

THE OPEN DOOR

The Magazine of the Lymington United Reformed Church



Our BBQ team hard at work!

AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 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 head through the summer months, getting ready to enjoy the weather, I wonder if we naturally take an optimistic, positive approach to what this means for us, or do we take a more pessimistic, negative response?

Do we relish the opportunity for dryer, still longer days? What about the chance to sit in the sunshine in the evening after a long day? Perhaps your gardens are in full bloom, or your allotments and veg beds are producing lots of salad and vegetables that head straight for the table at dinner time? Maybe, with the school holidays, you get to spend more time with children and grandchildren? Or, like me, the alarm can be set a little bit later for a few weeks.

Or do we complain that it is too hot? Perhaps the sun is still out in the evening, and it isn't as quiet as you like it to be. You're having to work much harder in the garden to keep on top of all the deadheading and vegetables you need to look after, and now there is a hose pipe ban! It's the school holidays, so all the tourists are about, the roads are busy, and you have to spend more time with children and grandchildren. And because it is so warm, even though you might not need to get up so early, it is bright, and you are woken up anyway before the alarm even goes off!

Both of these perspectives can reflect our moods, and of course we might not have the same opinion about *ALL* of these

different things, maybe one or two. But do we make the most of what God gives us or do we take the opportunity to moan and complain because that is what we do?

We are very blessed to enjoy temperate weather, which, yes there is change to things happening in the climate, but on the whole in our corner of this world it seems to be quite a pleasant place to be, particularly in the summer months.

Perhaps celebrating that with others is a good way of sharing our faith with them? Being positive about the world around us could lead to a conversation about why we are so positive about it, and we can point to God and the creation we have been given, and maybe our gratefulness will inspire someone to see this in the same way?

As Jeremiah says, *“Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.”* (32:17) simply acknowledging this shows that we understand and appreciate what God is capable of – and this is something that can be missing from people’s lives today.

So, however you are spending the summer months, if you are away, or at home, inside or out, with others or not, I hope you get to see some of God’s wonder in the world around us.

Blessings,

Paul

SECRETARY'S BITS AND PIECES FOR AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 2025.

As I write this, after the sunniest, driest and warmest spring on record, the rains have at last come, typically at the start of the school summer holidays. As a result of this lovely weather, our Garden Café has flourished and we've welcomed many appreciative visitors.

At our recent annual Church meeting, Richard Mallory stood down as an elder, after completing a three year term. We thank him for all he has added to our eldership. Chris Brown and John Wiseman also completed a three year term, but offered themselves for re-election and as both gained the required number of votes, were duly elected to stand for another three year term.

On a recommendation from the elders, the ACM agreed we spend approximately £5000 to upgrade and thoroughly overhaul our heating system. Over the past few years, the system has completely failed on several occasions and it was felt it was no longer practical to 'nurse' it along. Hopefully, this work will be done very soon before the winter sets in.

It has become necessary to increase the church's security and to this end a gate is proposed to be erected at the top end of the side ally. Andrew received a quote of £3316.92 to do this work, if agreement was given. At the time of the Church meeting we had already received or been pledged a total of

£2379.66 specifically for this project, leaving a balance of £937.26 to come from Church funds. This was agreed and is to go ahead. Since the ACM more money has come in specifically for this.

Many of our grandchildren are awaiting exam results. A very nerve-wracking time – not only for the young people but also for their families. We hope they get the results they expect and require and our thoughts and prayers are with all young people as they move on to new classes, new schools or university.

The Fellowship and Fundraising team is planning a Cheese and Wine party in the Church garden on Friday, August 8th, starting at 5.00 pm. But I'm sure Andrea will be telling you all about this elsewhere.

On Saturday, September 27th, we'll be visited once again by the MAF plane on the Church forecourt. Please put the date in your diaries. More information will follow, as soon as we know the final plans.

Our harvest service is on September 28th this year and the service will be led by Chris (Mrs Chris Brown) All donated goods will be given for the work of the Basics Bank.

Since the last edition of the magazine, we've had Paul's induction service. It was good to be able to welcome Paul officially to our Church and to meet some of his family. During the service he was warmly welcomed by our church family,

representatives from other churches, and the local community including our Mayor.

And finally....please don't forget that on Sunday mornings the forecourt parking is reserved for the minister/preacher, organist and Blue Badge parking.

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 OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 'OPEN DOOR':

19th SEPT 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!

AUGUST

- 3rd: 10.30 a.m. Worship including communion
led by Mary Ann Jardine
- 10th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 17th: 10.30 p.m. Worship by Mrs Thelma Roberts
- 24th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Maggie Larkin
- 31st: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Rev'd David Newman

SEPTEMBER

- 7th: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mr Gerwyn Davies
- 14th: 10.30 a.m. Worship including communion
led by Rev'd Paul O'Connor
- 21st: 10.30 a.m. Worship led by Mrs Linda Lee
- 28th: 10.30 a.m. Worship for Harvest
led by Mrs Christine Brown

Postcard from the Baltic Sea.

We were able to take our long awaited cruise to the Baltic Sea in May this year. Our original plans were thwarted by Putin's invasion of Ukraine and that event was reflected in our understanding of the states adjacent to Russia during our visit.

The nearest we got to Russia was beautiful Tallinn in Estonia. We learned about the recent history under Russian rule, the subtle changes that took place following Gorbachov's releasing Estonia in 1991 into independence and of the communist influence still, happily it seems, being in the culture of Estonia.



The pictured elaborate church in the traditional Russian style was built in Tallinn by the Russians to establish an Orthodox base which, in reality, was a relatively recent build. About 10% of Tallinn's Christians are Russian Orthodox. We were not encouraged to enter. There are only two Catholic churches and most of the remainder of Christians are members of the state owned Lutheran Church (which takes 1% or so of their income at source to fund the church and some charities). 80% of Estonians claim to be "irreligious".

Babies are expected to attend child care facilities from the age of one year, and both parents return to work. This, and all schooling, is paid for by the state which also supplies the country it's main meal at midday whether at childcare, kindergarten, school, university, in the office and at other places of work. In recent years it was noticed that the population was becoming overweight so the diet for this meal was changed! We noticed the availability of sweet treats and fast food is markedly less than we have here. No bad thing maybe, but a degree of choice being removed, we felt.

The communist blocks of flats, towering, grey, depressing, standing side by side by side with no greenery, still exist in the suburbs, but newer beautiful Nordic style individual houses are more evident nearer the centre of Tallinn.

The day we were in Estonia, at 3pm the air raid sirens were tested and warning texts sent to all. Whilst we were advised in advance, it was a chilling experience. The locals were obviously very disturbed. The next day we saw on the news that that night a Russian fighter plane had breached Estonian airspace and British and Polish fighter jets were scrambled - right over our heads! Although we were not aware at the time, it brought home the reality of the situation in this region.

The "Church in the rock" pictured below, was built in Helsinki in 1968, in the rich banking and corporate office centre of the town. When the build was requested, it was initially refused as the land was too valuable and the siting inappropriate. The exasperated planners eventually said "you can build it in that rock" and they did! An amazing

architectural feat and beautiful inside as you can see.



What was originally planned as a trip to investigate our own county's relationship with the Baltic countries during the Second World War became an education in more recent cultural change and current conflict. We pray for the lovely people we met in these frightening times.

Gill and John

Quote from Pope Leo XIV.

" Brothers, sisters...

I speak to you, especially to those who no longer believe, no longer hope, no longer pray, because they think God has left. To those who are fed up with scandals, with misused power, with the silence of a Church that sometimes seems more like a palace than a home.

I, too, was angry with God.

I, too, saw good people die, children suffer, grandparents cry without medicine.

And yes... there were days when I prayed and only felt an echo.

But then I discovered something:

God doesn't shout. God whispers.

And sometimes He whispers from the mud, from pain, from a grandmother who feeds you without having anything.

I don't come to offer you perfect faith.

I come to tell you that faith is a walk with stones, puddles, and unexpected hugs.

I'm not asking you to believe in everything.

I'm asking you not to close the door. Give a chance to the God who waits for you without judgment.

I'm just a priest who saw God in the smile of a woman who lost her son... and yet she cooked for others.

That changed me.

So if you're broken, if you don't believe, if you're tired of the lies...

come anyway. With your anger, your doubt, your dirty backpack.

No one here will ask you for a VIP card.

Because this Church, as long as I breathe, will be a home for the homeless, and a rest for the weary.

God doesn't need soldiers.

He needs brothers.

And you, yes, you...
are one of them."

Robert Prevost (Leo XIV)



What's been happening?



Talented members of our Worship Group leading the music on the first Sundays in June and July.



Men from the ~~Merriment~~ ~~Group~~ Group cooked a tasty breakfast for us before the service in June. Many of us enjoyed this superb start to our Sunday!



Fundraising & Fellowship



The weather was kind to us as we gathered for our July BBQ. Top chefs John and Graham certainly did a superb job cooking sausages and burgers and we enjoyed a range of salads and an ice cream dessert too! It was lovely to relax and enjoy each other's company. Thank you to all who helped organise the event.



Cheese & Wine Evening

in the garden
with musical entertainment

Friday 8th August

5-7pm
£10 per person
Non-alcoholic wine available



Let us know you're coming!

Bring family
or friends!

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

Our Garden Cafe



Our Garden Cafe is continuing to delight many customers over the summer months, and we are so pleased that many people have visited us. We are lucky to be able to offer sheltered tables on our patio as well as a beautiful garden to sit in.

Thank you to the church gardening team who look after the garden so well- it's appreciated by many!



Tea, filter coffee, hot chocolate and homemade cakes are served between 10 and 12pm four mornings a week (all except Tues). Any money raised by the Cafe helps our church finances and this is only possible because our volunteers give up their time to help and to bake the cakes. If you think you could help during the week or baking cakes, please speak to Dave Best.

ROTAS FOR AUGUST

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 3rd

COMMUNION ELDERS: Margaret and John

DUTY ELDER

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

READING IN CHURCH

Dave Best
John Wiseman
Wyn Davies
Janice Perkins
Judith Baker

STEWARDS

3rd Andre Best
10th Brenda Nevard
17th Pat Weaver
24th Gill Wiseman
31st Anne Simmons

SOUND SYSTEM

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

ROTAS FOR SEPTEMBER

COMMUNION SUNDAY: 14th

COMMUNION ELDERS: David and Dave

DUTY ELDER

7th John Wiseman
14th Dave Best
21st Margaret Clark
28th David Bywater

READING IN CHURCH

Richard Mallory
Pat Weaver
Keith Holmes
Margaret Clark

STEWARDS

7th Peter Middleton
14th Anne Gaines
21st Judith Baker
28th Lizbeth Eason and Janice Sellars

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)





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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