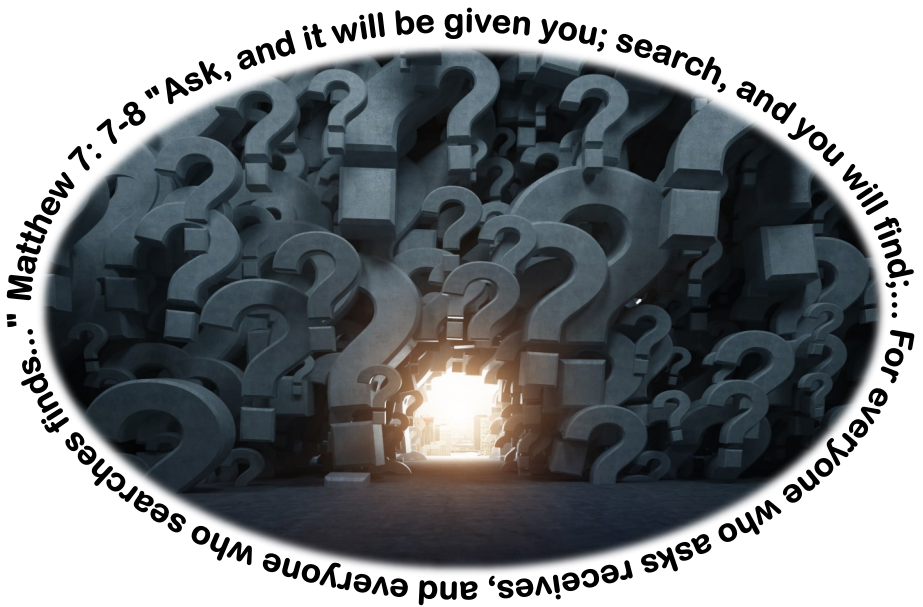




FOCUS

January 2024



London Street United Reformed Church

Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 7NU

Tadley (Old Meeting) United Reformed Church

Malthouse Ln, Hants, RG26 3NY

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

This month Joy Williams asks...



'What is Epiphany?'

Well, let's start by asking what the word means. The Cambridge dictionary offers two definitions:

- 1) A Christian holy day in January (traditionally 6 January in Western Christianity) that celebrates the revelation of the baby Jesus to the world. (St. Matthew 2:1-12 The Magi visit Jesus)
- 2) A moment when you suddenly feel that you understand, or suddenly become conscious of, something that is very important to you. (Ephesians 2 & 3)

How much we need God's Epiphany moments in these difficult times.

Every new year brings us closer to Jesus' return and the battling in the heavenly realms between good and evil gets fiercer. This is reflected on the earth in general and in our everyday lives too. Fear can threaten to overwhelm us. Our faith and trust in God's love and care is really tested as we look around at what is happening in the world – cruel wars, shortages, climate change, hunger, cost of living increases, health and care services creaking, illegal immigration and the refugee situation seemingly overwhelming. Is God really the loving Father we thought he was? Wouldn't he stop it if he was?

How do you react to all this?

Do you ask the same question or do you ask God to show you why this is happening?

Do you ask him to remind you of the promises he has made to those who trust him?

Do you go to your Bibles for answers and/or reflect on both the wider picture and the personal ones in the light of what the Holy Spirit brings to your attention?

Do you ask him what you can do that will help to alleviate the suffering, further his plan and to hasten Jesus' return to the earth?

Battles between good and evil continue but Jesus has already won the

war. Through his life, death, resurrection and ascension he has conquered sin and death. We are called to enforce the victory by the way we live our lives – loving God and loving our neighbours. We could start by joining our prayers with those of the angels using St, Paul’s words to help us.

So, let us pray this prayer of St Paul regularly for ourselves, for others and those who hold positions of authority under God in this world.

Prayer based on Ephesians 3:14-20 (make it personal/for others/for the church):

I kneel before you Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of your glorious riches you may strengthen [me/a name/the church] with power through your Spirit in [my/your/their] inner being, so that Christ may dwell in [my heart/their heart(s)] through faith. And I pray that [I/you/they], being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that [I/you/they] may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!

Amen

THE NOTICEBOARD

Information, updates, tips and more.



Can you help to make sure that no one in our local community goes hungry?



Items **urgently** needed: Custard (Ideally Sachets), Hot & Cold Desserts (Not Rice Pudding), Shampoo, Tinned Fish, Tinned Fruit, UHT Milk, Washing Up Liquid.

Items needed: Coffee, Cooking Sauces, Deodorant, Hot Chocolate, Household Cleaning Products, Long Life Fruit Juice, Powdered Milk, Savoury Spreads (Marmite, Peanut Butter, Meat Paste etc.), Shower Gel, Sweet Spreads (Jam, Marmalade etc.), Tampons, Tinned Meat (Hot, e.g. Chilli, Hot Dogs, Stewing Steak), Tinned Veg.

Please **do not** give Baby Food, Hand Soap, Hot & Cold Cereal, Men's Shampoo, Non-Dairy Milk, Pasta, Pet Food, Pulses, Rice, Sanitary Pads, Tea, Tinned Beans, Tinned Rice Pudding, Tinned Soup, as these are already in surplus.

Donations can be left at London Street URC in the container provided. For up to date lists, or to find other donation points, go to:

<https://basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Or, you can now install the BankTheFood app on your Android or iOS device to keep up to date with the latest shortages at the Basingstoke foodbank.

Happy Birthday to the following members of our church family:

Anne Davey

Sheila Munro

Daniel Moavu

Scarlett Weller

Jenny McCloy

Amelia Ann Green

Peter Bentall



FOCUS: Next Issue

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Focus magazine. If you would like to contribute to the February magazine, please contact the editor by **20th of January**.

Eco Tip

God's Gift -- Our World

The Environment -- Our Responsibility



In the UK about 3.1 million glasses' worth of milk get poured down the sink every day. Save yours by freezing in ice cube trays to add to sauces, baked rice pudding, custard or batter for Toad-in-the-Hole or pancakes.

Don't forget, you can recycle the following items at London Street:

Empty Printer Cartridges, Aluminium Containers and Foil, Batteries, and Plastic Milk Bottle Tops.

Junior Church



You may have noticed that we have welcomed several new members to our Junior Church...this is great news! How wonderful to be growing as we help children at the beginning of their faith journey. It means that we will be able to split the group into 2 smaller, age related groups which will be better for everyone. However it does mean that we would need more helpers to come through to Junior Church and be a support to the Leader. Would you be able to help? Please pray about this---pray that we will find leaders and helpers and pray that we will be able to meet the varied needs of the youngest members of our church family.

Please speak to Jenny or Carol if you feel you might be able to help.

Craft Group Appeal

Are you looking for something to do in the winter nights?

Well would you like to knit or crochet green squares?

Any shade of green, approx. 4inches square.

The Craft Group are hoping to create a knitted/crocheted Christmas tree in 2024, and we will need at least 1000 squares.

If you need green wool please ask, or come along on a Monday morning for a chat and knit/crochet.

All are welcome.



Can you help?

We all enjoy the refreshments after morning worship, it is a good time to catch up on all the news from friends within the church family, and it is also a good time to welcome new visitors to our church in a relaxed environment. Please could you volunteer to be on the rota for serving teas and coffees? We have had a few volunteers who have had to step down this time and so our choices are more limited.

I will always make sure that you are with an experienced member of the team at first and they will help you to learn how things work.

This is a really important outreach for our church, please help if you can!

Jenny



THE PRAYER CIRCLE

Please remember the following people in your prayers...

Zoe Cole

Archie

David Bennett

Elaine (David Vickery's daughter in law)

Seb and Dorcas

Carys Haywood

Hyacinth Ridguard

All our Iranian friends in their new accommodation

Claire Macro

Beverley Cantwell

Joan Musselwhite

Ali Jannesari

Maxine Perkins

Joyce Cook

Mark & Chris Best

David Corfield

Doina Rasnita

Eric & Christine Clucas

Beverly Harris

Betty Shipway

Hamid Baradaran

Stan & Sandra Marut

Barbara Banbury

The Patterson family

Maggie Morgans & family

The family of Eileen Poulter

Owen Collins and family

DAILY BIBLE READINGS



This month's assigned readings.

	Psalm	New Testament		Psalm	New Testament
1st	1	Matt 1	17th	10: 7-11	Matt 13: 24-43
2nd	2: 1-6	Matt 2	18th	10: 12-15	Matt 13: 44-58
3rd	2: 7-12	Matt 3	19th	10: 16-18	Matt 14
4th	3	Matt 4	20th	11	Matt 15: 1-20
5th	4	Matt 5: 1-26	21st	12	Matt 15: 21-39
6th	5: 1-7	Matt 5: 27-48	22nd	13	Matt 16
7th	5: 8-12	Matt 6	23rd	14	Matt 17
8th	6	Matt 7	24th	15	Matt 18: 1-20
9th	7: 1-5	Matt 8	25th	16: 1-4	Matt 18: 21-35
10th	7: 6-13	Matt 9	26th	16: 5-11	Matt 19
11th	7: 14-17	Matt 10: 1-20	27th	17: 1-5	Matt 20
12th	8	Matt 10: 21-42	28th	17: 6-12	Matt 21: 1-22
13th	9: 1-6	Matt 11: 1-24	29th	17: 13-15	Matt 21: 23-46
14th	9: 7-12	Matt 11: 25-12: 21	30th	18: 1-6	Matt 22: 1-22
15th	9: 13-20	Matt 12: 22-50	31st	18: 7-15	Matt 22: 23-40
16th	10: 1-6	Matt 13: 1-23			

EVENT DIARIES



What's on this month at London St. & Old Meeting URCs.

At London Street URC (unless otherwise specified):

Regular Events

Sunday Worship 10:30am			
Mondays	10:15am	Craft Group	
Tuesdays	5:45-6:45pm	Beavers	In Term Time. All in the Den except Scouts who meet in the Wessex Hall.
	7-8:30pm	Cubs	
	7-9pm	Scouts	
Wednesdays	10:15am	3Cs Coffee, Chat and Company	3rd Wednesday of the Month Only (17th).
	10:15am	Memory Tree Social Club	
	12:15pm	Lunchtime Prayers	

January Worship Diary

7th	Led by The Worship Group; Musician: Joyce Cook; Duty Elder: Jenny McCloy.
14th	Includes Holy Communion. Led by Joy Williams; Musician: Mark Best; Duty Elder: Jenny McCloy.
21st	Led by Revd. Howard Sharp; Musician: Peter Dixon; Duty Elder: Jenny McCloy.
28th	Led by Revd. Julian Macro; Musician: Mark Best; Duty Elder: Jenny McCloy.

Next Church Meeting:

February 4th (Sunday), 12 noon (in the Sanctuary)

At Tadley (Old Meeting) URC (unless otherwise specified):

Regular Events

Sunday Worship 10:30am		
Monday Afternoons	Ladies' Cell Group	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Monday Evenings	Cell Group	Contact Mark Ward or
Tuesday Evenings	Joint Prayer Time with St Paul's	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Wednesday Evenings	Prayer via Zoom	Contact Mark Ward.
Friday Afternoon	Men's Shed	2pm, once a fortnight. Contact Paul Gross.

January Worship Diary

7th	'Bring and share' service - bring any readings, thoughts, songs etc.
14th	No Service at Old Meeting.
21st	Communion Service. Led by Mark Ward.
28th	Led by Mel Euerby.

London Street United Reformed Church

London Street URC, Basingstoke seeks to ensure that all content and information published in this issue of FOCUS is current and accurate. The information included does not in any way constitute legal or professional advice and the church cannot be held liable for actions arising from its use.

London Street United Reformed Church is a working name of Registered Charity London Street (Basingstoke) United Reformed Church Charity [reg. no. 1130801]