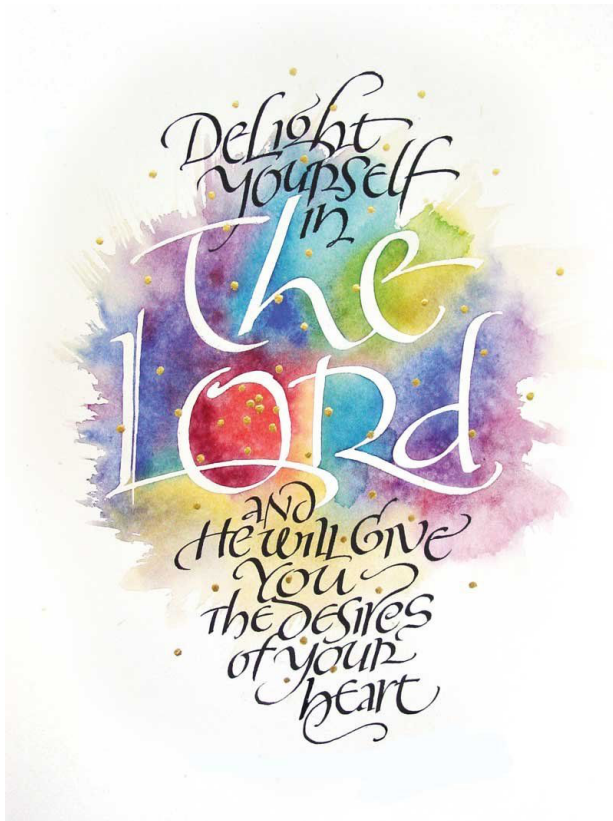




London Street

United Reformed Church

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



Focus
March, 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

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)

Catching a moment with Woman’s hour on Radio Four on my day off is what I often do. They frequently run items that leave me pondering about my own and others’ different experiences of life. I am often challenged about being a Christian in a largely secular world and what difference that can make in transforming a person’s attitudes or perceptions. Last week was a case in point. The item was around loneliness. This is a hot topic at the moment especially in connection with mental health and well-being. Folk were calling in with their own stories of loneliness and how they had, or had not, dealt well with periods of loneliness in their life. The overall message was ‘we are not alone in our feelings of loneliness’. Loneliness is a universal emotion which is both complex and unique to every person. There is no single cause. A significant bereavement; relocating your home; changing your job, school or college; going through some big life-changing event, whether physically or emotionally; retiring; becoming the full-time carer for a loved one; all of these things can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. We cannot prevent periods of loneliness occurring in our lives, we are kidding ourselves if we think we can. But what is loneliness? Well, loneliness is not just about being alone. We can be surrounded by people yet still feel lonely.

When I first went on maternity leave, my life had changed dramatically. I had been commuting from Brighton to London and worked in an office near Piccadilly Circus where I was the interior designer for company restaurants across the South East of London area. Then I gave birth to my first daughter, Alma. Suddenly I felt trapped at home in our first floor flat with a newborn baby who couldn’t speak and demanded 24/7 care. This was a huge life-changing experience. I felt very alone and at sea. Andrew, also commuting to London for work, would leave the flat at 6.45 am and not return until 8 pm at the earliest. These were the longest of days for me. So, there I was surrounded on all sides by neighbours yet knowing no one. As young professionals we just never met our neighbours, very few would even say ‘hello’ in passing. It seems to be the closer in proximity that we live to others the more folk seem to put up emotional walls. I tried visiting local toddler groups but often it was hard to get to know people, to break into what seemed like little cliques of those who already knew each other. Toddler groups can be great places for forging friendships or they can make aloneness feel

even more acute if they are not run well by attentive, caring and hospitable staff (that's why I am so passionate about running them well!).

So, loneliness is actually more about a state of mind. But loneliness can have all sorts of negative effects on our mental and physical health if it is not dealt with. Loneliness is defined by researchers as feeling lonely more than once a week. Well, I wonder how many folks may fit that criteria! Many, I imagine. Feeling lonely can be all-consuming and can cause us to become introverted and self-absorbed, which in turn then adds to the feelings of aloneness. It can be a vicious circle or a downward spiral if we let it.

So back to Radio 4 and Woman's Hour. A lady rang in to say how hard she found retirement. She missed the structure of a working day and the companionship of work colleagues. She missed it so much that she returned to work and re-retired at 70 years old, but she was still unhappy. I found myself getting cross.....why didn't this lady look beyond herself to the needs of others? There are so many worthy causes crying out for volunteers. So many great community building projects where capable volunteers can really make a difference. Helping others, serving others, can help us to reconnect to others and therefore feel less alone.

So what can or should churches be doing in response to this apparent surge of self-confessed loneliness in the wider community? What church offers well can be micro communities formed around shared experiences. The Basingstoke 'Memory Tree Social Club' for dementia carers with those they care for, or the 'Living With Loss' café in Tadley for those struggling with bereavement are examples of such groups. These groups are micro communities drawn together through shared experiences. These aim to be safe spaces where folk can become vulnerable with one another. Vulnerability is powerful for building relationships. Healthy church fellowship should, I believe, be both community and relationship building. God has designed us to have a desire for significant relationships, to be part of something greater than ourselves. To be part of families (biological and/or spiritual), to create things together, to share our work and our days with others and to recognise our dependence upon God as our source of love and life. Without God we start to not know who we are any more, we disconnect from our creator. Over this last few weeks I have thought a lot about whole life discipleship, whole life worship. We are the hope carriers, the ones connected with God through Jesus, who are sent out into a world where many are disconnected from God and have lost hope. Jesus has commanded us to love one another in response to His first loving us. He also said that the way in which we love one another would be a sign

to others of our discipleship. If loneliness then is a sign of disconnect with others and with God our faith should be a sign of our connection with God and with one another through faith. Through faith in Jesus we become part of a global family and an eternal family. Our growing connection with God and with one another unleashes a strength greater than our individual parts. This is the strength of Jesus to heal and bring wholeness.

Yours in Christ

Kay



CIRCLE OF PRAYER

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

Short Term: Derek Anthony; Barbara Banbury; Phyllis Birchmore; Kay Cook; Bram Corn; Eileen Poulter; Betty Shipway; 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; Jo and Steve Tremarco; Matt Wise and family.

Prayer Focus

Col. ch 1 v 27 God has chosen to make known amongst the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery which is Christ in you the hope of glory.

Hope is one of those key words in the bible. It occurs often in the Psalms and is a favourite of Paul's, running through so many of his letters. Not a word used casually as we so often do in our daily conversation, but a word of deep significance for the Christian life, a word towards which our lives are directed. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus we have the 'hope of eternal life' with him after we die. It is the one thing that gives shape and purpose to our lives. It is the word which springs to mind most readily as we enter March (and the season of Lent) as those first stirrings of Spring in our surrounding countryside burst into life, the days grow longer, and the weather (hopefully) becomes more clement.

Paul tells the Corinthians 'so remain these three, faith, hope and love' as his trio of basic Christian principles and the writer to the Hebrews writes that 'faith is being sure of what we hope for, of being certain of what we cannot see' (Heb. ch 11 v.1). For Christians this 'hope' is a certainty and an interesting spiritual exercise during Lent might be to go through as many bible references as possible to see where and how the word is used to try to expand our own understanding of its full meaning.

Prayers

- for those caught up in the continuing Coronavirus situation
- the political leadership in our country as we move towards new relationships
- our own spiritual journey through Lent
- London Street activities and Fellowship

Night Light Winter Shelter:

In January the London Street congregation kindly donated the amazing sum of £218.49 to be used for the benefit of guests at the Night Light Winter Shelter. This amount, combined with donations given to me from some residents at Hook, gave a total of £406.49.

I have, therefore, been able to provide new clothing, including warm socks, underwear, joggers, and refillable drink cups for our guests when the shelter is open at London Street.

Another benefit of this collection has been the purchase of Greggs' gift vouchers. A £5 voucher can enable a guest to buy a hot drink, a hot snack plus they are then able to sit in Greggs which is warm and dry.

On Saturday, 1st February I handed out 14 vouchers, one for each of the guests at the shelter on Friday night.

On Sunday 2nd February I was delighted to welcome three of the guests from the shelter who had come to the morning service at London Street to personally thank the congregation. This was an amazing gesture on their behalf, and I would like to thank everyone for being so welcoming when the guys stayed for coffee after the service.

Please be reassured that not only has your donation been put to good use but the recipients of this gesture are so grateful.

Thank you, Gill Miller



Flower Rota - March

- 1st Rob Williams
- 8th Jan Hooper
- 15th David/Julie Bath
- 22nd FREE
- 29th Liz Lindsay



Lizzy Payne, 12 years on 10th March
Sylvia Reynolds, 88 years on 12th March
Les Wenham, 89 years on 20th March
Joyce Cook, 80 years on 21st March

Daily Bible Readings for March:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1 st		Reflection		16 th 98	Hebrews	9
2 nd	119:81-96	Acts 27		17 th 119:161-176	"	10
3 rd	17	" 28		18 th 19	"	11
4 th	119:97-112	Hebrews 1		19 th 54	"	12
5 th	18:1-19	" 2		20 th 86	"	13
6 th	51:1-13	" 3		21 st 121/122	Reflection	
7 th	84	Reflection		22 nd 99	"	
8 th	97	"		23 rd 20	Galatians	1
9 th	119:113-128	Hebrews 4		24 th 56	"	2
10 th	18:20-30	" 5		25 th 23/24	"	3
11 th	119:129-144	" 6		26 th 87	"	4
12 th	18:31-42	" 7		27 th 100/101	"	5
13 th	52	" 8		28 th 124/125	Reflection	
14 th	119:145-160	Reflection		29 th 25:1-10	"	
15 th	85	"		30 th 126/127	Galatians	6
				31 st 25:11-22	James	1

Ffald-y-Brenin

Joyce Cook invites you to drop in to the Bowls Club in Fairfield Road on 21st March, any time between 2.30 and 8pm. It would be helpful if you could let her know beforehand if it is your intention to join her on this occasion of her 80th birthday.

—oOo—

Eileen Poulter writes:

“A belated but BIG thank you to all who sent me ‘Get Well’, Christmas and other cards, greetings and prayers. Apologies for not sending any myself. I am a lot better now but have decided to live with my sister in Wiltshire; a hard decision as I miss you so much but it is the right one, I hope.

“We are 1¼ hrs down through pretty countryside so those who can arrange transport, please visit when you can. Unfortunately, there is no public transport. My sister will take me to visit Basingstoke but please keep in touch.

“Please keep 18th March free. I have booked the Hook Room from 12.30 to 3pm, Penny and her team will provide tea, coffee and refreshments. I want to thank you and have a pleasant get-together.”

Answers to February Crossword:

ACROSS:

8. Cross-examined, 9. Ash, 10. Apocrypha, 11. Sci-fi, 13. Typical, 16. Visited, 19. Offer, 22. No account, 24. RAC, 25. Sovereign Lord.

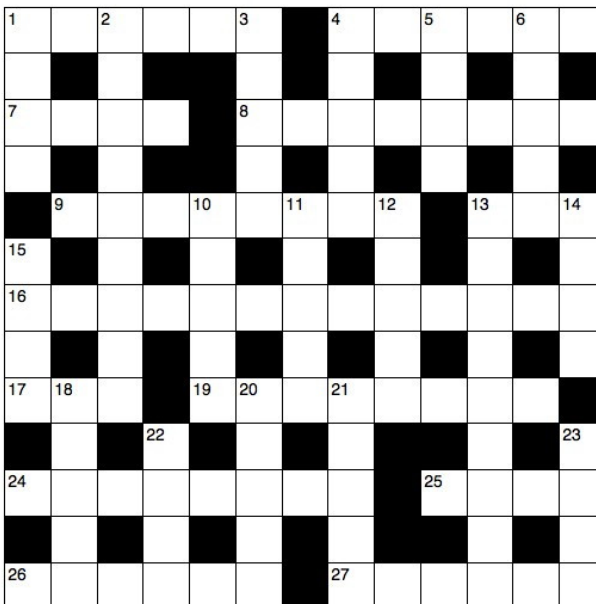
DOWN:

1. Oceans, 2. Hophni, 3. Islamist, 4. Exhort, 5. Omar, 6. On spec, 7. Add all, 12. CBI, 14. Plotting, 15. Awe, 16. Vanish, 17. Starve, 18. Daub it, 20. Furrow, 21. Recede, 23. Cure

Eco Tip

Cut down on your cooking times and use 50-70 per cent less energy than a saucepan by using a pressure cooker.

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



CLUES

Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
 4 'On a hill far away stood an old cross' (6)
 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1) (8)
 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5) (8)
 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)
 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)

- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
 19 Where the Gadarene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
 6 To put forth (5)
 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me (Luke 22:34) (4)
 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
 22 Does (anag.) (4)
 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)

Diary - March

at London Street, unless otherwise stated

Sun	1 st	8.30am	Prayer Breakfast
		10.30am	Worship – led by the Minister and including Baptism of Aidah Grant
Tue	3 rd	7.30pm	Lent Study Group at the Manse
Wed	4 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Fri	6 th	1.30pm	World Day of Prayer at Trinity Methodist Church
		7.30pm	Messy Church Planning
Sat	7 th		Elders' Training at Immanuel Centre, Tadley
Sun	8 th	10.30am	Worship – led by World Mission Group and Leprosy Mission
Tue	10 th	7.30pm	Lent Study Group at the Manse
Sun	15 th	10.30am	Worship, including Holy Communion and followed by Fellowship Lunch and Annual Church Meeting
Deadline for contributions to April FOCUS			
Mon	16 th -20 th		Minister training at Westminster College, Cambridge
Tue	17 th	7.30pm	Lent Study Group at the Manse
Wed	18 th	10.15am	3Cs – coffee, company and chat. All welcome
		12.30-3pm	Eileen Poulter's farewell - refreshments in the Hook Room. All welcome.
Sat	21 st	10am-4pm	Safeguarding Training
Sun	22 nd	10.30am	Worship – led by Peter Bentall (Mothering Sunday)
Tue	24 th	7.30pm	Lent Study Group at the Manse
Sat	28 th	3.30pm	Top of Town Messy Church
Sun	29 th	10.30am	Worship – led by Revd Jonathan Clark

Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

	<u>Preachers</u>	<u>Welcome</u>
1 st March	Lionel Goodfellow	Ena and George
8 th March	Rev Kay Blackwell	Mandy and Dave
15 th March	Mark Ward	Ladies Cell
22 nd March	Rev Adam Payne (Communion)	Mark and Julie
29 th March	Mel Euerby	TBA

Teacher: "What is the difference between results and consequences?"

Bright pupil: "Results are what you expect; consequences are what you get."

Easter Day Dawn Service

12th April 6.00am, Tadley Skate Park



Everyone welcome! Join us at Tadley Skate Park and celebrate the real meaning of Easter. A short reflective service of songs and readings as the dawn breaks and the sun rises...



Join us afterwards for Breakfast at Tadley Immanuel Centre at 8am

Rev Kay Blackwell
Tadley United Reformed Church
contact@tadleyurc.com
www.tadleyurc.com



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

Mondays:

10am-1.30pm OASIS Café in the Concourse (Term Time)
10.15am Craft Group
3-5.30pm in Youth Café for secondary school and
Term Time college students

Tuesdays:

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**

Wednesdays:

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

Thursdays:

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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