GOD
SO
LOVED THE WORLD
HE
GAVE
HIS
ONLY
SON**

Focus
February, 2020

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - www.basingstokeurc.org.uk

MINISTER:

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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:

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View from the Manse

In January the press loves to bombard us with programmes and articles about the latest diet or fitness fads. As we enter into February, we then get bombarded by holiday advertising luring us to book flights to beach holidays with the beautiful people in some exotic places. And then comes Valentine's Day and the commercial pressure to be loved and show love and if you can't do either of those you may be a bit of a loser. Basically, advertising is designed to help others make money out of us by making us feel guilty so that we consume more and more stuff. Jesus came to show us a radically new way of living, through him we are assured of being loved. I can see that for young people, glued to their phones and social media pretty much 24/7, the pressures to conform and fit in and consume more and more can seem very compelling and almost claustrophobic. On the radio this week I heard that the fashion journalists have decided that, on average, the new clothes that young people buy are only worn twice before being discarded. The fashion industry needs to rethink thiswe all need to rethink the way we are living!

The terrible bush fires continue to rage in Australia as I write this. According to the BBC news from today, some 27 people have so far have been killed - including four firefighters - and an estimated 10 million hectares (100,000 sq km or 15.6 million acres) of bush, forest and parks across Australia have to date been burned. This equates to what looks like around two-thirds of the UK burning! I am sure by the time you read this, the fires will have claimed even more lives and a greater area of land. In Australia even the sun and the moon have turned red.

In the face of such natural calamities as volcanic eruptions, Tsunamis, fires, droughts, floods and melting glaciers, we see how powerless we actually are in the midst of God's mighty and powerful creation.

We are all responsible for nurturing and caring for the beautiful balance of creation. In Genesis 9:1-3, after the flood of the earth, Noah was told to *'be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth'*, God

also told Noah that God gave him and all his offspring **all** of creation in which to be fruitful. Well, humanity has certainly filled the earth!

God gave humankind creation but with that great gift comes responsibilities to maintain creation's balance and order. This we have not done. We have used, abused and consumed and are continuing to do so. We cannot continue to do so without impunity! The speeches and actions of Greta Thunberg, such a young voice calling out in the wilderness, appear to have stirred many. Extinction Rebellion, labelled at one time as a terrorist movement (now recently changed), is made up of variety of ordinary people like you and me, people from varied walks of life, from professionals to students. People who see the future as bleak, unless the way we all live changes drastically before it is too late. These are worrying times indeed.

Re-wilding, treating farming in a totally different way, may be a way forward. Organic farmers, using re-wilding techniques, seem quite rapidly to see a return of bees, butterflies, birds and other wildlife. It seems that re-wilding land enables the natural balance and order of creation to return. But like all such things, the solutions can be complex and have wider implications. We have many mouths to feed and many living on small budgets that would exclude them from shopping for organically grown products. Our national and global structures of trade have economic and political implications. But what is clear, is that we all have a responsibility to consume more ethically when we can, and consume less.

Without faith this can all feel rather bleak indeed. The levels of depression among our young people is quite overwhelming when you look at the statistics. But as people of faith we have a different perspective to offer. Jesus came to live among us as God's love for all creation, restoring, renewing and reviving wherever he went. He died on the cross, taking upon himself the sins of the world. He rose again to show us that he is sovereign over all creation. We live in the in-between times. His kingdom is being established and will be established in full at his return.

Then there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What we need to do is be faithful, humble ourselves before the cross, be Christ's beacon lights of hope in a darkening and confusing world. Read Romans 8this is our sure hope in Jesus Christ!

Future Glory

'¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now'

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; Phyllis Birchmore; Kay Cook; Bram Corn; Eileen Poulter; Betty Shipway; Richard Spurr; Yvonne Thornton.

Long Term: Beverley Cantwell and family; Christine Clucas; Penny Dilley; Claire Macro; Ron and Rosemary Martin; Maggie Morgans and family; Ian and Jenny McCloy and family; Gillian and Tony Patterson and family; Hyacinth Ridguard; Joyce Smith; Jo and Steve Tremarco; Matt Wise and family.

With sadness and regret we have to report the death, on 29th December, of Fay Spurr. A Thanksgiving Service was held at London Street on 15th January. Please remember Fay, her son, Richard, and friends in your prayers (see p.13).

Prayer Focus

It is January as I write this, the start of a new year with all its promise and hope. Yet even now there are issues that have risen to the top of the news reports that we would never have considered happening before Christmas; fires in Australia, events in Iran and now disruptions in the royal family. And of course the many happenings among our families, friends and church family. So much to pray about.....how?

Psalm 130: Out of the depths I cry to you , O Lord;.....

A prayer from the URC Prayer Handbook for 2020:

From our heart to yours, O God

From our heart to yours.

All that stirs and bubbles within -

The naked truth of who we are

And what we feel,

Born of joys and fears

And hopes and disappointments,

Challenges and frustrations

And pain.

No 'right words';

no 'correct way';

no pomp,

no ceremony,

no norms or etiquette

Just a pouring forth of

All that we are

In response to what we sense

Of you.

From our hearts to yours, Gracious God.

From the hearts of your people

To you.


Karen Campbell



Flower Rota - February

- 2nd Muriel Haddock
- 9th Rosemary Martin
- 16th Gill Miller
- 23rd Leng Ayland

There are two free dates on the Flower Rota: 23rd August and 22nd November. If anyone would like to commemorate a special event or simply wish to contribute to the flower fund, please speak with Liz Lindsay.



Kay Cook, 86 years on 8th February
Ruth Bentall, 80 years on 1st February

Daily Bible Readings - February

<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>
1 st 92	Reflection	16 th 119:17-23	Reflection
2 nd 116	Reflection	17 th 80	Acts 18
3 rd 75	Acts 8	18 th 12	“ 19
4 th 7:1-11	“ 9	19 th 119:33-48	“ 20
5 th 117/118:1-14	“ 10	20 th 13	“ 21
6 th 8	“ 11	21 st 81:1-10	“ 22
7 th 47	“ 12	22 nd 119:49-64	Reflection
8 th 93	Reflection	23 rd 15	Reflection
9 th 118:15-29	Reflection	24 th 95	Acts 23
10 th 77:1-15	Acts 13	25 th 119:65-80	“ 24
11 th 9:1-16	“ 14	26 th 16	“ 25
12 th 119:1-16	“ 15	27 th 50:1-15	“ 26
13 th 79	“ 16	28 th 82	“ 27
14 th 48	“ 17	29 th	Reflection
15 th 94:12-23	Reflection		

Peter Bentall interviews Joy Williams:

Peter: Thank you Joy for agreeing to be interviewed. How long have you been a Christian?

Joy: As long as I can remember. From a young age I prayed and was taught to ask Jesus to help me. My parents were both committed Christians. They worshipped at London Street and I was baptised there. They subsequently went to the Methodist Church (Dad's denomination) which had an afternoon Sunday School. Sundays and Church became very unpopular with me and I tried to avoid going as it was a time to spend with my friends! The return to London Street was influenced by the excellent preaching and the morning junior church so at least I had the afternoon free! I was about 10 then, but when I was around 13 or 14 I started 'listening' to the evening sermons and understanding more.

Peter: When did you become involved at London Street?

Joy: I joined the Youth Club when I was about 13.

Peter: How did you develop your involvement?

Joy: I was given the job of collecting the subs. That led to becoming the youth club treasurer and then secretary. Club members took part in the monthly Evening Youth Services (the start of my Lay Preaching interest); I was on the Mission Committee and, with some friends, we ran monthly sales and coffee mornings to raise money for a new organ.

Peter: How did life in London Street progress?

Joy: The Youth Services were really popular with all ages (often standing room only!). The youth club developed into an 18/30 club as we all got older. There was a badminton club and a drama group over in May Place where young people and adults mixed and where I got to know Charles, whom I married in 1965.

After that I was made a Deacon (Elder from 1972), Chair of the Mission Committee and edited the Focus magazine.

Both our sons were born in Basingstoke and around 1980 I was made Church Treasurer - for a short time I was both Treasurer and Secretary concurrently. I then handed over as Treasurer and continued as Secretary until quite recently.

Peter: You have been a Lay Preacher for many years.

Joy: Yes, I completed the Congregational Church Course around 1960 and then became involved in the Charismatic Renewal and learned about being baptised in the Holy Spirit which opened up new insights for preaching. I still preach occasionally at London Street and elsewhere.

Peter: Apart from Church involvement what do you do in your leisure time?

Joy: I still play bowls; I like most sport; I walk in the countryside as often as possible - I love the outdoors, but also enjoy reading and watching TV.

Peter: Is there anything Members might be surprised to learn about you?

Joy: Probably many things! I played cricket at 14 for Hants Ladies under 18s and, when working for the Air Ministry in London, represented them at tennis against the Navy.

Peter: Thank you, Joy, for sharing your Christian journey and lifelong commitment to God's work at London Street.

—oOo—

Note from Ruth Dewis

Dear Kay,

I hope you have had a rest after your hectic Christmas! Thank you again for all you did for me. Please could you pass the following on to both of the congregations?

To everyone at London Street, Basingstoke and Tadley URC, I can't thank you enough for letting me have my time with you all before Christmas. It was a very hectic time for you all but your welcome and friendship meant the world. I really felt part of your church families and it was amazing to see what God is doing in your communities. I am absolutely positive it has a lot to do with the commitment you show by using Ffald-y-Brenin rhythm of prayer. It was a joy to see how God is honouring your prayer times.

Thank you so much again for the friendship and warmth you showed to me and be encouraged that the Lord is working through you all. God Bless and much love,

Ruth

2nd February - The Presentation of Christ in the Temple/Candlemas

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2nd February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

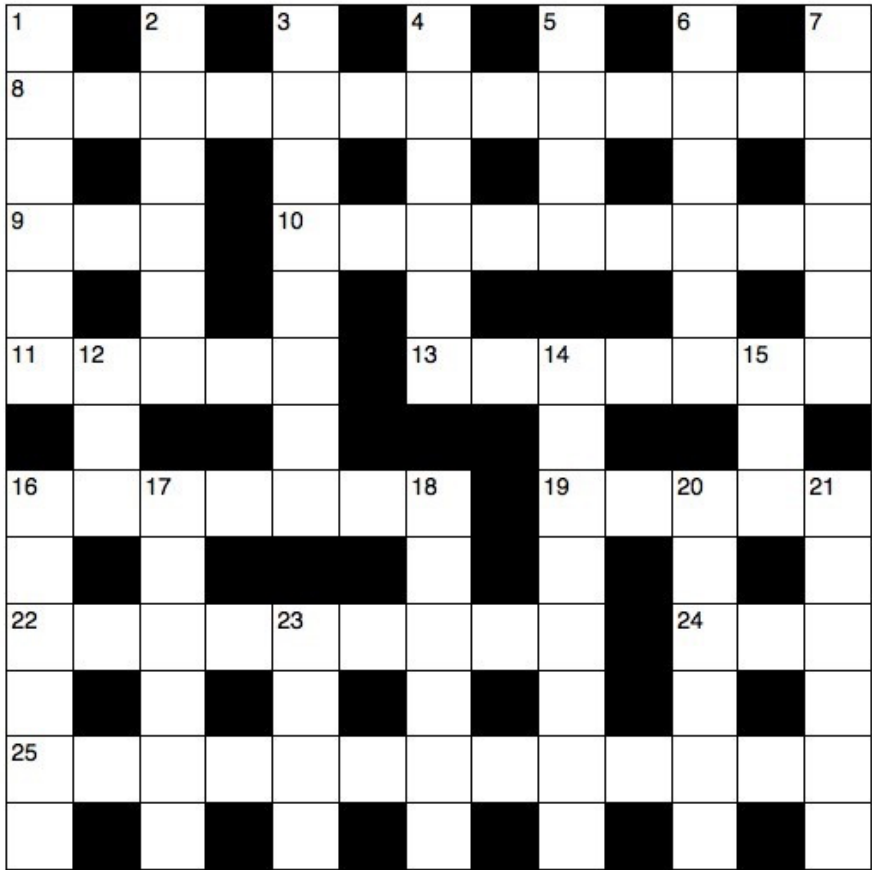
The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is, of course, found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

(From Parish Pump)

ECO TIP

Aluminium foil production is a resource and energy-intensive process, so use it sparingly and reuse it whenever possible. When it's no longer usable wash it and recycle into the dedicated containers as recycling it uses a twentieth of the energy needed to smelt the virgin metal from ore.

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



Across

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)
- 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)
- 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)
- 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)
- 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)
- 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)
- 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)
- 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)
- 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1)
- 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

Down

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
- 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines
(1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
- 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father'
(1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to —
your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm
56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain
(Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern
where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases
(Luke 9:1) (4)

—oOo—

Beryl Welbrock:

We were sad to receive the news that Beryl Welbrock, the wife of the late Rev David Welbrock, had died suddenly before Christmas. She and her family were remembered on our weekly Diary. With their four children they were at London Street for ten years between 1967 and 1977.

Beryl always totally supported David in his work here and was an active member herself in the life of the Church in many ways, especially with the Friendship Hour, the Ladies Club and the Council for World Mission.

It was good to welcome them back during our 200th Anniversary celebrations when Beryl conducted the morning service, with David doing a reading as his health was not strong enough then to take the whole service

Those of us who knew her will remember Beryl with affection.

Jean Holton

Fay Spurr:

In the 1970s Fay was actively involved with our monthly fundraising activities, especially when London Street became involved with The Council for World Mission. She often helped out in the Church kitchen and welcomed everyone to her home in Old Basing for a 'Travelling Supper'.

Through the missionary friend of a previous Church Secretary, London Street became involved with Papua New Guinea. From time to time the friend would visit London Street when she was home on furlough and, in the 1980s Fay corresponded with Ministers of Churches there.

Fay was very kind to the residents of Pages over the years, taking them out for drives.

14 February - Valentine's Day

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day - 14 February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February.

One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

(from Parish Pump)

Diary - February

London Street, unless otherwise stated

Sun	2 nd	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast
		10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister
		12.15pm	Church Meeting
Wed	5 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thu	6 th		Spring Harvest (see below)
Thu	6 ^h)		Night Shelter
Fri	7 th)		"
Sat	8 th	8.30 for 9am	Mental Health Awareness Course
		1 for 1.30pm	Mental Health Awareness Course
Sun	9 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Joy Williams
			Deadline for contributions to March FOCUS
Thu	13 th)		Night Shelter
Fri	14 th)		"
Sat	15 th	6.30pm	Skittles evening at AWE, Tadley
Sun	16 th)	10.30am	Worship, including Holy Communion
Mon	17 th)		Youth Café closed for half term
Tue	18 th - 24 th		Minister on Reading Week
Wed	19 th	10.15am	3Cs – coffee, company and chat. All welcome
Thu	20 th)		Night Shelter
Fri	21 st)		"
Sun	23 rd	10.30am	Worship – led by Melanie Townsend
Mon	24 th		Youth Café re-opens
Thu	27 th)		Night Shelter
Fri	28 th)		"
Sat	29 th		TLG (Transforming Lives for Good) mentor training



SPRING HARVEST

SPRING HARVEST LOCAL

WITH

Abby Guinness Paul Weston Sam Blake

Gather for an evening of heartfelt worship, inspiring teaching and an opportunity to pray for the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Thursday 6 February 2020
BASINGSTOKE
7.30pm London Street Reformed Church
Doors open at 7pm

TO BOOK VISIT
SPRINGHARVEST.ORG/LOCAL

Tickets £8 adults, £6 for concessions.*
Discounts available to youth groups.
*Concessions include: students, under 18s, benefit recipients and OAPs

Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

Preachers

Welcome

2 nd Feb	Philip Jones	Ena and George
9 th Feb	Rev Kay Blackwell (Communion)	Mandy and Dave
16 th Feb	Mark Ward	Ladies Cell
23 rd Feb	Rev Adam Payne	Elaine and Brian

Tadley Church Notices:

Dear Church Family,

During 2020 we will be teaching on monthly themes during our church services. The theme for January was "The Bible", February is "Worship".

This year we are also running The Bible Society's "Bible Course" at the cell groups. Speak to cell group leaders if you want to join in! We are also fund-raising for Sunday School land and improved water supply in Uganda. All fund-raising ideas welcome!

Here are the exciting February notices:

- 2nd Feb – Walk to the Plough – after church feel free to join the walk or meet us at the Plough!
- 6th Feb – Spring Harvest Local – Thursday, 7pm for 7:30pm, (£8/£6) London Street URC. Your chance to experience a Spring Harvest Evening locally. See Mark or Kay to book.
- 9th Feb – Roast Club – Sun after church all welcome. Please sign up or book with Mark
- 10th Feb – (Date TBC) – "The Bible Society Bible Course" – Monday Evening Cell Group are starting this course soon! Please talk to Paul or Mark now if you would like to join us for this course!
- 15th Feb – Our Church Family skittles night, 6:30pm, AWE RecSoc (£10/£5) Everyone welcome – sign up with Mark. WOW! IT'S FULL!!!!
- 22nd Feb – Christine and Bryan's Uganda Supper. Booking essential! 01189700415 or bryanwatson@onetel.net 7pm at St Paul's Church

Please let me know if you have things to include in the next edition(s).
Love in Christ, Mark on behalf of Kay and the Elders at Tadley URC.

Mark Ward

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 (Term Time)
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

Tuesday's:

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse (Term Time)
10am-12 noon 'LITTLE ANGELS' pre-school Club (Term time)
3-5.30pm in Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students
6.00pm (BEAVER SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Colony)
7pm (CUB SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Pack) Term
7pm (SCOUTS — 8th Basingstoke Troop) Time
7-8.00pm PRAYER MEETING at **Tadley URC or St Pauls**

Wednesday's:

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse (Term Time)
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 Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students

Thursday's:

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse (Term Time)
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

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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