



FOCUS

January 2026



2 Corinthians 5: 17

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

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 Jenny McCloy shares a prayer from the URC prayer handbook.



Christmas seems quite a long time ago now, Lord,
can it be only a week ago?
The carols have stopped on the radio
Holiday companies tempt us with summer extravaganzas,
And the dusty decorations need to come down again.
Now the rush is over and we're back to normal.

There's so little time to think
about Christmas at Christmas,
it's great to see loved ones,
eat good food and listen to lovely music
but so little time to think about the meaning of it all.
Maybe you feasted with family and friends
On high days and holy days?
Perhaps this is what we should think about,
The joys and sorrows, the fun and the fellowship,
The loneliness and sadness, the feasts and the famines
The glory and the tragedy of being human.

You experienced all of this, Lord.
You lived amongst us and we see your glory,

Showing us grace and truth
Incarnated in the mess and muddle of life.
Give us grace to see your glory
Revealed in flesh
Amen

Written by Andy Braunston, the URC's Minister for Digital Worship

Taken from 'Touching God' the Prayer Handbook for 2026

The Noticeboard

Information, tips, updates, and more...



Eco Tip

God's Gift -- Our World

The Environment -- Our Responsibility

Remember what your parents/grandparents used to tell you --
Don't waste, make do and mend.



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.

Church Flowers

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

If you wish to celebrate an important
occasion by donating the Church flowers
please contact Liz Lindsay.



Happy Birthday to the following members of our church family:

Anne Davey

Sheila Munro

Evie Burrell

Daniel Moavu

Scarlett Weller

Jenny McCloy

Isla Thomas

Molly Payne

Peter Bentall

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.

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 18th of January.



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



Items **urgently** needed: Tinned Fruit, Custard, Tinned Meat (e.g. Chilli, Stewing Steak, Ham), Tinned Veg, Tinned Tomatoes, Powdered Milk.

Items needed: Jam, Savouring Snacks, Loo Roll, Tuna, Rice Pudding, Tinned Soup, Hot/Cold Desserts (e.g. Jelly, Sponge Pudding, Angel Delight), Sweet Treats, Tinned Spaghetti, 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).

Basingstoke Choral Society Return

Owen Collins shares his experience of the BCS concert at London Street on the 17th December.



On the evening of Wednesday 17th December, I returned to London Street to attend a carol concert given by the Basingstoke Choral Society in aid of the Basingstoke branch of the Samaritans.

My ticket cost £10. The concert started at 7.30pm and finished at 9.30pm with a 20-minute interval. The atmosphere in the sanctuary was majestic and intimate. It was lovely to see the ground floor virtually full and a scattering in the balcony. The accompaniments by David Bridgman on the organ and piano were mesmerising for a number of pieces and it was a joy to hear soloists provided by teenagers. The conductor was Ian May-Miller and did an incredible job in engaging with the children in the audience by inviting them to use a tambourine or maracas, and perhaps more importantly encouraging the adults to sing loud and joyfully.

The programme was varied. Traditional carols, some sung by the choir with a twist. Sung either in Latin or with a different arrangement; O come all ye faithful, was one. In addition to carols we were treated to arrangements of popular songs such as Jingle Bell Rock, Deck the Hall and Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas. If I had to summarise it in a few words, I would say invigorating, whimsical, joyful and wonderful.

This was the first concert by the BCS after a break of 6 years. Their intention is to have a concert once again in 2026. Message for Tony and Gill - if they book again for 2026 please advertise it. I'm confident that a number of people within the congregation would very much like to attend.

A Quiet Thought...

Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do; but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do.

Anon.

The Prayer Circle



Please remember the following people in your prayers...

Margaret Carrick Smith and family.

David Swain, and Alison who is supporting him

Barbara Banbury and David Corfield

Marguerite Hurford and her son Michael

Beverley Cantwell's daughter, Abbie

Chris Jones' grandson, Archie

Louise & David Waller

Maggie & Richard Morgans

Christine & Eric Clucas

Bev Harris and Dom

Hyacinth Ridguard

Stan & Sandra Marut

Peter & Ruth Bentall who is recovering from a fall and broken collar bone with the help of carers at home.

Gill & Shirley Craft

Carol Scott

Joan Mussellwhite

Dick & Anne Davey

Jason Dudley

Carys Haywood

Claire Macro

Jenny McCloy

Beryl Wootton

Joyce Cook

Sheila Munro

Karen Bell

The Patterson family

Gill Vickery

Elaine & Brian's daughter and grandchildren

John's daughter Laura

Helen and Peter's son

David Bennett

Seb Allwright

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: 21-29
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			

New Year 2026



A poem by Megan Carter.

If we put our hand in God's hand
As we enter this New Year
Not knowing what the future holds
But that our Friend is near.

We shall not fear what lies ahead
If He is by our side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If He will be our guide.

The Sinless One from heaven came
To dwell with us on earth,
He sought and bought us with His blood
And offered us new birth.

Now as we travel through this year
He knows the things He's planned,
So let us trust and know just this –
Our times are in His hands.

World Leprosy Sunday

January 25th is a day dedicated to raising awareness about this terrible disease.



We read about leprosy in the Bible and assume it is a disease of the past. But leprosy is very much a disease of today, with more than 200,000 newly diagnosed cases every year.

That means that every two minutes of every day, someone hears the words 'you have leprosy'. Three short words, but they carry thousands of years' worth of fear, stigma and shame.

Leprosy thrives in areas where poor nutrition, overcrowding, shared wash facilities and low standards of living naturally lower people's immune systems.

Lepers will suffer growing numbness and worsening nerve damage, ulcers and finally even amputations. They will also suffer the hurt and shame of being an outcast, often abandoned by their own families.

And this is where The Leprosy Mission steps in, and with the support of churches in the UK, works to help the sufferers of leprosy around the world. The Leprosy Mission is a medical Christian mission which helps people with leprosy both medically, spiritually, and practically. With your help, their Leprosy Mission Vocational Training Centres can give sufferers a chance to learn a skill and get a qualification.

In Mark 1, the leper said to Jesus, 'If you are willing, you can heal me.' That plea still stands today – if we are willing, we can help The Leprosy Mission to still do Christ's work of healing and rehabilitation today.

More details at: <https://www.leprosymission.org.uk>



Event Diaries



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

At London Street URC (unless otherwise stated):

Regular Events

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

January Worship Diary

4th	Led by The Worship Group; Musician: Mark Best.
11th	Led by Nicola Hamilton; Musician: Mark Best.
18th	Led by Revd. Stephen Thornton; Musician: Revd. Denis Smith.
25th	Service includes Holy Communion and Elders' Induction Led by Revd. Julian Macro; Musician: Peter Dixon.

Duty Elder for the month: Leng Ayland.

Next Church Meeting:

January 25th (Sunday) at 1pm (in the Hook Room)

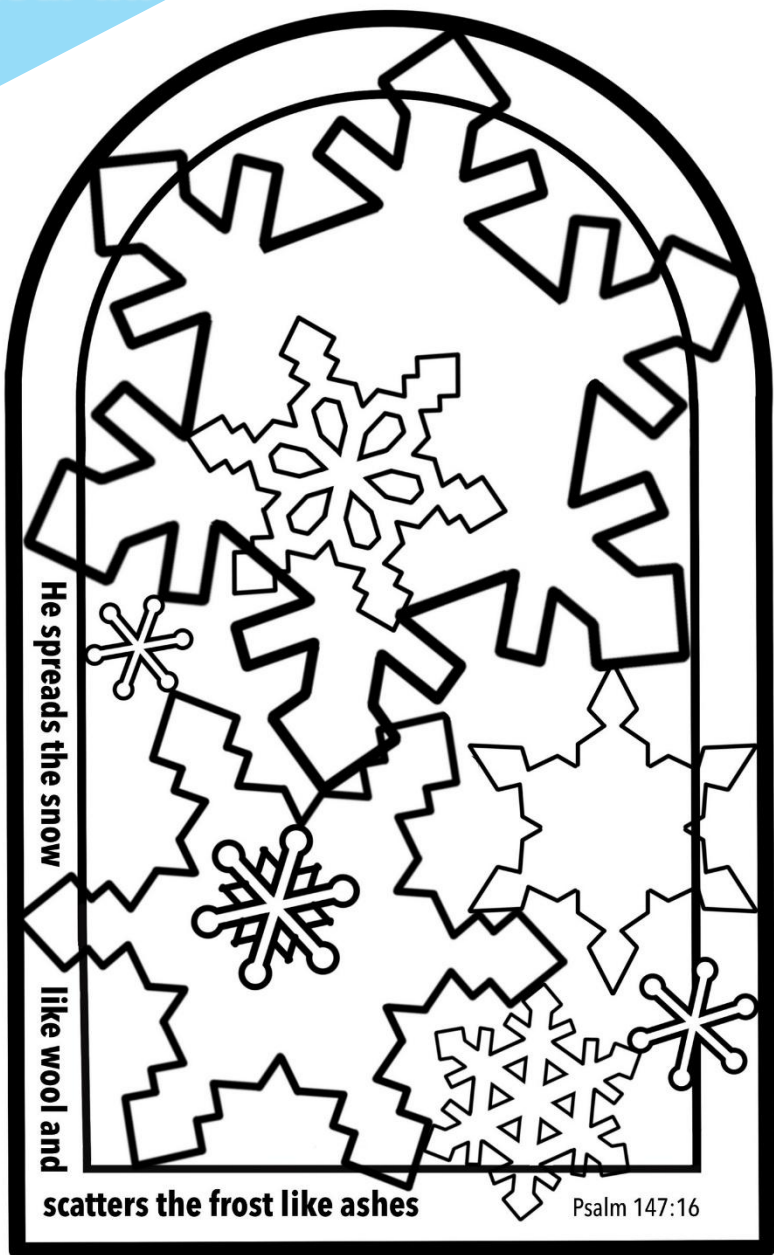
At Tadley (Old Meeting) URC (unless otherwise stated):

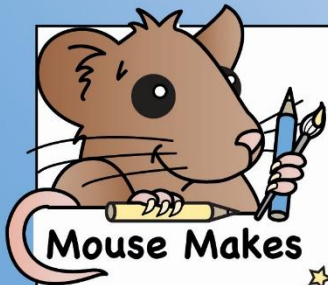
Sunday Worship 10:30am		
Monday Afternoons	Ladies' Cell Group	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Monday Evenings	Cell Group	Contact Mark Ward or Paul Gross.
Tuesday Evenings	Joint Prayer Time with St Paul's	Contact Penny O'Bee.
Wednesday Evenings	Prayer via Zoom	Contact Mark Ward.
Friday Afternoons	Men's Shed	2pm.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

January Worship Diary

4th	Immanuel Centre, 10:30am. Baptism of Chelsea and Dedication of Amiah. Led by Mark Ward.
11th	Led by Helen Williams.
18th	CTAT Unity Service, 10:30am.
25th	Led by Philip Jones.

Colour In!





Mouse Makes

DID YOU KNOW ?

Stars shine different colours, the colour we see depends on the temperature of the star. The hottest stars shine blueish-white, then yellowish-white, yellow, orange and the coolest stars shine red.

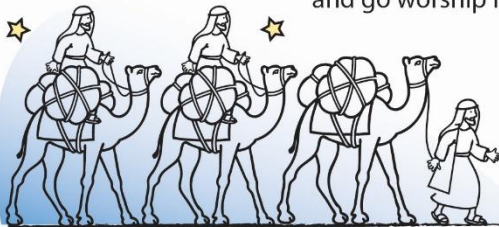
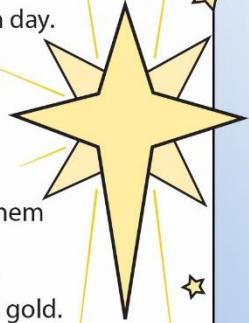
WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

The Wise Men came from a land far away, they had seen a star that shone brighter than day.

The star was a sign of the birth of a king, so they followed that star to pay homage to him.

They found him in Bethlehem as the prophets foretold, they gave him three gifts: myrrh, frankincense and gold.

The star led to Jesus our saviour and king, let us join with the Wise Men and go worship Him!

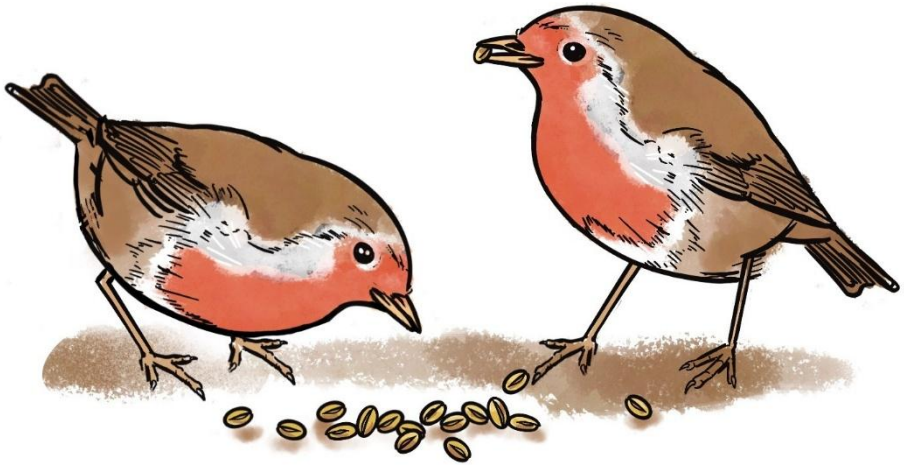


Read the story
of the Wise Men in
Matthew 2:1-12

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

Can you find
these words in
the word search?

WISE MEN • MAGI
STAR • SIGN
JOURNEY • BETHLEHEM
VISIT • JESUS • MESSIAH
CHRIST • KING
GIFTS • GOLD • MYRRH
FRANKINCENSE
WORSHIP • JOY
EPIPHANY



London Street

United Reformed Church

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