



*'Sharing the love of Jesus every day'*

# *Connections*

*The church magazine for Baginton Road URC*



**September 2024**

*Incorporating Warwick Road URC and West Orchard URC*

*Baginton Road  
Coventry  
CV3 6FP*

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## CONCERT

in aid of Alzheimer's Society  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, 2.30pm  
Baginton Road URC Sanctuary



A programme of light classical and popular music by Nick Wolff (clarinet, saxophone and voice)

Refreshments will be provided after the concert (max. 1 hour duration).

No charge but donations to Alzheimer's Society.

## Dear Friends

*The joy of the Lord is your strength!* [Nehemiah 8:10]

Our life journey is often faced with challenges, obstacles and trials being thrown our way, as well as unannounced and unexpected experiences that seek to shape and change the course of our lives. What challenges or difficulties are you going through right now? What is causing you pain, frustration or sorrow? What is trying to rob your joy or has taken away your smile? Maybe you feel like you once had joy and have lost it; it's gone.



This month, I want to encourage you with a reminder of God's Word. The Lord desires to restore your joy, confidence, laughter and smile. He wishes to restore joy in all areas of your life. If, as you are reading this, you see joy as a hope and dream we can have in the distant future, I want to encourage you that joy is for today, it is for the present, and it is for now!

God wants you to know that real joy cannot be taken away from you; it is there forever!

In John 15:11, Jesus said: *"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."* Isn't that an amazing truth? God's joy is in us, and it is complete!

Some translations use the words *"that your joy may be full."* The joy God gives you is not given half-measured but you are filled with it. Look at Jesus' words in John 17:13: He says *"so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them"*. The joy that you have is not temporary; it is permanent and remains in you always.

God wants you to know that joy is not determined by your personality or your circumstances, but your joy stems from Jesus. It is a joy that comes from knowing and serving Him – your relationship with Him. It is a deep, abiding joy from knowing that God loves you.

If you struggle to find joy, I want to show you how to find it in God's Word:

- Firstly, it is found in the presence of God. Psalm 16:11 says: *"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."* Remember, you can have as much of Jesus' presence as you desire. Why? Because Jesus' presence lives inside of you. The Holy Spirit is the continuous presence of God that fills you with overflowing joy. Galatians 5:22 tells us the fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy.

- Secondly, you need to have the right viewpoint and perspective. James 1: 2 says: “*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.*” The key word in this verse for me is ‘consider’, which means “to believe to be or think of as”. It all stems down to your perspective. It all depends on how you consider things and how you face them. You can consider each trial you face as joy and rejoice with joy inexpressible.

The New Living Translation of this verse uses the words: “*when troubles of any kind come your way*”, and the Message Translation says: “*when tests and challenges come at you from all sides*”. Would you agree that finding joy amid trials and rejoicing in the face of hardship is another dimension and level? It is supernatural. Most of us are looking and searching for joy away from our challenges, away from troubles, but remember, as this verse reminds us, there is joy in all circumstances.

How can you find joy in the midst of painful experiences and hardships? It is through the understanding that the joy the world gives is not the same joy that the Holy Spirit gives. God’s joy empowers you to face difficulties, overcome obstacles, and persevere in your faith in the face of adversity.

God calls you to be an outshining of His joy in the world – through the joy of the message you bring of the gospel of Jesus Christ and as an outward expression of His joy. May you continue to embrace the fullness of joy found in God’s presence.

Every blessing,  
*Pastor Sherry Owolabi*



## Appreciation



I would like to thank everyone for their kind words and for the beautiful flowers and card presented to me at the AGM, it was wonderful to feel so appreciated by so many of you.

*Pauline L*

**Kathy Jackson** would like to say a big Thank You for the beautiful flowers from Baginton Road URC.

## Secretary's Remarks, AGM 2024



I became Acting Church Secretary in 2015 during a period of vacancy; Sue M then took on the role until 2017 when I took over the reins once more. During the past seven years we appointed Reverend Yvonne as our Minister, which meant for the first time in its history, West Orchard was part of a joint pastorate with Warwick Road URC. We faced two years of Covid and all its associated problems, the strange world of Zoom meetings, streamed worship, social distancing and weekly newsletters. This was followed by the proposal to explore merging our two churches and forming a new pastorate here on the Baginton Road site. Both churches agreed and the first service of BR URC was held in February 2022. Reverend Yvonne then retired and once again we were in vacancy, though ably supported by Reverend Peter and the Elders.

In April of this year, we welcomed our new Pastor, Sherry, and her family and so began the next chapter of this new church here at BR. Already we are facing changes and I have to say I feel a real buzz among all who pass through our doors, particularly on a Sunday. Exciting times are ahead, God has much for us to do!

Colleagues who have served on the Eldership have been telling me for the past year and a half that I should consider handing over and taking a break. This is something I have been reluctant to do as I felt stability and continuity were important during our early days of working together as a new fellowship. Now it is time for a change – this year, for the first time since pre-Covid days, we have been able to hold an election to appoint Elders. I'm delighted that we have 11 people who will assist Sherry and Peter in their work here at BR URC. Sue D has offered to take over as Church Secretary and I am stepping aside to become Assistant Church Secretary. Over the next few weeks Sue and I will work together and look at the various tasks and share them between us. If this proves a successful way of working, the appointment of Assistant Secretary will continue.

During my time as Church Secretary, I have been fortunate to have the support of a fantastic group of Elders who have given so much time and support during the highs and lows of the past seven years – because of them, my job has been made a lot easier. Thank you to all those Elders, trustees and committee members who are standing down after tonight, your contribution to the life of BR is very much appreciated and valued. Finally, thank you to all of you wonderful people for your love throughout and your prayers and support when the going got tough, I hope you feel I have served you well.

Thank you and God bless.

*Pauline Luckett, Assistant Church Secretary*

## Notes from Elders' Meeting, August 2024



- Future of the Manse discussed and a proposal agreed for Church Meeting to be held in September. Paper to be made available for members.
- Harvest Service arrangements agreed.
- Elders will be having an Away Day on Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> August at the Peace Retreat in Allesley.
- Revd Peter gave an update on his work and recent activities. He is now holding a regular Holy Communion service at St Andrew's House for three URC people. He shared information about a new course he is hoping to run in the coming weeks.
- Holiday Club and Holiday from Home had both been very successful.
- Elders were reminded of the legal responsibilities surrounding copyright for material used in worship.
- Proposal for Church Meeting to rename the Prayer Rooms at the West Orchard Centre and at the Warwick Road Centre after two recent bequests.

*Church Secretary*



### Women's Prayer Breakfast

Next dates: 7<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 9<sup>th</sup> November.  
December date and venue to be arranged.

8.30am in the Small Hall (NB ramp door to the halls will be unlocked).

A warm welcome to all women from our church, Belonging Church and any friends from another or no church. We meet once a month at 8.30am to set up and start with a bring-and-share breakfast – always delicious and varied with more than enough!

It is an opportunity to offer each other encouragement and a listening ear as we share our good times and our tough times, laughter and maybe tears. We spend about 20 minutes with an activity to nurture our spirit and soul and always end in prayer for concerns shared as we talk. There is no obligation to speak, you can just listen and eat too. Everything we share is confidential to those present.

Nobody comes every time, come when you can. We promise that it is always worth getting up for! Please ask me if you wish to know more.

*Pam Dawson*



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

A few years ago, a group of ladies from West Orchard URC began a "Prayer Shawl Ministry": this involved us knitting or crocheting shawls, scarves and blankets which were then distributed to people going through a difficult time, illness, bereavement or other difficult circumstances. The shawls were accompanied with a card and the message "*Your shawl has been made by friends at West Orchard URC and is given to wrap you in comfort and assure you of our prayers*". These shawls were very much appreciated by the people who received them. The cards have now been up-dated to say they are from Baginton Road URC



There are several of these beautifully-made shawls and scarves still available for distribution; they are suitable for ladies or gentlemen. If there is anyone that you feel would benefit from receiving one – a friend, neighbour or friend of a friend – please speak to myself or Sue Matthews.

Alternatively, the shawls are available to collect from the Prayer Room with an accompanying card.

Please add the name of the person who will receive the shawl to the red notebook so that we can hold them in our prayers.

*Sue Davis*



## Macmillan Coffee Morning 2024

We will be holding our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning on the morning of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September from 10am until 12 noon in the Sanctuary.

Donations of cakes of all varieties will be gratefully received on the day and can be dropped off from 8.30am.

We will also be having a sale table for books and jigsaws, so this is an opportunity to have a clear out. Again, please bring your donations on the day. If you need items collected, please let me know and I'll come and collect them the day before.

We will need helpers to set up from 8.30am and to serve teas/coffees, as well as clear away at the end of the event. I've already emailed my 'band of helpers' from last year, but if I've missed anyone and you're prepared to help for half an hour, please let me know. My contact details are 07889 738905 or email me at loowip@aol.com.

Please make a note in your diary and come and enjoy a cuppa, a slice of cake and, of course, share some valued fellowship. Let's do something amazing and raise money to help people living with cancer. Hope to see you there!

*Lesley Rice*

## Hymns of Yesterday

Earlier this year, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Williams of Oystermouth, wrote an article stating that, in his opinion, the great classic hymns have fallen out of common memory, even though people are looking for something to “nourish the soul”.

Selection of hymns at weddings and funerals were often chosen because people vaguely remembered those from their primary school days. Was this because fewer hymns were being sung in schools or even football matches?

He asked whether the clergy were not wanting to “solo perform” when guests do not know the tune to lesser-known but appropriate hymns. The Archbishop said a good hymn is one that does two things: it has interesting words and images, giving you metaphors and pictures to think with, which are vivid and unusual; it also takes you on a bit of a journey and tells you a bit of a story as it unfolds. Charles Wesley’s hymns such as *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* and *Come, O Thou Traveller Unknown* are great classics worth singing and thinking about.

Rowan Williams called upon priests to encourage children at local schools and religious education teachers to explore singing and chanting, noting that every religious community is very serious about music. He went on to refer to Robbie Williams’ *Angels* and Leonard Cohen’s *Hallelujah*. Since his article, Taylor Swift songs are being considered suitable for church services.

The Revd Christine Smith, at Hymns Ancient and Modern, says that in many cases new lyrics have been written for well-known melodies such as *Morning Has Broken* and *I Vow to Thee My Country*, thus allowing people to sing familiar tunes with new words.

The Revd Robert Canham of the Hymn Society says “we should give thanks that, after 175 years, *All Things Bright and Beautiful* still speaks to people today”. An organist recalls being delayed in traffic and found the service had started with the congregation singing this hymn unaccompanied.



The question arrives of: what is a hymn? Is it poetry or prose that has a tune composed for it, or a tune for which words have been composed? The poem *Oh Happy Day* was written by Dr Doddridge in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the tune came a century later and then was adapted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the Edwin Hawkins Singers.

My favourite hymn that, I believe, is effective both as a prayer or sung is *Be still for the presence of the Lord, the Holy one is here*. Do you have a favourite hymn? Why not request it, sung or said.

*Barry Stelfox*



## Social Committee News

We have had an excellent summer with a few social events that were very well supported by both volunteers and those attending.

On a bright sunny afternoon in June, we held a strawberry and cream afternoon with games in the church garden. This was very well attended both by our church friends and the local community. The monies raised were for church funds.

In August we had the Holiday from Home event which included a coach trip to the National Memorial Arboretum. On average, 30 people attended the activity days and enjoyed sharing lunch together as well doing a variety of crafts and having manicures. There was lots of chat and laughter – see the fuller report, below.



We appreciate all the help and support we had for both events and thank everyone who volunteered.

Please look out for further details of each of the events below which will be available nearer to each event.

### Dates for your diary:

- **Musical Concert:** Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, by Nick Wolff in aid of an Alzheimer's charity
- **Harvest Lunch:** Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September – this will be a 'bring and share' lunch.
- **Christian Aid Soup Lunch:** Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November,
- **Christmas Craft Fayre and Bazaar:** Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November
- **Christmas Tree Festival:** starting on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December.

*Social Committee*



### Holiday from Home

We had a successful and enjoyable time at Holiday from Home this year, with about 30 people attending on the Monday and Wednesday, and a coach trip on Tuesday.

Without the many volunteers this event would not happen, from those supporting the activities to those preparing and serving the meals and refreshments. The Social Committee thank all those who worked so hard over the two days and supported the coach trip.

There was a variety of activities, which included a talk about beekeeping, manicures, pottery, keep fit session, soap making, beading and embroidery among other crafts.

Our participants enjoyed a ploughman's lunch and a jacket potato with a choice of fillings and desserts for lunches, as well as refreshments at the start and end of the day.

The coach trip to the National Memorial Arboretum took place on a dry sunny Tuesday, which was enjoyed by all who went. During the visit there was the opportunity to have a tour of this fascinating and thought-provoking place on the land train.

We had positive feedback from all those who attended and would welcome any suggestions on how to improve what we offer should we hold this event next year.

Thank you to all who attended and those who helped.

*Social Committee*

## **Making Mondays - Dates for the Autumn**

23<sup>rd</sup> September; 21<sup>st</sup> October; 18<sup>th</sup> November –  
Christmas activities day; 16<sup>th</sup> December



We meet either in the Small Hall or back of the Sanctuary, usual time 1.30 – 3.15 pm, £2.00 per session. Please bring your own scissors, pens, pencils etc.

*Sue, Pam and Kathy*

## **Children's Work News**



The Landlubbers Holiday Club which ran from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> July was a great success, with 40+ children coming along. The age range was from 11 months – 11 years and lots of our families from Bounce & Play joined in the fun too! One highlight of the week was a puppet show performed for us by the Thrive Ministries puppeteers from Leamington Spa.

They performed an incredible medley of songs which the children and adults all enjoyed watching. Some great links have been formed with the families whose children took part in the week and we will ensure we keep in contact with these families so they can come along to other church events.

The team of about 20 volunteers who came along during the week to help out were all amazing and embraced the spectrum of ages attending the event. It was truly a time of 'team spirit', and Peter Kimberley and Louise Bowler kept us all entertained with their pirate antics. It was a week of fun, laughter and teaching as the children learnt about Jesus through stories of some of His miracles and parables. Thank you so much to everyone involved in helping out with this wonderful outreach work – it was so great to see many grandchildren of our volunteers come along to help too. It was wonderful to have them involved in the event, which many of them had attended when they were young children.

We have planned a Christmas Activity Morning on 14<sup>th</sup> December, an Easter Activity Morning on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and next year's Jungle Jamboree Holiday Club will run during the week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025. Please make a note of these dates in your diaries now as we'll need prayer and volunteers.

Stay & Play has run during the summer for the parents and children who usually attend Bounce & Play during term time. It has proved a 'lifesaver' for some parents and grandparents who want somewhere they can take the children in their care. Peter has continued with Story Time every week, so ensuring there is always a Christian story at each session.

It has been a very positive summer and we look forward now to the autumn and welcoming schools back into the Sanctuary for visits, Harvest and Christmas events – and much more. Your prayers would be much appreciated as we continue to work with the children and families in our local community. Thank you.

*Marilyn Sanders*

## **Commitment for Life 2024/25 - Zimbabwe**

The headline for the 2024-25 campaign is "Resilience and Hope" and for Zimbabwe, we must add in – goats! Just how valuable are goats? Depends on the country and the era, you might say: before coins were used for money, goats were traded for silver, they were so valuable; during biblical times, goatskins were used as parchment for writing, and early explorers used goatskins as water containers when they travelled – Mahatma Gandhi consumed goats' milk every day for 30 years.

So back to Zimbabwe. How valuable are goats to the local people now? For the last few years, Zimbabwe has continued to experience unstable, unpredictable climate conditions. This year has reached a tragic peak – in April, the President of Zimbabwe declared a drought emergency and forecast a £2 billion need for humanitarian aid.

Farmers like Sekai Mazarura, a local farmer, married with 7 children, has admitted sadly that: "Drought has killed our crops, shorter rainy season comes too late, 30 days without rain in our growing season."



Farming is the primary livelihood. No yield = no income = no food. This poses a significant risk to women and children, often vulnerable to exploitation in their desperation to provide the next meal.

However, through the BRAC program\*, thanks to our donations, Sekai has learned to plant smaller, more climate resilient, nutritious grains, rather than the traditional maize crops; also, he has been able to diversify his livestock, having

learned how to choose and breed Boer cross goats. Livestock is crucial for farmers to store wealth, especially in a volatile economic climate.

Sekai explains how his goats thrive: “Unlike local goats, I have to look after the Boer cross kids very carefully, giving the right vaccinations and worm treatments. The kids mature early and there is more meat on the adults.” The price these goats fetch is much higher than for local goats: £27 - £31 compared to £19, so the cost of medication is more than compensated for. This means less stress about drought and income. Sekai emphasises how people are now working more together, sharing the BRACT knowledge and practice and passing on livestock. This diversification is benefiting the whole community. Such is the value of goats in Zimbabwe!

Thanks to BRACT-funded training and despite adverse conditions, families are persevering and adapting to the current precarious economic situation. Please support their resilience and unwavering hope during our Appeal in September.

Further details and donation envelopes will be available in church for September.

*Mary Goodwin*

\*BRACT programme: Building Resilience through improving the Absorptive and Adaptive Capacity for Transformation of at-risk communities in districts of Zimbabwe, which helps local people prepare and adapt to changing climate and economic shocks.

## **Special Cause for September and October - Mercy Ships**



The idea for this special cause charity came out of a discussion at Tuesday Home Group. Please leave donations in the box at the back of Church.

Mercy Ships is a global Christian charity that follows the 2,000-year-old model of Jesus to bring hope and healing to those suffering from disability, disfigurement, and disease. They deploy hospital ships and partner with African nations to transform surgical systems and provide free surgery to those most in need. They believe every person is valuable.

In low-income and lower middle-income countries, nine out of ten people have no access to basic surgical care. Their charity hospital ships sail directly to these people to offer the medical care they need – for free. Since 1978, medical missions by Mercy Ships have worked with compassion in more than 56 nations, providing services worth over £1.2 billion that have helped more than 2.8 million people. Their current focus is on sub-Saharan Africa.

*Sue Davis*

## News From Coventry City Mission

It's been a busy few months at Coventry City Mission. The café and shop continue to be popular and the refurbished café is being enjoyed by everyone who uses it. The outside area has been transformed into a lovely garden, with space for sitting and relaxing at one end and a community garden at the other end, which is beginning to produce useful crops for the café.

The Thursday morning Connect sessions continue to offer a short time of worship, followed by crafts and chat and weekly Bible discussions take place on Tuesdays, including questions about Baptism.



The Annual Fun Day was held during August and what an amazing day it was! The sun shone and there was an opportunity for a barbecue and outdoor games and activities, as well as crafts, face painting and more fun indoors. The premises were full to over-flowing with families enjoying food, fun and fellowship in a safe and secure environment – and a chance to throw wet sponges at Colin!

Several of the staff and volunteers are currently having a well-earned break before returning in September with a Retreat Day led by Revd David Spriggs and then it will be all systems go for the Christmas Giving Tree Appeal. If you shop at Tesco at Walsgrave, Cross Point or Ball Hill, you can vote for CCM using the blue tokens and help them to earn between £500 and £1,500 towards the cost of Christmas presents for the appeal. Voting is open until the end of September.

Please continue to support the mission with your prayers as they work to “Serve God and Help People in Need.”

*Sue Davis*

## Pastoral News

Dorothy M has recently moved into Avalon Court Care Home in Tile Hill. Dorothy doesn't yet have a telephone in her room, but can be contacted via the number for Avalon – 024 7647 0246. Her daughter Gillian says that Dorothy would welcome visitors, but it might be worth checking with Avalon first before you visit, just in case she has been taken out in the minibus for an adventure!!



## Warwick Road Centre and Café

Things pick up again in September after a quiet period in the summer months when some of our regular room hirers took a break.

As always, we are keen to hear from anyone interested in offering volunteer time in our Open Doors Café. Please get in touch with the Warwick Road office if you feel able to help.



*Trevor Gay, Warwick Road Centre Manager*

### Open Doors Café menu – September 2024

Opening Times: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday. Snacks and Drinks: 10am – 11.30am; Hot Meal: 12noon – 1.30pm (last orders 1pm)  
Main course £5, Pudding £2.50, Meal Deal (Main and Pudding, served with tea or coffee) £7.50. Telephone orders: 024 7622 0299

Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Bacon & cheese filled potato skins, coleslaw and salad Eve's pudding and custard
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Ham & leek pie, potatoes and vegetables Chocolate & raspberry cheesecake
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Lamb & vegetable casserole Treacle tart and custard
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Lemon chicken, potatoes and vegetables Belgian berry waffle
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Savoury sausage meat lattice, potatoes and vegetables Coffee, date and walnut sponge and custard
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Cottage pie and vegetables Strawberry mousse
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Chicken dinner Apple & blackberry crumble and custard
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Fisherman's pie and peas Caramel apple cake and custard
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Pork & apple casserole Warm chocolate fudge cake and ice cream
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Cumberland sausages, bubble & squeak and onion gravy Peach & almond tart and cream
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Chicken & vegetable cobbler Lemon sponge and custard
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Corned beef hash and cauliflower cheese Rhubarb & ginger crumble and custard



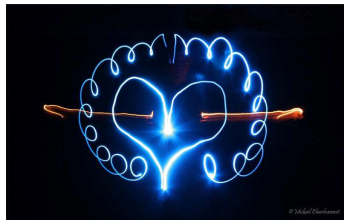
## All We Need Is Love

For a number of reasons – not least failing eyesight – this will be the last time I will be submitting anything for *Connections*, at least for the time being.

So, what thoughts do I want to leave you with? I have read many books of a religious nature over the years – most, but not all, looking at Christianity from all angles. I have also read books about other religions, to see what makes them ‘tick’. The one thing they all have in common is that love plays a major part in their philosophy.

I am not afraid to think ‘outside the box’ and may be at odds with what many Christians of a more traditional understanding think. I have expressed many unorthodox opinions over the years as well as many doubts – but the one thing I believe, beyond any doubts, is that universal love is all that is needed to create a world fit for future generations and for all life forms on our planet.

Printed below is my favourite poem of all time; I leave you to consider it. For the time being, at least, I wish you all ...



**The Light of Love**  
by *Scott Kearns*

Shalom  
*George Drake*

By the light of the sun and the glow of the moon  
we can see the natural world all around us.  
But the world of the spirit is a world of mystery  
and natural light won't help us to see.

In the light of love our lives have meaning.  
In the light of love our purpose shines.  
Whenever there is justice to be dared,  
compassion to be shared -  
this is our calling, in the light of love.

So lift it up, hold it high – write it clear across the sky,  
burn it deep within your soul – live it well and live it whole  
and nothing else is needed, but nothing less will do,  
for nothing else can take the place of love.

In the light of love our lives have dignity.  
In the light of love our purpose shines.

To celebrate the beauty everywhere  
with deep respect and care -  
this is our calling in the light of love.

Not our forms, not our creeds, neither plans nor empty deeds,  
no nothing else can take the place of love.  
Not our status, nor our health, not inheritance or wealth,  
no nothing else can take the place of love.

So lift it up, hold it high – write it clear across the sky,  
burn it deep within your soul – live it well and live it whole  
and nothing more is needed, but nothing less will do,  
for nothing else can take the place of love.  
Nothing more, nothing less, nothing else could ever take the place of love.

## **Mission, Outreach and Worship Report for September 2024**

**Church Membership:** During August's Holy Communion service (18<sup>th</sup>), I had the privilege of welcoming Audrey Potts, Graham and Sue Coles into church membership. If you are not currently a church member but regularly attend Sunday worship, could I ask you to seriously consider and pray about becoming a member of Baginton Road URC.



Leadership and pastoral care in a church are generally shared by ministers and Elders who are elected by church members. The congregations hold Church Meetings which are usually open to all, but at which only church members may vote. Prayer and discussion take place before important decisions are made.

Members are encouraged to share in the life of the local church. Most do this by participating in weekly worship, attending Church Meetings, contributing financially to the work of the church, and taking part in its activities. If you feel you might want to become a member of a local church and would like to know more, have a word with the minister, an Elder or another member, who will be only too happy to advise you and guide you through the process. If you would like to be a part of shaping the continuing life of the United Reformed Church, we warmly welcome you.

We are in a time of much decline in church attendance / membership, with most of the nationally-recognised traditional denominations reporting smaller and smaller numbers worshipping in churches on Sunday morning.

One of the consequences of smaller church membership in the URC is that the stipendiary ministry to support churches is becoming increasingly stretched and our denomination is having to make difficult decisions regarding the placement of

ministers. This is something we know only too well about here in Coventry, where in future the five churches of Baginton Road, Foleshill, Ansty Road, Keresley, and Sherbourne Community Church will be served by just one full-time minister; and in the whole of Coventry and Warwickshire, some 15 churches will be served by just two and a half ministers after 2028.

I am making a plea to those of you amongst our congregation who have yet to make the step towards formal church membership, to pray about it, and to seriously consider becoming a member of the URC because more than ever it truly matters.

But, not only does church membership matter in term of a position within the denomination, it also matters to God. God calls us all into oneness with him. We are all called to become and play our part in the body of Christ (the church); however small you may feel that part may be. I assure you that it is a vital part.

I would encourage you to read 1 Corinthians 12-14: *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body – whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.*

Sherry and I are holding a church membership session on 3<sup>rd</sup> September between 10am – 12noon; we would encourage you to come and discuss becoming a church member.

**Bounce and Play:** this will start again on 11<sup>th</sup> September. Fourteen families from Bounce and Play joined us for our holiday clubs; we are struggling for volunteers on a Wednesday morning, please contact me if you are able to offer some of your valuable time.

**Holy Communion at Home:** I have been asked to reach out to those who can no longer get to church and offer them an opportunity to receive Holy Communion. If you know someone who would appreciate receiving Holy Communion please get in touch with me.

**Agenda-less worship:** We have restarted Tuesday evening worship time with the help of Kings Church, Christchurch, and Quinton Park. We are taking a holiday in August so agenda-less worship will return on 24<sup>th</sup> September at 7:30pm at Baginton Road Church.

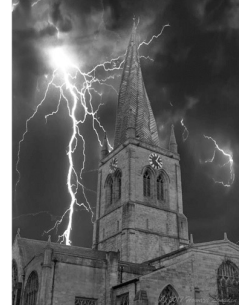
Every Blessing  
*Revd Peter Kimberley*



## NEWS IN BRIEF FROM AROUND THE UK AND BEYOND

The landscape behind the Mona Lisa painting has been solved, claims an American geologist and Renaissance scholar who has studied the travel notebooks of the artist. Visible are Lake Como in Italy with the Alpine peaks overlooking Lecco plus the 14<sup>th</sup>C Azzone Visconti bridge.

In 1749 Benjamin Franklin invented the lightning rod. Church leaders vehemently opposed installing lightning rods because they were interfering with Divine Will even though these buildings were built at the highest point of a town or village. Bellringers rang the church bells in thunderstorms in the belief that the noise would scare off demons in the sky that were supposed to unleash lightning bolts but, alas, this practice led to many deaths. In 1764 a violent thunderstorm of nearly an hour of constant claps led to damage to the steeple of Christopher Wren's St Bride's Church in Fleet Street, London, and in Chatham docks HMS Ramillies was hit by a rare case of ball lightning. Eventually King George III decreed that lightning rods used in Britain and the colonies should have rounded ends. It is thought the delay was due to Benjamin Franklin being a signatory of the 1776 American Declaration of Independence.



The Office of National Statistics has advised that marriages in England and Wales in 2022 totalled 246,897, the first increase since 2017.

Malaga has now opened the first Spanish public pet cemetery. Cremation and burial pricing is based on weight, with a counselling service for owners. This town in 1831 inaugurated Spain's first cemetery for Protestants; previously, burials occurred in the beach under the cover of night and standing upright in the sand facing out to sea.

Next year it is estimated that 35 million pilgrims will visit St Peter's Basilica in Rome for a Jubilee to ask for remission from sins. Vatican staff and workers have been advised to cover up visible piercings and tattoos, yet in 2018 the Pope told young believers "Don't be afraid of tattoos ... tattoos indicate belonging".

Research suggests that approximately 200 churches a year change from pews to chair seating.

It is estimated that in Dublin, Ireland, there are over a million Catholics and 197 parishes, yet two of these parishes were forced to merge in July 2024 because of a shortage of priests. The Vocations Director has said they have one trainee priest arriving in September and from the leadership team advice that young people were daunted by making a lifelong commitment to religious duty and they believe in the welcoming of female priests!

*Barry Stelfox*

## Harvest Lunch

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

Lunch will be held after the morning service at about 12.00 noon. It will be a 'bring and share' lunch, and a list to be signed will be put at the back of the Church later this month. This will give us an indication of numbers attending, and what you may be bringing.

Everybody is welcome. Please do not worry if you cannot either confirm beforehand that you are coming or if you are unable to bring a donation of food.

There is always more than enough to eat at these events.

We would really like you to share lunch with us at Harvest Time



**St Andrew's House**  
**19 St Andrew's Road, Earlsdon**  
**Coventry CV5 6FP**  
**Residential, respite or short stay care**  
**in a Christian home.**  
**St Andrew's can help!**  
**Telephone Lesley 02476 673745**  
**[www.standrewshouse.org.uk](http://www.standrewshouse.org.uk)**

## Poetry Café

Poetry Café meets each month in the Open Doors Café at 2.30pm. Meetings are normally on the first Thursday of each month but this is sometimes changed so please check beforehand with Warwick Road Centre Office: 024 7622 0299.

We each share two or three poems – these are usually on a set theme but don't have to be! All are welcome. The next meetings are:

**Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, Theme: 'The sea'**

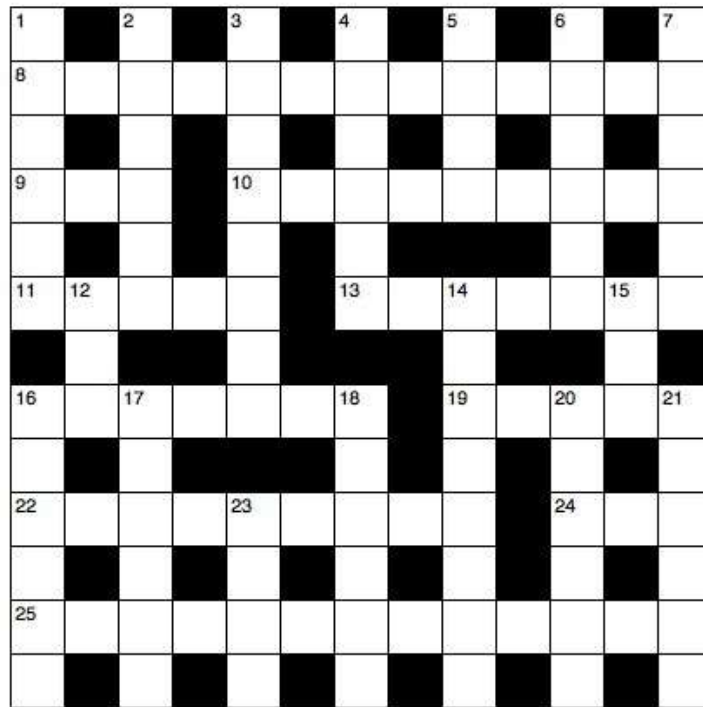


**Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, Theme: 'Harvest'**



For more information, please contact David Lathbury: [david@dlathbury.co.uk](mailto:david@dlathbury.co.uk).

## Puzzle Pages



### Across

- 8 Where the ark of the covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)
- 9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14–17) (3)
- 10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4)
- 11 'Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have —' (Malachi 1:3) (5)
- 13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)
- 16 'Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger' (John 8:6) (7)
- 19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)
- 22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)
- 24 & 2D 'Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the —' (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)
- 25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

### Down

- 1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)
- 2 See 24A
- 3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)
- 4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)
- 5 The Bible's shortest verse: 'Jesus —' (John 11:35) (4)
- 6 'Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?' (Isaiah 49:15) (6)
- 7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)
- 12 'Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem' (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)
- 14 Second city of Cyprus (8)
- 15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)
- 16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)
- 17 Braved (anag.) (6)
- 18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)
- 20 'Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight' (Isaiah 5:21) (6)
- 21 'Neither — nor depth... will be able to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (6)
- 23 What Jesus shed in 5D (4)



### SUDOKU (EASY)

	8		9		1			
	3	9	5				7	1
	1	4			6		2	
	9	8	3	2			6	
7								2
	2			8	4	1	9	
	7		2			6	5	
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			7		8		3	

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### SUDOKU (MEDIUM)

					1	3		
5			4	3		2		
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	2		9					
	3						9	
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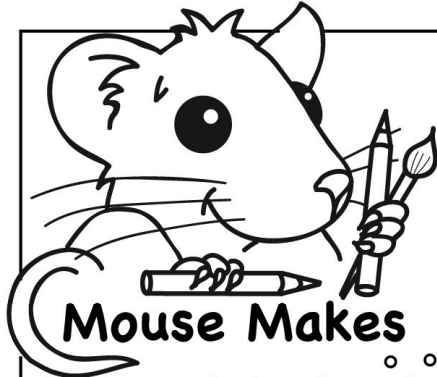
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Solutions on p.23

## WORDSEARCH

The Church remembers angels this month, with the feast day of Michael and All Angels on the 29th. The Bible is full of angels, where they often had a key role in crucial events. It seems that Michael is their leader, an 'archangel'. In stained glass he's often seen with a sword, because in the Book of Revelation he leads the angelic host who fight and defeat Satan and his army. In the Gospels, angels make numerous appearances. Just two examples: Gabriel was sent to Mary to announce the coming of her baby, Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God. Another angel was sent to sit in the empty tomb on Easter morning, waiting to tell the startled women that Jesus wasn't there - He had risen [Mark 16:5]!

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## HARVEST THANKSGIVING

"May the peoples  
 \_\_\_\_\_ you, O God!  
 May all the peoples praise you!  
 The land yields its harvest;  
 God, our God blesses us."

*Psalm 67:5-6 NIV*

"God ... has shown kindness by  
 giving you rain from heaven  
 and crops in their seasons.

He provides you with  
 plenty of \_\_\_\_\_. He fills  
 your hearts with joy."

*Acts 14:16-17 NIV*

"Honour the Lord with your wealth  
 and the first part of your harvest."

*Proverbs 3:9 ERV*

"Let us fear and respect  
 the Lord our God.

He gives us autumn and  
 spring \_\_\_\_\_  
 at the right time.

He makes sure that we  
 have the harvest at  
 just the right time."

*Jeremiah 5:24 ERV*



O A G A T H E R A I N S  
 S V O G M A U T U M N P  
 O G D O P R O D U C E R  
 I H J O Y V S H A R E I  
 L A N D H E P R A Y D N  
 T H A N K S G I V I N G  
 Y P F E R T I L E E P S  
 B L E S S E D D E L R W  
 S E A S O N F O O D A A  
 U N R E W K I F R U I T  
 N T T E N S C R O P S E  
 N Y H D P R O V I D E R

HARVEST • THANKSGIVING • LAND • EARTH • FERTILE • SOIL • SEED • SOWN  
 NEED • WATER • SUN • SEASON • AUTUMN • SPRING • YIELD • PRODUCE  
 ○ FRUIT • GATHER • CROPS • PLENTY • PRAY • GOD • PROVIDE • JOY ○  
 BLESSED • GOODNESS • SHARE ○

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*Find the words from the questions too!*

**SOLUTION - SUDUKO (EASY)**

2	8	7	9	3	1	5	4	6
6	3	9	5	4	2	8	7	1
5	1	4	8	7	6	9	2	3
1	9	8	3	2	7	4	6	5
7	4	6	1	9	5	3	8	2
3	2	5	6	8	4	1	9	7
8	7	3	2	1	9	6	5	4
9	5	2	4	6	3	7	1	8
4	6	1	7	5	8	2	3	9

**SOLUTION - SUDUKO (MEDIUM)**

7	4	2	8	9	1	3	6	5
5	9	6	4	3	7	2	8	1
1	8	3	6	5	2	9	4	7
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2	7	4	3	6	9	1	5	8
3	1	9	5	7	8	6	2	4
8	6	5	2	1	4	7	3	9

**CROSSWORD SOLUTION**

**ACROSS:** 8 Kiriath Jearim. 9 Toe. 10 Ill at ease. 11 Hated. 13 Miletus. 16 Started. 19 Micah. 22 Leviticus. 24 Eli. 25 Mary and Joseph.

**DOWN:** 1 Sketch. 2 Priest. 3 Samizdat. 4 Shalom. 5 Wept. 6 Breast. 7 Embers. 12 Art. 14 Limassol. 15 UNA. 16 Salome. 17 Adverb. 18 Decade. 20 Clever. 21 Height. 23 Tear.

**Connections - October 2024 issue deadline**

News, articles & other items to be included in the October 2024 issue of *Connections* should be sent by email to the editor Claire Booth (clairehbooth@hotmail.com) no later than **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024**.

Items should ideally be no more than 1 page in length (about 450 words) and definitely no longer than 2 pages.

*Connections* is published in digital format ten times a year and emailed to subscribers. You are also able to view it on the church website and Facebook page. If you want it emailed to you, please contact Kevin Bodsworth at the Church Office: office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk.

Thanks, *Claire*

**The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of the URC or its congregation**



## Worship at Baginton Road URC - September 2024



Morning service: 10.30am; Evening service: 6.30pm  
(unless otherwise stated)

Date	Time	Preacher	
1 <sup>st</sup> September	am pm	Sherry Owolabi Revd David Spriggs	Holy Communion
8 <sup>th</sup>	am	Sherry Owolabi	
15 <sup>th</sup>	am pm	Revd Peter Kimberley Sherry Owolabi	Holy Communion
22 <sup>nd</sup>	am	Darren Burgess	
29 <sup>th</sup>	am	Sherry Owolabi & Revd Peter Kimberley	Harvest and Church Parade
6 <sup>th</sup> October	am pm	Sherry Owolabi Revd Colin Offor	Holy Communion

### Church Contacts

 <p><b>Pastor:</b> Sherry Owolabi tel: 07497 558120 email: pastor@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</p>	 <p><b>Mission, Outreach and Worship Leader:</b> Reverend Peter Kimberley tel: 07581 710348 email: outreach@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</p>
<p><b>Baginton Road Church Office:</b> Baginton Road, Coventry CV3 6FP tel. 024 7641 9927 website: www.bagintonroadurc.org.uk Usual office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday &amp; Friday 7.30am - 1.30pm.</p> <p><b>Church Administrator:</b> Kevin Bodsworth email: office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</p> <p><b>Church Secretary:</b> Sue Davis e: secretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</p>	<p><b>Warwick Road Centre Office:</b> 10 Warwick Row, Coventry, CV1 1EX tel: 024 7622 0299 e: cityoffice@bagintonroadurc.org.uk Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm</p> <p><b>Room Bookings:</b> tel: 024 7641 9927 email: rooms@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</p> <p><b>Premises Caretaker, Baginton Road:</b> George Stone tel; 07468 585611 e: caretaker@bagintonroadurc.org .uk</p>