



# **London Street**

## **United Reformed Church**

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



**Focus**  
**April, 2020**

# CHURCH DIRECTORY

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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)

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# View from the Manse

'So, let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.' (*Galatians 6:9-10*)

In these trying times we should endeavour to truly live by the Christian faith we proclaim. Yes, we need to be responsible, yes, we need to take all reasonable precautions but we also need to truly live by Christlike principles. '*Loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind and soul and loving our neighbour as ourself*. If Christian love is the principle by which we live we must not '*grow weary in doing what is right*'. We may not be able to hug or shake hands but we can keep in regular touch by phone, e-mail, social media, or even snail mail.

We need to be mindful of one another, our neighbours, families and friends and 'whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.'

It is so easy to get swept away into fearfulness and anxiety fuelled by the daily news frenzy, and growing rumours around this Coronavirus. But Jesus taught us not to worry (see Matthew 6:25-34) but to '*strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness*'. If we start to panic buy, if we start only to focus on ourselves and the fear of what might happen, then what difference has our faith made? If we become full of anxiety because of the press coverage, then haven't we lost sight of what it is to trust in the Lord? What witness to Jesus Christ are we then being to others?

The disciples at the last supper were horrified to hear Jesus say how that very night one of them would betray him into the hands of the authorities.

And so it came to pass. Jesus was betrayed by a kiss, betrayed by one of his own disciples. How heartbroken must Jesus have felt?

But then consider the disciples and how frightened must they have felt. Their leading Rabbi arrested! Surely, as his disciples, they must be next!

So what did those eleven disciples do? They just seem to melt silently away into the darkness, all that is except Peter. Courageous Peter, never backward in coming forward. He followed the soldiers to see where Jesus had been taken. I do wonder if in his head he was telling

himself that 'he would stick by Jesus', 'he would be there when Jesus needed him most', even though the other disciples had been too fearful to follow, he would stay, the only loyal disciple. But then it all changed. A servant girl spotting him, singling him out as a Galilean, naming and shaming him as one of Jesus's disciples in front of everyone. Brave Peter, suddenly gripped with fear, responded with *"I do not know what you are talking about"*. Three times he was challenged and three times he denied being a disciple or to even knowing Jesus. What was the fear that gripped him? The fear that made him do what he hadn't set out to do. Was he not there to support Jesus? In the end it was fear for his own life; fear that whatever they had arrested Jesus for could now be pinned on him too. Suddenly, being a Jesus follower put him in a potentially dangerous place. Out of fear Peter denied Jesus. At the time it probably seemed like the least bad option. As soon as the cock crowed, Jesus's previous words to Peter about his impending denial of Jesus himself must have shot back into Peter's memory. Peter wept bitterly that even with his best intentions at heart, he too had let Jesus down. Even worse, Jesus had known that Peter would let him down all along.

After the glorious day of resurrection Peter must have been constantly aware of his personal failure and wondering if Jesus knew that too. But finally, in John 21:15-19, at a barbecue on the beach, Peter is restored by three opportunities to reaffirm his love for Jesus.

Jesus died on the cross for each of us, that we might all, through Him, despite our weaknesses and personal failures, be redeemed, made right before God. Let us not be fearful as these worldwide events unfold. Let us place our trust in Jesus, acknowledging him as Lord and saviour of all. Worrying won't change a thing for anyone. Random acts of kindness made in the name of Jesus, a reassuring smile, a message of hope, such things can change the atmosphere from anxiety into peace.

May the peace of the Risen Lord Jesus be upon you and your family this Eastertide.  
Hallelujah he is Risen! He is risen indeed!





## 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; Joyce Smith; Jo Tremarco; Matt Wise and family.

Sadly, we have to report the death, on 13<sup>th</sup> March, of Steve Tremarco. Please remember Steve, Jo, family and friends in your prayers.

Many of you will remember the Revd Derek Wales, former Moderator here in Wessex. His wife Anne and a friend were killed in a car crash on the evening of Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February near their Chichester home. Please hold Derek and the family in your prayers at this difficult time.

Alan Toogood, husband to Wendy, has passed away. Alan and Wendy were members at London Street until they moved away in the nineties. Wendy's address is at a nursing home - Stonehaven, 117 Main Road, Quadring, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 4PJ.

## Prayer Focus

Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV)

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Hebrews 13:5 NRSV

Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

As I write this the Coronavirus is continuing to spread with the UK Health Minister testing positive today. What will be happening when you read it

nobody knows except for one thing that God will never leave us nor forsake us and all things work together for good to those who love him and

keep his commandments. In every situation these promises give us hope through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Meditate on them. Speak them out loud. Make them your first thoughts and words in the morning. There may or may not be suffering to overcome but we are not in it alone. Christ bore that horrific experience on the cross – we do not have to.

Prayer pointers:

- Governments around the world – wise decisions
- The W H O and other agencies – good advice
- That people will obey emergency measures
- That those still affected by flood water - may have respite
- Those awaiting diagnosis - may know your peace
- Those who are grieving the loss of a loved one - comfort

## Daily Bible Readings for April:

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

Ffald-y-Brenin

## CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2019

In September, at the Community Café commissioning service, Penny Dilley the Café manager, spoke about the missionary and discipleship work of the Café, in and for the community. Penny's statement made such an impression on me that I felt the need to embrace this when compiling my annual report.

This was very much confirmed when, shortly afterwards, I went away for 10 days to Romania. Bear with me, I would like to show just a few photos the objective of which will become clear. As well as visiting a number of impressive castles, travelling through beautiful countryside from Bucharest, I found myself in northern Romania not far from the border of Ukraine to visit a number of painted monasteries which was the main objective of my holiday.

This is Humor Monastery.



Apart from being a place of worship, what does this monastery have in common with our church here at London Street? The nuns at Humor provide a service to the community of offering food and shelter to those

in need. Does this sound familiar? Every day locals bring food to the monastery for distribution to those with very little or none at all. Before distribution by the nuns it is blessed by the priests. The nuns also make a cake which, roughly translated, is a fellowship cake made from fruit, grains and honey. It isn't baked and has the consistency of muesli. The day I visited I was in time to take part in the service and after the blessing I was given a piece of this fellowship cake. Speaking to one of the nuns afterwards she told me about the work they do in the local community and that the cake they make each day is an offering of fellowship to visitors. A simple but extremely moving act of fellowship remembering not only the local community in which they serve but also those visiting from home and abroad.

Dissimilar architecturally, London Street is just as worthy as Humor for the contribution made in serving the local community and the community further afield.

During 2019 Revd Kay Blackwell spoke about Holy Habits. A quick reminder of what Holy Habits is all about. It is the heart of Christian Life, a whole-church discipleship approach for those exploring or already actively living out the call of Jesus to 'follow me' based on Luke's portrait of the community of followers of Jesus that we see in Acts 2:42–47; encouraging the practice of ten disciplines or holy habits. One habit that we explored was Fellowship. On more than one occasion Kay explained that the Greek word for fellowship is Koinonia which is our fellowship with the Trinity, expressing what disciples of Jesus share together, what we give as well as what we receive. For the first part of my report I want to show how we at London Street over the past 12 months have practised this habit by sharing fellowship with each other and the world around us.

Let me start then by returning to the Community Café. The Café comprises both Oasis and the Youth Café. Both are run ecumenically by 23 members from 12 different churches.

Oasis has provided over 6,000 meals to various groups of people in the community. As well as regular customers, they include Methodist at Home, the Macular Society, Hillstead Court, OneChurch Basingstoke and the Wessex Synod. Oasis has also catered for church groups, the Night Light Winter shelter and a variety of funerals. This aspect of catering is part of a strategy developed to counteract the falling footfall on London Street due to shop closures.



London Street also serves as a hub with Oasis collecting food from Marks and Spencer five days a week and Lidl twice a week. It is then distributed through Little Angels here as well as toddler groups in Brighton Hill, Popley and Buckskin; and also 11 families. When Penny gave her address in September, she mentioned the warmth families feel towards London Street for the rôle we take in providing for those who have very little. As with the Community Café, the volunteers who help with the distribution are from different churches. New volunteers are always welcome. This is very much a growing project and plans are under way to create a charity, The Community Food Link under the 'Starfish' umbrella to take on this responsibility.

As you can see, much of the work of the Café is involved with providing support and care for a very wide range of people in need. The Café itself is the doorway through which all of this need comes. Ministerial support for those in need comes from Kay, and Penny reports that it is a great blessing when Kay is on site to help a person in difficulty which is a common occurrence.

The Youth Café continues to grow. There are now over 500 young people who attend, many of whom are regular attendees. They are primarily Years 7, 8 and 9; and enjoy playing snooker and table football. The team of helpers share in the ups and downs of the teenagers' lives which can at times be extremely challenging. Those who have left pop in occasionally, grateful for the love and support given and Penny reports that it is heart warming to see them return with tales of their adult lives.

Fellowship from Café staff extended to Guildford College as Ruth and Kevin, two of the cooks, started a catering course in September. The Café has also had 3 students from Coppice Wood School for children with difficulties; and has just taken on a student from BCoT. You may also be surprised to learn that Kay now leads two English speaking conversation classes in the Café.

Thank you Penny and your team for all you do.

In her report for the Little Angels toddler group, Kay is pleased to report that the group continues to thrive. In 2019 two new members of staff came onto the volunteer team, Sara Mills (who has attended Little Angels as a mum of four children for many years) and Doina Rasnita. Both are great assets to the group and come in early most Tuesdays to set up the equipment. Anne Davey, Louise Waller, Chris and Leng

Ayland also continue to faithfully serve in this group. Thanks need to be given to all our volunteers, without whom Little Angels would not be nearly so welcoming and friendly. Revd Kay Blackwell oversees the group, planning each term's craft activities, themes and weekly Bible passages and providing the weekly singing sessions at the end of each group. Kay also organises the end of term church services (giving a Gospel message) where little Bible story gift books are given out to the children and after the singing and story telling a party is held. In July the party was held in the War Memorial park with lots of balls and giant bubble making fun and the weather was great. These end of term events are held three times a year and are increasingly well attended. A lot of the existing group moved on to school and nursery in September but the numbers have soon built up again. The register currently holds around 35 names with regular weekly attendance at around 20 to 25 families as not all come every week. Little Angels meet in term time only (around 36 weeks each year) in the Wessex Hall. The group is overtly Christian but it also remains very culturally diverse and welcomes practising Christians as well as the unchurched, alongside Muslims and Hindus. You will find families come from UK, Eastern Europe, Turkey, India, China and the USA to name but a few! During each Tuesday morning deliveries of free food and flowers collected from Marks and Spencer and Lidl by the Café staff are brought up to the group for free distribution. The families are always very grateful for this support. Where needed, pastoral support is provided to those families within the group.

Kay finishes her report with a few quotes from some of those attending Little Angels:

*'Always so welcoming! Such a warm, friendly place to come! The singing time is just wonderful.'*

*'Such a lovely playgroup. Warm, friendly and welcoming. Great selection of toys and activities. Singing is amazing.'*

*'We have been coming here for more than two years now. It is so warm and homely. The staff are so good and jovial. This place is full of fun and frolic. Me and my daughter love being here. We thoroughly enjoy the singing as well.'*

*'I think this a wonderful playgroup. My 2 year old loves coming and as soon as we arrive he is off playing. The volunteers are amazing people and I can talk about anything with them.'*

*'We have been coming to this playgroup for over 2 years. It is by far the kindest and most friendly we've been to. Always recommend it to friends. The staff really go above and beyond.'*

As with Little Angels, the Top of Town Messy Church is very much appreciated by a core number of families. London Street runs this venture ecumenically with All Saints and meets on the last Saturday of the month on a bi-monthly basis. In 2019 we held six Messy Church sessions. With All Saints being in vacancy, our numbers of volunteers from All Saints has somewhat diminished but Kay, in drafting the messy church report for me, stated that from the beginning of 2020 we have a Methodist circuit community worker, Tessa Bennet, coming on board so she will be a great asset. Many of the families who come to Messy Church do not attend 'church'. Messy Church IS their church. London Street IS their church. The numbers fluctuate up and down but we usually have 15 to 20 children attending and around 15 adults, though we do sometimes have more, especially around Christmas.

With the support of the Oasis Café team and our wonderful Messy Church cooks, we provide a hot and nutritious meal for both parents and children at the end of each session. Kay wishes to thank all of the Messy Church team for their support and skills over the year from cooks, registration and welcome, crafts, celebration and a fantastic clearing up team. Thank you!

Kay finishes her report with a few quotes from some of those attending Messy Church recently:

*'This is a welcoming and inclusive event. Some families come who may not be part of any church, and they seem to feel relaxed and at home. The crafts are so varied and interesting, and the singing time is wonderful! The meal at the end is well cooked and nutritious. A clear message comes through each time.'*

*'Lovely event, really welcoming and warm atmosphere. My children really enjoyed all the crafts and the theme was meaningful. The food was great too, nutritious and home cooked. We really are looking forward to the next Messy Church.'*

From October 2019 our ecumenical Messy Church has become part of a two year research and discipling project undertaken by the URC Children's and Youth Work Committee; and in November many of our

team took part in the Messy Church training session held here at London Street

Another group catering for our youngsters that enjoys great fellowship and fun is the 8<sup>th</sup> Basingstoke Scouts. Gill Craft reports that they had another amazing year with the group growing in all three sections. I was particularly encouraged to hear from Gill that they placed an ad for vacancies for children through their Facebook page and it resulted in 14 new members! Something for our Communications Officer to consider when looking at other events here at London Street, Gill continues:

*The Beavers attended the usual district events, Space Camp at Ferny Croft, to celebrate 50 years since man walked on the moon, Paultons Park was a favourite even in the rain! Cubs went to District Cub Camp and continue to gain many activity and challenge badges whilst attending a varied programme on a Tuesday evening. Scouts had the opportunity to attend over 20 nights of camping, and many took the opportunity. There was a winter camp at Gillwell in January and a Patrol Leaders Camp in December so they are definitely not fair weather campers! The whole group attended a sleepover and went swimming at Tadley Pool and then went to Church Parade on the Sunday, a great time was had by all.*

*We are blessed with a wonderful bunch of leaders, and they provide an exciting programme that keeps the children coming back. The Group would not be here without the support of the Church in giving their support and providing our lovely premises and we thank you for that.*

Thank you Gill for your leadership and support.

The Craft Group meet at London Street on Monday mornings and they have seen a number of folk come along that don't normally come to our Sunday morning worship. The highlight has to be the Best of Basingstoke Banner, an idea that came from the Craft Club. I quote from their report:

*The idea started in the Craft Club after looking at pictures of a banner that the church at Hungerford had made. We thought that this idea could be used to invite folk during the 2019 Basingstoke Festival to say what they thought was really great about Basingstoke. Each person was given a 5" square of fabric to*

*decorate with any medium they liked: paint, printing, collage, felting or embroidery. The Young Embroiders Group that meet at the church were invited to take part and the Embroiderers Guild members to decorate the banner title. Over the weeks in June and July, including two Saturdays open to the public, other opportunities with church groups and individuals who were creative at home, there was much activity. We ended up with over 100 individual items made by people aged from 4 months to 91 years.*

*Thanks to Carol Scott for the idea and for controlling the glitter, for the Embroiderers entering into the idea with enthusiasm and to Alison Jamieson for assembling the banner.*

*Oh, and by the way, the yellow and blue was used because they are the colours of the Basingstoke Football Club.*

Thank you Isobel, Carol and Alison.

But of course it wasn't just groups that we led that brought in folk from Basingstoke and beyond. It was interesting to read the list of hirers provided by Joy Williams. It is a long list that includes authors getting together, the Basingstoke Male Voice Choir, the Basingstoke Natural History Society, the Basingstoke Philatelic Society, a young peoples social group, dancing classes for youngsters, young embroiders, a degree course for counsellors, weight watchers, the Child Contact centre, the Sanctuary Housing group, the Methodist Housing Agency and a number of Christian groups who use our premises for worship. Thank you Joy.

We also enjoy fellowship with people we never meet and countries we may never visit. Examples of that are given in the reports provided by John and Margaret Carrick Smith, Alison Jamieson, Jean Holton and Chris Ayland.

Traidcraft was founded in 1979, pioneers in fair trade and stands for changing peoples' lives through trade, saving vanishing traditional skills from extinction, and celebrating a world of creativity and culture. They are the original fair trade pioneers, and advocate the importance of organic farming, sustainability, and transparency to the lives of growers and artisans around the world. It started with church-based individuals importing goods directly from artisans and growers and distributing them directly to shoppers in the UK, cutting out the middlemen. Over the past 40 years, Traidcraft has pioneered the first fair trade chocolate,

coffee, tea, fruit juice, wine, rice, honey, charcoal, rubber and palm oil to name just a few. Almost everything we know today as fair trade began with Traidcraft.

In their report for Traidcraft, John and Margaret recall that in 2018 Traidcraft plc was at the start of a financial recovery process, the outcome of which was far from certain. John and Margaret continue to provide Traidcraft goods so it is surviving although at the time of drafting my report we had yet to see the financial report for 2019. In continuing with their report, they state:

*One impact of the recovery process has been a substantial revision of the products stocked. Where possible products are shared with similarly ethical companies, hence the dried fruit being sold under the Tropical Wholefoods brand name. A number of favourite products have gone and other new ones introduced. Perhaps this explains the 9% drop in our sales for 2019 compared with 2018. Reduced sales means that we have more difficulty keeping stock fresh. We don't have to worry about chocolate though!*

*The work that Traidcraft does allows some of the poorest people in the world the opportunity to work for a decent income. So please think if you can buy one or more products regularly. Yes, it might cost you more, but makes a very big difference to Traidcraft's suppliers. Your support counts! A big thank-you to all our current customers who show care in how they buy. And again a big "Thank you" to Gillian and Tony Patterson for looking after the stall when we have been away.*

Thank you John and Margaret.

As chair of the World Mission Group, Alison Jamieson starts her report with the achievement of the church collecting the Bronze Eco Church award:

*Having ended 2018 in achieving the Bronze Eco Church award it was with some frustration when the Council stopped the collection of secondary plastics and we were forced to go back to putting this in our black bins. We hope that another outlet will be found soon for this bountiful recycling opportunity. We are still collecting batteries though!*

*We have continued to receive regular postings from Commitment for Life that brings us up to date with the developments in the partner countries and the current global concerns affecting our world. Enough copies of the current information booklet were ordered and distributed to the congregation. Following the retirement of Linda Mead, who has headed up Commitment for Life for many years we now have a new leader in Kevin Snyman who may come and speak to us in 2020.*

*We started the year in January with a visit from Ollie Durrant, our local Bible Society representative, who gave us a lively and enthusiastic update regarding the doings of the Bible Society. It was very pertinent as we were about to start 'The Bible Course', all very encouraging.*

*Fairtrade Fortnight was low key this year with some advertising in the window and the Oasis Café. Kay used some of the information regarding the cocoa producers of West Africa and highlighted that their wages were below the poverty line. Junior church enjoyed themselves icing chocolate buns.*

*In April Revd Adam Payne led a service when we used the Open Doors material to hear from a number of Christians from various countries who have experienced different forms of persecution for their faith. We were encouraged to take a picture card for one of them and to pray through this for them over the following week.*

*This year Christian Aid Week sort of stretched from March when we had a visit from Joanna Tom-Kargbo who comes from Sierra Leone and works as a midwife there. She spoke about how Christian Aid has supported the work there to bring good local healthcare to expectant mothers and their children. The local churches were encouraged to join us to hear about this work. This was very moving and was a good lead up to Christian Aid Week in May. We, as usual, carried out some door to door collection, including a new initiative suggested by Christian Aid, where donors were encouraged to take their envelopes to a local collection point. The latter had very limited success, possibly because we chose a completely new area. Junior Church did the Big Brekkie and the following Sunday we had a Christian Aid Lunch. The total raised for Christian Aid, including the March weekend, was £1,338.47. A very good effort.*

*And finally at the Harvest Parade Service, led by Gill Craft, we had an introduction by Craig Marshall, a parish priest in St. Mary Bourne, to the work of the Community Farmers Network. This highlighted the joys and the many pressures that farmers can experience in their work leaving them isolated with the Farmers Network providing support and advice, both emotional and practical.*

Thank you Alison.

In her report for 2019, Jean Holton our archivist reports that it is good to be able to refer back to previous Minutes, Reports etc., when someone in the church asks "What did we do last time?" The archives are not just for us, they serve a purpose in tracing relatives from families who think, or know, that someone from their family worshipped at London Street many, many years ago. Even from vague information given it is always satisfying when details can be found and this helps to build up a picture of the actual involvement of the person concerned in the life of the church. In continuing her report:

*In June on the occasion of the latest Fellowship Tea Tour, there was a small exhibition of archive material relating to the 1994-96 renovation and refurbishment of our premises. Also on display were various booklets produced to commemorate London Street's various significant anniversaries, and amongst other things a list showing the contents of the time Capsule placed under the pulpit in 1996.*

Thank you Jean.

On behalf of London Street, Chris Ayland sends the stamps that you collect on to the Leprosy Mission. In his report Chris mentions that he forwards on average 250 stamps per month and his contact at the collection office at Peterborough explained that the stamps are sold to collectors and raise a considerable sum of money for the Leprosy Mission. Thank you Chris.

Our Fellowship extends to past members whom we keep in touch with and this is dealt with admirably by Christine Robertson editor of our church magazine, Focus; and Joan Beattie who dispatches the magazine. Thank you Christine and Joan.



It also extends into the heart of those in need of food in the Basingstoke community through the Food Bank and thanks to Alison Jamieson and Chris Ayland for the provision of a collection point here at London Street. In his report Chris states donations to the Foodbank in Basingstoke average £20,000 worth of food per week and in 2019 the Foodbank, which is based at Trinity Methodist Church, gave out 4,000 three day emergency food supplies. This is all thanks to donations of food, money and time.

For this report I asked Kay, as Minister, to provide me with details of the ecumenical work she does. Rather than attempt to highlight aspects of the report I shall read it out in full.

*As Minister at London Street URC my heart is for developing stronger ecumenical links. Three years ago, I became part of the newly formed OneChurch Basingstoke leadership team. This team was formed by discontinuing two groups, the ABC (Area Basingstoke Churches together) and the churches leaders network group. Will Ross from Buckskin Evangelical church, is the chair of OneChurch. Following on from the Churches together being involved in the Who Cares mission in 2017, of which I was part of the steering group, there has been a growing desire to encourage more ecumenical mission and working across the town.*

*In 2019 the OneChurch team facilitated and encouraged town wide support of the 'Try Praying' mission. For Try Praying, I have been part of the team running training sessions and ecumenical prayer events across the town culminating in a 'Pentecost prayer service' running from London Street to celebrate the 30 churches involved in the 'Try Praying' initiative. Following on from this in early October we held a OneChurch service at Trinity Methodist Church to celebrate the many Christian led charities working within the Basingstoke area. This was a great time of giving thanks and affirmation for the good work already happening and networking groups into one another. The OneChurch team held their second team prayer and vision day at Old Meeting, Tadley URC later in October 2019 in order to further develop our future vision.*

*We have developed a new logo around our vision of encouraging and supporting Fellowship, Communication, Mission and Prayer. Part of my role has been to organise a new leader's welcome lunch at London Street once a year, with the first in September 2019. We have had presentations to our team from influential*

*Church led projects in other cities and we are planning, as a team, to perhaps visit a community project in Yeovil in 2020.*

*In July I organised for the Epiphany music group to come to Basingstoke (underwritten by the OneChurch Basingstoke team) as part of the Basingstoke Festival along with the creation of the wonderful 'Best of Basingstoke Banner' (big thanks to the hard work of Alison Jamieson, Carol Scott and the craft club, the young embroiderers guild and many others) and an art exhibition by Gill Sakakini.*

*Through the ecumenical work of the Youth Café and with the support from a OneChurch grant I have been working throughout 2019 towards developing an ecumenical mentoring project to go into Costello school. We are now registered as a TLG (Transforming Lives for Good) centre and will commence our mentoring training in February 2020. Our hope is that this will become a wider project with Gershwin Road Baptist church planning to become a second TLG base which will then take mentoring into Brighton Hill School. Our mentoring coordinator, Peter Hay, is from Hope Church and our mentors will be from several churches across the town.*

*I continue to take an active role in the Street Pastors who run from our building. I am now a trustee on the board (we officially became a CEO in 2019) for the Street Pastors and am acting as their chaplain and prayer support coordinator.*

*I am a senior coordinator for the ecumenically run Night Light Winter Shelter which is now in its fourth year of running. I help co-ordinate Friday Nights along with Carol Scott and Gill Miller who do excellent work in supporting and working for the NLWS (thank you for your hard work!) at London Street. I am also on the board of reference for the NLWS. Because of my work with the NLWS and the street homeless, in July 2019 I also became a trustee for the Dwelling Place. The Dwelling Place is a 'move on house' funded with the assistance of the Green Pastures charity. It is a project started by Hope Church four years ago. The Dwelling Place provides supported housing in a shared house for those who have previously been street homeless but who are now clean from addictions and just needing a couple of years or so with emotional and practical support in order to help them back towards independent living.*

Thank you Kay. Of course all of the work I have mentioned requires prayerful and financial support. Our income is generated from two main sources. The monies that you give through the offertory and from our lettings. Our thanks to Joy Williams as Lettings Secretary and to the members of the Finance Committee chaired by Julia Burrows.

Much needed financial support and fellowship has also been generated by the Bring and Buy sales we had during 2019 and thanks to Alison Jamieson, Ian and Jenny McCloy, Isobel Martin, Joyce Cook and Chris Ayland for their work in making these sales successful. Thank you also to Gill Miller who co-ordinates our Fellowship Lunches. As well as providing a time of fellowship over a shared meal, they provide another avenue of financial support.

If you were to compare London Street with an animal what animal would you choose? One elder when we had our training compared London Street to an albatross. Albatross are faithful parents – caring and loyal, they travel over large distances, akin to outreach. I mentioned at the beginning the address given by Penny at the September commissioning service. Penny compared it to an octopus. Not an animal that normally springs to mind but one that is most appropriate. An octopus has a fair few tentacles and the work we do can be described as tentacular providing support and care for a very wide range of people in need.

To those already mentioned, on behalf of London Street, once again a big thank you to you all.

Reflecting just for a moment on the images invoked by Fellowship I have described, our final thanks have to go to Kay whose input, not just here at London Street but also the many ecumenical projects, cannot be underestimated. It goes without saying, Kay, that it is a great blessing to have you as our Minister, so on behalf of London Street 'Thank You'.

I now turn to the second part of my report and I begin with our Sunday morning worship. We are of course richly blessed to have Kay preaching on most Sundays but Kay serves Tadley URC as well as London Street and is the URC minister for Christ Church, Chineham. In times of Kay's absence we are grateful to our visiting preachers and thank you to Mark Best who organises the rota.

Thank you to Carol Scott and Jenny McCloy who lead Junior Church and those who help. Carol in her report states that they continue to use Roots as their resource tool, but they would appreciate more volunteers who are willing to prepare and lead.

Thank you also to our musicians throughout 2019 – Mark Best, Peter Dixon, Ian Rees, Alex Macro, Maggie Morgans, Joyce Cook and the digital hymnal, and of course Kay and Andrew Blackwell. Sunday worship though is more than just the ministry of word and sacrament. There are many who work before and after the service and are worthy of our appreciation. There is Rob Williams who ensures that the heating is on if we need it, and Carol Scott as performing and copyright co-ordinator. Carol reports that our most popular hymn for 2019 was *Brother, Sister, let me serve you*. We also have the drivers who give lifts to those who need one, the greeters at the door organised by Jean Holton, the stewards organised by Joyce Cook, the sound system organised by Alex Macro, the bible readers organised by Joy Williams, the flowers organised by Liz Lindsay and her team, the provision of teas and coffees organised by Ian and Jenny McCloy, the Traidcraft stall run by John and Margaret Carrick Smith assisted by Tony and Gillian Patterson, the ladies who wash and return the communion glasses organised by Elspeth Anthony, the counting of the offertory organised by the Finance Committee, the distribution of taped services by Alison Jamieson; our Junior Church staff and helpers, myself in co-ordinating and printing the diary and order of service and the duty elders.

Attendance at Sunday worship during 2019 remains static averaging 65 to 70. The average attendance at church meetings, of which we had 6, was 27. As at 31 December 2019 we had 90 church members on the church roll with 14 regular attenders who are not church members. In September we welcomed 6 new members: Revd Adam Payne and Kyla Payne and daughters Lizzie and Molly; Jo Tremarco and David Waller. It was with great sadness that we lost some very dear friends; John Dunn, Brian Haywood, David Shaw, Molly Shaw, Grace Springthorpe, Fay Spurr and Beryl Welbrock.

At the beginning of 2019 we had 9 serving elders: Leng Ayland, Anne Davey, May Honeyball, Alison Jamieson, Ian McCloy, Jenny McCloy, Carol Scott, Ian Scott and Joy Williams. In addition we had 7 non-serving elders with a pastoral group each: Margaret Carrick Smith, Joyce Cook, Gill Craft, Liz Lindsay, Isobel Martin, Tony Patterson and Rob Williams. During 2019 we had 11 elders' meetings. Every

member of the congregation has been remembered by the elders in prayer in our devotionals. Items for discussion have been many including arrangements for the Basingstoke Arts Festival; Fellowship Tour and Tea; summer picnic with Tadley; Try Praying initiative; AV unit in the Hook Room; annual review of our policies; ecumenical events; fund raising events; prayer days; training; worship; mission; communication; maintenance of our buildings; and finance. Within the eldership we have a number of focus groups or sub-committees.

With regards to the maintenance of our building, Joy in her report on behalf of the Buildings and Fabric Group states:

*There have been three major works completed this year. The redecoration of the Hook Room done in house by Bram Corn and Ian McCloy with invaluable help from several of the ladies of the church; the installation of the Audio Visual system in that room and the long overdue refurbishment of the gents toilet which now improves our green credentials. During the summer a working party spent the morning giving the concourse, sanctuary and stairs a thorough clean - a big thank you to all who turned up and worked so hard. You may also have noticed that the concourse roof no longer leaks thanks to Ian Cranstone's expertise.*

*Sadly, the drains have continued to become blocked. Unnecessary amounts of toilet paper are still stuffed down the toilets and catch in the pipe's tight bends. The problem is very inconvenient and costly as we have to get Ian in to clear them. We have also had a little repair work done on the central heating system and there is the endless replacement of the many light bulbs and fittings around the place which Rob Williams and Chris Ayland try to keep up with.*

Thank you Joy and to the members of the Buildings and Fabric Group, Bram Corn, Rob Williams and Chris Ayland.

The Communications Group have focused primarily on redesigning and siting new directional signs to help visitors navigate their way round the building as well as new signs displaying instructions for Health & Safety and keeping rooms tidy. Thank you to Alison who took the lead in this particular project and to members Isobel Martin, Christine Robertson, Margaret Carrick Smith and myself.

Continuing with my thanks, thank you to our cleaners, Roy Bennett and Louise Waller and to Ian Scott as their line manager. When it comes to our shop window and decorating our church, many thanks to Alison Jamieson and to the contribution made by Ian McCloy. And finally to John and Elaine Coakes for ordering and distributing Reform.

As I come to the end of my report I hope that I have given you an insight as to the level of collaboration from many in London Street that Jesus has called to mission in so many diverse ways. Church is not just for Sunday, fellowship is not just an occasional chat over tea or coffee. We flourish and grow, not just in our relationship with each other, but in our relationship with the community. It's demanding; it's challenging; but together with the Lord's blessing we will continue to share fellowship with each other and the world around us. Amen.

That concludes my report for 2019. Thank you.



# Traidcraft

If anyone would like to buy from the Traidcraft stall - perhaps particularly Easter eggs or cards, though not only those - do email or 'phone us and we'll arrange to deliver to your doorstep. If you aren't sure what we have, just ask. Payment can be made direct to our bank account or can wait until we are able to meet at church again.

With best wishes,

John and Margaret Carrick Smith

Tel:780725

Email: [carricks@madasafish.com](mailto:carricks@madasafish.com)



*Jean Young, 81 years on 16th April*  
*Joan Beattie, 94 years on 17th April*

## Easter Word Search ~ 2020

A	M	S	A	C	D	M	W	S	N	O	I	R	U	T	N	E	C	H	E	N	O	T	S
L	A	I	N	X	A	A	I	E	Y	A	F	D	S	P	A	N	A	X	V	U	X	H	T
I	K	N	N	R	A	I	E	E	O	A	A	O	Q	U	E	E	N	E	R	S	O	I	H
R	E	G	Y	I	O	S	E	R	U	L	D	E	T	D	S	T	H	O	W	I	G	S	G
R	L	O	R	D	S	H	E	A	B	E	R	E	X	S	N	E	O	E	C	G	R	E	I
R	A	D	A	N	G	N	T	W	B	D	Q	I	E	I	A	I	J	E	S	L	I	A	N
B	E	G	G	R	E	E	T	F	M	O	E	G	I	R	L	E	S	N	O	A	P	U	E
E	H	V	E	I	Y	S	K	M	O	S	E	N	N	O	H	C	F	E	X	S	P	H	E
T	P	O	O	N	E	R	I	U	T	N	F	O	E	T	A	T	W	A	G	S	E	T	R
A	E	D	H	S	I	E	N	R	T	O	W	N	F	V	S	N	O	G	J	O	N	A	H
L	S	C	G	R	S	V	I	M	S	W	L	O	R	D	A	A	R	A	B	R	A	B	T
I	O	E	I	W	A	A	E	S	N	I	G	T	R	C	R	E	S	E	R	C	A	B	D
P	J	A	N	G	E	L	P	N	K	N	E	I	G	C	H	R	L	S	T	I	A	A	N
S	A	B	B	A	R	A	B	C	I	T	U	H	H	T	I	W	T	N	E	A	T	S	A
U	Q	I	E	I	X	I	J	K	N	W	M	U	S	I	C	R	A	I	U	L	O	L	E
I	U	M	K	N	H	T	A	B	B	A	S	Y	L	K	E	E	W	N	M	N	O	A	V
T	E	S	T	L	O	R	D	M	O	S	E	S	E	H	T	N	E	R	O	G	I	U	A
N	O	I	X	I	F	I	C	U	R	C	R	E	N	A	M	E	S	H	T	E	G	N	O
O	T	I	S	C	A	R	U	S	E	R	L	O	R	D	Y	D	Q	I	A	I	X	N	J
P	U	T	V	C	N	O	I	T	C	E	R	R	U	S	E	R	O	S	E	N	O	A	Y
Q	U	E	S	B	U	L	L	C	L	O	C	U	R	C	M	A	S	F	A	A	W	A	G
A	S	I	E	R	S	E	H	T	O	L	C	E	V	A	R	G	E	H	T	N	E	E	R

- ANNUAL SABBATH
- BARABBAS
- CENTURIONS
- CROSS
- CROWN OF THORNS
- CRUCIFIXION
- FEAST OF
- UNLEAVENED BREAD
- GARDENER
- GETHESEMANE
- GRAVE CLOTHES
- JESUS
- JONAH
- KING OF THE JEWS
- MARY
- NAILS
- PASSOVER
- PONTIUS PILATE
- RESURRECTION
- STONE
- THREE DAYS
- AND THREE NIGHTS
- TOMB
- WEEKLY SABBATH
- WINE VINEGAR

## Answers to March Crossword:

**ACROSS:** 1, Planet. 4, Rugged. 7, True. 8, Augustus. 9, Attitude. 13, Bed. 16, Participation. 17, War. 19, Hillside. 24, Baldhead. 25, Bede. 26, Census. 27, Arisen.

**DOWN:** 1, Path. 2, Adulterer. 3, Tract. 4, Rigid. 5, Gust. 6, Exude. 10, Irish. 11, Uriel. 12, Esau's. 13, Blindness. 14, Deny. 15, Spew. 18, Awake. 20, Ideas. 21, Lydia. 22, Odes. 23, Lean.

## Eco Tip

If you would like to make a contribution to reducing the plastic in our oceans, I can highly recommend you purchase your cleaning products from [www.ocean-saver.com](http://www.ocean-saver.com). My family have been using their products for a little while now and I can confirm that they do work and are a great alternative to help stop the use of single use plastic. I quote from their website: OceanSaver was born from a deep love of the sea and a concern over single use plastic. We all know the ocean in our own way, through memories, objects and experiences. The Ocean is precious and we want it to stay that way for future generations, but plastic is destroying it, fast. Did you know, there will be more plastic in the sea than fish by 2050? We believe that everybody can help stop the use of single-use plastic and OceanSaver can be your contribution. We've taken a stand by making really effective, plant-based home cleaning solutions. Cleaning your home and helping to save the ocean. Our cleaning refills transform in water, creating safe and powerful products to clean your home. Join us and become and become an OceanSaver today.

If you like them can I ask that you pass the message on to family and friends.

Blessings, Owen.

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



## Services at London Street

All regular services at London Street are suspended until further notice. Please check the Basingstoke URC website for updated information or contact the church secretary at [secretary@basingstokeurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@basingstokeurc.org.uk)

## Services at Old Meeting, Tadley

All regular services are suspended at Old Meeting until further notice. Please check the Tadley URC website for updated information.

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*John Proctor, the URC General Secretary, has written to all churches about the outbreak of Covid-19, repeating the advice as at 17 March given by the government strongly discouraging public gatherings. We, at London Street, are actively considering the information provided as to how we can continue to 'worship' as a congregation and will communicate this to you as soon as possible.*

**Finally, a prayer: Lord Jesus, in the midst of a storm, you said 'Peace be still'. Bid our anxious fears subside, sustain your church in faith, hope and love; bring our nation through this tumult. Grant wisdom to those with heavy responsibilities, and healing and hope to those who are infected. Amen.**

**Regular Events and Meetings**  
(at London Street unless otherwise stated)

**All suspended till further notice**

*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 – 8<sup>th</sup> Basingstoke Colony )  
7pm (CUB SCOUTS – 8<sup>th</sup> Basingstoke Pack ) Term  
7pm (SCOUTS – 8<sup>th</sup> 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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