



Yours

Magazine of
The United Church
Winchester

September 2023



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Magazine Editor

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Tim's Letter: Enabling Groups—What's Happening?

Recently, some of you have asked me what's happening with Enabling Groups. Following the results of the Enabling Group survey which were presented at our March ACM and which I wrote about in the April edition of *Yours*, I'm pleased to say that much progress has been made. A lot has gone on behind the scenes, so it's high-time I gave you an update!

New Enabling Groups

The most pressing concern in March was to form Finance and Pastoral Enabling Groups following the end of Christine and Helen's terms of office heading up these portfolios. Our new Finance Enabling Group has now met twice and provides vital information and analysis to the Leadership Team and Church Meeting. Our new Pastoral & Prayer Enabling Group, co-led by myself and Jane, has also met and the current pastoral care survey is one of the outcomes of that work, along with promoting the role of House Groups in providing pastoral care. The new Technology Enabling Group has also met (via Zoom no less) and is prioritising improvements to our AV and streaming system and to our WiFi.

Existing Enabling Groups

The following groups were already formed and have morphed into the new Enabling Group structure. These are our Worship & Learning Enabling Group (what used to be AWL – Approaches to Worship & Learning) led by Tim Clifford, and the Communications Enabling Group led by Bob. A current priority of Tim's group is to involve House Group leaders more in how we plan and provide our worship and learning, and a current priority of Bob's group is to explore how we might use a package called ChurchSuite to help manage the computer data we hold. We've enlisted new group member, Rob, to help us do this.

Priorities for Autumn

So, we've made progress, but there's still a lot left to do. I'm keen to

prioritise the formation of a Sustainability Enabling Group, so if you selected that as one of your Enabling Group survey choices then I may well be in touch. I'd love to start groups for Art and Music too, so if you're interested in helping do this it would be great to hear from you. The re-formed United Youth House Group has become a great focal point for our existing young people, but we need to do more to develop our work with children, young people, and families so forming a group in this area is vital. And an important conversation I will be having with Jo is about mission. All of what we do, by definition, is missional, but there must be a forum for discussing our wider missional aims and priorities, and for discussing evangelism and church growth.

I hope that gives a bit more detail to the question what's happening with Enabling Groups. Please do come and talk to me if you'd like further information or want to share your ideas.

In Christ,

Tim

Editorial

This month's front cover features a beautiful glass vase made, we think, for the refurbishment of the church. We can't find out who made it. If you know, please email yours@ucw.org.uk

We have several helpful book reviews. Carol Jessop shares another part of her Miniature World. She invites us to see all her wonderful houses during a coffee morning on 23 September in aid of Link to Hope.

We read about a thought provoking report on the future of the URC which may well help our reflections on the Worship Day on 8 October. Former minister Howard Sharp will be speaking on 'Our Faith and Calling' and Jo Crocker and Patricia Mitchell will be sharing thoughts of 'Faith and Sustainability'.

Tim will lead us in worship in a beautiful modern chapel. It's not too late to sign up. See page 28.

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

News of the United Church Family

Welcome back to all those who have been on holiday and in particular Elise and Amelie Grigorian after eventful trips with the World Scouts movement.



We wish Alfred and Isabel Witham well in their new home in Alton and look forward to keeping in touch with them. We shall miss their regular presence with us after so many years.

Nancy Hughes, Chris Young and Rosemary and Greg Black were received into the membership of the church on 6 August. Welcome!

Congratulations to those who have recently graduated from university, including Sam Roles, who has graduated with a degree in Ecological & Environmental Science from Edinburgh; Angus Armstrong, who graduated from Durham with a degree in Biology, and Ruari Armstrong, who gained a Masters in Cyber Security from the University of East Anglia.

We think of all those receiving exam results as *Yours* goes to press and those moving on to the next stage of education or work.

Clare Cheesman has been in hospital for several weeks. We send our best wishes for a full recovery.

Jill Cook celebrated a significant birthday in July (see page 6). Congratulations! Happy birthday too to Joan Wood, who

celebrated her 99th birthday on 18 August.

We wish Neil Messer well in his first weeks in a new appointment as Professor of Theological Bioethics at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. We look forward to seeing Neil during semester breaks.

Jane Lawson, Pastoral Lead

Birthday Presents

Gifts given to mark a birthday – appropriate or not; appreciated or not –are usually given by family or friends. They often recognise how one is regarded or valued. They may be of monetary value or sentimental reminders of past days.

Can you guess who might receive a book of poetry, a detective novel, a historical novel or perhaps some DIY tools, a recipe book and cooking ingredients, or a tapestry cushion cover to work, theatre or concert tickets, flowers or plants, clothes or cosmetics?



Over the years I have received most of the above on various occasions.

For my most recent birthday, as well as much appreciated donations to various charities, I was given a cross stitch cushion and an oriental picture to embroider and a 1,000 piece jigsaw puzzle.

Clearly I am not yet expected to be idle! After all I am only 90. Thank you to everyone who shared in the celebrations – especially my 7-month old great grandson, Hugh.

God bless you all.

Jill Cook

Book Reviews:

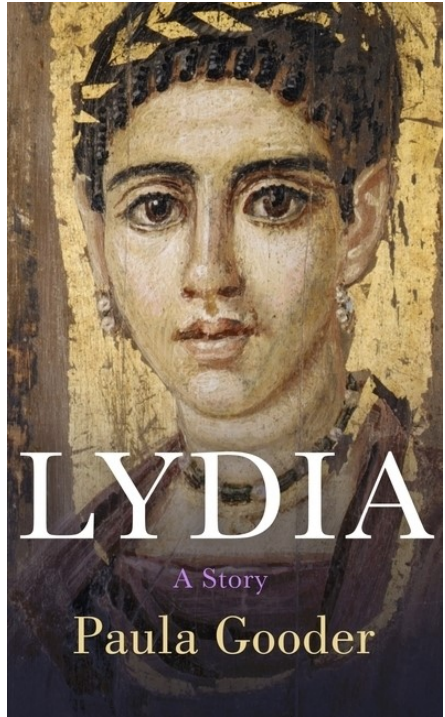
Lydia, a Story by Paula Gooder

Some of you may remember a Space in the City Series led by an eminent New Testament scholar, Paula Gooder, who became Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral.

This book is a story she has created around a New Testament character, about whom we know very little. Lydia was the 'seller of purple' who invited Paul and Silas to stay at her house after they were released from prison in Philippi (see Acts 16). Paula weaves together a story about all the people mentioned as living in Philippi in Acts and in Paul's letter to the Philippians; it's a fascinating and engaging story that brings the early church to life. It is based on carefully researched historical detail.

The book is in two parts, the first part being the story, and the second part a detailed analysis of the historical evidence about life in Greece at that time, and of the different theological interpretations of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

You can enjoy the story without reading the second section, but I found all the historical detail fascinating.

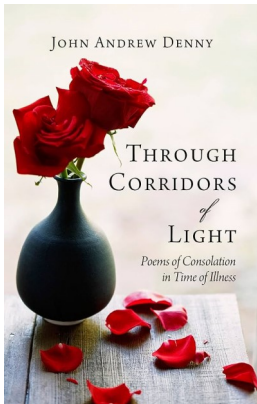


Pat Fry

Poetry and Life's Challenges and Joys

Hello dear friends at The United Church. Happy September! I hope that life is treating you kindly and that today is a good day for you.

I wrote earlier in the year to recommend a book which has helped me live with Chronic pain and illness. I am writing this time to recommend a lovely book of poetry which has helped me greatly and I would like to recommend it to you.



It is called *Through Corridors of Light* and was compiled by John Andrew Denny. John lives with Chronic Illness and found reading many poems helped him, and after researching through discussions with others who live with Chronic illness he came up with an excellent collection of poetry. It takes you through many stages of facing up to, living with and living beyond illness and really it is about coping with life's many challenges along with recognising its many joys. I think that it would

be lovely for anyone who enjoys poetry to read as it has such a variety of poets, from different times and places.

I thought I would send a poem to the magazine now and again. I am sending one I find very honest and moving. Wishing you happy times and peace in your heart. God bless you.

Starting Over—Anna Mackenzie

And so we must begin to live again
We of the damaged bodies
And assaulted minds.
Starting from scratch with the rubble of our lives
And picking up the dust
Of dreams once dreamt.

And we stand there, naked in our vulnerability,
Proud of starting over, fighting back
But full of humility
At the awareness of the task.

We, without a future,
Safe, defined, delivered
Now salute you God.
Knowing that nothing is safe,
Secure, inviolable here.
Except you.
And even that eludes our minds at times.
And we hate you
As we love you,
And our anger is as strong as our pain.
Our grief is deep as oceans,
And our need as great as mountains.

So, as we take our first few steps forward
Into the abyss of the future,
We would pray for
Courage to become what we have
Not been before
And accept it,
And bravery to look deep
Within our souls to find
New ways.

We did not want it easy God,
But we did not contemplate
That it would be quite this hard,
This long, this lonely.
So, if we are to be turned inside out,
And upside down,

With even our pockets shaken,
Just to check what's rattling
And left behind,
We pray that you will keep faith with us,
And we with you.

Hold our hands as we weep,
Giving us strength to continue,
And showing us beacons
Along the way to becoming new.
We are not fighting you God,
Even if it feels like it,
But we need your help and company
As we struggle on.
Fighting back
And starting over.

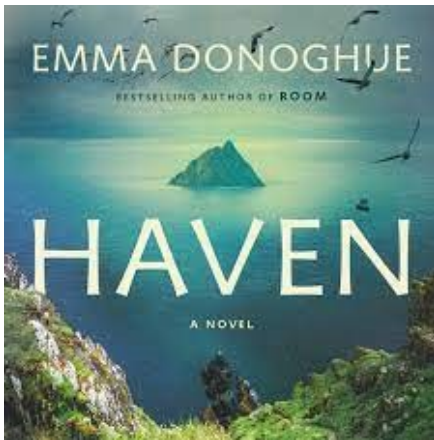
I thought it might be good to put a face to my writing as it's not likely we will meet in church; but you never know – we may!

Lisa Ball



Haven by Emma Donoghue

Life in 6th century Ireland was tough. Food had to be foraged, snared or caught in the sea with hands or nets. Shelter constructed from piled stones. If you were a monk writing materials were a necessity. Stone and flint tools were used to smooth and fashion vellum from animal hides, quill pens from large bird feathers, maybe swan or eagle, and ink from crushed rock to make black or red. The Psalter had to be copied so that it could be distributed to other fledgling communities for the words of the psalms guided all their actions and are often quoted in the narrative. The system was hierarchical, with the Abbot to be obeyed under God and punishment for disobedience or minor infringement harsh.



In *Haven* we share the experience of Trian, a young monk, as he sails and rows down the River Shannon to the open sea in search of the island where he and two other men are to make their home to the glory of God.

This novel is written with imagination and a clarity that involves one completely in a very different time but in worship of the

unchanging Creator God and His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. I thoroughly recommend it to you.

Jill Cook

Music for a Summer Evening

The visit of the Harrow Choral Society to The United Church on Saturday 15 July was a musical treat.

Harrow Choral Society is made up of around 70 enthusiastic amateur singers, who have made tours to mainland Europe and each year have an 'away day' in the UK. This year it was Winchester's turn, and The United Church was fortunate in being able to host the event.

They are led by Sam Evans who is himself a professional singer, formerly a King's College, Cambridge choral scholar, and has sung with many prestigious choirs in many famous venues in the UK and abroad. Their accompanist, Paul Ayres, is a renowned organist and composer and has won many prizes and awards.

The concert included music from a selection of composers including Haydn, Mozart, Bruckner, Finzi and others, and some intriguing arrangements of hymn tunes by accompanist Paul Ayres and songs by Fauré ('Les Berceaux') and Hammerstein ('Some Enchanted Evening' from *South Pacific*) ably sung by conductor Sam Evans.

As Sam noted in his introduction, the choir were visiting Winchester on St Swithin's Day, and there were a couple of references to Winchester in the programme. One of the pieces sung by the choir was 'Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace' by Samuel Sebastian Wesley, organist of Winchester Cathedral in the mid-19th century.

Paul Ayres played his own piano composition 'Toccatina on Here Comes The Sun' by George Harrison. This seemed to be tempting fate on St Swithin's Day! It was a real 'tour de force' as was his arrangement of the hymn tune Crimond ('The Lord's My Shepherd') sung by the choir. The arrangement was in the style of J. S. Bach and I am sure the great man himself would have been proud of it.



The hymn 'My Spirit Longs for Thee' was also sung by the choir to an arrangement by Paul Ayres.

The programme from the choir was carefully chosen and was a blend of exuberant and reflective church music. The concert was off to a rousing start with 'O Thou the Central Orb' by Charles Wood. This was followed by 'Geistliches Lied' by Johannes Brahms, an exquisitely beautiful piece which speaks of hope in troubled times. This quiet piece of music is in the form of a canon with sopranos and tenors, and altos and basses, singing at an interval of a ninth (an octave and one note). This would normally be discordant, but Brahms weaves the parts together so that we are not aware of this. The piece ends with quietly affirmative 'amens'.

From here the mood changed to the joyous 'My Spirit Sang All Day' by Gerald Finzi. The anthem 'Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace', alluded to earlier, was part of a set composed by Samuel Sebastian Wesley during his time at Winchester Cathedral. The music, influenced by Mendelssohn, is a prayerful expression of faith, admirably sung by the choir.

Anton Bruckner, the organist of Sankt Florian in Linz, Austria, wrote many pieces of sacred music in the form of masses and motets in addition to symphonies. The motet 'Christus Factus Est Pro Nobis' sung by the choir reflects the devotion and sincerity of his music. The Austrian theme was followed by its two supreme composers – Josef Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Like Bruckner, Haydn wrote music for the celebration of the mass. The short mass, or 'Missa Brevis' was beautifully sung by the choir. One of Haydn's most famous compositions was the oratorio 'The Creation', considered by many to be a masterpiece. From this the choir sang the chorus 'Awake the Harp' with expression and feeling.

What more fitting way could the concert end than by the choir singing Mozart's 'Ave Verum Corpus'. This was one of the last pieces of music written by Mozart, and dedicated to a friend, Anton Stoll, who was the musical director of the church at Baden, near Vienna. It was written for the feast of Corpus Christi (23 June). It represents a simple but profound expression of Mozart's music.

We were privileged to listen to the highest quality of music performed by a choir which sings in a beautiful way with energy and conviction and was able to convey this to an appreciative audience.

Tony Wood

We are very pleased the Harrow Choral Society came to our Church – chosen because of our lovely Sanctuary. They offered the proceeds of the concert to Link to Hope, our World Action Project. As a result, we are able to add £505 to the Project fund. Many thanks to them.

Steve Barber

Calling all Flower Friends

There are two teams within the flower ministry in The United Church. The first is a small band of members who help on a rota to provide flowers for the Sanctuary on Sunday. It doesn't have to be an elaborate creation. A vase of flowers is most welcome. We could certainly do with some more helpers on that rota.



The second is the flower dismantling team who then take the flowers to members of the church who are unwell or in need of a pastoral visit. This ministry is so much appreciated and continues week by week – usually on a Monday morning. At present we have five people on this rota, but it would be much easier if we could call on one or two extra so that we do not have as many turns in a quarter, and to cover for people

who are unable to carry out the commitment for any unforeseen reason.

The third aspect of the Flower Ministry is the Flower Fund. Members can donate for a special occasion or an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. We are very grateful to some members who also donate to the fund on a regular basis. They can also make a general donation, either regularly per Standing Order or per Single Donations by cheque or Bank Transfer.

Please contact me if there is a way, however small, that you can assist these faithful teams.

Lesley Worrall

Home Not Away

This article was supposed to be a lively travel tale. Instead it begins with a visit to my dentist, who thought he might be able to take a troublesome tooth out in time to recover before my imminent holiday in Croatia. I felt no pain and went ahead with my plans to shop for a 🦷. I thought bright pink might make me easier to see if I needed rescuing from the ocean. You might think this over cautious, but I had been caught in a riptide in New Zealand and memories of rolling over and over while being pulled to shore made swimming now out of my comfort zone. I didn't let it stop me so I added a pair of goggles and put them with my 'to be packed pile'.

I expected a reaction to the extraction, but two visits later with the dentist stuffing the socket with sedatives which failed to stop the infection I began to worry. I asked for antibiotics as the pain had spread round my whole mouth and I was getting headaches. By now the stress of this 'Will I make it?' was getting to me and after a couple of pain-filled sleepless nights I was panicking. I felt as if my head was exploding. On a telephone call with my doctor, she suggested an appointment that afternoon, and a Good Samaritan friend ran me there.

Unsurprisingly my doctor was of the opinion I should not be flying off and even with medication it was obvious I would not be able to use mind over matter, however much I wanted to.

I am now waiting for an X-ray but not an urgent one and am up and about again, if not quite in my right mind.

I am not writing this so you can feel sorry for me, but to say the memories I am left with from my Home Not Away Stay are more precious than any vacation could have provided.

I am hard put to find words to express the gratitude I feel for all the friends who sustained and encouraged me through this patch. Daily messages, phone calls, and flowers made me feel

cared for and valued more than I realised.

With no family near to help, I am dependent on friends to rally round and how lucky I feel to be a member of our wonderful church family. Thank you all! 😊

Rosemary MacMullen

Link to Hope

We will again be supporting the Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal.



The boxes will be going to Eastern Europe including Ukraine.



We hope you will feel able to support the project as the need will be greater than ever this year.

Please pack a shoebox or if you are not able to do that give a donation of things to go into a box or money.

We would be grateful for any help.

Many thanks,

Yvonne North and Leslie Worrall

My Miniature World

Soon after I purchased the kit to build my very first miniature house, I joined a group of like-minded people calling themselves The South Hants Dolls House Club. We had such fun making our tiny projects at our monthly meetings. We all owned dolls houses and would arrive home after a club evening with a tiny object to put in pride of place in one of our houses. I now own 10!

A highlight of belonging to the club was visiting several Miniaturist Fairs each year. We would join the members of other clubs and travel by coach all over the country to these wonderful events. One of our favourites was held at Alexandra Palace which attracted miniaturists from all over the world.

It was on a visit to Alexandra Palace one year that I found myself unexpectedly buying my third house. At the end of a fair, stallholders usually reduce their items and this house was a bargain. It didn't look much in plain brown MDF and the kit had



been badly assembled but it had such potential. The nice stallholder even offered to deliver it home for me that evening as he was visiting his son at the Army Barracks in Worthy Road. The only problem was that it arrived home before me, totally unannounced, as it was before mobile phones. Ralph was somewhat surprised and I had a bit of explaining to do later on!

I made my third house into a Victorian Toy Shop. It is set in 1887 and like my other houses has its own story.

Rainbow House



Mr Jermiah Jingle and his wife Maud are proud of their Toy Shop that delights the local children.

On a Sunday afternoon Jermiah entertains the children in the park with his Punch and Judy show. He keeps it at the back of the shop and sometimes does a show for his young customers on a wet Saturday afternoon.

Soon after they opened the shop Maud's Dear Papa passed away. Maud's Mama is now living with them over the shop.



The stock room is now her bedroom.

Maud's Mama tries not to be a bother and she does knit the most exquisite baby clothes.

Carol Jessop



*We are holding a coffee morning at our house, 5 Chesil Wood, Petersfield Road, SO23 0DA on **Saturday 23 September from 10.30 am**. An opportunity to see dolls houses, model railway and for the energetic an elevated garden with beautiful views. Any donations will be for our Church Mission Project, [Link to Hope](#). We do have 17 steps with a handrail to reach our front door. There is some parking on our drive and 2 hours allowed on Petersfield Road opposite our house. No need to contact us, just turn up.*

Review of 'David Harewood on Blackface'

Do you remember 'The Black and White Minstrel Show'? It was the most popular family show on Saturday night TV and watched by up to 20 million people for 20 years from 1958 to 1978 . A really, great family show. Or was it?

'Explain it to anyone under the age of 50 – anyone who didn't grow up watching it on the BBC – and they will find it grotesque. It's astonishing, really, to think that a show in which white performers blacked up to perform song and dance numbers was still on television until 1978.' Anita Singh, Telegraph.

However, there was some objection in the 1960s. The BBC's chief accountant - who had worked in the US and been part of the civil rights movement - wrote a letter of complaint in 1962 but the director of television replied that he was speaking 'arrant nonsense'.



David Harewood, the first black actor to play Othello, growing up and watching the show in the 1960s and 1970s and, searching for his own black identity, instinctively thought it was not quite right but did not know why. In this programme he examines the history of the show and the whole genre, discovering how Blackface performance emerged out of the end

of slavery and was brought to Britain after the abolition of the slave trade. It later became viewed as a relic of the time when naive people simply didn't know any better, and by the turn of the 21st century, had been relegated to Halloween costumes, and 'edgy' comedy, but as the programme uncovers, the reality is much worse.

'Harewood once again proves himself a confident and charismatic documentary presenter, surrounding himself with an ensemble of historians, actors and musicians. Together they track the history of blackface from Victorian performers to 'The Black and White Minstrel Show'. For Harewood, blackface is not just a racist curio but a deeply personal subject. Growing up in Birmingham, he remembers it being "everywhere". He meets Adrian Lester at the Globe, and they reflect not just on the times they played Othello (and how they were compared to Laurence Olivier's blacked-up Othello) but also how their industry and audiences have regularly been confounded by them as Black men'. The Guardian

The documentary's strengths come from showing the ways that 'blackface' grew over the decades, and by showing, and confronting, how generations of adults and children were gradually and subtly fed harmful stereotypes. I can highly recommend watching it – probably more than once!

View on BBC iPlayer

Dorothy Lusmore

Summer Conferences 2023

The annual conferences of our two parent denominations were held during the summer as usual.

The **Methodist Conference** met in Birmingham in June. According to tradition, the new President and Vice-President gave substantial addresses to the meeting. The President, Revd Gill Newton, took as her theme: 'Hidden Treasures': 'It's very easy to feel abandoned by God, but all the time God is working in the darkness, in those secret places, bringing things to birth'.

The Vice-President 2023-24, Deacon Kerry Scarlett, assured the Conference that "We are all truly loved by God".

Issues considered by the Conference included the following:

There was a warm response to the report from Action for Children, which noted that the charity's support and expertise are needed more than ever.

A proposal to create a small team of experts to take on the role of disposing of closed churches was rejected by the Conference.

Both the Methodist Council and the Conference are to be significantly reduced in size from next year.

Proposals for predominantly online churches to exist in circuits was endorsed.

The national increase in interest rates has unexpectedly rescued the Methodist Church's struggling pension schemes!

Orders of service for The Marriage of any Two Persons and for the Blessing of a Marriage of any Two Persons were approved by the Conference.

The **United Reformed Church General Assembly** met in July at The Hayes, Swanwick in Derbyshire.

The work of the Assembly included the following:

“Spaces of grace” was the theme underpinning all the worship during Assembly.

Greetings to the Assembly came from ecumenical and international guests, including Nagla Kassab, the President of the World Council of Reformed Churches.

Victoria James was welcomed to the new post of Chief Operating Officer.

The 2023 Community Awards were announced, the 25th year of the scheme; the winners were the churches in Darwen, Wooler and Warrington.

The online church yoURChurch was accepted as a local congregation of the URC.

Significant time was devoted to consideration of the reports of the Church Life Review Group, set up by Assembly to look at the current state of the URC, and to work on various aspects of its future.

The Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson was inducted as the Moderator of General Assembly 2023-24, and welcomed as the first black woman to take up this role.

Graham Rolfe

The URC: A Paradoxical Church at the Crossroads

In 2022 Theos and the United Reformed Church entered into a partnership to undertake an in-depth study of the URC, including LEPs like The United Church. The report is available free from the [URC bookshop](#). The main findings are as follows:

Aspects of Flourishing

The URC is made up of around 1,300 churches which, despite having an average size of 30 people per congregation, contribute far more than might be expected in terms of community outreach.

A clear strength of the URC is its vibrant activism and its 'unrelenting generosity to the local community'. One respondent commented: 'Our mission is to be out there, doing the work, and maintaining a place of welcome, friendship, love and support'.

Barriers to Flourishing

The URC is people-poor and most congregations are overstretched and tired. 'It's mostly retired folk, and those who are active are getting a bit older'.

Post Covid some churches reported that they have seen an attendance drop by a third or even a half, to say nothing of congregations that simply closed during the pandemic.

Buildings are seen by many as a clear asset, providing critical community space at a time when such spaces are becoming increasingly scarce. For many congregations they are a vital revenue stream, with churches renting out their premises to local and regional organisations. The pandemic has adversely impacted this. Fewer organisations returned and those that did are coming back slowly. This is putting a strain on church finances.

Pathways to Flourishing

There is a desire among church leaders to recover a holistic understanding of mission which includes the kind of vibrant community outreach described earlier, but also culturally appropriate and imaginative forms of faith-sharing/evangelisation. One leader commented: 'We are quite good at outreach, we struggle with evangelism. We are happier talking about the football than talking about Jesus.'

Several interviewees intimated that without intentional and concerted efforts to encourage faith-sharing/evangelisation as part of a holistic vision of mission, the future of the denomination is in peril and the opportunity to stay true to the theological traditions that run through the URC, which include sharing the Good News of Jesus, is missed.

A deepening of discipleship will require appropriate discipleship resources. 'Stepwise' was mentioned as such a resource. One leader said there should be a shift towards 'a culture of experimenting and risk-taking, trying new things to reach different people.' Churches need a locally based catalyst leader to inspire congregations to push beyond the comfort zone. Where churches have closed 'we should be investing some of the resources we get in trying to plant new churches.' 'That and evangelism is where we need to spend the bulk of the money'.

Bob Lord

To listen to a thought provoking approach to a holistic understanding of mission hear Debbie Smith (Winchester City Centre Chaplain) preach during the [service on 20 August](#). (Ed)

Elena's Language Teaching Course

Doing the CELTA Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages course has always been a dream for many English language teachers.

What is CELTA? The gold standard teaching qualification. It is globally recognised, and is the most often requested by employers; three out of four English language teaching jobs require a CELTA qualification.

I was happy to be among four other Ukrainians who were offered to do the CELTA course.

For me, it seems to be miraculously coming true. I feel happy and privileged to do it (at Portsmouth College with our teachers).

CELTA is 5 weeks of:

- never-forget experience
- great challenge
- intensive learning journey.



For me, the first week appeared to be much more challenging than something to enjoy.

We were loaded with lots of theory and introduced/ got to know new aspects of teaching. We started teaching 20-minute and later 40-minute classes to mixed multi-national groups of over 20 students. It was a new experience for me.

Apart from that it takes me over four hours to get there and back. As there is only one

train an hour I must leave home shortly after 6 am. And it exhausts me a lot. It is the UK. People here enjoy going on strike. So I'm not sure if I will be able to get to the classes tomorrow.

I kept worrying about:

- Long 8-page lesson plans. I foolishly hoped they were a thing of the past but appeared to be completely wrong,
- A PowerPoint presentation for a class which I 'successfully' failed as I was fighting with a whiteboard. A totally new thing for me.
- Remembering, or even trying to pronounce, over 25 students' names from all parts of the world.
- Being late for class due to strikes so stop sleeping.

Two things sent my spirit up.

- Our teachers. They are not just lecturers or mentors but a team of supporters ready to give a helping hand whenever any issues or questions might arise. All of them have a fantastic sense of humour. It is the UK.
- It might seem weird, but it is a new assignment – to interview a student. It is my cup of tea.

The first week is done. Nearly survived.

Setting a task for myself – to learn to enjoy CELTA.

July–August 2023 Winchester–Portsmouth

Elena Popova



The Wiltshire Wander, How Did it Go?

A reminder that I (at 76) undertook this cycle ride to raise funds for Prostate Cancer UK and the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Thanks to all those that have donated, the total is £2,520. My cycling buddy, Andy (just 62), was raising money for Cure Parkinson's and his total has passed £600 and still counting.

First things first: the weather. Temperature was ideal around 20c but day 1 and 2 featured strong headwinds. Day 3 was the homeward stretch with less hills and a mainly following wind.

In summary, total distance ridden 178 miles with an overall average of 10.7 mph. Day 1 covered 60 miles, day 2, 66 and day 3, 52 miles. So, short of the estimated 200 miles, as we took shorter routes on days 1 and 3.

Here's the bike (Dawes Karakum) laden down with front and rear bags, plus two panniers. It seemed to be almost the weight of a small child, extra. That was just carrying the essentials!



Day 1

Abbotts Ann Post Office to Vernham Dean, Great Bedwyn and the Wiltshire Cycle way. . Lunch at Wendy's

Community Café and then off for Marlborough. The Marlborough Downs were tough

going, with mainly adverse gradients for 5 or 6 miles against the wind. The view from the top of Hackpen Hill was amazing, as was the cycle ride down towards Broad Hinton. Then Broad Hinton and Broad



Town to Wootton Basset.

Day 2

Wootton Bassett to Mere, via Malmesbury, Corsham, Bradford on Avon and Longleat.

This was always going to be the hardest day with an estimated mileage of 70 miles and some steep hills to tackle in the second half. The Westerly wind hadn't given up, just to make life interesting.



Day 3



Finished, in more ways than one!

Mere to Salisbury and home via Alderbury, Dean, Dunbridge, Braishfield and Hursley. 52 miles.

Graham MacKenzie

To adapt the Celtic Blessing:

May the road flow down before you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm (but not too hot) upon your face; the rains fall soft a long, long way away and until we meet again,

May sponsorship flow like a never ending stream.



United Church Worship Day

Park Place, Fareham

Sunday 8 October 2023: 8.30–4.30

‘Our Faith and Calling’

‘Faith and Sustainability’

Howard Sharp, Jo Crocker and Patricia Mitchell

Exploring Creative Worship

Outdoor Games

Meditation Trail

Afternoon Worship with Tim

**Refreshments on arrival, morning coffee and biscuits,
sit down lunch, afternoon tea and cake.**

**It’s not too late to sign up! Forms available at
ucw.org.uk/worship-day and at the back of church.**

Monthly Munch Club at The Golden Lion

Next Meeting on Sunday 3 September

ALL WELCOME

Contact Rosemary MacMullen

Coffee Bar Volunteers Needed

Our Church Coffee Bar is open Mondays to Fridays, 10.00–12.00.

We have a great team of volunteers but could really do with some more people to join us.

There is a rota system with commitments varying from once a week to occasional help.

If you are interested to know more please contact any of the committee members:

Jen Barber, Pauline Brooks, Barbara Dunton, Pat Fry, Graham Rolfe, Jessica Tringham and Lesley Worrall.

If you've never visited the coffee bar or haven't for some time, do call in. We have some lovely homemade cakes!



Comedy Corner



The deadline for October *Yours* is **Monday 11 September**. All contributions welcome. Send to yours@ucw.org.uk.

* Anna
Chaplaincy
for older people



Vintage Fun

All welcome!



HARVEST TIME

Monday 11th September

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 tea and cake

Caraway
☺☺☺



Services for September 2023

In-person and live-streamed

3 SEPTEMBER

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

10 SEPTEMBER

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd John Archer

17 SEPTEMBER

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd Tim Searle

Followed by Church Meeting

24 SEPTEMBER HARVEST FESTIVAL

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

HC: Holy Communion; AA: All Age Worship.

UCW website: ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/

YouTube: tinyurl.com/ucw-services