

# **THE OPEN DOOR**

## **The Magazine of the Lymington United Reformed Church**



The Greek Main Gate at Perga, see postcard.

**OCTOBER/  
NOVEMBER 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 I look out of the manse window, I can see the changes that autumn (and what feels like an early winter!!) brings.

The trees are starting to look a different shade of colour and are a little bit more sparse, and the sounds and movement of nature are slowly disappearing.

This time of change in nature is of course part of the cycle of the seasons, the changes affected by the rotation of our planet around our sun. Of course, many years ago it was thought that we were at the centre of the universe, and it took a long time for the church (and the world) to catch up with the reality and change its viewpoint to reflect what we were able not only deduce, but to prove through scientific endeavour and space exploration.

I think we sometimes forget that the world-view we hold now will be very different to that of our Gospels. The world that Jesus and the disciples inhabited understood a flat earth with an above and a below. References to where God might (or might not) be were based on this world understanding, and illness, both mental and physical was considered due to sin, where the only cure would have been enough repentance and a decision of the temple or priest that the person was now "cured".

For many who were unwell, the act of Jesus healing them was more than a physical change, but also a religious one. Jesus would have declared them well where the temple may not have done – sometimes due to the correct payment to the temple being made to support the cure being carried out. This was liberating, an act that would have changed the social status of those who were now marginalised and on the edge of society to being accepted and welcomed again.

This liberation is at the heart of the Great Commission, where Jesus commands the disciples at the end of Matthew to “Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”. This is about reaching out to everyone, regardless of social status or position and offering them the chance to encounter God and form a loving relationship.

So, as we see the change in the world around us at Autumn, let's remember that this change in the world around us can also be reflected in our work as Christians, where change for those that we encounter, who might welcome it, can be a liberating experience that responds directly to Jesus command.

Blessings,

Paul

## **SECRETARY'S BITS AND PIECES FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2025.**

It's now officially autumn and our lovely Garden Café has closed until next Spring and we're welcoming people back into the Open Door Café. This year, because of the amazing Spring, we opened the Garden Café at the end of April and have welcomed many visitors to enjoy the sunshine, along with coffee and cake, in our beautiful garden.

A reminder that the United Warblers meet in the hall on alternate Mondays at 10.00 am and the prayer group meets on Wednesday mornings at 9.15 am in the sanctuary. Something new this Autumn is a series of bible studies that our minister, Rev'd Paul O'Connor, is hosting. These are on specific Tuesday mornings at 10.00 am in the Sanctuary – 30<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> October, 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December.

At our morning service on October 12<sup>th</sup> Paul will be inducting Chris Brown and John Wiseman as elders for a further 3 year period and he also hopes to be receiving new members into our Church family. Our next Church meeting is also on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October directly after morning service. Church meetings are open to everyone, but if a vote is taken on any important issues, only Church members can vote.

Our service for Remembrance Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 am will be led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor. There will be the usual rolling road closure in the High Street for the annual parade.

We believe Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November will see the 'Christmas in Lymington' event, where there will be the usual stalls and attractions in the High Street with the crib blessing at St Thomas' Church at 6.00 pm. Put this in your diaries as a possible event and we'll confirm as soon as we're sure!

The Fellowship and Fundraising team have got several events planned for the Autumn and Winter that you'll find advertised elsewhere in the magazine, and the first of these is the United Warblers Entertainment with tea on Friday October 10<sup>th</sup> at 2.30 pm in the hall.

Once again, thanks to everybody for all their help and support in keeping our lovely Church alive.

Many thanks.

Margaret

## **LYMINGTON URC DIARY**

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

**CLOSING DATE FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY 'OPEN DOOR': 19<sup>th</sup>  
NOV 2025**

### **COFFEE MORNINGS:**

The Open Door Café, hopefully every morning except Thursday, from 10 a.m. (See poster below)

## **WORSHIP:**

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

### **OCTOBER**

- 5<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship including communion  
led by the Worship Group
- 12<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 19<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 p.m. Worship by Rev'd Martin Ambler
- 26<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Maggie Larkin

### **NOVEMBER**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Linda Lee
- 9<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship for Remembrance Sunday  
led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 16<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship including communion  
led by Mrs Christine Brown
- 23<sup>rd</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies
- 30<sup>th</sup>: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mary Ann Jardine

## *Postcard from St Paul's first Journey*

*I am sure that everyone is familiar with St Paul's missionary journeys. The stories of Diana of the Ephesians, the wreck on the coast of Malta and so on, but, like us, the details often get overlooked.*

*His first journey took him to Cyprus and then to what is now Turkey. He was accompanied by Barnabas and John Mark and, leaving from Seleucia, the port of Syrian Antioch. Now it is suggested they called into Cyprus first as Barnabas knew the place. They then moved to Asia Minor, to Perga, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, before returning home.*

*Over the years Judith and I have been lucky enough to visit the Mediterranean's various holiday destinations and from time to time have found ourselves crossing the path of St Paul. Many years ago my daughter was married in Cyprus and while touring around we found ourselves in the ruins of Roman Paphos where a pillar is shown as the place where Paul was tied up and scourged. It has to be said that Paul didn't mention this event*



directly, but did say he had been whipped several times during his journeys. Despite this alleged scourging he eventually overcame a hostile Jewish advisor to convert the local Roman governor, a first in the annals of early Christianity.



*St Paul's Pillar, Paphos*

More recently we visited Turkey, flying into Antalya, coincidentally also the place that Paul's party arrived. We were staying further down the coast at a little town called Side (pronounced seeday) itself with some well-presented Graeco Roman ruins. On enquiring about visiting Ephesus, a name we both knew, we found it much too far for a day trip, but

*were encouraged to visit Perga instead.*

*Here we quite literally found ourselves in Paul's footsteps. The earliest church was simply the rounded end of the hippodrome or stadium which had been walled off and the existing tiers of seating was used by the congregation. Later a church proper was built closer to the main gates of Perga, but now not as accessible to the visiting tourist.*



*The walled off end of the Stadium*

*Standing on the sands of the first church it was possible to imagine the scene. Paul, standing under an awning, preaching to the*

*crowds on the tiers of seats. Four stones set into the ground might have been the base of such an awning, and standing there in the heat when we visited suggested the awning would have been very necessary!*

*Apparently Paul didn't preach at Perga that time, but did so on his way back from the other cities of Asia Minor. Clearly he made a significant impression as the city became a religious centre for Christianity even as its commercial importance waned with the silting up of the river.*

*It would seem that this area held a sophisticated population and the evidence for this was to be found, not only in Perga's religious significance, but also in the three large Graeco Roman theatres we visited. Whilst two were under repair one was still in everyday use and was currently putting on a play about Troy. Allegedly this one had been in almost daily use since it was first built 2000 odd years ago!*



*Two of the four stones supporting an awning?*

*Where next for us, you might ask? We have been fortunate to have been to Malta, staying near St Paul's Bay, although later research has now suggested an alternative site for his shipwreck. We have been to Rome and visited the Vatican City, but failed to visit St Paul's Basilica, his burial place, so there are a couple of places we may yet follow him in his journeys before we get too old for gallivanting around!*

*Judith and Wyn*



## FRESH FROM THE WORD 2026

I shall shortly be ordering copies of “Fresh from the Word 2026” for anybody who would like to read these excellent daily Bible Reading notes, which cost £15.00. “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.

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](mailto:maryann.plovers@gmail.com)

Mary Ann



# Fancy a cuppa and a chat?



**Lymington United Reformed Church**  
*"God's Open Door at the Centre of the Community"*

Our Open Door Café is open  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Fridays  
(Closed Thursday)  
10am to 12noon



Lymington United Reformed Church,  
High Street, Lymington, SO41 9AG.  
01590 676306 or [www.lymurc.org.uk](http://www.lymurc.org.uk)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP

**SUNDAY**  
Sunday 2nd November  
12pm after the service

Join us for traditional roast chicken with all the trimmings followed by apple crumble or fruit pie and coffee to finish.  
£10 per person.

Vegetarian/ gluten free by request



Sign up on the list in the hall  
or let us know you are coming



## Sunday 21st December 3pm

Come for mince pies and a hot drink and stay for Candlelit Carols in the church at 4pm.



## Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January

We're planning to get together for a New Year Celebration Meal after the morning service on 4th January 2026. More details nearer the time!



Many, many thanks to the dedicated members of our Fundraising and Fellowship group who give up their time and put so much effort into organising and running our church events. You are all appreciated!





JOIN US FOR  
*AFTERNOON*  
*TEA*

WITH THE WARBLERS'  
SINGING GROUP

**FRIDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2.30PM**

Sign up on the list in the church hall  
or let us know you're coming!

# Card Making Workshop

Friday 31st October

2.30pm-4.30pm in the church hall

Cards are easy to make...and great fun to work on!  
£2.50 each towards the cost of equipment used and  
includes a free cuppa!

Why not come along and have a go? Add your name to  
the list in the church hall or speak to Chris Brown





# What's been happening?



## *Cheese & Wine in the Garden*

Our August Cheese & Wine event proved to be such a wonderful occasion in the church garden. It was a warm summer's evening, and we were treated to some wonderful music courtesy of Pete Middleton and Tony Kent.



Platters of cheese, biscuits and grapes were enjoyed with fantastic company and over £160 was raised for church funds. Many thanks to members of our F & F Team, the musicians and all who supported the evening.



## **ROTAS FOR OCTOBER**

**COMMUNION SUNDAY: 5<sup>th</sup>**

**COMMUNION ELDERS:** Margaret and John

### **DUTY ELDER**

5<sup>th</sup> John Wiseman  
12<sup>th</sup> Chris Brown  
19<sup>th</sup> Dave Best  
26<sup>th</sup> Margaret Clark

### **READING IN CHURCH**

David Bywater  
Les Saunders  
Andrea Best  
Judith Baker

### **STEWARDS**

5<sup>th</sup> Janice Perkins  
12<sup>th</sup> Kate Noon  
19<sup>th</sup> Liz Griffiths  
26<sup>th</sup> Andrea Best

### **SOUND SYSTEM**

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

## **ROTAS FOR NOVEMBER**

**COMMUNION SUNDAY: 16<sup>th</sup>**

**COMMUNION ELDERS:** David and Dave

### **DUTY ELDER**

2<sup>nd</sup> David Bywater  
9<sup>th</sup> Chris Brown  
16<sup>th</sup> John Wiseman  
23<sup>rd</sup> Dave Best  
30<sup>th</sup> Margaret Clark

### **READING IN CHURCH**

David Newman  
Pat Weaver  
Richard Mallory  
Margaret Clark  
Wyn Davies

### **STEWARDS**

2<sup>nd</sup> Brenda Nevard  
9<sup>th</sup> Anne Simmons  
16<sup>th</sup> Gill Wiseman  
23<sup>rd</sup> Peter Middleton  
30<sup>th</sup> Anne Gaines

### **SOUND SYSTEM**

WD/MC  
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)*







**TRAIDCRAFT**  
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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Other web sites that list the church:

<http://www.joinmychurch.com>  
<http://www.findachurch.co.uk>  
<http://www.searchchurch.co.uk>

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