



Yours

Magazine of
The United Church
Winchester

May 2023



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Tim's Letter: It's a 'House' Thing

If you want to have a good idea about what the early church looked like, then think 'house' church, because that is essentially what it was. People, from all walks of life, and often still part of a Jewish worshipping community, met together in the homes of their number to pray, study, sing and share fellowship. They prayed for one another and for the issues of their times. They studied together deepening their knowledge of God in Christ and furthering their awareness of the movement of the Holy Spirit in and through them. They sang hymns and songs of praise to God reflecting both adoration and supplication. And they shared fellowship with one another, they fed one another, they cared for one another, and looked out for one another.

It is not at all dissimilar to the house groups that exist within our local church here at United. We're blessed to have five house groups who meet regularly to do just as the early church did: to pray, study, sing, share and care. I'm always delighted to be invited to the different house group meetings because it reminds me that as well as the bigger institutional church we're part of, with all the joys and trappings it brings, that Christians are still meeting as they always did, and that the work of God at this most grass-roots of levels continues to have a life, ministry and witness of its own. Praise God!

In case you're unaware of what house groups are available and would like to know more, here's a little summary of what's going on. On Monday afternoons the St Cross house group meet under the leadership of Tim Clifford and Alison Wood. On Tuesday evenings, Dorothy Lusmore leads our house group based out at South Wonston and the Lawsons host the Teg Down house group. While on Thursday afternoons, Tom and Mary Belshaw's house becomes the home of our Abbots Barton group. And don't be fooled by the house group names! The groups may well have started in one geographical part of Winchester, but the house

groups aren't stuck to these locations. For example, the 'St Cross' group often meets in Oliver's Battery, people from Winchester city attend the South Wonston group, and people from Kings Worthy attend the Abbotts Barton group.

Now the sharp-eyed among you will have spotted that I said we have five house groups, but have only mentioned four! Our fifth is our United Youth house group which meets monthly at Chris and Penny Roles'. Penny, Rob and I have been truly blessed by this opportunity to reconnect with our young people post-lockdown. We play games ('Telestration' being a favourite), eat pizza and have topical conversations on the issues of our times and how they impact our faith. A recent hit was when Jane Lawson came to talk about her life in social work and how that tied in with her faith. You could hear a pin drop as she shared some of her experiences with the group. And on our front cover this month you can see an artistic piece they created at their last group just by putting their hands together and taking a picture.

So let's take some time to appreciate our house groups this month, and think about the part we play in them. Perhaps consider whether you'd like to be part of a house group. And as always, if anyone has any suggestion for how we might broaden our house group offerings, I'd be very pleased to hear from you.

In Christ,

Tim

Editorial

Many thanks to Amy Crocker for sending in this month's cover (See Tim's letter above). What a great idea!

We have lots of news of the church family and coming events. Don't miss the invitation to a Church Away Day in October on pages 12–14!

Pat Fry has sent in two of her favourite poems and Jill Cook shares her thoughts on the importance of words. Graham Rolfe asks us if we're going to Sin on page 9!!

After a couple of bumper editions we are back to normal size this month. If you've been hesitating about contributing something, please send it in for June *Yours*.

Many thanks to all our contributors.

**The *Yours* Team—Bob Lord, Dorothy Lusmore and
Sophie Armstrong**

News of the United Church Family



Margaret James died in Abbots Barton Care Home on 23 March. Tim James, Margaret's son, is a much valued and longstanding member of our church family. We hold Tim, his brothers Paul and Nick and all the family in our prayers as they, and we, remember Margaret.

Margaret's husband (Tim's Dad) David James was URC minister when three congregations joined together in 1974 to become The United Church. Latterly Margaret regularly attended an Anglican church but remained in touch with members of our congregation. She is fondly remembered by many of us. Margaret had been

living at Abbots Barton Care home for several years. Her unexpected death at 83 has come as a big shock to her family.

Margaret's funeral will take place on 9 May. Details will be in 'Spotlight'.

Enid Brook died on 13 April at the age of nearly 98. She was living at Ryelands Care Home in Wallington, Surrey, near her daughter.

We hold Paul and Susan, Enid's son and daughter, in our prayers.

Enid and her husband Basil were much loved and valued members of our church family. Amongst many contributions to church life, Enid led the *Minstrels*, and worked hard as a coffee bar volunteer (which she reluctantly gave up, aged 85!) She and Basil were both members of the South Wonston house group, hosting it for a long time.

Enid's funeral will be on 11 May. Steve and Jen Barber have details.

The funeral of Maurice Charrett has taken place. The church was full of those whose lives he had touched, and his life was celebrated! We continue to hold Joan and the family in our prayers.

We think of all those, especially the young people in our church family, who are about to take exams.

We give thanks that on 28 March Louie Hitchen celebrated her 100th birthday!

We were delighted to celebrate the baptism of Ehsan on Easter Sunday.

Congratulations to Tom and Mary Belshaw who celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary on 20 April.

**Jane Lawson,
Pastoral Co-ordinator**

Maurice Charrett

Thank you to everyone for helping to make the Service of Celebration for Maurice on 4 April so memorable.

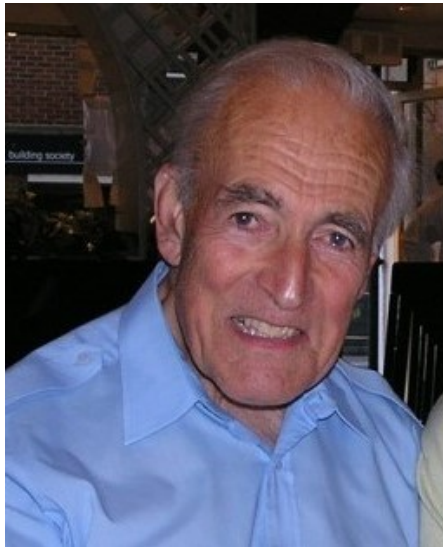
Many thanks to Tim for working with my daughter to arrange the Committal Service earlier in the day at Test Valley Crematorium for close family and friends and the Service of Celebration afterwards. Both services were beautiful.

Thank you to Tony. Maurice always admired your organ playing.

Lastly, thank you everyone involved with the refreshments and cake making, which are always excellent.

God Bless you all.

Joan Charrett



Louisa Hitchen

A very big thank you from the Hitchen family for remembering our mother with beautiful flowers on her 100th birthday, which was on 28 March 2023.

She is doing very well living at home and only taking vitamins each day. She is well looked after by all of her 5 children and carers who come in on a daily basis. Her 10 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren also play their part when able to do so.

A special thanks to Helen McTiffin, Pastoral Co-ordinator, for keeping us all up to date with *Yours* which my mother and I read on a regular basis.

Peter Hitchen



Sin



You may have heard of the old response to the question ‘What do you think of sin?’ – ‘We are against it!’ If you want to consider a more thought-provoking answer, The Arc in Jewry Street is holding an exhibition to illustrate responses to the question. Bringing together works of art that span the centuries, in partnership with the National Gallery, it explores the concept of sin in art.

Works include Rembrandt’s *The Woman taken in Adultery* (1644), Jan Steen’s *The Effects of Intemperance* (c.1663) (see above) and several other fascinating paintings. These are joined by two contemporary works, one by Ron Mueck, the other by Tracey Emin, who adds her own typically unexpected response to the discussion.

If you have not yet visited the exhibition, do give it a try – it is open until 14 May. There is an entry fee.

Graham Rolfe

Favourite Poems

The English literature O level course I did at school included some twentieth century poetry. We were taught by an inspirational teacher, and two have stayed with me: Robert Frost's 'Mending Wall' and W. H. Auden's 'September 1, 1939'. Once I knew them by heart, but now can only recite the first part of one, and the final stanza of the other.

Robert Frost's poem describes meeting a neighbour to rebuild the drystone wall between their farms, but underlying it is a longing to break down the barriers of misunderstanding and prejudice that keep people apart:

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there ...

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down ...

W. H. Auden's long and complex poem describes his feelings at the outbreak of the Second World War. Though not written in Christian terms, the final verse is a prayer that is as relevant today as it was then:

Defenceless under the night
Our world in stupor lies;
Yet, dotted everywhere,
Ironic points of light

Flash out wherever the Just
Exchange their messages:
May I, composed like them
Of Eros and of dust,
Beleaguered by the same
Negation and despair,
Show an affirming flame.

Pat Fry

Words

Our lives are full of words. Some of us have added Wordle and Waffle to our daily involvement with our vocabulary and are having to accept American spelling! All good for keeping our brains active.

There are so many words associated with Christian worship that have special meaning for Easter. Think of denial, betrayal, flogging, suffering, crucifixion and then the joyous mystery of resurrection.

This year two words used in a service struck me with their particular significance – immersion and saturation. Both emphasise depth and completeness. Not just something that takes a few moments of our time but the all-pervasiveness, the omnipresence of God – even on Holy Saturday when God was dead but still existing here, there, wherever, and however that state is manifested.

As John tells us in the opening of his Gospel ‘In the beginning was the Word’.

Value words as communication and value the Word as our Lord and risen Saviour with whom we can relate and communicate as we continue on our journey of faith.

Jill Cook

Church Away Day

Would you like to spend a day in beautiful surroundings with fellow members of the church community? Would you enjoy worship in a different environment with a chance to be creative, talk through faith issues, pray and have fun?

Three of us drove over to Wickham on 10 April to visit Park Place Pastoral Centre.



Park Place is a fine old Georgian house set in extensive grounds of 18 acres. It has been a Pastoral Centre since 1968 when a beautiful Chapel and new accommodation were added.



The Centre is open to all and has a large focus on ecumenism, meditation and the environment.



We were greeted by two of the Franciscan Sisters of St Mary of the Angels who run the centre in conjunction with the Diocese of

Portsmouth. The eighteenth-century elegance of Park Place's interior is complemented by its tranquil and beautiful grounds which have a meditation walk.

We found there to be an atmosphere of Peace and quiet conducive to prayer, giving visitors a time to reflect, meditate, listen, relax and unwind from the busy and stressful demands of daily life.



There is a spacious hall and many smaller, comfortable and bright rooms for small groups. There is lots of space outside for games and exploring the park.

A spacious dining room is available for sit down meals.



We hope lots of you will be able to join us in spending time in this beautiful place on a **Church Away Day on Sunday 8 October 2023**. It will be a chance to worship together in a different setting, enjoy each other's company with a time for quiet reflection indoors or out. There will be a choice of activities with a balance of reflection and fun, including:

- craft activities
- small group discussions on sharing our faith and on how our Christian faith links to our care for our planet
- outdoor games
- prayer
- music making

The cost of the day including lunch and tea, and morning and afternoon tea and coffee is £35. We hope to offer some reduced/free places, for those with limited means. Park Place is half an hour's drive from Winchester. Transport, either by car sharing or minibus, will be available, so if you need transport, or have dietary needs including vegan, gluten free, etc., indicate that when you book.

All options will be catered for, and lunch choices will be made in advance of the day.

If you would like to come, please let us know by email to awayday@ucw.org.uk and pay a deposit of £10 by Sunday 21 May. The balance will be due by the end of September.

Booking forms and payment details will be sent out by email with paper copies available at church from 30 April.

**Tim Clifford, Pat Fry and
Bob Lord**

Meet and Greet is One Year Old!

I thought it was worth noting that, having double checked the dates, it was 16 April 2022 that we first opened the doors on a Saturday morning to welcome in those seeking sanctuary.

We were unsure if anyone would come, and would have been glad to see two or three, but guests flooded in from 10 am and have been joining us ever since.

A massive thank you to all volunteers for their ongoing time, care and commitment over the last year. Things have certainly developed from that first Saturday although we still focus on a relaxed informal offering.

Meet and Greet is open to all refugees and asylum seekers. Our first visitors were Ukrainians but we now have a wide range of nationalities.

If you would like to support Meet and Greet financially, donations can be made by bank transfer to The United Church Winchester Number Two Account, Sort code 40-46-39, A/C 91513419 reference: Meet and Greet.

We try and have available basic toiletries, so we would be grateful for donations of the following. Please leave in the church office or in the box in the Sanctuary.

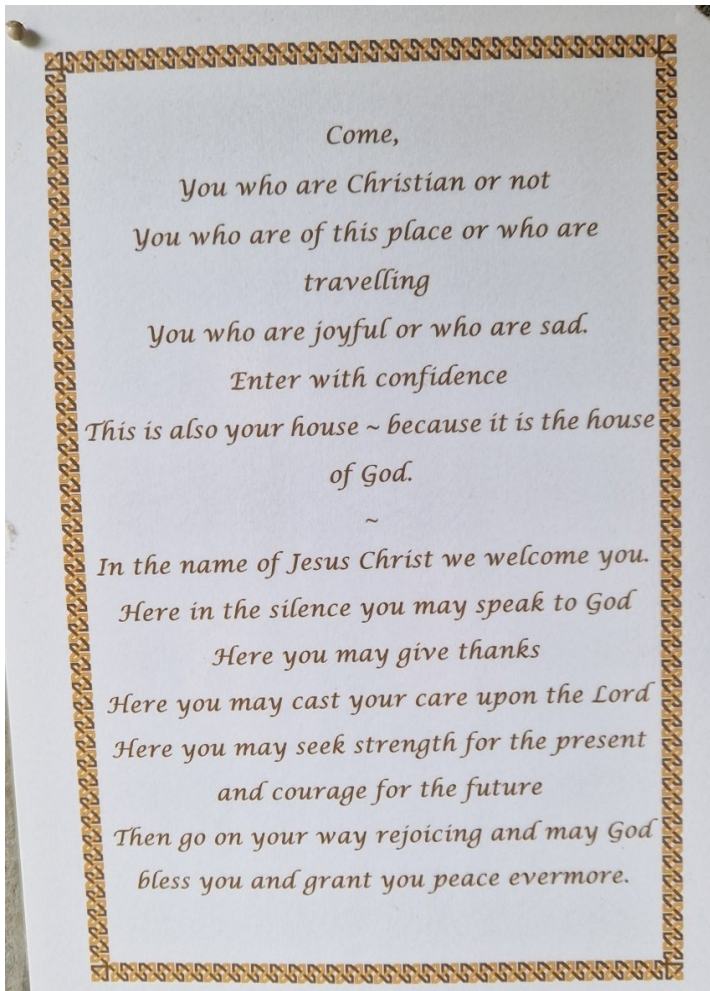
- sanitary towels
- toothbrushes/toothpaste
- shampoo/conditioner
- body lotion (unisex)
- soap
- deodorant (men & women)
- shower gel
- individual hand sanitiser

**Jo Pellatt,
Mission Co-ordinator**

Welcome Prayer

Tim and Sue Clifford sent in a welcoming prayer they spotted in Newport Cathedral for March Yours entitled **BEWARE** (Find it on pages 10–11).

On a walk in and around the pretty village of Chilcomb I found the message below in the entrance to St Andrew's Church.





The church is always open. It is a place which lends itself to quiet reflection and prayer, and you have a sense this is exactly what it has been used for for hundreds of years. It is a simple Norman church with thick walls. There is a striking crucifix made by Peter Ball in 1996. It is made from drift wood with copper embellished with gold.

The church yard is full of wild flowers of the season and is a two mile walk from the centre of Winchester along the South Downs Way.

Bob Lord



News of the Wider Church

Disney Channel star Joshua Bassett has shared his Christian beliefs during an acceptance speech on winning Favourite Male TV Star at the Kids Choice Awards. The 22-year-old stars in Disney's *High School Musical: The Series*. After thanking his co-stars and crew, Bassett said: 'I'd love to thank my Saviour, Jesus Christ.' He went on to say: 'I want to say something. There are a lot of people here who are burdened, broken-hearted, and have been beaten down by life. I'm here to tell you ... for those of you who've lost hope, there's a very real God who loves you more than you will ever possibly know. His promise is peace and my testimony is my healing.' As he left the stage, he concluded with three short pieces of advice: 'Remember: Forgive quickly, love freely, and walk courageously. Love always wins in the end.'



Easter in Jerusalem. Thousands of Palestinian Christians and pilgrims from around the world filled Jerusalem's Old City to celebrate the Orthodox Holy Light ceremony, under a heavy Israeli police presence that has drawn anger from churches. The millennium-old celebration, symbolising Jesus' resurrection, usually draws thousands of worshippers to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where many believe Jesus was buried. But Israeli police this year have significantly limited access to the event, citing safety concerns.

In contrast to previous years, when as many as 10,000 worshippers packed into the church, only 1,800 were allowed

inside this year, with another 1,200 outside. Additional checkpoints around the Old City also restricted access to the area around the church.

The churches said they see the police restrictions as part of long-standing efforts to push out the local Christian community. Israel annexed East Jerusalem, which includes the walled Old City and its holy sites, after a 1967 Middle East War in a move not recognised internationally. It sees Jerusalem as its eternal and undivided capital. Palestinians seek East Jerusalem as the capital of a future independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. The Holy Sepulchre lies at the heart of the Old City's Christian Quarter in East Jerusalem.



The 50th Greenbelt Festival, set to take place this August, has announced a star-studded line-up featuring Christian comedian Milton Jones and fair-trade advocate and actor Adjoa Andoh, among others.

Adjoa Andoh, is a Lay Reader in the Diocese of Southwark. Headliner Milton Jones, a renowned comedian who has previously performed at Greenbelt, is known for his clever one-liners and unique style of humour. His presence at the festival illustrates Greenbelt's commitment to blending artistry and belief through diverse forms of expression, the festival says.

The festival will be held over the August 24–27 Bank Holiday weekend in Kettering.



Monthly Munch Club At The Golden Lion

Next Meeting on **Sunday 14 May**

ALL WELCOME

Contact Rosemary MacMullen

email rosiemac@talktalk.net



National Safeguarding Training 2023



Refugee and Asylum Seekers
May 30th 7pm-9pm

Substance Abuse and the impact on
Safeguarding
June 26th 7pm-8.30pm

Suicide Awareness
September 11th 2pm-3.30pm

Domestic Abuse
September 19th 1.30pm-3.30pm

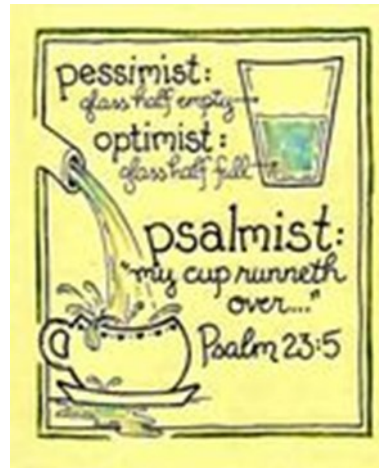
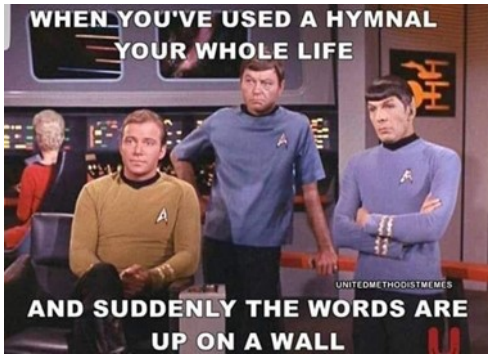
Modern Day Slavery
September 25 7pm-9pm

Safeguarding for Ministers Supporting Survivors
October 9th 2pm - 4pm

Adult Safeguarding
November 21st 7pm - 9pm

**All training will take place via zoom.
Bookings can be made by emailing
Emma.Pearce@urc.org.uk**

Comedy Corner



The deadline for June Yours is **Monday 15 May**. All contributions welcome. Send to yours@ucw.org.uk.

* Anna
Chaplaincy
for older people



Vintage Fun

All welcome!



May Flower Poetry

Monday 15th May

2 - 4 pm

at the

United Church

Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ

Vintage Fun is a monthly afternoon of friendship over a cup of tea. Each afternoon will offer a variety of activities,

Caraway



UNITED CHURCH
WINCHESTER

Services for May 2023

In-person and live-streamed

7 MAY

10.30 am **Morning Worship (HC)** Revd Tim Searle

14 MAY

10.30 am **Morning Worship** The St Cross House Group

21 MAY

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Mrs Pat Fry

28 MAY

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd Tim Searle

HC: Holy Communion.