



# Yours

Magazine of  
The United Church  
Winchester

November 2023

**The Lord God saw what He had made, and it was very good.**



**Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like a never failing stream.**

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## Tim's Letter: Israel Palestine: The 'no wins' scenario

One of the questions I dread being asked is where I stand on the conflict between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It might be easier to answer if 'Occupied Palestinian Territories' was replaced with ' Hamas', but that would be side-stepping the issue. Like it or not, Hamas is the authority elected by its people to govern the Gaza Strip, and so decoupling their rulers from the people is as dangerous as applying the same logic to Israel. There is a reason why Hamas has risen to power, and that is because ordinary Palestinians feel trapped with no hope of escape. Moderate Palestinians may not agree with Hamas' religious fundamentalism, nor approve of their tactics, but they see little alternative. It's easy to criticise someone else's 'democratic process' from the safety of the sofa, a luxury they simply don't have. The Israelis are in a similar position, at least politically. Equally lassoed by right-wing politics, the language of fear has shaped Israel's rhetoric under Netanyahu, a fear ultimately grounded in repeating their tortured history. The grim irony is that their tough stance has only incited the very scenario they were so desperate to avoid. And so, tragically, the language of pogrom, hidden for decades, has re-emerged into common parlance. Even the remnant on the left of Israeli politics, who just a few weeks ago flew flags of peace over the fence-line dreaming of a two-state solution, have been radicalised by their revulsion, a revulsion they have every right to feel. The product of all of this: a stalemate of violence from which neither side will peaceably retreat. Hamas continues their provocation blinded to the human cost by their religious fanaticism; Israel continues to retaliate blinded by their rage.

Philosopher Nigel Warburton's recent article for *The New European*<sup>1</sup> wrestles with the same sense of futility. Moral philosophy, as Warburton suggests, tries to offer *ultimate* solutions based on assessing which sides' approach is more likely to produce the lowest overall casualties, either now or in a projected future. But

the agonising dilemma facing these peoples cannot (and must not) be reduced to a thought experiment. For a war that has been waged for so long and which continues to defy reason on all fronts, proposing a 'tidy' solution is almost as illogical, and offensive, as any alternative. As Warburton concedes, this might be a situation in which there is 'no morally right solution, and not even an obvious "least worse" one.' He goes on to make a comparison with William Styron's 1979 novel, 'Sophie's Choice', where the lead character is forced to choose which of her children is sent to the gas chamber at Auschwitz . Indecision would have resulted in the death of both, so she chooses her daughter, a decision she never recovers from; who would. The point being that, regardless of how much we may long to see a just and non-violent resolution to the conflict, lives will continue to be lost on both sides with little progress towards a peaceful outcome. Israel may 'win the war' by sheer weight of military force, but this will only succeed in driving the conflict underground where it will continue to seethe. Speaking on the podcast 'The Rest is Politics', Israeli historian Yuval Harari likens the crisis to a competition, each side courting public opinion to draw attention to its immense pain and suffering. The problem is, in such a competition there are no winners, only losers.

So how do you respond to a 'no win' scenario like this? Warburton's response draws on Jean-Paul Sartre who, when faced with the moral dilemma of a young student seeking his advice; whether to remain in Nazi-occupied Paris to look after his mother, or to join the Free French to fight for his country; replied that the only advice he could give was for the student to make his *own* choice. Sartre contends that 'there was no right answer, except to act as if the whole world were watching him, as if he were a moral exemplar for humanity.' This, I believe, offers a clue as to how we might begin to respond to this tragedy, and others like it. We cannot offer solutions, and it is

impossible to try, but we can apply our moral agency to the dilemma, challenging ourselves to see it in the widest possible terms; from both sides, from all sides, and even from God's. What does it mean to think of all creation looking to us for an example? What does it mean to not take sides and yet be on everyone's side? What does it mean to strain the limits of empathy, to suspend judgement and join in with the lament of God? One thing it does not mean is indifference, nor the opinion of the uninformed, nor the careless words of a soundbite. And it certainly does not mean adding further violence and enmity like salt to a wound. Temptations to 'fight' the cause of either side must be resisted. If the whole world is looking to us for an example, let them find compassion instead of judgement, self-control instead of self-destruction, and the resolve to maintain peace even when our own hearts call for war.

Let us pray....

God of compassion, our hearts are broken, our world racked with pain. We join in your lament. We pray for all sides; for combatants and victims, for perpetrators and defenders. Forgive us our folly, the suffering we've wrought on that which you will to be wholly good and at peace. May your justice flow like a river, and your peace like an ever-rolling stream. Soften the hardened hearts of your children, bring us under your wing once again.

Amen. Shalom. Inshallah.

So say we - in peace - according to your will.

<sup>1</sup> Nigel Warburton, 'Everyday Philosophy: The Israel-Hamas war has become Sophie's Choice', *The New European*, 18 Oct '23.

In Christ, Tim

## Editorial

This month's cover was painted by Amy Crocker during our Worship Day, as Jo talked passionately about Faith and Sustainability. You can hear Jo's talk on our website's [Worship Page](#) along with those by Howard Sharp (on Our Faith and Calling) and Patricia Mitchell and Tim Clifford (on Sustainability and the United Church). Amy's original painting can be seen in the church sanctuary. It's good to get close to the brushstrokes.

Alison Wood shares the beauty of frescoes in Spello this month and next, Rosie MacMullen and Ralph Jessop give contrasting accounts of cruises to offshore islands. We read an insight into violence in Palestine and a review of a film telling the story of refugees fleeing the Middle East and arriving in the North East of England.

There is, of course, usual news of music, food and craft events to look forward to and Brief Encounter returns with Lisa Ball.

Many thanks to all our contributors.

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

## News of the United Church Family

We were sad to learn of the sudden and unexpected death of Kathleen Hill at the start of October. Kathleen was a very much valued and active part of our Church community for many years. She remained in regular contact with a wide group of Church friends, always ready to offer thoughtful insights and ideas as well as care and friendship. She will be missed. We hold Kathleen and her family in our prayers.



We remember Paul and Rosanne Weaver in our prayers, following Paul's recent death. Paul was a member at United Church before moving to Whiteparish a few years ago. He and Rosanne took an active part in the Abbotts Barton house group.

Our best wishes go to Clare Cheeseman who has moved to Hedge End, where she can receive the care that she now needs. We know that Clare would be very happy for friends to remain in touch.

**Jane Lawson, Pastoral Lead**

## **A Prayer**

Loving God  
I see the news and I am afraid.  
Violence is spiralling out of control.  
I don't know what to think or feel.  
The temptation to fall into  
hatred, or  
despair  
feels very close at hand.  
Help me to remember  
that nothing in all creation  
can separate me from your love  
that I know in Jesus.  
May your perfect love for me  
cast out my fear  
and free me to discern  
what is mine to do  
amidst the chaos of this suffering world.

From Prayer for Israel/Palestine on the [Methodist Church website,](#)

## The Baglioni Chapel Frescoes

In the Umbrian hills of Italy there is a beautiful small town called Spello. It is about five miles from Assisi and much less well known than its busy neighbour. A few years ago we stayed there for a week and took the opportunity of visiting the frescoes of the Baglioni Chapel, painted in 1501 by the artist Pinturicchio, who painted some of the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.





Like many churches in Italy the exterior is plain. In fact, much of the time the church is locked with no information to say when it's going to be open. We persevered because the art critic, Andrew Graham Dixon, describes the frescoes as stunning. Their special beauty is that these well known Biblical scenes are set in the Umbrian countryside. Worshippers since the 16th century will have recognised the landscape, bringing the stories closer to home and giving them a more personal significance.

The first - the Annunciation - shows Mary and the angel. The clothing and wings of the angel are exceptionally beautiful and the colours are at their best following recent expert restoration work. The angel holds a white lily, an artistic sign for the Virgin, and Mary's gestures show both her surprise and modesty. The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, appears to be descending from heaven on skys! The artist couldn't resist including his own self portrait, which is on the wall behind Mary.



(You can see the fresco in more detail online at the [Web Gallery of Art](#). Next month **The Adoration of the Shepherds**.)

**Alison Wood**

## Journey to See St Kilda.

We have been on two really enjoyable cruises on the SAGA ship Spirit of Adventure around the British Isles, one clockwise and the other anticlockwise. This ship was built alongside its identical twin sister in 2021 and is not huge so is ideal for getting into narrow waterways. Most of the time we were in the north of Scotland going to places which cars and trains can't reach. So the Shetlands and Orkneys as well as Western Isles are prime destinations for these ships. The tours are not rigidly planned and the Captains seem to decide where to go depending on weather and conditions.



On our tour this September the weather was really good and we were taken to St Kilda which is part of Britain and nowadays is managed by National Trust. It is a World Heritage site. We really had no idea where or what it was except that it was 60 miles

away from Ullapool. As we sailed the sea became fairly rough, as we would expect in the north Atlantic. We seemed to be heading for Iceland at a fairly fast rate of knots. Eventually we arrived at this really weird place which is an archipelago of large black granite rocks covered in cloud. They had probably been formed by an erupting volcano under the sea millions of years ago. We navigated around the rocks for a couple of hours.



There were thousands of large birds, mainly gannets, flying around the ship and making a squawking din. The puffins had moved on so we missed them. There were also

sheep, a variety unique to the islands possibly descended from a number of ancient European breeds. There is no known saint called Kilda but the word may be ancient Norse. Hirta is the name given to the largest island with 80% of the overall area of all six islands which cover 3.3 square miles. There is evidence of human population going back 2000 years but they suffered from the effects of inbreeding, bad weather, and illness partly poisoning from the chemicals in the rocks. There is no soil as we know it and crops were grown in ground rich in bird dung carrying all kinds of diseases. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a church was built and there were a few Church of Scotland ministers who stayed briefly. There were never more than 200 people there

and the final evacuation took place in 1930 when the last 30 residents left having suffered a terrible winter.



Since the 1940s there has been a small military presence and there are a few scientists. They were taken by surprise when the ship was headed for the beach on Village Bay, the only part of St Kilda which is habitable. One of the pictures shows today's few inhabitants coming out with their binoculars looking at us with our binoculars and cameras looking at them. In the picture the old houses can be seen mainly without roofs but some had new roofs and were obviously habitable. There were no obvious means of transport other than small boats and a couple of vehicles. Emergency evacuation may be a problem unless there is a cruise ship nearby.

A very curious visit.

**Ralph Jessop**

## Day-Trip to Guernsey.

6am. Thought I had set radio alarm, but it didn't sound. Luckily my new Samsung smartphone lived up to its name and chimed merrily. I sneaked down two floors in my pyjamas to use the tradesmen's toilet as mine was still out of action, feeling like an Agatha Christie character, then rushed upstairs to dress and grab my muesli. By 7.00 I was boarding the train for Poole where a taxi sped me to the port. Asked to produce my passport a.s.a.p. I panicked as I couldn't find it. Tipping out the contents it emerged from the bottom of my rucksack in the nick of time. Pink with embarrassment I was hustled onto the Condor Ferry and got upgraded to the quieter and more spacious Horizon lounge.

After soothing my ruffled feathers with a coffee and croissant I decided to go up on deck. It was windy, wild and exhilarating. Making sure I held onto the rail I lurched along till I reached some sheltered benches. I felt sympathy for a young woman who was hanging over the rail nearby. As she tottered towards me, I asked if she was seasick. 'Oh no, I was smoking - not puking!', she laughed. We chatted but I was a wee bit chilled after a while so went back inside.



1.15 pm We came alongside to a 'Welcome to Guernsey' sign and a very welcome sunny St. Peter's Port. Full of eager anticipation I aimed for the Candie Gardens, a half-hour climb that left me breathless. Disappointingly the Museum was closed on a Wednesday, so I was not rewarded by a view of the famous tapestry I had come to see.

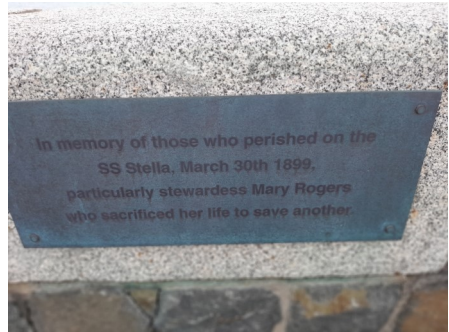
I headed towards a café for a ham toastie and a cappuccino. I did feel holidayish as I strolled past houses with hanging baskets and through winding streets with "Come Buy Me" window displays. I was tempted to buy a postcard to pop into the bright blue



postbox at the street corner, but the lure of the yacht harbour below was too strong. The sound of wind in the rigging took me straight back to family excursions on our yacht, Persephone. It's always fun reading the names owners give their beloved boats. Last Affair, Adventure and a rather glamorous Tequila Rose were three I spotted this afternoon.

Something that also caught my eye was this interesting plaque on the harbour wall:

- In Memory of those who perished on the SS Stella, March 30th 1899, particularly stewardess Mary Rogers who sacrificed her life to save another. The story of that sinking is a grim one. On that Thursday 147 passengers left Southampton for St. Peter's Port and ran into fog nearing the island. Captain Reeks ordered the engines full astern, but the ship scraped along the rocks and was ripped open by a submerged granite reef. Within eight minutes she had sunk. One of the five lifeboats capsized but was righted later by a freak wave. Of the twelve floundering souls who clambered back in four died of exposure during the night. Sixtyone passengers and twenty-four crew were saved. Mary Rogers gave up her chance to be one of them. She made the heroic decision to refuse to wear a life jacket and gave up her place in the lifeboat. Interestingly, there is a Memorial Fountain in Southampton dedicated to this outstandingly brave woman.



By now the clouds were gathering, and it was easy to imagine that dreadful event. 5.10 pm. Time to reboard the ferry. To my



delight I was allocated a reclining seat in the front row with nothing to block my view of the white -topped waves. A pleasant hour or two passed with nothing but the frequent belches of the sleeping passenger in the next seat to disturb me. Gentle little burps, they were rather soothing, and I dozed off myself till I got hungry. As I carried a loaded tray of fish, chips and beans back along the passageway, I struggled to keep the bottle of orange from rolling off. The boat was pitching a bit, and it was hard to keep the tray level. I settled back in my seat with relief. That fish was fabulous. Sea air and exercise had sharpened my appetite and each and every chip went down a treat. Disembarking at Poole I headed for the taxi rank but, as all the drivers said they were pre-booked, I felt I might have to head for the station on foot. It was dark by now and I was not at all sure where it was.

A few people were sympathetic but couldn't help. I was feeling discouraged till told I could phone free from a telephone on the wall inside the exit. I retraced my steps and found a phone with a yellow button which connected to the taxis. Soon I was happily heading to the station where I was just in time for an earlier train than the one I had booked for. The stations came and went unannounced and suddenly we were at my destination. Grabbing my bag, I hurried to get off. I had wondered if such a long day would be too much at my great age and being told my ferry was known as the Vomit Comet the previous day was a bit off-putting. I am thankful to say it did not live up to its name and, far from being overtired, I felt totally rejuvenated. 10.30 Turning the key in my lock there was only one question in mind. 'Where to go next?'

**Rosemary MacMullen**

## Ukrainian Artists Perform at St Cross in a New Format

Performers: Ukrainian singer and member of the famous “Dudu Band” Lala from Kyiv, accordionist Vladimir Vasylenko from Kharkiv. Young participant Zarina Ivanova (10 years old) from Lviv and Graham Davies from St. Cross Church.

The entire concert was composed of new songs that had not yet been performed before. The cast of performers was also new. Graham Davies joined the Ukrainian performers. He is an organist and long-time organizer of lunch time concerts.

The English and American songs were suggested by musician and music connoisseur Graham Davies.

Each participant did something new that they had not done before. Lala sang in English. Graham Davis swapped his usual organ for a piano for the duration of the concert. Zarina sang and performed with adults. Virtuoso Vladimir, as always, sounded like a whole orchestra.

Lala's performance is always tenderness and warmth, which seemed to envelop the entire hall. And the brightness and catchiness of the stage image she created did not allow one to take their eyes off her. Black and red intertwined and added uniqueness and charm. Lala said ‘It might take me days to get ready for every concert. The atmosphere on stage, and therefore in the audience, depends on my mood. So, coming up in front of the audience is always a crucial moment for me. Of course, I work a lot on presentation of songs, but my inner state is also





important to me. My lifestyle, sport, food, music, nature are the tools to reach harmony. I pay even more attention to this before my performances.”

Vladimir’s performance is always special. He performs on an electronic accordion with many functions and has mastered all of them. He is a participant in many music sessions, festivals and solo concerts. He has won over Winchester and is the delight and pride of any event. Zarina charmed the audience with her voice, smile and sincerity.



Graham Davies was the initiator and inspirer of this performance. All participants supported him.

This is how a creative union of Ukrainian and British performers emerged.

**Elena Popova**

*Vladimir Vasylenko will be performing together with the Kennett Accordion Orchestra in a free concert at the United Church on 18 November in the afternoon. See page 33. (ed.)*

## United Church official email addresses (..ucw.org.uk)

In the days before email, you would have expected work correspondence to be sent to your business address, and personal letters to be sent to your home address.

Now that much communication is done by email, the same principle applies. We have therefore set up email addresses for church correspondence. They all end ...@ucw.org.uk. Please use these for messages to the individuals concerned in respect of church business. Use their personal email addresses for personal matters.

These email addresses are:

Email address	Current user
minister@ucw.org.uk	Tim Searle
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pastoral@ucw.org.uk	Jane Lawson
mission@ucw.org.uk	Jo Pellatt
admin@ucw.org.uk	Steve Barber
treasurer@ucw.org.uk	John Lander
finance@ucw.org.uk	Janet Messer
property@ucw.org.uk	Martin Ramsey
facilities@ucw.org.uk	Patricia Mitchell

There are other email addresses also in the same form, associated with a purpose rather than a person. These are:

yours@ucw.org.uk	Items for Yours magazine
spotlight@ucw.org.uk	Items for Spotlight
webmaster@ucw.org.uk	Items for website

[office@ucw.org.uk](mailto:office@ucw.org.uk) is now used primarily for external senders to contact us. It has no current use for internal messages.

From time to time, new addresses will be added, sometimes on a temporary basis.

If you are in doubt about which address to use, send it to me at [admin@ucw.org.uk](mailto:admin@ucw.org.uk) and I will forward it.

### **Messages to the church list**

Messages sent as a distribution to members are sent from [admin@ucw.org.uk](mailto:admin@ucw.org.uk). Often these messages are sent on behalf of other members, but this means that if you just reply to the message it will come back to [admin@ucw.org.uk](mailto:admin@ucw.org.uk), not to the person on whose behalf it was sent. I will forward your message, but it is better to send your reply directly to the intended recipient – check the to: address before you hit send.

**Steve Barber**

### **Coffee Bar Paper Rack**

I am not sure how many people use the paper rack in the Coffee Bar (just to the left of the door to the corridor). It has a varied set of papers and magazines, together with a few other documents.

The regular papers are: Methodist Recorder, Church Times (the Church of England weekly), Reform (the URC monthly magazine), Connexion (the Methodist Church occasional magazine).

Then there are recent copies of Yours (the United Church magazine) and the current issue of the magazine of St Lawrence in the Square.

Also in the rack are two albums of photos and documents from the refurbishment of our building in 1989-91. So there may be something in the rack which you could find interesting!

**Graham Rolfe**

## Exile and Homecoming

On two Sundays in late October, and two in late November, we will be looking at some of the major themes of the Old Testament; not specific books of the Bible, but themes that run right through the Old Testament, and profoundly impact the Gospel Story. On 29 October we will be looking at a section of the Old Testament we seldom read, that covers a period of about 400 years, (seventh to fourth centuries BCE) that were crucial in the development of Jewish thinking; ideas that were still current at the time of the events in the New Testament, and still have significance for Jewish thinking today. It was at this time that the concept of the Messiah developed; the Messiah being God's chosen and anointed messenger who would save his people, which by the first century CE was taken to mean would drive out the occupying forces of Rome .

Rather than giving you a long history lesson in a church service, I have adapted the time chart from the Local Preacher's training handbook to give you an overview of the events of the time.

Though it was a period of great suffering and turmoil, it was also a time of creative thinking, and the latter part, a time when many of the Old Testament books as we know them were written and edited.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Main Events</b>	<b>Significant People</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> C.	One independent kingdom under Saul, David, Solomon	Samuel, Nathan
9 <sup>th</sup> C.	Kingdom split in two, North: Israel, South: Judah	Elijah, Elisha

Date	Main Events	Significant People
8 <sup>th</sup> C.	Prosperity for both kingdoms, then threat from Assyria	Amos, Hosea, Isaiah 1, Micah
722	Assyria conquered Israel Northern tribes, deported	
	Story of Judah only:	
7th C.	Ancient law book rediscovered. King Josiah instituted reforms. Babylon replaced Assyria as threat.	Jeremiah
597,586	Babylonians attacked Jerusalem deporting most people to Babylon.	Jeremiah , Ezekiel
539	Persians defeated Babylon, exiles allowed to return home in two waves, rebuilding of Temple begun.	Isaiah 2 , Haggai, Zechariah
5 <sup>th</sup> C.	city walls strengthened, town rebuilt.	Nehemiah, Ezra
4 <sup>th</sup> /3rd C .	little information, Greeks took over from Persians.	
2 <sup>nd</sup> C.	Persecution of Jews led to revolt.	Maccabees
1st C.	Roman occupation, Herod's Temple built	

## Nadia Bolz-Weber's Version of the Lord's Prayer

A number of members of the Abbott's Barton House Group recently attended the Memorial Service for Paul Weaver who, before moving to Whiteparish, was a much valued member of our group.

One of the prayers used was based on the Lord's Prayer and Paul himself had requested that it be included – it was very moving and is based on words written by Rev Nadia Bolz-Weber (a minister in the Lutheran church in America)

In the service the prayer was followed by the congregation saying the traditional wording of the Lord's Prayer.

Here is the prayer.....

*Our Father who art in heaven...Our Father who art in everything....who art in orphanages and neo natal units, jails and luxury high rises*

*Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come*

*We beg you to bring more than just a small amount of heaven to earth because this place is in a mess, Lord your people are killing each other and the vulnerable are even more vulnerable and the wealthy are even more wealthy, and it is hard to see a way out. So, we need your Kingdom to speed up.*

*Give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day our daily touch, our daily laughter, our daily kindness, our daily humility, our daily freedom*

*Give your children their daily bread, their daily naan, their daily tortilla, their daily rice.*

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*

*Forgive us when we hate what you love.*

*Forgive us for the pride we exhibit in our political life together.*

*Forgive us for how much we resent in others the same things we hate in ourselves.*

*And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*

*Deliver us from the inclination to think that we too do not have evil in our hearts.*

*Deliver us from addiction and depression. Deliver us from complacency and from complicity.*

*As Jesus taught us, we are throwing this bag of prayers at your door*

*Use these prayers to hammer us all into the vessels that can accept the answer when it comes.*

*For Thine is the Kingdom. The power and the glory. Forever and ever.*

*Amen*

**Tom Belshaw**

**Abbott's Barton House Group**

## **Monthly Munch Club**

Next date for Meeting is **Sunday 19 November** at 12.30. I have promised to let the Golden Lion know our numbers so they can organise our table. I will ring them after our church service. Anyone not attending church who plans to meet at the pub please contact me beforehand.

It is worth mentioning that while the food is excellent value and they serve half-portions, it can take a long time for desserts to arrive, so be prepared for a leisurely lunch! Rosie. 01962 849078 or email [rosiemac@talktalk.net](mailto:rosiemac@talktalk.net).

## Harvest Festival



I want to pass on the thanks from the Winchester Basics Bank for the generous donations given by our members. The team there is facing unprecedented demand from people needing support, and our donations (15+ bags of shopping) were gratefully welcomed.

This year I took the donations to the team based at Winchester Vineyard Church in Bar End, who distribute the food to those referred to them. The team there also runs something called Storehouse that "provides

good quality clothing, baby equipment, toys and food to individuals and families in need", and they also host a Warm Space.

The team at Vineyard were interested to hear of our Missional work, including Live at Home, Meet & Greet, Coffee Bar and Coffee Bar Playtime - and said they'd love to visit. They send their love and good wishes - and I would ask that House Groups and individuals pray for their Mission in our city.



**Tim Clifford**



## Looking forward to Advent

Over recent years we have decorated the church for Advent and Christmas, usually having decorated Christmas trees around the church, as well as the big tree at the front. We have also gradually built up a series of pictures on the blue screens. Pamela and her team are already working on planning the pictures. This year we will follow the Methodist Advent series: 'Out of the ordinary.'



# OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Do you think that having the small trees all around enhances the sanctuary for our hirers in the Christmas season? Do you think they enhance worship, or are they a distraction? Please let me have your views, and ideas.

Another suggestion is opening the coffee bar area , and possibly the sanctuary, on Saturday afternoons during the Christmas market, as it is in the afternoon that people are looking for a quiet sit down and a cuppa. Again, we can only do this if enough people feel it is worthwhile, and are willing and able to give up a Saturday afternoon at such a busy time. I realise carparking could be a problem, and it may not be practical.

If you could help by decorating a tree , or serving refreshment on a Saturday afternoon, please let me know by 12 November. These suggestions can only go ahead if there are enough people who are enthusiastic and able to take part.

**Pat Fry and Worship enabling group**

## Radicalisation – a story

The actions of both HAMAS and the Israeli government have shocked and appalled people throughout the world. Of course, such actions must be condemned, but we should think about the situations that have resulted in young people become radicalised. What follows is a fictionalised account of the factual story we were told by our Palestinian guest, Nidal, a pacifist YMCA youth leader from Bethlehem more than ten years ago, of how his cousin was shot dead at point blank range as they walked down an icy street together.

### Ben's story

Ben had grown up in a devout Jewish family in Tel Aviv. An intelligent, quiet, thoughtful young man he had earned a place at university, but first had to do his military service. The prospect terrified him. It was instilled into him that, for his own safety, he must assume any Palestinian was out to get him, and be on his guard, however innocent they appeared.

On this bitterly cold day, he and his comrade were patrolling a street in a mainly Palestinian district. At the bottom of a steep slippery hill, he looked up and saw two Palestinian men in their thirties walking towards them. They looked innocent enough, deep in conversation, but suddenly one of the men broke free, came sliding down the hill shouting, waving his arms; it looked as if he would canon into Ben himself. Ben stiffened, put his hand to his gun, and when man did not stop, but collided with him, instinctive fear took over, and he fired. The man fell dead beside him. Shaking, Ben looked up, expecting the second man to attack, yet desperately hoping he might flee. But no, the other man was kneeling, cradling his dead companion's head in his arms; between his sobs he seemed to be praying, totally oblivious of the danger he was in.

## Nidal's story

Nidal and his cousin were walking down the street deep in conversation. They started to make their way down a steep hill, slippery with black ice. At the steepest point, his cousin slipped, lost his balance, and hurtled forward, Nidal tried to grab him, but he was moving too fast, completely out of control, waving his arms as he tried to get his balance, screaming a warning to the two young soldiers walking up the hill, As his cousin reached the soldiers, a gunshot rang out. Nidal rushed forward, and realised, in horror, the shot had been fatal.

What impact might such situations have on younger teenagers affected by similar tragic circumstances? What will be the impact of the current terror on young children?

Pat Fry

## Film Review—The Old Oak

As the son of a Geordie mother and a friend of Syrian refugees in Winchester I was drawn to this latest film from Ken Loach.

Set in the rundown former mining village of Easington, County Durham, a lot of the action takes place in the pub of the title, whose owner, TJ Ballantyne (Dave Turner) is struggling to keep it open. He is aware that his customers have only this space to rely on for company and a bit of life in a once thriving but now forlorn community.

A bus load of Syrian refugee families arrive in the village. The reaction from many is predictable, loud and threatening (lots of authentically local invective here). A young woman refugee, Yara, has her camera deliberately broken. Some locals are angry when clothing and food is made available to the newcomers when many families in the village are struggling to feed and clothe themselves.

Yara (Ebla Mari), bravely comes into the pub to ask where she can have her camera repaired. TJ, who has had sadness in his life, responds to the warmth of Yara's family and their spontaneous hospitality. He shows her a back room of the pub, which, he explains, used to be full in more prosperous times. On the walls are photos taken by a local photographer during the miners' strike and of the Durham Miners' Gala. One caption of miners' families eating together reads 'When you eat together, you stick together'. This becomes a leitmotiv for the film.



Yara, TJ and local volunteers get together to repair the back room and offer meals not only for the Syrian families, but also local families who are known to be in need. This is deliberately done to recreate the solidarity of earlier days.

There is no sentimentality or easy rose-tinted ending here. There is still hostility. Some former critics of the welcome to the refugees come round, but there is a sense that opposition will continue.

The Durham Miners' Gala March ends up at Durham Cathedral. A memorable scene shows TY and Yara going into the cathedral. Yara is moved by the singing of the choristers and the beauty of the architecture.



Ken Loach succeeds in showing how the mining communities continue to suffer from the failure to provide alternative employment for those made redundant when the collieries closed.

He shows compassion for, and understanding of, the refugee

families as they offer their talents, hospitality and friendship to the host community, just like the families we know in Winchester. He also shows the horrific circumstances that led to their flight from Syria. The portrayal of the Syrians is authentic, apart from the fact that Yara does not wear a headscarf, unlike the rest of her family.

As always with Ken Loach the acting is superb and totally natural. It was shot in only six weeks and is one of his best films.

As for my connection with the North East, I loved hearing the Geordie accent, but the drunken invectives and threatening behaviour was a world away from the language and culture of the teetotal Methodist families I used to visit every year. Their warmth, friendliness, good humour and solidarity remains with me to this day.

## Bob Lord



## Brief Encounter with Lisa Ball.

### What is your favourite saying or quotation?

'If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain. If I can ease one life the aching. Or cool one pain. Or help one fainting robin into his nest again. I shall not live in vain' Emily Dickinson, poet.

### Who are your favourite poets?

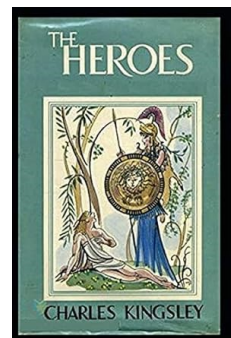
Mary Oliver, John Keats and John Donne.

### What are your favourite pieces of music?

My hope is safe with thee- Eden's Bridge (Christian Folk group)  
The Pines and The Fountains of Rome by Respighi  
(I love the Respighi not just for the music but my dear Dad gave me the record when I was studying for my finals).  
Beauty in your brokenness-Wildwood Kin  
Remember- Theme from the film Troy  
Day by Day- Godspell

### What are your favourite childhood novels?

The Crown of Violet by Geoffrey Trease  
The Secret Garden-Frances Hodgson Burnett  
The Heroes- Charles Kingsley. (This book has had a very significant impact on my life. It was given to me by my dear Mum when I was about eight years old. It was her copy from when she was at school. It set me off on a lifelong love of Ancient Greece and I have a degree in Classical Studies as a result!)



**What are your favourite films?**

Troy- no surprises there! Jason and the Argonauts- again , no surprise!

The Enchanted April, Romeo and Juliet (Franco Zeffereelli version). A Room with view.



**What are your favourite hymns?**

Oh Love that wilt not let me go,  
There's a wideness to God's mercy ,  
Tell out my Soul,  
Halleluyah, sing to Jesus,

**Where do you feel closest to God?**

In the Cathedral by the icons and in our sitting room at home with a candle lit.



## Photos from Worship Day 8 October



Catch up with talks on the website [ucw.org.uk/worship-day/](http://ucw.org.uk/worship-day/)



# The Kennet Accordion Orchestra



**Saturday  
18th November 2023**



**3pm - 5pm  
United Church Winchester,  
Jewry Street, SO23 8RZ**

**CHARITY  
CONCERT**



**SPECIAL  
GUEST**

**Ukrainian Accordionist,  
Volodymyr Vasylenko**

**FREE ENTRY**

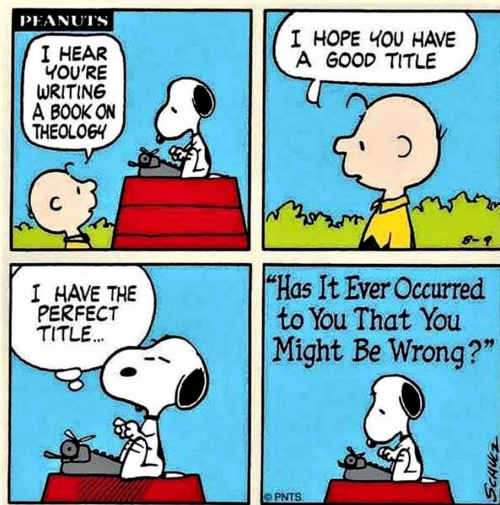
**With a retiring  
collection to the  
DEC Ukrainian Appeal.**



## Comedy Corner



**If Adam & Eve had been Cajuns, they would have eaten the snake instead of the apple and saved us all a lot of trouble.**



The deadline for *December/January Yours* is **Monday 13 November**. All contributions welcome. Send to [yours@ucw.org.uk](mailto:yours@ucw.org.uk).



# Vintage Fun

All welcome!



## REMEMBRANCE

**Monday 13th November**

**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





## Services for November 2023

In-person and live-streamed

### **5 NOVEMBER      WORSHIP DAY FOLLOW UP SERVICE**

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

### **12 NOVEMBER      REMEMBRANCE DAY**

10.30 am    **Morning Worship**            Revd Tim Searle

### **19 NOVEMBER**

10.30 am    **Morning Worship**            Pat Fry and Nick Langham

### **26 NOVEMBER**

10.30 am    **Morning Worship**            Revd Tim Searle

*Followed by Church Meeting*

HC: Holy Communion

UCW website: [ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/](http://ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/)

YouTube: [tinyurl.com/ucw-services](https://tinyurl.com/ucw-services)