

THE OPEN DOOR

The Magazine of the Lymington United Reformed Church



Llanddwyn Island on Anglesey, see this month's postcard.

**DECEMBER/
JANUARY 2024**

Our Open Door Vision Statement.....

"Our vision is to be a church with an Open Door for all people to come in and for us to reach out, responding to the needs of the community and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ."

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of not just the church year, but the calendar year, I am drawn to reflect on so many changes that have taken place not just for us in the manse, but for us all at Lymington URC.

At home, Flora has moved to secondary school, and what might seem like a small change for many has been quite a big one for us as she is the last of the four children to do this. The routine of school runs and after school clubs has been completely abolished, and now in its place is an early morning dog walk and a chance to get ahead on my steps for the day!

At Lymington there is much to reflect on, with Richard sadly leaving you all, some of our members and friends passing away, and getting used to a new minister, with his own style, in a very specific form of ministry. Not only that, but now you have to share with other churches too!

Change like this will always mean reflection and adjustment, and how we feel about all of this will shape our understanding and approach to accepting, managing, or even rejecting the change around us.

As the new Church year approaches, we not only head into Advent and Christmas, but we also change the core gospel readings in the lectionary to that of Mark (from Matthew in

2023/23). There is smattering of John, but in the main we are led to explore Mark's understanding of the events of Jesus' ministry – and for me this is exciting, and perhaps reflects where we are right now.

For me Mark was the first Gospel I was presented with in booklet form as a gift at my confirmation aged 10. As I re-explored my faith it was Mark that spoke to me clearly. And it was a full reading of Mark's Gospel publicly that showed me that there is much to gain from hearing the whole of Jesus ministry in one go.

So, perhaps this new church (and then calendar year) is an opportunity for us all to reflect not only on the cyclical nature of Church, but also the fact that we can always take time to step back and not only look at Jesus' ministry afresh, but also our own in our churches.

As this letter also covers December, I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas, and I hope you are all able to spend it with the people you want to share it with.

Blessings

Paul

SECRETARY'S BITS AND PIECES FOR DECEMBER/ JANUARY 2024

Where did 2023 go? It is incredible to realise that Christmas is almost upon us again. And plans are being made for special

Christmas services, Christmas decorations and all that is involved in Church life during Advent.

Advent Sunday this year is on December 3rd and our service will be led by Mrs Chris Brown. Our very own Music Group will be leading the singing. Don't forget that Chris is hoping to organise a 'Christmas Display', at the back of the Church, of memories we may have of Christmases past. She is also hoping to receive pieces of art work, craft or poetry to display. But it will only happen if we provide exhibits!

The Rotary Club kindly provide us with an outside Christmas tree each year – this will be delivered and erected on Tuesday 5th December. We shall know it's REALLY Christmas when that goes up!

Lymington Town Band invites you to celebrate the festive season with a Christmas Concert in our Church on Saturday December 9th and to get you even more into the Christmas spirit, on Sunday December 17th there will be a 'Carols by Candlelight' service in Church, led by the Music Group. Coffee/tea and mince pies will be served in the hall from 3.30, prior to the service, and the service will start at 4.30, so do come along and join in the carols.

Our service on Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th is at 10.30 as normal and will be conducted by Mrs Mary Ann Jardine and our service to celebrate Christ's birth on Christmas morning, will be led by Chris Brown. Please note that this service will start at 10.00 am and Chris has promised it will be a short service to

enable us to get home for Christmas lunch!

And on to January 2024. It doesn't seem 24 years ago that we were looking to welcome in the new Millennium with some trepidation – I'm sure we all remember the fears about 'the Millennium bug' that proved largely groundless. Our next Church meeting is on January 7th, please note the change from 3rd Sunday to 1st Sunday. This will follow a Bring Your Own lunch. These meetings are an important part of Church life, when it's your opportunity to have your say. Do please try to come along.

The week of prayer for Christian Unity is from Thursday 18th to Thursday 25th January. There should be a united service sometime around this time, organised by Christians Together in Lymington and Pennington. The date hadn't been announced when we went to press. As soon as it is known, we'll let you know. Please try to make the effort to attend this service – it's always a very joyous service.

A very happy and blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all.

Margaret

*Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.*

LYMINGTON URC DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS:

The Open Door Café, hopefully every morning from 10 a.m.

WORSHIP:

Note: The Prayer Group meets on Wednesday at 9.15 a.m. at Church.

**CLOSING DATE FOR FEBRUARY/MARCH 'OPEN DOOR':
20th JAN 2024**

Free Wi Fi connection to the internet available in the Open Door Cafe, balcony, main hall and cottage meeting room areas. Just ask for the required passwords!

DECEMBER

3rd: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Christine Brown

10th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies

17th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
4.30 p.m. Candlelit Carols

24th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mary Ann Jardine

25th: 10.00 a.m. Worship for Christmas Day
led by Mrs Christine Brown

31st: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Linda Lee
(don't forget your 2023 diaries!)

JANUARY

7th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Christine Brown

14th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor

21st: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Tony Bennett

28th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies

SECOND HAND PAPERBACK BOOKS

I'm sure you have all appreciated that the advent of covid really affected our sales of paperback books which were virtually wiped out for over a year. However at last there is 'light at the end of the tunnel' and so far this financial year we have raised £200 for Church Funds (pre covid takings were about £400 each year).

I am therefore trying to revamp our selection of books with a view to increasing sales and recycling some of the older books. If you have any paperbacks (not hardbacks please) which you feel somebody else could enjoy I should be really glad to have them to update our bookshelves. I am happy to collect them if you are not able to bring them to Church.

My thanks in anticipation.

Ann Webber - 01590 676284

WHO HAS MADE ALL THINGS WELL

Verse 4

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell,
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well:

In the last three verses I have given you my thoughts on the previous verses, but I think the words of the last verse say it all, so I will just attach another photograph by my husband Alan. It is of 'Kenny's Pride' of ponies taken at St. Leonards, near Beaulieu.



Fran Cooke

When you have read this please remember Fran Cooke, our church member, who died recently. Her family and friends are in our prayers.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

'Chris Brown has changed her email address. It is now Chris.NF678@gmail.com'

"Mary Ann would like to thank all those who have sent such kind cards and messages of support following the loss of her husband Stuart."

Post card from Llandudno, North Wales

In early September 2023, seven of us, including Pete's sister Lou and girlfriend Carol, headed off for a week's holiday at John's family house in Llandudno. We had a wonderful time of fellowship, fun and discovery, visiting new and familiar places, and really getting to know each other.



John and I stopped off overnight in Sutton Coldfield on the way up and went out for a lovely chatty meal with Richard and Virginia, seeing their new home and environment. Richard is as busy as ever, preaching locally and supporting his grandchildren. They send their love to all who know them here in Lymington.



One place of interest that we all visited was Llanddwyn Island on Anglesey. The name 'Llanddwyn' actually means 'Church of Dwynwen'. And is so named after the Welsh patron saint of lovers, Saint Dwynwen, who lived here. The Welsh equivalent of the English Saint

Valentine only celebrated 3 weeks earlier on the 25th January and with less materialism. Many legends surround her life but she is said to be buried in the church on the island.



Andrea and I also saw a pod of “dolphins” playing in the sea off the island - we were later informed they were actually porpoises but they still made our day! It must have been a good holiday - everyone wants to go again next year!

Gill Wiseman

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

I am sure that many of you will know that there is a Dementia Support Group which meets in our hall on a Tuesday morning. The Group is run by Annabel and Cheryl, helped by volunteers. I have been very impressed by the group who make all welcome and everyone has all an enjoyable morning.

There is plenty to do and a varied programme of activities. This includes Drawing, Painting and Musical Mornings when Linden House Residents join us with their guitarist. Everyone joins in with the singing. They also tend to the raised beds in the Church Garden and were delighted with the vegetables which they harvested recently.

If you know of anyone who you feel may benefit from the Group, pop in on a Tuesday morning and Annabel and Cheryl can tell you more and point you to other Agencies who can give you advice and answer your queries.

Ann Simmons

FRESH FROM THE WORD 2024

I shall shortly be ordering copies of “Fresh from the Word 2024” for anybody who would like to read these excellent daily Bible Reading notes, which cost £12.99. “Fresh from The Word” gives global perspectives on carefully selected passages from the Bible. The writers include theologians, biblical scholars, church leaders and activists for peace from across the world, all of whom share a passion to bring the Bible into conversation with day-to-day concerns.

I shall also be ordering the 2024 URC Prayer Handbook “Full to the Brim.” This costs £5.99, which is the same price as last year’s edition.

Please telephone me on 01590 670785 or 0774 8762 666 if you would like to order a copy. Alternatively, you can email me on maryann.plovers@gmail.com

Mary Ann



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

ROTAS FOR DECEMBER

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 3rd

COMMUNION ELDERS: David and Margaret

DUTY ELDER

3rd Dave Best
10th Margaret Clark
17th David Bywater
24th Barbara Waite
31st Chris Brown

READING IN CHURCH

Shelagh Richardson
Margaret Clark
Barbara Waite
David Bywater
Andrea Best

STEWARDS

3rd Gill Wiseman and Peter Middleton
10th Anne Gaines and Judith Baker
17th Lizbeth Eason and Judith Baker
24th Janice Perkins and Kate Noon
31st Liz Griffiths and Barbara Waite

SOUND SYSTEM

DB/GC
WD/MC
DW/MC
DB/GC
WD/MC

ROTAS FOR JANUARY 2024

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 7th

COMMUNION ELDERS: John and Richard

DUTY ELDER

READING IN CHURCH

7th Richard Mallory

Keith Holmes

14th John Wiseman

Dave Best

21st Dave Best

TBC

28th Margaret Clark

John Wiseman

STEWARDS

SOUND SYSTEM

7th Andrea and Dave Best

DW/MC

14th Pat Weaver and Anne Simmons

DB/GC

21st Gill Wiseman and Peter Middleton

WD/MC

28th Anne Gaines and Judith Baker

DW/MC

Save
the
Date!



• JOIN US FOR A •

Post
CHRISTMAS
get together

Sunday 4th February

Enjoy a celebratory lunch at church after
the morning service. Details to follow.



Candlelight Carols

*Sunday 17th
December 4.30pm*

*Join us for mince pies
and coffee from 3.30pm*



Please order online using the URC Bookshop's new easy-to-use website www.urcshop.co.uk or by calling 020 7916 8629.



Jubilee Scarf - By popular demand from scarf wearers and those wanting fabric for other purposes, a lightweight polyester scarf measuring 2m x 80cm in the new anniversary blue and multi-coloured fish design. £7.99 +p&p.

A pair of jubilee socks, designed by Holy Socks. Each pair comes with details about the URC and a reflection on Faith, Hope and Love by Holy Socks founder Margaret Wyllie. Available in two sizes, 4-7 and 6-11. £5.95 +p&p.

(Other 'Jubilee' items available)

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when you
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Fighting poverty through trade

PLEASE NOTE: This magazine is printed on paper from renewable sources out of our concern for the environment.

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