

THE OPEN DOOR

The Magazine of the Lymington United Reformed Church



The Music Group in full song!

**JUNE/
JULY 2025**

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 appreciate the warmer weather, we are also being warned about a possible drought over the summer months. One of the benchmarks of this problem is that the water levels are close to those measured in 1976, when the country suffered a severe heatwave and drought.

I was born in 1977, so I only hear about this through anecdotes and recollections from those who lived through it, however the event is so important and had such an impact I still hear about it even today.

This reminds me of two very different things, even though they offer similar theological reflection.

The first of these is that this event is like the exile in Babylon for the Hebrews once they had returned to Jerusalem. So embedded in their story was this event, that this shaped the Pharisees' and temple priests' response to Jesus, who was very much rocking the boat with the Romans. Any attempt to challenge the Empire that was now in charge was seen by those leaders as too risky – and this shaped the events that we know so well that led to Jesus' crucifixion.

The other of these is a novel named *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*, a book about two girls who hear the local priest share this sermon at their church. This is all set within the context of the great drought of 1976, which is described in vivid

detail and shapes the plot of the story which leads to a dramatic climax.

Of course, the passage about the Goats and the Sheep is from Matthew 25 and is part of a discourse which includes the parable of the talents. As I have explored before, the parable of the talents traditionally was seen as passage challenging us in our discipleship to be obedient, but further academic reflection can lead us to conclude that this is more about Jesus challenging the Pharisees and the way they hypocritically determine who is righteous and who isn't – and perhaps the same could be made as an analysis of the Goats and the Sheep too.

It is this interpretation that reinforces the thought that the Pharisees, although wrong in their attitude and actions, are only responding to what they think is best – to avoid exile as their nation had experienced the last time they turned away from the Law and making sure it was followed to the letter.

So, when someone reminds you of an event in the past, perhaps reflecting on whether or not it is limiting your future actions or decision making is helpful? Jesus seems to challenge us to do this through these parables, and perhaps we too are guilty of looking back and acting on what we know happened in the past – instead of seeing God in the now - and leaving the future to Him.

Blessings

Paul

SECRETARY'S BITS AND PIECES FOR JUNE/JULY 2025.

As the song goes 'June is bustin' out all over' and we're now approaching the half way point of the year! With the amazing spring weather we've had, our Garden Café opened in the last week of April and it has proved, once again, to be an amazing success. Do take the time to go and have a cup of coffee and slice of cake and sit in our Church garden. It's a beautiful haven of peace and quiet away from the busyness of the High Street. As always, we must thank our hard working gardening team for creating such a beautiful space, and to all the café volunteers.

Easter now seems an age ago, even though it was very late this year. Mary Ann led us in a Tenebrae communion service on Maundy Thursday, always a special time. For the second year in a row, the Good Friday service was inside because of the threat of rain, but many people came along to join in worship. It was a real 'Christians Together' service with contributions from all the churches in the town. We celebrated Easter Day with communion and a service led again by Mary Ann.

Sunday June 22nd will be a very special day for us when Rev'd Paul O'Connor will be officially inducted to serve as our minister. The service itself will be conducted by the Synod Moderator Rev Dr Michael Hopkins and starts at 2.30. We'll be pleased to welcome many visitors to our Church on that day both from Synod and locally. It will be a very memorable

occasion for us.

The minister is hosting bible studies on the following dates:

3rd June

17th June

1st July

These are fortnightly on a Tuesday morning starting at 10.00 in the sanctuary.

Our Annual Church meeting will take place on Tuesday evening, 15th July at 7.00pm, but at 5.00pm you are all invited to come along to a barbecue in the Church garden. David Bywater has kindly agreed once again to co-ordinate and circulate our reports. If you produced one last year, he'll be contacting you shortly to send him one for this year. We will also be holding our elders' election, details about this below.

Enjoy the coming summer months – although it's a bit optimistic to expect this amazing weather to continue for too much longer!

ELDERS ELECTION

We will be holding an elders' election at our ACM at our July Church meeting on Tuesday 15th July, when we'll elect elders to serve for the next three years. Please remember to nominate anyone who is eligible (a member of at least one year) through the nomination process. If you feel called yourself to be an elder, please remember that you need to be nominated and seconded by other church members (not

yourself).

The full list of elders currently serving is:

Dave Best Chris Brown

David Bywater Margaret Clark

Richard Mallory John Wiseman

Richard completes a three year term of office and is now standing down. We thank him for all he has contributed to the elders' team.

Chris and John have also completed a three-year term and are willing, if nominated and elected, to serve a further term. Please make sure that if you would like these elders to continue as serving elders then they must be nominated and seconded through the nomination process.

Nomination forms will be available from me. Please give or send it to me by Sunday, 15th June.

Many thanks.

Margaret

LYMINGTON URC DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS:

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

WORSHIP:

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

CLOSING DATE FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 'OPEN DOOR':

17th JULY 2025

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!

JUNE

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------|---|
| 1 st : | 10.30 a.m. | Worship including communion
led by the Worship Group |
| 8 th : | 10.30 a.m. | Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor |
| 15 th : | 10.30 p.m. | Worship by Mrs Maggie Larkin |
| 22 nd : | 10.30 a.m. | Worship led by Mary Ann Jardine |
| 29 th : | 10.30 a.m. | Worship led by Mrs Linda Lee |

JULY

- 6th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies
- 13th: 10.30 a.m. Worship including communion
led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 20th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Christine Brown
- 27th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Sean Brown

REPORTS FOR ACM

Margaret has included in her bits that our ACM is on Tuesday July 15th.

In order to again speed things up we are asking for reports to be sent in prior to the meeting so they can be circulated before the meeting.

Can reports please be sent to
reportslymurc@gmail.com

Many thanks



BAKING CAKES – AGAIN!

Do I have to, Lord? Not ANOTHER cake! Yes, I know I like baking and I find it therapeutic, and it's very satisfying to see people enjoying my handiwork. But I don't feel like it today and I haven't time, and I'm on a diet, and ...

Where does cake baking come in the Bible, Lord? I never heard Jesus or Paul talk about it. I never knew it was part of the Christian life – it isn't in the membership promises, or the eldership service, so why are we expected to produce cakes so faithfully.

I'm sorry, Lord, I'm giving in to ungenerous thoughts. Please help me, I do want to be generous. I want to see people come together in your name as they eat – in imitation of the meal you had with your disciples. It may not be bread and wine, and I may not be ordained, but I am part of the priesthood of all believers.

Please use my offering to bless your people.

Amen

(As found by our Secretary!)

DEMENTIA

We are told that perhaps one in three of those in the “dessert” of life will have dementia or Alzheimer's.

The piece below was something that Mike produced for a very dear friend some time ago, but just how true and relevant it is now as he succumbs himself to this cruel mental illness!

Norma

Don't ask me to remember
don't try to make me understand,
let me rest and know you're with me —
kiss my cheek and hold my hand.

I'm confused beyond your concept —
I'm sad, and sick, and lost,
all I know is - that I need you,
to be with me, - at all cost.

Don't lose your patience with me
do not scold, or curse, or cry
I can't help the way I'm acting,
can't be different - though I try!

Just remember that I need you,
that the best of me is gone,
please don't fail to stand beside me,
— Love me - til my life is done!

Fellowship & Fundraising

Garden Café

Our fabulous Garden Cafe has now been open more than a month and we've been privileged to have been visited by many people; some of our visitors have been church members or locals but many have been on holiday visiting Lymington.



Visitors are always very impressed by our lovely garden- thank you to all those who help maintain it and keep it looking so beautiful.

Forecourt sales



Thank you to John Wiseman and others who held a plant sale on April 26th. We are grateful to all who spent time growing these plants. This sale raised over £100 and kicked off the first of many forecourt sales and tombola stalls which we hold throughout the summer months.

Here are Judith and Ann with the first tombola of 2025 and the second-hand goods stalls.



DATES TO REMEMBER

Sunday 1st June 9.30am:

Join us for breakfast before the service. This will be prepared, cooked & served by men from the Merriment Men's Group. Donations in aid of New Forest Disability.



Tuesday 15th July 5pm: Garden BBQ

Everyone is invited to share in a delicious BBQ in the garden from 5pm before our Annual Church Meeting. Further details will be given nearer the time.

Friday 8th August: Cheese & Wine Evening

What could be better on a summer's evening, than cheese & wine (or non-alcoholic drinks) in the garden with friends?

Join us for a fabulous evening with live music provided by Tony Kent & Pete Middleton. Further details nearer the time but put this date in your diary now!



Wanted- Jigsaw Puzzles



Do you have any good quality used jigsaw puzzles you can donate to the church for us to sell? These are extremely popular, especially 500piece puzzles. Please leave them in the donation box in the ODC or speak to Dave Best. Thank you.

ROTAS FOR JUNE

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 1st

COMMUNION ELDERS: Richard and John

DUTY ELDER

1st Margaret Clark
8th David Bywater
15th Chris Brown
22nd Richard Mallory
29th John Wiseman

READING IN CHURCH

Margaret Clark
Richard Mallory
Barbara Waite
Wyn Davies
Janice Perkins

STEWARDS

1st Anne Simmons
8th Gill Wiseman
15th Peter Middleton
22nd Anne Gaines
29th Judith Baker

SOUND SYSTEM

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

ROTAS FOR JULY

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 13th

COMMUNION ELDERS: Margaret and Dave

DUTY ELDER

6th Dave Best
13th Margaret Clark
20th David Bywater
29th Chris Brown

READING IN CHURCH

Judith Baker
David Best
Les Saunders
Keith Holmes

STEWARDS

6th Lizbeth Eason and Janice Sellars
13th Janice Perkins
20th Kate Noon
29th Liz Griffiths

SOUND SYSTEM

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

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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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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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