



FOCUS

January 2025



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 shares 'A New Year Resolution we cannot afford to ignore'.

People have remarked to me over the last year or so how good it is to see new people coming to worship at London Street, particularly the number of children, who seem keen to get involved. This was highlighted by the recent Christmas services which have been, in different ways, a real blessing to us. I trust they were for all who took part as well! It makes me think that we must be a little way along the right road or the Lord would have led people elsewhere. Realistically though, there could be a long way to go before Jesus returns and there is no more crying on the earth. A seemingly impossible task if we try to do our part in our own strength but, it is God's plan to return to the earth and restore it to its original perfection, and we all have our parts to play in it.

Where do we begin? Firstly, we fall in with what God is already doing – we use our eyes, ears and all our senses to discern it. We pray about it individually and when we are together. We ask God to show us what we need to know at each step as we listen and wait patiently to discover it knowing there will be difficult times as well as good ones. It is not our good ideas of how to grow His church that He seeks but ordinary people like us who have known his love and faithfulness and want others to know Him and experience it too and who He will use to build His church.

Our first step is to pray for London Street Church to grow in her knowledge of Him and in her experience of His love and care. Our Lord Jesus' instruction was that His disciples should share with others what knowing Him, submitting our lives to His Lordship, receiving the new life He gives through the Holy Spirit, has meant for us in our own experience. All who have come into membership of the Church receive the Holy Spirit but if we stay splashing about in the shallow end of the pool, as it were, and never go out of our depth and swim, it is a waste of the great gift he has given us. We will never know how much more useful we could be in the Lord's work, or know the joy and encouragement that comes when we see the tears of hurt, guilt and

loneliness gradually wiped away from the eyes of our loved ones, friends, and neighbours when they meet with Jesus.

Have you ever thought how many people it took with a word here, an action there, to get you to the point of confessing Jesus as Lord? A lot! All faithfully playing their parts until the right time and you were ready. The Lord Jesus will return one day, and God will wipe all tears from our eyes. Let us be found faithfully praying, discerning and sharing our own experience of knowing Him so that others may know Him too.

PRAYER: Leading your Church into Growth

God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church, send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions, joy to our worship and power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE NOTICEBOARD

Information, updates, tips, and more.



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 **19th of January**.

Church Flowers

The Flower Committee would like to thank Ian Scott for donating and arranging the January Church Flowers in memory of his brother Peter.

Thanks also to Carol Tooke for the vase of flowers on the 19th Jan.

Thank You!

A big thank you to everyone from London St. & Tadley URC who have prayed for and supported me and Michael on our hard and difficult journey over the past few months.

We still have a long way to go. He's in the Neuro. Rehab unit in Southampton being well cared for.

God bless you all,

Marguerite Hurford



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



Items **urgently** needed: Coffee, Toilet Roll, Powdered Milk, Shampoo and Conditioner, Small Packs of Tea, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Meat (e.g. Chilli, Stewing Steak, Ham), Tinned Soup.

Items needed: UHT Milk, Cooking Sauces, Custard, Deodorant, Hot/Cold Desserts (e.g. Jelly, Sponge Pudding, Angel Delight), Nappies (Size 5 & Above), Rice Pudding, Savoury Snacks/Crisps, Squash, Sweet Snacks/Kids' Treats, Sweet Spreads (Jam, Marmalade etc.), Tinned Spaghetti/Ravioli, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Veg, Washing Up Liquid.

Please **do not** give Baby Food, Hot/Cold Cereal, Nappies (Size 4 & Below), Non-Dairy Milk, Pasta, Pulses, Rice, Sanitary Pads, Tinned Beans, 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/givehelp/food/>

Or download the BankTheFood app from the Apple App/Google Play store and select Basingstoke Foodbank.



Tea and Coffee Rota

We all enjoy our time of fellowship after worship, when we share a cup of tea or coffee.

This is a great time for the members of the church family to catch up on news and share information. But it is an even more invaluable time in which we can welcome visitors as they join us after worship.

We are therefore grateful to everyone who takes part in the tea and coffee rota which makes our welcome possible.

Have you ever thought of volunteering to be part of this important team? If this would be your first time you would share the work with somebody who is more experienced until you are confident in using the equipment.

Please have a word with Jenny if you are interested, so that the rota for the new year can be drawn up.

If you are already on the rota, please confirm to Jenny that you wish to continue in this service in 2025.

Blessings,

Jenny

Calling All Bakers!

Memory Tree needs you!

Our guests at Memory Tree love having cake on a Wednesday morning.

If you could help by joining the rota to provide cake on a regular basis please let Jenny know.



Happy Birthday to the following members of our church family:

Anne Davey

Daniel Moavu

Scarlett Weller

Jenny McCloy

Isla Thomas

Amelia Ann Green

Peter Bentall

Sheila Munro

Elsbeth Anthony



Amnesty for Keys

We need to maintain an accurate and up to date record of keys issued. Obviously, too many keys pose a risk to the safety and security of the premises. Therefore:

1. If you have a key which you no longer require, please could return it to me as soon as possible.
2. If you have one or more keys which you still require please let me know:
 - a. How many keys you have.
 - b. Why you need them.
 - c. Whether each key is marked 'M', 'MA', or 'A1'.

Please have all keys returned or declared by 31/01/2025.

Thanks,

Tony Patterson



Thanks from Owen

My dear friends at London Street and Tadley

I'm overwhelmed by the love and generosity shown towards me during morning worship led by Josh on Sunday 22nd December. I was presented with a cheque and I will use some of the money in purchasing some roses and pots for my back garden that I've had my eye on when visiting Mottisfont. I shall enjoy looking out into the garden and treasure the kindness of you all.

It was a moving service and thank you to all who kept quite a few secrets from me! It will be an occasion that will remain with me and sustain me for many years to come.

My work as Church Secretary at London Street for the last 10 years has been a joy and a privilege with a little bit of turbulence now and again, and I will miss it. Gill Miller will now be stepping into the role of Church Secretary and I know that you will sustain Gill with the same prayerful love and support you have given me.

Thank you all once again.

Many blessings. Owen



A Quiet Thought...

The good neighbour looks beyond the external accidents and discerns those inner qualities that make all men human and, therefore, brothers.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

PAST AND FUTURE

As we say goodbye to our interim Minister and Secretary, Peter Bentall recalls some of those who have served our church over the years.



At the November Church Meeting, marking the time both Owen and Josh are about to step aside from their leadership roles, we recalled with thanks those many Ministers and others who have served our Church over the centuries many shown in the Worthing Room photographs.

Given more time we would have acknowledged particularly Owen's wife Ann, who assisted Julian Macro, and Josh's grandfather George who guided us during a previous vacancy period, each sadly for all too short a time. Together with Church Secretaries/Treasurers/Junior Church Leaders this Church has been blessed in its leadership

One maybe less known fact is that there are still those in membership today whose family connections go back not only decades but even some to Victorian times.

My grandmother (Nee Sapp) was born in Basingstoke in 1879 and her mother also in 1848. My grandmother taught in the Sunday School in late Victorian times and was married here in 1905 to a man with equally long family connections in the Farnham church. The Sapps were local builders as were the Musslewhites, another name still in membership, and the family continued in membership with my grandmother's nephew Ian here when I joined in 1974. Two of her great, great grandchildren were baptised here when Mike Burrell was Minister.

Continuity of Ministry and membership are the strengths of our Churches and give us the confidence for our future.



FINANCIAL GIVING TO LONDON ST. URC

Alex Macro provides an update on how gifts can be given to the church and what these gifts are going towards.

By supporting the work of London Street URC, through its regular financial giving scheme, you will be making some return to God in acknowledgement of the many gifts which we have first received from Him.

The amount of your contribution is a very personal matter, and others may only offer you guidance.

We support the Biblical principle of tithing (giving a tenth of your income) but it is up to you to decide upon the actual amount which you feel led to promise for God's work through London Street, and through other charities.

It is realised that your promise relates to your present circumstances. If these change at any time, your promise may be revised.

Methods of Giving

Standing Order / Direct Payment

There is an option of making regular payments from your bank account into the Church's account.

These are typically weekly, or monthly, payments; the details will depend on the instructions that you provide to your bankers.

The Church's bank details are available from the Treasurer.

This is the preferred method, especially if a Gift Aid Declaration form can be completed - see below, as it provides clear details of what was given and the administration of the donations has the least paperwork associated with it.

The Offering Plate

Cash donations may be placed in the offering plate during each Sunday service.

Contactless Payments

There is a contactless card payment machine which can be used to donate money to the Church. The Church receives most of the money you donate, into its bank account, after a few days. (The card payment machine operator will deduct a percentage of your donation, as a fee.)

Gift Aid

Gift Aid is how that the Church can reclaim, from HMRC, an extra 25p for every £1 donated to it by an individual. There is no additional cost to the donor. However, to enable this, the donor must have completed a simple Gift Aid Declaration form which confirms that they have paid the same amount, or more, in Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax.

It is important that the Church has up-to-date Gift Aid Declarations.

The Treasurer will write to each church member in the New Year detailing their current Gift Aid Declaration status and ask them, if appropriate, to complete and return a new Gift Aid Declaration form.

Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme

The church may also reclaim 25p for every £1 of cash or contactless card donations made to it as long each donation is clearly £30 or less.

Note - If you are unable to complete a Gift Aid Declaration then cash or contactless card donations of £30 or less allow the church to reclaim extra money from HMRC.

What Does Your Contribution Go Towards?

- * Running costs of the building: heating, lighting, cleaning, servicing, etc.
- * Building maintenance
- * Mission: youth, community and children's work
- * Special collections: crisis funds or a particular need
- * Central URC funds for ministry training and salaries
- * Local ministry costs
- * Capital expenditure and new equipment

THE PRAYER CIRCLE

Please remember the following people in your prayers...

Nicola Hamilton

Beryl Wootton

Revd. Josh, Hannah, Isla, and Joel Thomas

Liz Lindsay and family

Maggie & Richard Morgans

Louise & David Waller

David & Julie Bath

Mrs Noorie Khatkur

Dick & Anne Davey

Christine & Eric Clucas

Carys Haywood

Barbara Banbury and David Corfield

Joan Musselwhite

Ian & Carol Scott

Marguerite Hurford and her son Michael

Chris, Leng and their families

Christine Robertson

Bev Harris and Dom

Claire Macro

Stan & Sandra Marut

Hyacinth Ridguard

Betty Shipway

Owen Collins and family

The Patterson family

Chris Jones' grandson, Archie

Brian & Liz Foster

Alison and David

Morteza

Maxine Perkins

Rebecca, the granddaughter of Elaine and Brian Cole

Gill Vickery following the death of her father David

Seb and Dorcas in Uganda



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

This month's assigned readings.



	Psalm	New Testament		Psalm	New Testament
1st	23	Matt 1	17th	10: 1-12	Matt 13: 24-43
2nd	1	Matt 2	18th	10: 12-18	Matt 13: 44-58
3rd	2: 1-6	Matt 3	19th	11	Matt 14
4th	2: 7-12	Matt 4	20th	12	Matt 15: 1-20
5th	3: 1-4	Matt 5: 1-26	21st	23	Matt 15: 21-39
6th	3: 5-8	Matt 5: 27-48	22nd	13	Matt 16
7th	4	Matt 6	23rd	14	Matt 17
8th	5: 1-7	Matt 7	24th	15	Matt 18: 1-20
9th	5: 8-12	Matt 8	25th	16: 1-4	Matt 18: 21-35
10th	6	Matt 9	26th	16: 5-11	Matt 19
11th	7: 1-9	Matt 10: 1-20	27th	17: 1-5	Matt 20
12th	7: 10-17	Matt 10: 21-42	28th	17: 6-12	Matt 21: 1-22
13th	8	Matt 11: 1-24	29th	17: 13-15	Matt 21: 23-46
14th	9: 1-6	Matt 11: 25-12: 21	30th	18: 1-6	Matt 22: 1-22
15th	9: 7-12	Matt 12: 22-50	31st	18: 7-15	Matt 22: 23-40
16th	9: 13-20	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	2:30pm	Take Time Meditation (Exploring Luke's Gospel)	On Zoom. Contact Church Secretary for password.
	5:45-6:45pm	Beavers	In Term Time.
	7-8:30pm	Cubs	All in the Den except Scouts who meet in the Wessex Hall.
	7-9pm	Scouts	
Wednesdays	10:15am	Memory Tree Social Club	
	12:15pm	Lunchtime Prayers	
Thursdays	7:15-9:15pm	Explorers	In Term Time. In the Den.

January Worship Diary

5th	Led by The Worship Group; Musician: Mark Best.
12th	Led by Helen Everard; Musician: Denis Smith.
19th	Led by Joy Williams; Musician: Mark Best.
26th	Led by Revd. Howard Sharp; Musician: Peter Dixon.

Duty Elder for the month: Margaret Carrick Smith

Next Church Meeting:

26th January (Sunday)

Follows morning worship.

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 Paul Gross.
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

5th	Led by Mark Ward.
12th	Led by TBC.
19th	Led by Christine Watson.
26th	No service at Old Meeting.

January Events

26th (Sunday) 3pm	CTAT Unity Service at St. Michael's
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London Street United Reformed Church

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