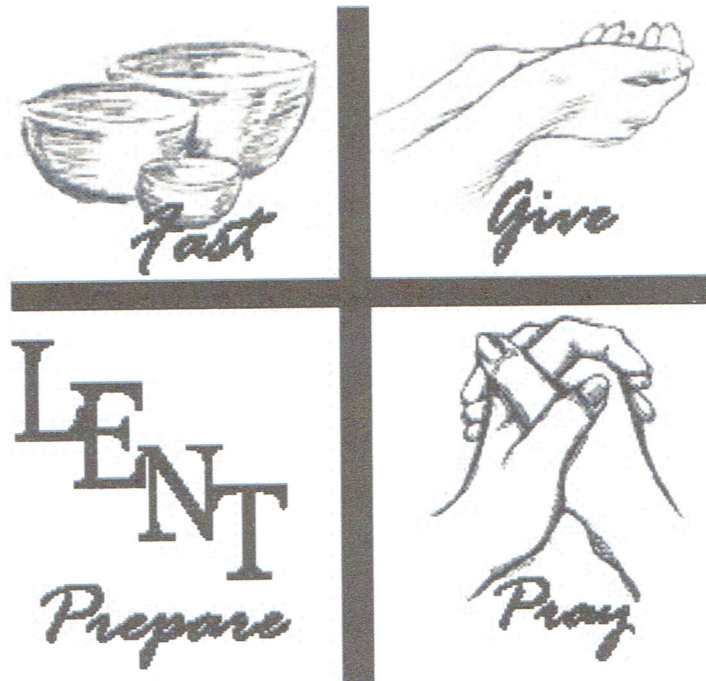




# London Street

## United Reformed Church

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



Focus  
March, 2021

## CHURCH DIRECTORY 123

Tel: 01256 477070

Website - [www.basingstokeurc.org.uk](http://www.basingstokeurc.org.uk)

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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:** Paul Gross  
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## View from the manse

*'Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember?'" (Mark 8:17-18)*

On a Sunday afternoon Andrew and I usually try to have a walk together if we can. The other Sunday we started out on our walk a little later than intended as I had a meeting first. This particular week we decided to try a route we had not walked before. We have a couple of walking route guides so we thought it would be fun to try out one of these. So, we set out with our walking guide and dressed for winter weather. To start with all went well. We had a clear route, we knew where we would start and where we end, and our little route guide was giving us clear directions. It was certainly nice to go somewhere new. The weather was a little squally at times but we soldiered on. The wind was blowing away the cobwebs after being tied to our work desks and computers so much recently. Then the instructions became a little unclear and they started to need a certain amount of interpretation. We interpreted the description one way and in fact went the wrong way! Oh dear, we then had to re-trace our steps back to a certain point about twenty minutes earlier. After much debate and turning the map first this way and then that, we set out hopefully on the correct route. Dusk was drawing in. From there on in we had to carefully analyse each junction in the journey, looking for landmarks and signs along the way. It got darker and colder. It got so dark we could no longer even see the map! We had to resort to the GPS on Andrew's phone and just keep heading as close to the right direction as we could. We kept marching on but by now we were walking completely in the dark in an area we did not know. At the very final part of the journey, we hit an impasse. Barbed wire fences to the front and the side. The only way was to clamber through the barbed wire and across a short area of a private estate in the hope of walking down their drive to get to the road. This we did and at last found the car.....it was just around the corner! Somewhere on the estate manager's CCTV footage is the film of a tallish man (early sixties) and a woman (mid-fifties) both heavily wrapped up in coats and scarves, accompanied by a little black dog (also in a coat), crawling through the fence and walking across the lawn. Three and a half hours later we were home, safe at last and a little worn out!

As our walk got more confusing and disorientating, I started to ponder how the disciples so often seemed to be in a state of confusion and somehow 'in the dark' as they followed Jesus. I also began to think about our journey through this covid-19 epidemic. This has been a very

disorientating period for us individually and as a church at times. I have often found myself wrestling with God in prayer, 'O Lord what next? .....how is this all going to end?'. Being 'in the dark' can be quite frightening. When we are 'in the dark' we no longer feel in control. Is that why so many of us are feeling frustrated, we have lost our perceived control on our diaries and the route our lives are taking. We can currently just live our lives from day to day. Each day waiting for something to shift, for a new government announcement to be made. Yet, through this some amazing things have happened too; families are spending more time together and doing things like walking together (I have never seen so many families out walking!). Because of this people are paying more attention to nature and the world around them. People are paying attention more to those, often lower paid, workers in their midst and being more thankful for them. People such as supermarket assistants, cleaners, bin collectors, care workers. We are also more thankful for, and less critical of, our wonderful NHS system and all those who work so hard for the NHS. Mental health awareness and support is also much higher on the NHS agenda which is, I believe, a good thing.

But back to those disciples. As their journey with their rabbi, Jesus, continued, they not only heard his radical teaching, they also witnessed his radical miracles. Yet still they struggled to understand what this all meant. They did have moments of wonder and amazement after witnessing Jesus' great authority over sickness, disease, demons, natural phenomena (such as storms), and even life itself. Yet they seemed so quickly to fail to understand the meaning of what they saw and experienced through Jesus. Peter, in answer to Jesus asking "*But who do you say I am*", finally acknowledged "You are the Messiah" (Mark 8: 28). But having had that revelation in front of the disciples, they still failed to understand that Jesus was to die and rise again even though he told them this was to be the case. When Jesus was arrested before his crucifixion, Peter even denied knowing Jesus, let alone knowing him as the true messiah. The trouble was, despite all they had witnessed, the disciples were, as yet, not filled with the Holy Spirit. So, when Jesus was taken from them, they not only lost their Lord and guide, they felt totally in the dark!

For us, this pandemic may have been disorientating and hard at times. But as Christians today, we have the benefit of the Holy Spirit within us to guide, comfort and lead us on. Let us not be in the dark. We know that, though all around us may feel difficult and frightening at times, the Lord is with us. Lord Jesus who died for us on the cross and rose on the third day is also the Lord of resurrection. Ultimately, all will be made new through him. We are not disorientated as others in the world are, we must daily re-orientate ourselves on Jesus Christ, who is the way

the truth and the life for all humankind. Trusting in Jesus each day is what our faith is about. Following him every day even though we may not fully understand the route. The final destination is God's Kingdom come to Earth as it is in Heaven. Let us keep a Heavenly perspective then on this time and this journey.

Yours in Christ

Kay



## CIRCLE OF PRAYER

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

**London Street:** Stan Marut, Lou Waller, Annemarie and Rose, Phyllis Birchmore, Kay Cook and family, Anne and Dick Davey & family, Ron and Christine Holt, Victoria Paige and family, Alberta Patel, Tony and Gillian Patterson & family, Doina Rasnita, Hyacinth Ridguard, family and friends of Joyce Smith, Jo Tremarco, Beverley Cantwell, Betty Shipway, Joan Flint, Keng and Rita & family, the residents of Lady Susan Court.

**Tadley:** George and Ena, John & Karen, the Fairhead family, Ian and Heather, Linda and Seb, Heather & Ian and Julie & Mark Ward as they continue to grow their relationship with the adopted grandchildren.

## Topics for Prayer

Pray that we may all take the time to reflect more fully on the meaning of the forthcoming events of Holy Week and Easter.

Pray for those preparing and conducting all the Lenten, Holy Week and Easter services for London Street and Tadley.

Pray for the Staff of the Oasis Café and all the volunteers who help to distribute the meals they prepare and for the recipients.

Pray for all those experiencing continuing difficulties in the current pandemic and economic climate.

For 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 see again the new life of Spring all around us, filling us with Easter hope.

## CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2020

As a child, I referred to it by name when asking for an ice lolly. I also referred to it to express a sudden fast movement or read it in comics. In my teens it came up regularly in a camera shot for a close up image, then later an album recorded by ELO. Now of course it's byword for our meetings throughout 2020. I'm referring of course to Zoom. How 2020 has changed with images of gathering together for worship and meetings just a distant memory.

As 2020 dawned and with relatives in Queensland, I recall the enormity of climate change as the Australian bushfires dominated the headlines and worrying about their safety. Many of the TV images were quite alarming. Kay referred to the images she had seen on the BBC news as she sat in the Manse drafting the *View from the Manse* for the February edition of Focus. It was in that article that Kay reflected on our responsibility to nurture and care for God's creation. God gave humankind creation but with that great gift comes responsibilities to maintain creation's balance and order. As January closed, February brought news of the World Health Organisation reporting the first transmission of the virus we now know as COVID-19 outside of China.

From that moment the world changed; days of despair and a new normality as the virus spread at an alarming rate, resonating a mask of fear.

Soon, however, those pieces of fabric would appear in every city on every continent, as a guard against this new respiratory threat. The mask not only became an emblem of the year, but also of a frightening, if not alarming, new normality.

So it is against this background that I bring to you my report as Church Secretary for London Street for the year 2020.

During January, February and the first 3 weeks of March we continued with regular Sunday worship at London St., a number of volunteers from London St. helped with the Night Light Winter Shelter; Memory Tree met every Wednesday; Little Angels every Tuesday and the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts met Tuesday evenings. Prayer breakfast on the first Sunday of each month and prayer meetings during the week also continued. Top of Town Messy Church met at the end of January and the community Café and Youth Café remained open.

It was in January that the congregation kindly donated the 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 Gill Miller from residents of the Housing Association she works with, gave a total of £406.49. Gill was therefore able to provide new clothing, including warm socks, underwear, joggers, and refillable drink cups for our guests. In addition was the purchase of a £5 voucher thereby enabling 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 the first Sunday in February Gill introduced three of the guests from the shelter who had come to the morning service to personally thank the congregation. Thank you Gill for organising this.

On 15<sup>th</sup> January we gave thanks for the life of Fay Spurr who died on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2019. We gave thanks for new life on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 as we celebrated the baptism of Aidah Grant, daughter of Alison and Lee, sister to Ethan and Amos, and granddaughter to May.

The 15<sup>th</sup> March was a turning point as it was the last time in 2020 that we worshipped together at London St. and after the service we enjoyed a fellowship meal which was then followed by the Annual Church Meeting. Many from London St. also enjoyed fellowship with our friends from Tadley when we joined them for a skittles evening on 15<sup>th</sup> February. Thank you to Mark Ward for organising a very enjoyable evening.

All of these became distant memories as Kay, Karen and I met at London St. on 17<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the challenges being caused by the coronavirus and whether we should continue with a service on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, which was to be led by Peter Bentall on Mothering Sunday. I recall with great clarity Kay phoning Peter twice during that day, firstly to reassure him that we shall remain open for worship, only to phone him again after lunch to say that the government had announced that all places of worship should close with immediate effect. During the day I commenced drafting a letter for Kay's signature for the congregation. I had to change it a number of times as news filtered through from the BBC and Church House as the Prime Minister and the Cabinet met to discuss what we now refer to as the first lockdown. Because the advice from the government changed almost hourly, it was extremely difficult for the three of us to issue specific advice about plans at London St. But we did. Towards the end of the day it was agreed that the elders would make contact with everyone in their pastoral groups that the sanctuary would be closed; Kay would issue a letter to everyone by the end of the week; and Penny and her team would make arrangements with Oasis to provide, on request, a

main meal and dessert for £5 per 2 course meal to be pre ordered weekly.

With the content of the letter finalised and the purchase of 200 second class stamps, I returned to church on the Thursday to print it. Together with Karen and Kay, we addressed the envelopes and organised the distribution of the letters together with the daffodils we had purchased for Mothering Sunday to every member of the congregation.

In the advice issued by the government about the closure of places of worship, they stated that *prayers can be said by clergy and ministers on behalf of everyone and churches should consider ways of sharing this with the wider community.* With the appointment of Revd Adam Payne as our Communications Officer; Kay, Adam and I set about transforming your living rooms into places of worship. Kay purchased a Zoom licence and by Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March we had our first online worship when 26 logged on. It was, and remains so, a considerable amount of work for Kay to put together a Zoom service. A very steep learning curve initially, and with Adam helping with some of the technical issues including recording the services and downloading them onto You Tube with the congregation being able to access them via the church website, Kay had secured an attendance of over 100 by Easter Sunday.

By the middle of April, we had adapted well to the new reality of turning our living rooms into places of worship. Perhaps for some of you it also brought a new dress code. Yet the paradox of not meeting at London St. meant that we shared worship with many friends that we hadn't seen for a while, but equally we lost the experience of sharing worship with friends who don't have access to the internet. A balance had to be struck. Letters were issued to every member of the congregation with no internet access and eventually with the help of Tony Patterson we were able to produce a DVD of Sunday worship for those who wanted it. With my ever increasing workload I was extremely grateful to Jenny and Ian McCloy who took over from me the responsibility of printing Kay's weekly letter, and addressing and posting them. Thank you Jenny and Ian. Your help and support has been very much appreciated. Jenny and Ian also arranged the distribution of material for Junior Church which met on line on a Sunday at 9.30am. Carol Scott reports that these were well attended with more children accessing worship online than when they met at London St. Thank you to Kay, Carol and Jenny and all those who helped run this for the children.



Returning to the appointment of Revd Adam Payne as our communications officer, I firmly believe that it was God's plan that Adam and his family were called to London St. They had originally planned to settle elsewhere, but the agency looking to secure a nursing post for Kyla suggested Basingstoke. Adam's role was totally different to the role we had envisaged when Kay and I interviewed him in March. What was to be a part-time job quickly became a full-time post from the beginning of May with Zoom meetings and worship, technical support for the congregation with a little bit of social media thrown in for good measure. With the recording of Zoom services and the editing of those services, Adam created a YouTube channel so we would have a professional and easy place to share the recordings through our website. Adam went on to support Penny, the Synod and Tadley and to identify immediate communication needs for the church including a number of social media outlets and looking once again at the feasibility of an AV system for the sanctuary. Thank you Adam.

As we stayed indoors or perhaps ventured out locally, time seemed to collapse in on itself; when days were sometimes hard to tell apart; when weeks seemed to merge; when timelines seemed constantly to shift. We had to endure mixed messages from the government as to when life would return to 'normal'. Would it be weeks or months? When are we opening the sanctuary again for worship? What about private prayer? I consulted with all the congregation during the month of July that very question about returning to the sanctuary for worship and private prayer. We then met together on 24<sup>th</sup> July, via Zoom, to discuss further. A risk assessment was undertaken and that, together with all of the information gathered, was then debated by the elders. The decision was to remain closed. This was reviewed in October and the decision made was to reopen the sanctuary for private prayer but not for worship.

In the meantime, the Sunday morning commute continued to be measured in metres not miles. The Sunday morning handshake was banished, and so, too, were hugs, and interaction you can only get when seeing someone face to face. All at the very moment when we needed them most. Yet, as I mentioned earlier in this report, the paradox of social distancing was that it engendered a new intimacy. At a time when we couldn't share the experience of worshipping together at London St., we shared online the experience of reconnecting with people we hadn't seen or heard from for a while. Attendance at Sunday worship during the first 3 months of 2020 averaged 65 to 70, and for online worship thereafter a similar number. However if you take account of the number of 'hits' of individuals viewing the Zoom services

through the Church website, that number increases with varied amounts, 47 being the most as I draft this report.

In a year when we've been forced to act locally, I cannot help but recall some of the pictures I saw on television; hospitals and medical staff in northern Italy, then Spain, then the UK. These images were frightening and alarming. How can we also forget the medievalism of those mass graves in New York and Brazil. During 2020 millions of families throughout the world struggled to put bread on the table. Here in Basingstoke many local supermarkets were looking for an outlet to pass on food that had reached its sell by date but still considered safe to consume. I recall being at London St. at the beginning of April when Penny Dilley asked if it was possible to use the Den to bring in the food from the supermarkets, sort it and distribute it to those in need. As part of the Community Food Link, which is an integral part of OneChurch Basingstoke, it wasn't long before they were taking up to 35 collections from stores each week and serving around 1,000 people each week using a wide variety of distribution points including local schools and churches and individual 20 families. 'Every Little Helps' is the catch phrase of a major supermarket, and this small but significant enterprise, this discipleship, has helped so many individuals and families within our community.

Meals on Wheels has also grown with both London St, and the Baptist Church at Gershwin Road preparing over 100 meals a week.

With Debenhams closing their restaurant, they donated to London St. a substantial amount of food and condiments. This gave rise to the Risen Bakery. Every Wednesday morning Greg and George were happily baking bread and scones and selling to the public from the front of the church from 10.30am to 12noon. Over time they began to experiment with different loaves and at times adding freshly baked cakes. This has turned out to be a successful enterprise, not just in providing additional income, but in the opportunity to engage in conversations with passers by and customers as part of our ministry of discipleship.

At the beginning of 2020 we had 12 serving elders: Leng Ayland (11), Anne Davey (11), May Honeyball (11), Alison Jamieson (12), Ian McCloy (11), Gill Miller (12), Kengjise Moavu (12), Carol Scott (11), Ian Scott (11), Joy Williams (12), Sarah Williams (9) and Jean Young (11). (Numbers in brackets refer to the number of meetings attended from 12.) In addition we had 6 non-serving elders with a pastoral group each: Margaret Carrick Smith, Joyce Cook, Gill Craft, Liz Lindsay, Jenny McCloy and Rob Williams. During 2020 we had 12 elders'

meetings and the elders participated in two Away Days to consider the vision for London St. from 2021 onwards. Every member of the congregation has been remembered by the elders in prayer in our devotionals. The average attendance at church meetings, of which we had 6, was 34. Items for discussion encompassing both elders' and church meetings have been many including Lent Study groups; safeguard training; installation of a defibrillator; the ever changing guidelines covering COVID-19 and whether we should re-open the sanctuary for worship and/or private prayer; the community Café, meal delivery service and London St. Hub; post lockdown preparation; and changes to the elders' election. Thank you to Tony Patterson for the work done as Clerk to Elders' Meeting and to Margaret Carrick Smith for preparing the minutes of church meeting.

As at 31 December 2020 we had 84 church members on the church roll with 11 regular attenders who are not church members. It was with great sadness that we lost some very dear friends. We remember in particular Joan Beattie who died in October. We also grieve with Jo Tremarco who lost her husband Steve just before we went into lockdown in March and with Rosemary Martin who lost her sister Sylvia. Eileen Poulter, with her health deteriorating, made the decision to permanently stay with her sister in Wiltshire; and Adam, Kyla, Lizzie and Molly moved to Godalming in August as Adam took up his position as minister at Godalming United Church.

We also remember Alan Toogood, husband to Wendy, who passed away at the beginning of the year. Both Alan and Wendy were members at London St. until they moved away in the nineties to Spalding. And although not part of our immediate fellowship, we remembered Anne Wales, wife of Revd Derek Wales former Moderator here in the Wessex Synod, who was tragically killed in a car crash near their Chichester home in February.


I finish my report by saying thank you. Firstly to our minister, Revd Kay Blackwell. Where do I start? We have a lot to thank you for Kay. We are blessed with the presence of the Holy Spirit in giving leadership to the Church and its mission when you preach the Word of God on a Sunday and your discipleship when working ecumenically with churches throughout Basingstoke; organising and running Zoom groups throughout the week; exercising pastoral care with support from the eldership; and there to give members your co-operation and prayers. But again I add a word of caution, please remember to take some 'me' time!

Thank you to those who help Kay put together worship on Zoom; John Carrick Smith and Alex Macro for their musical input, the stewards who keep us safe online, the readers and those who prepare the prayers. When Kay has been absent, thank you to Revd Adam Payne, Revd Clare Downing and Joy Williams for leading worship. Thank you also to Tony Patterson for taking up the mantle from Adam in recording and editing the Sunday services and downloading onto You Tube and distributing the DVDs. Thank you to those helping support the Community Food Link and Meals on Wheels in particular Penny and her team; and to Lou for cleaning the premises. Thank you to Alison Jamieson for changing our shop window, Rob Williams for attending to the odd jobs, Joy Williams for the lettings, to Christine Robertson for preparing Focus for the first 4 months of 2020, and to Julia Burrows and the members of the finance committee and Karen as church treasurer.

So how did the year end and how has 2021 begun for you, London St. and the community. For many of us, Christmas and New Year were tinged with sadness and uncertainty. Yes, there was hope for the future, and longing for God's purposes and presence and that was evident in the Walk About Nativity, but the world simply hasn't behaved as it "normally" does. 2020 is a year when so many things collided; shaking, breaking and re-making the world in the process. However, as we look towards the "True Light", the complexities of this troubled world are met with three words that Jesus spoke, lived and entrusted to those that would follow him: "Love one another".

So in 2021 let's be kind to others and to ourselves; let's reach out with love, and let's rejoice in following the example of Jesus, even in these most challenging days. Remember 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 brought about by this pandemic 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. Bringing our individual parts together as the Body of Christ within London St. and this community, is the strength of Jesus to heal and bring wholeness as we come out of this pandemic.

That concludes my report for 2020. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Owen", with a long horizontal line underneath it.

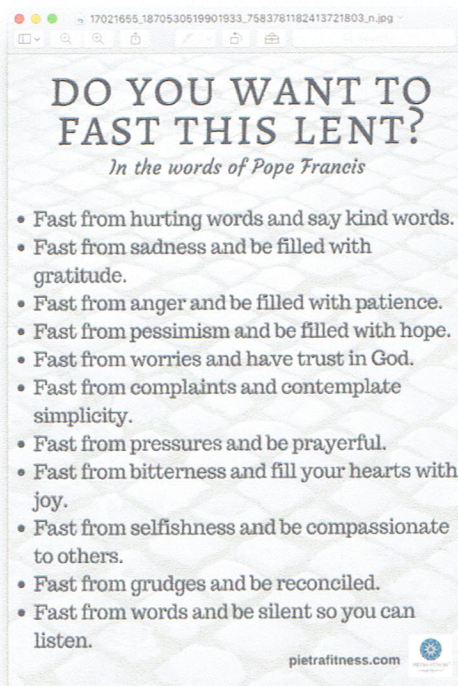
## Archives:

I am sure I am not alone in always being grateful for being part of the caring and supportive London Street family; the past months have probably highlighted that. Although not being able to see everyone via Zoom, I and others like me without Internet, are being kept very well in touch via a paper version of communications, etc.

I am keeping all copies of the Sunday Services and letters and planning to put them in the Church Archives, together with the DVDs of the Services which I, and others like me, have been receiving, thanks to the expertise of Tony Patterson. I have also asked the Community Café, who are doing such sterling work, to keep any relevant paper-work.

If you have anything else, London Street related, which you think should be included, please keep it and let me know.

Many thanks,  
Jean Holton, Church Archivist  
Tel: 01256 322301



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### DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

*In the words of Pope Francis*

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

pietrafitness.com



*Sylvia Reynolds, 89 years on 12<sup>th</sup> March*  
*Les Wenham, 90 years on 20<sup>th</sup> March*  
*Joyce Cook, 81 years on 21<sup>st</sup> March*

-ooOoo-

“If love has not yet won, then  
the battle is not yet over.”

*Martin Luther King III,  
human rights campaigner*

-ooOoo-

## Joy Williams interviews David Bath

Joy – Thank you, David, for agreeing to be interviewed. How long have you have been a Christian?

David – I was born into a happy Christian, church-going home. My father, a Methodist local preacher, was out a great deal but my mother, a devout Baptist, accepted this as part of their joint service. She attended the Baptist Church on Sunday evenings.

Joy – How did you spend your Sundays?

David – Cycling with my father to village churches where he was preaching and at George Street Mission for worship and Sunday school plus, on Tuesdays, Christian Endeavour.

Joy – What was your first contact with London Street?

David – The 8<sup>th</sup> Basingstoke Scouts. As a scout I took part in the parade services and sang “Jerusalem” accompanied by Norman Ramsden on the organ, went gliding at Lasham and sang in a couple Gang Shows over in May Place. My failure to get into Winchester Cathedral’s choir school was not all bad!

At this time I also learned to ring the bells at All Saints and was encouraged to stay for worship afterwards but unbeknown to my father I sometimes sneaked off to the Lucania Temperance Billiard Hall in Winchester St. and became quite good at both billiards and snooker.

Joy – How did you meet Julie and do you have children?

David – We met at All Saints Church youth club and were married in St Michael’s Church. Our first home together was a caravan on the Bridge Caravan Park, Winchester Road, from there we moved to Pinkerton Rd, then St Peter’s Road and lastly Hyacinth Close, Kempshott where we have been for the last 42 years.

During Billy Graham’s second mission at Wembley in 1962/3 my parents, Julie and I went to hear him. We were both moved by the Holy Spirit and went to the front for prayer and commitment. Afterwards they gave me a book, a pen and a pamphlet called “Living Letters” which I still turn to occasionally. They also put me in touch with a local church and, much to my Mother’s delight, it was the Baptist Church led by

Pastor Barney Coombes, who helped us enormously by prayer and the laying on of hands through several miscarriages; the diagnosis that we could not have children; the adoption of our son Darrell at 6 weeks and the subsequent "miracle baby", Melanie, who was already on the way as Darrell's adoption was finalised and who amazingly reached full term. We had asked God specifically for a baby, not babies, and believe that, as later, Julie lost another baby, Melanie was a wonderful answer to prayer. In the midst of all this I had lost my job on medical grounds just one week before the family court was to finalise Darrell's adoption. Through church contacts I found one and stayed for 3 years.

I loved the preaching and music at the Baptist Church but when it became the Community Church the leadership intruded too much into the ordering of our lives and we drifted away from church for about 20 years.

Joy – How come you are now back at London St and a non-serving elder?

David – We met Arthur and Joy Harris at a sequence dancing club and they asked if we would like to join London Sreet's trip to Israel in 1992 which we did. I was really moved by walking where Jesus had walked and loved it. The following Easter Sally Piper (Church Secretary) sent us an invitation to the Easter Services and that is why we are here. We soon became involved in its life - Junior Church teacher, chair of Christmas Fair Committee, Digital Hymnal setter upper and twelve years as a serving elder plus still being a trustee of Pages Bungalows.

Joy – Is there anything else Members might be surprised to learn about you?

David – My first job at 15 was at the post office as a telegram boy.

Joy – Thank you, David, for sharing so much with us. Sorry I cannot write more about your sporting activities like golf and lawn bowls; your caravanning and summers in Caister; your piano playing and love of music particularly Peter Dixon's playing, your early days at the Post Office and adventures with a number of their vehicles.



## Income/Expenditure Summary

	2020	2020	2019
General Fund Income	86,937	69,257	84,349
General Fund Expenditure	-67,857	-67,857	-74,586
Premises Fund Expenditure	-13,346	-13,346	-17,691
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>5,734</i>	<i>-11,946</i>	<i>-7,928</i>
Transfers to General Fund (Running Costs)	10,640	10,640	6,559
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,374</b>	<b>-1,306</b>	<b>-1,369</b>
		Excludes legacies and gifts in memory.	

- Shortfall in our General Income & Expenditure for 2020 is £1,306, before legacies & gifts in Memory
- It does include the Gift Day of £7,755, which if not taken into account is a shortfall of £9,061
- The Legacy & Gifts in memory brings this to plus £16,374

## 2020 Income/Expenditure Summary

- General Income includes:
  - Giving £47,066
  - Gift Sunday £7,755
  - Heat & Light Donations £3,550
  -
- This includes shortfalls of :
  - Loose (Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme) of around £3,900 plus Gift Aid (compared to 2019)
  - Gift Aid claim made in July of £7,611, not received from HMRC
  - Lettings – reduction in £12,800 due to pandemic (compared to 2019)
  - Little Angels fees
  - No fund raising activities for 9 months
- The year end Draft accounts show an expected £15,800 to be moved to the Building Reserves Fund





## Comparison of LSURC Offerings

	2019	2020	regular 2020 to 2019	2020 Gift Aid - not yet received
Freewill Envelopes	£19,055.30	£6,994.00	-£12,061.30	
AM Loose (non Gift Aid)	39		-£39.00	
AM Loose (Gift Aid)	£5,062.67	£1,141.53	-£3,921.14	
PM Loose			£0.00	
BGC	£27,339.64	£38,930.98	£11,591.34	
Direct to Treasurer	£511.12	£513.16		
Gift Sunday Appeal	£ 375.00	£7,755.00		£1,380.00
Gift Aid	£ 4,115.56			£13,211.00
<b>Total incl. Gift Aid</b>	<b>£56,498.29</b>	<b>£55,334.67</b>	<b>-£ 4,430.10</b>	<b>£ 14,591.00</b>

- £4,430 short on Regular offerings before Gift Aid
  - Loose GASDS reduction of £3,921 with the loss of its gift aid, which accounts for a reduction of a possible £4,901
- GA Claim in July of £7,611 not received and enquires with HMRC are ongoing
  - The figure includes some 2019 catch up of GA for a late gift aid declaration
- January 2021 - Claim for the rest of 2020 £5,609

## Gift Sunday

- Gifts of £7,755 received as of 31-12-2020
  - Gift Aid Claimed, not yet received, £1,380
- Total Communication Officer costs of £7,569.45
  - Communications Officer £6,617.77
  - NI – Employee £424.80
  - PAYE £457.40
  - Communications Cost £69.48
- Received to date for Communication Officer costs £6,800 (outside Gift Sunday)
  - Donations £2,800
  - Tadley £1,000
  - Synod £3,000
- Transfer from Gift Sunday to cover Communication Office Costs £769.45

## Joan Mussellwhite's Early Memories:

I have been asked to write my early memories and how and when I came to London Street.

As a child I went to the Methodist Church which was opposite St Michael's Church. It was a beautiful church and the interior was similar to ours. In 1940 bombs fell in that area of the town and the Methodist Church was damaged beyond repair. The church was rebuilt after the war only to be demolished, much to everyone's horror, for town re-development in the 1960s.

I was 13 in 1940 and I came with a friend to the Congregational Church in London Street and there I have remained. I went into the Senior department of the Sunday School - there were Nursery, Primary, Junior and Senior departments. We met on Sunday afternoons in May Place Hall, which then belonged to the Church. It was a huge Sunday School but, in those days, many families lived in or near the town and the children could walk to church and were expected to go to Sunday School. Mr W. H. (Harry) Mussellwhite was the Sunday School Superintendent and Mrs Ruth Mussellwhite was leader of the Primary department. Revd Wilfred Salmon was the Minister, a kind and gentle man, and he came to the Girls' High School on Friday afternoons to give us non-conformist girls Religious Education. We were rather naughty in class but we did our homework. I felt very ashamed when I got to know him and apologised and he said he hadn't even noticed.

The ground floor of May Place Hall was built for the Boys' Brigade in the early 1900s and the other two floors were added later. Many of you will remember the rabbit warren of rooms behind the church before the refurbishment in 1995/96. There was one large hall on the ground floor and smaller rooms upstairs. One large room was the Church Parlour - it had a carpet on the floor and an enormous table with many chairs around it.

I became a teacher in the Primary Department when I was 16. Each department had at least six teachers and we met on Friday evenings for a training class to prepare for Sundays. I also joined the very large church choir and went to morning and evening services. All the ladies wore hats and I got into trouble because I didn't like wearing a hat! The choir also met for practice one evening a week. I remember walking home in the blackout - no lights anywhere, no torches allowed - and I felt perfectly safe. I was also a member of the Youth Fellowship, a large group who all went to church evening services, always sitting in the gallery. We met afterwards for discussion and a chat and we also

did a few social activities during the week - not many because this was wartime. The church had a very strict caretaker, Mr Swan, and we were not allowed to take anything to eat or drink into the church parlour.

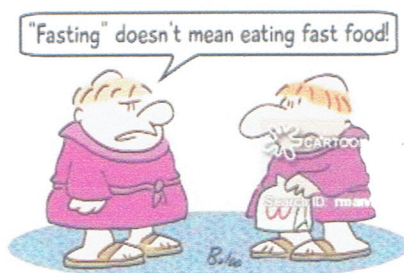
We did a wonderful pageant called "All The Saints" when we dressed up and paraded round the church. I was the narrator, standing in the pulpit. I can't remember the content of the pageant, just the amazing parade with everyone singing the hymn "For all the Saints".

Alan returned home from Boarding School, came to church and joined the Youth Fellowship where he became the treasurer and I was the secretary - a very nice arrangement and that was how we met. Alan joined the Royal Air Force, was demobbed early in 1946 and in March 1948 we were married at London Street by the Revd G. Glyn Evans - we were delighted when he and his wife, Marion, came to our Golden Wedding celebrations. We then went to live in London for two years before returning to Basingstoke - but that's another story.

Now we are in this dreadful time of lockdown due to Covid 19 and we've had no church services at London Street for ten months. We are all truly grateful to Kay and Owen for all they are doing to keep everything going, especially for the Zoom services each Sunday. This is where modern technology comes into its own - that is if you know how to use it!

In whatever walk of life, we have to adapt and change and the church is no exception. Family church services began many, many years ago - afternoon Sunday School stopped and children came to morning service and then went into their various groups, as they still do. Whole families came together which was much better of course. Not many children on Sunday mornings now but lots of children on the premises during the week. I feel we will have to adapt and change again once this lockdown is over.

I can't wait to go back to church and to see you all again.



## Daily Bible Readings for March:

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

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## Daily Bible Readings for April:

	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>		<u>Psalm</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	
1 <sup>st</sup>	57	James	2	16 <sup>th</sup>	103	Matthew 8
2 <sup>nd</sup>	102:1-17	"	3	17 <sup>th</sup>	135	Reflection
3 <sup>rd</sup>	128/129	Reflection		18 <sup>th</sup>	131:1-10	"
4 <sup>th</sup>	26	"		19 <sup>th</sup>	138.	Matthew 9
5 <sup>th</sup>	130/131	James	4	20 <sup>th</sup>	31:11-24	" 10
6 <sup>th</sup>	27	"	5	21 <sup>st</sup>	62	" 11
7 <sup>th</sup>	60	Matthew	1	22 <sup>nd</sup>	104:24-35	" 12
8 <sup>th</sup>	89:1-13	"	2	23 <sup>rd</sup>	139	" 13
9 <sup>th</sup>	102:18-28	"	3	24 <sup>th</sup>	32	Reflection
10 <sup>th</sup>	132	Reflection		25 <sup>th</sup>	63	"
11 <sup>th</sup>	28	"		26 <sup>th</sup>	140	Matthew 14
12 <sup>th</sup>	133/134	Matthew	4	27 <sup>th</sup>	33:1-12	" 15
13 <sup>th</sup>	61	"	5	28 <sup>th</sup>	65 "	" 16
14 <sup>th</sup>	30	"	6	29 <sup>th</sup>	141	" 17
15 <sup>th</sup>	89:14-29	"	7	30 <sup>th</sup>	33:13-22	" 18

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