



**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 Alison Jamieson discusses the wonderful gift of sharing the stories from the Bible.



Advent is a time for preparation before Christmas, not just the organising of family get togethers, planning of meals, buying presents and writing cards but also considering and wondering at 'the out of this world idea' that God, the maker of the universe, should come to dwell on the earth as a baby, part of a family and experiencing what it means to be part of the human race. This is at the heart of Christmas story. For me these are the mind blowing and precious understandings, that have gradually gathered over the years, a bit at a time starting as a child.

I have been looking at the Bible Society monthly prayer leaflet. This time it has a picture of children dressed as shepherds. They are obviously enjoying the experience, as only 5 to 8 year-olds can do, open to entering into a story and sense what it is all about.

This article has highlighted the 'Open the Book' project that takes Bible stories into primary schools through teams of costumed volunteer story tellers from local churches. This has proved a 'winner' from the point of view of the children the schools and the project teams that go in. The enacted stories open up much conversation and exploration, bringing the Gospel in a very real and experiential way to hundreds of children who have never heard the Bible story, Old and New Testament.

There are a number of Open the Book teams in Basingstoke and a couple of the congregation at London St. are members of these teams and enjoy the stories as much as the children do.

May you have a peaceful and joyful Christmas!



## THE NOTICEBOARD

Information, updates, tips, and more.



### Eco Tip

God's Gift -- Our World

The Environment -- Our Responsibility



If you use tea bags, consider using loose-leaf tea instead. A forest the size of Wales is cut down every year just for tea bags, also the constituents of the adhesive used often contain plastic.

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.

### FOCUS: Next Issue

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Focus magazine. If you would like to contribute to the January magazine, please contact the editor by **15th of December**.

Happy Birthday to the following members of our church family:

Dick Davey

Ruth Nicholson

Amos Grant

If you know someone who is 80+ that would like their birthday added to the list in Focus, please let Jenny McCloy or the Editor know.



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



Items **urgently** needed: Christmas Pudding/Cake/Chocolate (Ideally By 6th Dec), Mince Pies (Ideally By 6th Dec), Savoury Snacks, Tinned Fruit, Custard, Tinned Meat (e.g. Chilli, Stewing Steak, Ham), Loo Roll.

Items needed: Tuna, Rice Pudding, Tinned Soup, Hot/Cold Desserts (e.g. Jelly, Sponge Pudding, Angel Delight), Tinned Veg, Sweet Treats, Tinned Spaghetti, Tinned Tomatoes, Powdered Milk, UHT Milk, Coffee, Savoury Spreads (e.g. Peanut Butter, Marmite), Shampoo and Conditioner, Shopping Bags, Tampons, Household Cleaning Products & Washing Up Liquid.

Please **do not** give Baby Food, Hot/Cold Cereal, Nappies, Non-Dairy Milk, Pasta, Pulses, Rice, Sanitary Pads, or 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.



The latest Foodbytes magazine can be found by following this link: <https://basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/249/2025/08/Autumn-25-Foodbytes.pdf>



**NOTE:** There is still a need for 'Bags for life', strong enough for tins of food and tetra packs of milk etc. If you can help, please put them in the 'Foodbank' box in the concourse (on the way into the church).

## Carols with Memory Tree

On Wednesday December 17th we will be singing carols in the Sanctuary with our Memory Tree guests, Mark will be playing for us. Afterwards we will share a cuppa with mince pies.



Members of our church family are invited to join us for an hour or so of festive joy and to come and share time with Memory Tree.

## Favourite Carols

If you have a favourite carol, please can you let Jenny know, maybe with a story of why it is your favourite. We may have an opportunity to use these carol choices and stories...



## Tea and Coffee Rota

We would like to thank all those people who serve our tea and coffee after worship. It is such an important part of our fellowship. We are about to compile the rota for 2026 so if there is anybody who would like to be a part of this rota please let Jenny know as soon as possible.

Don't worry if you haven't done it before, you will be put with somebody experienced who will show you how to use the equipment etc.

If you are on the rota but would prefer to step down, please let Jenny know as soon as possible.

-Jenny & Ian McCloy





## Church Decoration

The Church will be open on **Saturday 6th December 10:30-12:30** for people to decorate the window sills. Please add your name to the list on the noticeboard. Thank you.

-Liz Lindsay



## Joy to the World!

On Festive Friday we had the church doors open as families were enjoying festive fun at the Top of the Town on November 14th. We handed out knitted angels which the craft group has been making. Attached to these were labels which announced the dates of special services/celebrations at Christmas in our church. These were met with great enthusiasm... one of the Police Community Support Officers attached her angel to the aerial on her radio! We have LOTS more of these angels which we will be distributing during the service on November 30th, Advent Sunday. We would ask you to take them away and either give them to a neighbour or a friend who perhaps isn't connected to a church, or you could leave them randomly around your neighbourhood for people to find. We hope the angels will bring the joy of Christmas to people around our town and also invite them to share in our services... to come and share the joy of Christmas with us at London St.

Thank you to the Craft Group for making the angels and a huge thank you to Tony who made over 200 labels, printing, laminating and cutting them all for us. (Sorry Tony for having a random idea which created a lot of extra work for you.)

If you need any further information please ask me.

Jenny McCloy



# Christmas Day

## Cafe Church

at London St. URC, **10am**

A service for all the family, led  
by Gill Miller.

Will include worship, singing,  
fun crafts, and refreshments.

One-off new  
start time!



Please come along and support  
this new style of worship for  
Christmas day!

*You are warmly invited to our short*



# **FAMILY CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE**

**Christmas Day 10:30am  
Tadley United Reformed Church,  
Main Road/ Malthouse Lane,  
Tadley, RG26 3NY**

**Come and join us for  
a warm welcome**

**URC Churches Charity No 1130801**





# A Traditional Carol Service



**19<sup>th</sup> December 6.00 pm**

**Tadley United Reformed Church,  
Malthouse Lane, Tadley, Hants**

**Everyone welcome**

**Refreshments to Follow  
URC Churches Charity No 1130801**

*You are warmly invited to OUR*

**LIVE**

**ANIMAL**

**NATIVITY**

Enjoy MINCE  
PIES &  
MULLED  
WINE

*Come and journey together with us on an  
amazing adventure through time & place to  
discover the stable & the newborn baby Jesus*

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 4pm to 5:30pm**

Starting at St Michael's Church, Tadley and journeying  
together to Tadley Common Methodist Church and on to St  
Mary's Tadley. Hosted by Churches Together Around Tadley

Local Churches with CTAT

Charity Number: 1187062





## Church Flowers

The Flower Committee would like to thank Ian & Carol Scott for the vase of flowers in November to celebrate Carol's birthday.

## THE MOST WONDERFUL GIFT

First seen in Focus Autumn 2011, we re-share this article by request.

Reading from Romans 12: 9-21

In this passage Paul has a wonderful array of good advice for the would-be disciple on how to live their everyday life. Tucked in the middle is this bit about “blessing” people rather than cursing them. I don’t think we go in much for cursing people, but we may be more likely to be critical and negative about people, a far cry from “blessing” them. To bless someone may have a rather old-fashioned ring about it. Something you would expect old comedians or actors to say to their audiences as they end their show? Yet to ask God to bless someone is the most wonderful gift. It is asking him to reach out and touch someone’s life, to bring new life and wholeness to them. To make himself known to them. Something we all value above everything. The start of new relationships. To speak God’s blessing into lives and communities is to open up situations beyond our influence to his power of love and grace. It is more than intercession, not so restricting? More an acknowledgment of his greatness and creativity. We have “the blessing” at the end of each service when the person who is leading the service might say “The blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always”. That is quite something, and it’s worth pondering on what the practicalities of this are. How easy it is to let those words flow over us without thinking.

Prayer from Numbers 6: 22-26

*The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.*

## LEST WE FORGET

Richard Davey was invited to give the Kohima Epitaph at the Mayoral Remembrance Service as a Korean War Veteran. With great pride we share this picture from the day.



*"When you go home, tell them of us and say, 'For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'"*



## THE PRAYER CIRCLE



Please remember the following people in your prayers...

Sheila Munro

Gill & Shirley Craft

Carol Scott

Joan Mussellwhite

Dick & Anne Davey

Jason Dudley

Carys Haywood

Claire Macro

Jenny McCloy

Joyce Cook

Beryl Wootton

The Patterson family

Margaret Carrick Smith and family.

David Swain, and Alison who is supporting him

Barbara Banbury and David Corfield

Marguerite Hurford and her son Michael

Owen Collins on his travels to New Zealand

Beverley Cantwell's daughter, Abbie

Alexander Adams & family

Chris Jones' grandson, Archie

Louise & David Waller

Maggie & Richard Morgans

Christine & Eric Clucas

Bev Harris and Dom

Hyacinth Ridguard

Stan & Sandra Marut

David Catterall and his daughter Louise who is recovering from  
damaging her back in a fall.

Peter & Ruth Bentall, and their grandson who has gone to Australia  
for a couple of years.

Seb Allwright

Gill Vickery

Rebecca (Elaine & Brian's granddaughter)

Penny O'Bee

Michael Kimber

Sam Spain

John's daughter Laura



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

This month's assigned readings.



	Psalm	New Testament		Psalm	New Testament
1st	135: 15-21	2 Peter 3	17th	143: 7-12	Revelation 8
2nd	23	1 John 1: 1 - 2: 2	18th	144: 1-8	Revelation 9
3rd	136: 1-9	1 John 2: 3-29	19th	144: 9-15	Revelation 10
4th	136: 10-16	1 John 3	20th	145: 1-7	Revelation 11
5th	136: 17-26	1 John 4	21st	145: 8-13	Revelation 12
6th	137	1 John 5	22nd	145: 14-21	Revelation 13
7th	138	2 John	23rd	146	Revelation 14
8th	139: 1-6	3 John	24th	147: 1-6	Revelation 15
9th	139: 7-12	Jude	25th	147: 7-11	Revelation 16
10th	139: 13-18	Revelation 1	26th	147: 12-20	Revelation 17
11th	139: 19-24	Revelation 2	27th	148: 1-6	Revelation 18
12th	140	Revelation 3	28th	148: 7-14	Revelation 19
13th	141: 1-4	Revelation 4	29th	149	Revelation 20
14th	141: 5-10	Revelation 5	30th	150	Revelation 21
15th	142	Revelation 6	31st	23	Revelation 22
16th	143: 1-6	Revelation 7			

## 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			
<b>Mondays</b>	<b>10:15am</b>	<b>Craft Group</b>	
<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>5:45-6:45pm</b>	<b>Squirrels</b>	<b>In Term Time. All in the Den except Scouts and Beavers, who meet in the Wessex Hall.</b>
		<b>Beavers</b>	
	<b>7-8:30pm</b>	<b>Cubs</b>	
	<b>7-9pm</b>	<b>Scouts</b>	
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Memory Tree</b>	
	<b>12:15pm</b>	<b>Lunchtime Prayers</b>	
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>7:15-9:15pm</b>	<b>Explorers</b>	<b>In Term Time. In the Den.</b>

### December Worship Diary

<b>7th</b>	<b>Gift Sunday &amp; Parade Service. Led by 8th Basingstoke Scouts; Musician: Revd. Denis Smith; Duty Elder: Joyce Cook.</b>
<b>12th (Fri)</b>	<b>Carol Service. Led by Revd. Adam Payne; Musician: Peter Dixon.</b>
<b>14th</b>	<b>Led by Liz Foster &amp; Junior Church; Musician: Revd. Denis Smith; Duty Elder: Joyce Cook.</b>
<b>21st</b>	<b>Led by Peter Bentall; Musician: Mark Best; Duty Elder: Joyce Cook.</b>
<b>25th (Thurs)</b>	<b>Christmas Day Café Church Service. Led by Gill Miller.</b>
<b>28th</b>	<b>No Service at London Street.</b>

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

### Regular Events

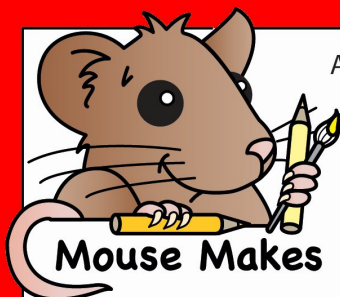
Sunday Worship 10:30am		
Monday Afternoons	Ladies' Cell Group	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Monday Evenings	Cell Group	Contact Mark Ward or Paul Gross.
Tuesday Evenings	Joint Prayer Time with St Paul's	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Wednesday Evenings	Prayer via Zoom	Contact Mark Ward.
Friday Afternoons	Men's Shed	2pm (now every week!) Contact Paul Gross.
Saturday Mornings	Ladies' Breakfast & Talk	10am, 2nd Saturday of each month. Everyone welcome.
	Men's Breakfast & Talk	10am, 4th Saturday of each month. Everyone welcome.

### December Worship Diary

7th	Family Christmas-themed service. Led by Mark Ward.
14th	Christmas crafts. 10:30am at the Immanuel Centre. Led by Karen Jones.
19th (Fri)	Traditional Carol Service, 6pm at Old Meeting.
21st	Led by Marie Grout.
25th (Thurs)	Christmas Day Service. Led by Mark Ward.
28th	No service at Old Meeting.

**Colour In!**





## Mouse Makes

A baby needs clothes  
to keep warm like  
a snuggly sleep suit  
or a vest and nappy.

*What were you dressed in?*

Jesus was wrapped in  
.....

**read** Luke 2:7



A baby needs  
somewhere  
to sleep like  
a crib or a cot.  
*What did you  
sleep in?*

Jesus slept in a  
.....

**read** Luke 2:7

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,  
God's Son and our Saviour  
coming into the world as a baby,  
and we look forward to the time  
when Jesus will come again,  
not as a baby but as the  
King of kings and Lord of lords!

**read**

John 14:3



A baby needs somewhere  
to be born like at home  
or in a hospital.

*Where were you born?*

Jesus was born  
in a stable in  
.....

**read** Luke 2:1-6



A baby needs  
a name.

*What name were  
you called?*

Jesus was given  
a special name  
that had a  
special meaning.

**read**

Matthew 1:21-23



# HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ★ NOLLAIG CHRÌDHEIL ★ NOLLAG SHONA

JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN





# 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  
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Church Charity [reg. no. 1130801]