

THE OPEN DOOR

The Magazine of the Lymington United Reformed Church



Part of our music group, see worship group article.

**FEBRUARY /
MARCH 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,

We recently discovered a television programme where Amanda Holden and Alan Carr set about renovating a house in Italy bought for 1 euro. We were notified by the latest series, which prompted us to go back and catch up by watching the first one fairly quickly.

A few things fascinated us about the programme. The first was that the houses could be bought for 1 euro. Secondly, that they would then sell the property and the profits would go to charity. And finally, the relationships they made in the town with local trades people and neighbours.

I think church life can sometimes offer us the same kind of challenges and opportunities that they faced in the programme.

We can be very focussed on our buildings and ensuring that they are up to scratch and working. This is, of course, important – we have a responsibility to be caretakers of our legacy and without our buildings we would not be able to open up to our communities and offer outreach. This is like the first two elements I described in the programme.

But the third part, relationships with our neighbours, is something I think we might find a challenge. We are not sure how to engage with those around us, what should we invite

them to and how do we get along with them when perhaps they don't know anything about us?

But for Alan and Amanda, both foreigners to the town, they found a way to connect with those folks and work together to not just improve the building they were renovating, but to get along in new positive relationships.

One of our January readings is Mark's account of Jesus calling the disciples. I wonder what it was about Jesus offer that made the disciples give up everything to come with him? I will leave you to ponder on that – perhaps you could take a look in Mark 1:14-20?

Whatever your conclusions and reflection, I am sure you will agree that there is something about an invitation of hospitality that is both attractive, and Gospel, that Jesus encourages us to offer.

Blessings

Paul

SECRETARY'S BITS AND PIECES FOR FEBRUARY/ MARCH 2024

Goodness me, it's February already! February possibly isn't a favourite month, but daylight hours are starting to get longer and we can look forward to spring.

We can also look forward to our Winter Warmer Celebration lunch on Sunday 4th February, after morning service. The meal

will be provided by our Fellowship and Fundraising team, with entertainment by Pete Midd. We hope it will be a very joyous occasion.

As Easter is very early this year, Lent, recognised as a forty day period of fasting, study and prayer, begins on Wednesday 14th February and ends on Thursday March 28th. At the time of writing, there are no plans for any Lent courses, but we'll all be able to prepare, in our own way, to remember the events leading up to the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross and to celebrate His resurrection at Easter. On Maundy Thursday, 28th March at 7.00 pm, we will come for our Tenebrae communion service, led by Mary Ann. This is an incredibly moving service as we reflect quietly on the Last Supper and Jesus' arrest, sharing bread and wine by candlelight. Plans for Good Friday have not been finalised as yet – we'll let you know what they are as soon as we know, but on Easter Sunday, we'll meet at 10.30 am for our celebration of Easter Day, including a special Easter communion, led by Rev Paul O'Connor.

Following the departure of our Moderator, Rev Clare Downing last summer, a new Moderator, Rev Dr Michael Hopkins has been appointed and will be inducted on Saturday March 23rd at London Street URC, Basingstoke. We have been very lucky - he will be preaching here on Sunday 5th May. Try to keep the date free. We want to give him a very warm welcome!

Our fundraising team is starting to plan events for the coming year. If you have any thoughts or ideas of things we can do,

please let Andrea or one of the team know.

A reminder (or nag!) Please ensure the Church is left secure, if you're the last to leave. That means checking all the windows and checking that all the doors that should be locked, are locked correctly. On several occasions recently, both sides of the main hall door have been unlocked, but not both locked again. It is very easy to push them open and gain access. The same applies to the main glass doors, both doors have been unlocked, but both not locked again. Thanks very much – nag over!

And finally a local radio presenter was encouraging listeners to phone/email/text in with what they considered to be the best time to hold a Sunday morning service. One suggestion was 'half an hour before it ends'!

Margaret

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 APRIL/MAY 'OPEN DOOR':

16th MARCH 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!

FEBRUARY

- 4th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mary Ann Jardine
- 11th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 18th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Maggie Larkin
- 25th: 10.00 a.m. Worship led by the Rev'd Martin Ambler

MARCH

- 3rd: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies
- 10th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 17th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Mary Thomas
- 24th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by The Worship Group
- 31st: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Leanne, Nick and Family would like to thank everyone from the church for their condolences, help, advise and support following Audrey, Mum's passing.

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

WORSHIP GROUP

Christmas was coming along fast, the whole year seemed to have gone by in a blur, and we hadn't managed to meet socially since getting together at the start of the year! We meet for practice on the first Saturday of every month to prepare for worship the following day during the morning service. However, these practice sessions are busy and there isn't time for too much frivolity; although usually there's more frivolity than serious practice!! So the Worship Group decided there was an urgent need for a party! Consequently, we all trudged wearily along to The Sail Inn on Friday 8th December for our first social event, without unfortunately Margaret and Tony, who couldn't make it.

In amongst the laughter and stimulating conversation, which on some rare occasions was quite sensible, there was a serious element to the event. This took the form of an Awards and Presentation Ceremony in several categories:

Most Improved Player – awarded to Gill Wiseman. Having dusted off her guitar and clarinet she really has made a staggering improvement and is an integral member of the team.

Most Practiced Player – There was a tie for this. The winners were Gill and Chris Brown, as they are the only ones who actually do any practice!

Most 'Returned' Player – Awarded to Elaine Turberville. As a Catholic and the catholic church organist, she returns to us every month – probably to see if we've improved!

Most Loyal Supporter – Awarded to Steve Turberville, as he attends every time that Elaine plays ... and films her!

Most tested Ears – Awarded to John Wiseman, as he must listen to Gill practice!

Most Practical Person – Graham Brown, as he takes the dog out when Chris practices!

The Most Shocked Person – Awarded to Carol Fitzpatrick (Pete's lady friend), who is only just realising what she's let herself in for!!





Best Female Vocalist – Awarded to Margaret Clark, because she's the only one we have ... at present, and she's also brilliant.

Most Deluded Person Award – Awarded to Tony Clark, as he always tells Margaret that we sound quite good after listening to us on YouTube!

The 'Best 'till last' Award – To Dave and Andrea **Best**. Combined because as a couple they have made a massive and positive impact on the whole church family. Had there been a Best Male Vocalist Award the chances are quite high that Dave would have won that!

A good time was had by all and everyone left the pub really

quickly leaving Pete and landlady Sue to sort out the bill!! We are all looking forward positively to future events in 2024 and building on leading worship. However before next year, our next meet-up was the Candlelight Carol Service practice, and the actual service on Sunday 17th December 2023.

Peter Middleton

ALL ABOUT LIGHT

I wonder if you have realised how the religions of the world have been influenced by the “light”? We have passed through autumn when one of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, namely Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light, was celebrated. Our Prime Minister, who is a Hindu, lit lights outside No 10 Downing Street. Diwali signifies the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance and hope over despair, and its celebration includes millions of lights shining on housetops, outside doors and windows, around temples and other community buildings in countries where it is observed.

As far as Christianity is concerned, in the run up to Christmas we saw Christingle services with a candle lit in an orange signifying the world, our candle light services and the lighting of the Advent candles. The underlying concept is darkness and light. John 8, v12 states: Again Jesus spoke to them saying “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of the world”.

But what of the next Christian festival, namely Candlemas day, our own festival of lights, celebrated annually on the 2nd February? It is included in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. It marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. Candlemas commemorates the ritual purification of Mary, forty days after the birth of her son Jesus. On this day Christians remember the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Forty days after the birth of a Jewish boy it was the custom to take him to the Temple in Jerusalem to be presented to God by his thankful parents.

The 2nd February was the day of the year when all the candles that were to be used in the church in the coming year were brought into church and a blessing was said over them – hence the festival day (or mass) of the candles.

And now for the Candlemas weather lore, beliefs and sayings! People believed Candlemas day predicted the weather for the rest of the winter. A fine, bright, sunny day means there is more winter coming whereas a cloudy, wet, stormy Candlemas day means that the worst of winter is over. Let us hope it is the latter this year!

Richard Mallory.





The Fellowship and Fundraising Team have been busy coming up with ideas for the coming months. Put these dates in your diary!

Sunday 4th February: Winter Warmer Celebration. 12.15- 3pm

An opportunity to enjoy each other's company over a hot meal. There will be cottage pie with vegetables and an apple crumble and custard for dessert. Fun activities are planned for after lunch too!

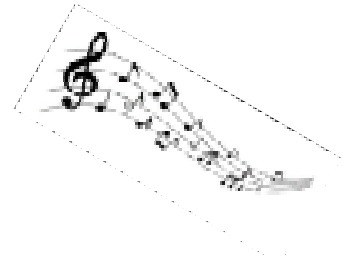


Sunday 7th April: Fellowship Breakfast. 9-10am

Prepared and served by the men from our MerriMENT group, everyone is invited to share breakfast before the morning service. Details to follow.

Friday 19th April: Warblers' Afternoon Tea: 2.30pm

This much-loved event returns for the first time this year. Come support our singing group while enjoying a cream tea.



Saturday 27th April: Table Sale

Weather permitting, we will be holding a Table Sale on the forecourt selling good quality bric- a- brac etc.

Tuesday 9th July: Garden BBQ. 5-7pm

Come and enjoy our Summer Garden BBQ! Enjoy our beautiful garden and the company of friends before attending our Annual Church Meeting at 7pm.



Thank you for continuing to support our events. We hope you enjoy them!

Love from

The F & F Team



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

ROTAS FOR FEBRUARY

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 4th

COMMUNION ELDERS: Barbara and David

DUTY ELDER

4th David Bywater
11th Barbara Waite
18th Chris Brown
25th Richard Mallory

READING IN CHURCH

Judith Baker
David Bywater
Wyn Davies
Peter Middleton

STEWARDS

4th Lizbeth Eason and Judith Baker
11th Janice Perkins and Kate Noon
18th Liz Griffiths and Barbara Waite
25th Andrea Best and Brenda Nevard

SOUND SYSTEM

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

ROTAS FOR MARCH

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 10th

COMMUNION ELDERS: Margaret and Dave

DUTY ELDER

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

READING IN CHURCH

Lizbeth Eason
Margaret Clark
Keith Holmes
Pat Weaver
Richard Mallory

STEWARDS

3rd Pat Weaver and Anne Simmons
10th Gill Wiseman and Peter Middleton
17th Anne Gaines and Judith Baker
24th Lizbeth Eason and Judith Baker
31st Janice Perkins and Kate Noon

SOUND SYSTEM

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



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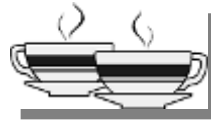


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