



**DOWNING PLACE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
CAMBRIDGE**

PLACE MATTERS



**ISSUE 47
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Candles burn at the Vigil for Trans Day of Remembrance on 20 November

Photographs on front cover and page 3 by Jess Uden

FROM THE MINISTER

Over coming days, lots of us will be going to the loft or the cupboard under the stairs to get out the Christmas decorations. Households take differing views about when in December to put them up, but by Christmas Eve many of us will have done so. Some people like annually to have a new colour scheme, selecting fresh lights, baubles, and tinsel for each year – a celebration of novelty and newness. Others re-use the ornaments of their childhood, and decades on still treasure them and all the memories they rekindle.



In our house, we major on the tree. Although it came from a Blackpool Garden Centre in 1993, we do buy one new decoration to hang on it each year. Some of those are predictable seasonal things, but others reflect the customs of other countries, like Germany, South Africa, and Hungary. I think it was four months ago, whilst on our summer holiday in Northumberland, that we got 2022's item. It's a robin on a holly branch, with green leaves and red berries, all made from felt. Holly has long been part of our Christmas imagery, getting onto cards, into the wreaths that go on front doors, and seemingly ubiquitous in a festive flower arrangement. The National Trust suggests that holly was adopted as a symbol of Christ's crown of thorns, the crimson berries being a symbol of his blood, and the evergreen a metaphor for life after death.

This year, I am finding that the holly berries have an especial poignancy. They are remarkably like red viburnum, a deciduous shrub that is native to the northern hemisphere. Alongside a vibrant blue and yellow flag, red viburnum, the red kalyna, is a symbol of Ukraine. It is also valued in Russia, where it suggests beauty and love. Since 24th February, however, Ukraine's use of red viburnum has been high profile, pointing to the courage and indomitability of its people. It can be heard not least in the song that is frequently being sung, meaning something like:

*Oh, in the meadow a red kalyna has bent down low,
for some reason, our glorious Ukraine is in sorrow.
And we'll take that red kalyna and we will raise it up,
and hey-hey, we shall cheer up our glorious Ukraine.*

The war in Ukraine is causing unspeakable suffering to many people – they are indeed bent low in sorrow. Even if the green leaves of the viburnum do look towards a springtime of peace, now the red berries are a more powerful picture

of the bloodshed and destruction. And would that Ukraine were the only place where that is so.

Displaying our Christmas decorations, maybe the red holly berries will prompt us to pray for ‘peace in our time’, and to ponder ways in which we can ease the burdens of our inhumanity to each other and of natural disaster. I am ever so aware of how compassion fatigue can dilute my own devotion to such things, and would quite understand if others feel that way, too. But those red berries eloquently prod me onwards, to walk in solidarity with Ukrainians amongst us, and to respond to their nation’s need as we dare to hope they might respond to ours if we were in similar circumstances.

Every time we sing ‘Hark, the herald angels sing’, we are reminded that Jesus came with healing in his wings. May living out that hope be what makes this Christmas a time of the comfort and joy that we share with families and friends, with neighbour and stranger alike.

Nigel Uden

Minister’s Sabbatical

United Reformed Church ministers are eligible for three months sabbatical leave every ten years. I am grateful for such an opportunity that has been granted me between Christmas and Easter. Thank you for your part in making this possible.

I will spend some of the time on Retreat, hoping prayerfully to re-centre a busy life onto God. Another part will take me to Germany, for a journey in the footsteps of J. S. Bach, indulging my love of church music. Both experiences are intended as preparation for whatever life offers and asks beyond full time ministry.

I am very grateful to everyone who will be holding things in my absence. I do not take for granted the extra that is required of them whilst I am enjoying a different rhythm and pace.

Bethan and Jess join me in wishing you blessed Christmas and New Year.

Nigel Uden

WHAT IS PIONEER MINISTRY?

Rev. Alex Clare-Young writes -

I've been asked by a few folks to explain what I'm up to. Pioneer projects develop over time, so it is good to keep talking about the ever-changing plan. So, what is going on?

What pioneer ministry isn't

It is often helpful to start by explaining what pioneer ministry isn't before we move on to celebrate what it is!

Pioneer ministry isn't:

- “Fluffy” or light
- Community work
- Charity
- Personal/crisis support
- Youth work

What pioneer ministry is

There are lots of ways to describe pioneer ministry. The definition below is informed by the definition given on the Church Mission Society website, where a fuller description can be found. <https://pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org>

- Seeing – really getting to know a context.
- Discerning – catching glimpses of Good News and Christ-shaped values in that context.
- Creatively responding – doing new things in response to the ‘seeing’ and ‘discerning’.
- Networking – gathering folks who catch the same vision.
- Experimenting with new forms of Christian Community.

Each of these points are revisited regularly throughout the course of a pioneer ministry project.

Our pioneer ministry project

In the profile for my role, these terms were used to describe the pioneer ministry project here:

- ministry of presence
- amongst predominantly younger people in the leisure economy
- providing a friendly face and a listening ear



- emerging new forms of worship
- emerging communities of discipleship

As I have been out and about, doing the ‘seeing’ and ‘discerning’ bits, I have connected most frequently and helpfully with those who are sometimes described as ‘millennials’, i.e. people between the ages of 26 and 41.



‘Young Protestants in Europe’ from the ‘Community of Protestant Churches in Europe’ visiting Downing Place URC to learn about our pioneer ministry

The work I am developing: Cambridge Solidarity Hub

The idea of the Cambridge Solidarity Hub has emerged from the conversations I have had, and observations I have made, out and about. The Hub focuses on discipleship through the social change lenses of inclusion, wellbeing, and sustainability.

The core events of the Solidarity Hub are:

- **Talks** – an opportunity to listen to a visiting speaker.
- **Action Sessions** – an opportunity to engage in facilitated and accessible actions that further social or eco justice.
- **Drop-ins** – these can be action sessions, fayres, spaces to talk, and/or spaces to experience something (such as sensory spaces).
- **Vigils** – these are an opportunity for prayer and reflection.

The next few events are:

1st December 2022 at 7pm: World AIDS Day – come along to explore the

international response to HIV/AIDS and to find out how we can help.

9th December 2022, 2-6pm: Drop-in/Action: Write 4 Rights – pop in to write a letter that has the power to make a difference. It only takes five minutes, and could play a vital part in improving lives around the world.

10th December: Downing Place Christmas Fair - The Solidarity stall at our Christmas Fair will offer an opportunity to reflect on social and eco-justice and will sell eco Christmas decorations in aid of the Solidarity Hub project.

Solidarity Scripture: 2022-2023 Power

These are Bible study sessions in a ‘conversation over a meal’ style on challenging contemporary themes. These are learner led. In other words, people will learn through conversation with each-other. There will also be multi-sensory content – things like tactile items and music. There will be a list of listening and reading for folks who want to continue to explore the themes following our sessions.



The next session is January 22nd 2023:
Liberating Love

Out and About

I am also developing work under the ‘Solidarity Hub’ name out and about. This includes facilitation and chaplaincy work with John Lewis; chaplaincy, craft and community work with the educational/arts charity Rowan; out and about drop-ins in shared community and leisure spaces; ministry of presence in leisure spaces – especially cafes and pubs/bars; and explorations with partners regarding the possibility of renting a shop space for community dialogue. I am currently working on applying for/recruiting a Time for God Worker and working with Westminster College as they restart their conversations about forming an Intentional Community.

How you can get involved

You can get involved in many ways – if you have any ideas for how you might like to be a part of this project, please do let me know. You can reach me on alex@downingplaceurc.org or at 07544858918. I can’t always answer the phone, so please leave a message or text me.

You are more than welcome to attend any of the events above. Some folks have

helpfully raised the question of whether it might be unhelpful for folks who have been church members for a long time to attend – that isn't the case at all. If you are worried, the main thing is to listen to, and learn from, the new people you might meet. There also might not be any new people, at least at first, and that is OK too!

It would be really helpful to have volunteers at each of the core events. If you are available – even if its for part of an event – please do let me know. Roles might include welcoming folks, serving tea and coffee, being available for conversations, helping with activities, or just being there. If there are any particular things you would like to do (or not do!) please do let me know.

If you know anyone who might like to attend events, or to host an 'out and about' visit, I would love to have a chat.

I am also very happy to chat with any of you at any time – I really value your opinions, insights and support, so please email or text if you would like to meet up so that we can arrange to have a cuppa. With peace, Alex



HELP FOR UKRAINE

Stephen Rapkin from Saffron Walden URC writes: 'Our Care4Calais group still needs more suitcases - not least because we now have a second hotel to look after - Gt Hallingbury Manor, a '4-star country house hotel'. Stephen asks if we might continue to ask for any spare suitcases. He can be contacted on treasurer@saffronwaldenurc.onmicrosoft.com

STAMPS FOR CHARITY

The Christmas season will soon be here and most of us will be sending/receiving letters and cards bearing stamps. I will be pleased to receive ANY STAMPS you wish to dispose of – on envelopes or detached.

I send them to the Leprosy Mission which has the means of raising considerable sums from stamp sales through reliable dealers.

Please leave your offerings in the relevant black box in the Hub – at any time!
Any queries – please speak to me (01223 237899)

With thanks

Ted Dennison

POETRY AT DOWNING PLACE RUTH CONOLLY (1905-2000)

Looking for something on a bookshelf in our attic room a few weeks ago, I came across a 'slim volume' of poetry. *The Bright Land*, by Ruth Conolly. I had been looking for an excuse to include some poetry in *Place Matters*, and now (say I) I have it!

Ruth was in her 70s even when Judy and I first encountered her at Emmanuel URC forty years ago. She was a woman to be reckoned with – strong, clever, compassionate. I am grateful to Margaret Thompson for finding a short, biographical tribute to Ruth in the Emmanuel Newsletter published soon after her death in 2000. I now draw on a few sentences from that tribute, by way of introduction to those who didn't know her, then I am delighted to reprint two of Ruth's poems. The second is both seasonal and sadly topical: and I find that first line of 'Edith's poem' irresistible.

Ruth was brought up in the Free Church, and came to Emmanuel as a Girton student. Called to teach with the London Missionary Society after training at Selly Oak, Ruth journeyed to Madagascar, met and in time married her husband Jim. They lived there until their return in 1953, when they settled with their four children in Cambridge. Ruth's membership of Emmanuel dated from 1954.

At Emmanuel she influenced worship, Junior Church, ecumenical and inter-faith concerns and social issues, drawing on her strong pacifist conviction. Church meetings were important to Ruth, where she always had the knack of recalling us to the heart of the matter. A stimulating member of different house-groups, she would often challenge others to think more deeply about the topic under discussion. Ruth was caring and compassionate towards so many people, strangers became friends.

She was a very creative person: a cellist, she took up watercolour painting in later life. Her poetry books, *Glimpses* and *A Bright Land*, reveal depths of thought, eloquently expressed.

I take great pleasure in seeing her handwriting inside the cover of my copy of that slim volume. Ruth was gracious and modest: her vibrant faith shone through her full life. *Tim Rowland, Editor*

For Edith, convalescing

There is an urgent beauty in the spring
Which overflows the waiting waterpots
And gushes, gabbling, down its giddy course,
Vaulting rock ledges, eddying in pools,
And crashing through a rainbow to the plain.

But other is the beauty of the stream,
Which purls through willow'd fields of springing green,
Pastures all daisy-decked, where lazy cows
Chew, fisherman sit, barges ply -
The mother of our villages and mills
And all the busy-ness of modern life.

There's yet another glory of the lake,
Which unresisting, passive, cradled lies
And mirrors back the beauty of the hills.
The golden dawn, the red of sunset skies.
Who knows which beauty in God's eyes is best?
So when you're laid aside, just smile and rest.

On Sadat's visit to Israel, Christmas 1977

On November 20, 1977, Egyptian president Anwar Sadat visited Israel. The two countries were considered to be at war. Sadat addressed the Knesset, the legislative body in Israel. Sadat's visit paved the way for a peace agreement between the two countries. Here we see a pacifist Christian poet's response to that momentous event.

There would have been no Christmas
If God had waited for the 'appropriate time',
The stage he took: over-crowded town,
No room, no welcome, a tax-angry crowd,
A tyrant on the throne – sword-happy –,
A girl in labour on a donkey's back.

No Angels heralded that birth inopportune;
No wise men had set out
Following Halley's comet or whatever.
The gift came first and *then* the angelic song,
Swelling through heaven and through the hearts of men,
And ringed a star with fire to guide us too;
And prophecies leapt up (hindsight it was)
To crown that infant head.

There would have been no Christmas
If God had waited.

And still there is no Christmas
If good men wait for the appropriate time.
Christ's birth seemed ill advised. Did God foresee
The slaughter of those guiltless baby boys?
He staked his son – calls us to play our hand
And humbly take the initiative with him.

So Sadat went, with no more pride than God,
To meet the enemy in his own land,
And Christmas comes and angels sing again,
'Glory to God on high and peace to men'.

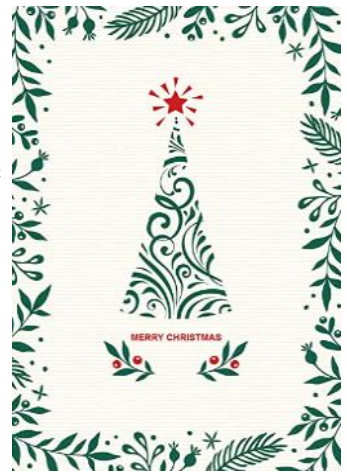
CHRISTMAS GREETINGS AT DOWNING PLACE

- a way to save time and to donate to those in need.

This year, there will be the opportunity to have a Christmas card displayed in the church, sending greetings to all at Downing Place, as we have done in past years. Please leave your card in the labelled container near the church office/reception – it will then be included in a display in the sanctuary.

Having then saved money by not buying so many cards and stamps, you could make a donation to support those helping vulnerable families in Cambridge over Christmas - such as

Cambridge city food bank <https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/> ,
Cambridge sustainable food <https://cambridgesustainablefood.org/> and
Cambridge City council <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/christmas-gifts-for-vulnerable-families>



BUILDINGS GROUP CELEBRATION

The Buildings Group has been planning and managing the redevelopment of the Downing Place buildings since July 2017. After 54 meetings and a huge number of other meetings with architects, builders and others as the development progressed, it has completed its work, meeting for the last time in September 2022. To celebrate the successful conclusion of its work all eight members of the Building Group met for a meal on 13 October. (Rev. John Bradbury was also a member until he moved from Cambridge in 2020).

From left to right: Rev. Nigel Uden, Jane Bower, Margaret Reynolds, Robert Porrer, Lindsey Bellis, David Thomas, Kelly O'Doherty and Elaine Barker.

Robert Porrer



RECENT DOWNING PLACE JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS WITH THE YOUNGER GROUP

Sunday 23rd October - It was half term. It was wet. We were on holiday in Cambridge. Puppets were used to act and talk about Jesus' story of two men praying in the Temple. You can see the one, pleased with himself, bringing money and the one (tearing his hair) telling God how sorry he was for things he did which were wrong.

The younger group enjoyed a lovely session on 30th of October, welcoming Ailsa to play the keyboard for us for the first time. We started with a couple of familiar songs and then learned an action song about Zacchaeus as the introduction to our Bible story. As we set up a Playmobil tableau and worked through the story we talked about how the different characters might have felt when Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus' house for tea. We tried to understand why Jesus acted as he did, using chocolate coins to illustrate how Zacchaeus had cheated his neighbours, finally sharing the coins out equally so that everyone got their fair share. The children then engaged in a craft activity showing Zacchaeus climbing the tree and were glad that Jesus had given him a chance to put things right with those he had cheated and to live a better life with Jesus as his guide.

The following Sunday, we looked at a very familiar Bible story about Noah and how he trusted God and followed God's instructions even when his neighbours and other people were laughing about it, and didn't believe what God had said. We watched the story on the screen, saw how Noah did build the ark with his sons, how Noah took care of the animals and that they had to wait a long time for all the water to go down again and to be able to come out of the ark where they did see a beautiful rainbow with God promising that he would look after us. We then attempted to make a keyring with rainbow beads, which turned out very fiddly, so we took them home to finish off.

The 20th of November we started our Christmas preparations with the younger group. We realised it's still a bit early, but we were all very much looking forward to Christmas and also wanted to practise some carols on time for the Carol Service in December. Ailsa kindly accompanied us on the keyboard, and we agreed on the carol to sing at the Carol Service and came up with some actions



too. We welcome you all to be there to listen! As a craft activity we made lanterns with stars and snowflakes and beautiful coloured paper.



SPECIAL CAUSE DECEMBER 2022



CAMFED is much easier to say or to read than “Campaign for Female Education” and for those who have followed its work, there is also a home grown aspect in that it was founded in Cambridge by Ann Cotton in 1993. Over the years CAMFED has expanded its work from Zimbabwe to Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Ghana, providing opportunities for girls to go to school to learn, to thrive there and then to lead change.

Angeline Muriwama writes in the current CAMFED magazine of what exclusion from education can mean. “To be told that you can’t sit in this class alongside your peers because you cannot meet the cost is powerfully painful...Education is justice. Giving everybody a chance to go to school is justice, it tells every child that they belong, that they own their destiny, that they can shape it”. Angeline was amongst the first to be supported by CAMFED and is now the Campaign’s Executive Director for Africa.

CAMFED *alumna* not only support the work financially, but by example, as “Learner Guides”. In Tanzania alone, this programme has used 3,800 Guides to reach 235,000 children in 405 schools over the last nine years – one statistic stands out that 100% of girls supported by Guides returned to school after Covid restrictions were lifted. A pilot scheme in Ghana will see collaboration between CAMFED Association members organised in cooperatives, and the Fairtrade Foundation, to secure a recognised certification for shea butter, which is used in cosmetic moisturising cream.

Downing Place members and friends can support the work via the month’s Special Cause (a collection on 18 December) or by a direct gift through the website

<https://camfed.org/donate/>

where more can be learned about this very special charity.

Margaret Thompson

SPECIAL CAUSE JANUARY 2023



Lyn's House is an ecumenical Christian charity that provides a community of friendship for adults with and without intellectual disabilities. Based in Cambridge but inspired by international organisations such as L'Arche and Faith and Light, it seeks to build a place of hospitality and joy in which relationships across the spectrum of intellectual ability can be fostered and celebrated, and their transformational value proclaimed.

In 2013, an intentional Christian community was established at a house in Cambridge. Its residents were postgraduate students and young professionals committed to the Lyn's House vision of inclusion and friendship, and with the help of a team of volunteers and other supporters they regularly opened their home to adults with intellectual disabilities who would visit, not to receive care or any other service, but simply to share meals and spend time together. On one of these occasions, one of the core friends recognised the house as having once been the home of an artist, Lyn, whom he had known, and thus the charity received its name.

Though Lyn's House has subsequently moved house and passed through many cycles of residents – it will soon mark its tenth birthday – it continues to hold weekly dinner parties, monthly tea parties, and all manner of other events, outings, and celebrations. By sharing in the life of the community, adults with intellectual disabilities are able to participate in patterns of social life their peers without disabilities enjoy; residents and volunteers receive a contrasting experience from that of the often intensely competitive settings in which they work; and all involved are offered the possibility to have their lives enriched by lasting friendships. In all it does, Lyn's House strives to be a place in which the Christian message is made plain: that you are valuable not for what you achieve, but for who you are.

You can see a gallery of photos here <https://lynshouse.org/gallery/>

You can give directly to Lyn's House via their website <https://lynshouse.org/> or via the Special Cause envelopes in January. There will be a Special Collection at worship on Sunday 15 January.

THE SPIRIT MOVES

Humans do many things instinctively and naturally – make marks, move, talk inwardly to someone other than themselves, or plead to some greater being. Name these inborn activities as Drawing, Dance and Prayer, and we can turn very British. Express emotion? Ooh, no thank you.

For the twenty six years that I spent teaching adults and children art, the first few sessions of each project were spent dispelling fears, removing self-consciousness and building confidence. Humans make marks. We always have. But at a certain stage (often around aged 7) we start saying of our natural mark-making ‘I can’t draw.’

The same is true of dance. Humans of every culture have always danced. But so many shy away from it. When I first started teaching dance, I used to ask children if they could name a dancer. A few girls knew of Margot Fonteyne. Then came Michael Jackson, Michael Flatley and *Strictly*. At last, dance is re-becoming the joyful norm it should have remained.

Dance is one of my favourite languages. Like music, anyone can speak it. It doesn’t matter if your body is not functioning fully. You can dance with your fingers, your eyes, your face, your mind.

For some time Alan and I took part in dance sessions in the sanctuary of Emmanuel URC, led by the inspirational tutor, Filipa Periera Stubbs. These sadly ended with the pandemic, but have now resumed in the Gibson Hall on Fridays from 5-6pm. We were eager to get back to them.

There is no choreography. People arrive, the lights are slightly dimmed, and music is played. Filipa’s playlists are evocative, varied, unusual. I start in a corner with my back to everyone else. I do whatever the music tells me. I often realise that I have done much of my static work with my eyes closed. If I move around, I don’t see people, or even bodies. I see shapes, which have become part of the music. Far more than a journey of the body, which I hardly think of, it is primarily a journey of the mind. Like painting, massage, swimming or staring at a landscape, it creates the ideal mindset for prayer. As Betty Edwards, who teaches non-drawing adults to draw remarkably, explains in her wonderful book *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, the left side of the brain, which deals with facts such as what time it is and where you are, recedes, and the right side, which deals with non-worldly thoughts and feelings, almost fully takes over. It is pure therapy. No-one pays me any attention and I don’t notice anyone else. The hall doors stand open in the dark, and outside, our beautiful courtyard is lit up. If you have never danced barefoot in our courtyard under the stars, or studied the Gibson Hall

ceiling from a lying position, I can recommend it.

If, later, I had had to say who had been there, I couldn't have done so – though I know there is a woman who carries her baby in a sling against her body; he is utterly content, and never makes a sound. At the end, the music slows, and when it stops we take time to re-enter reality. Often we simply leave in silence, as after a quiet act of worship. One man was slightly tearful, and somebody comforted him. But they were tears of relief – he felt so much better.

The first time I attended, I realised how calm I was when I got to the bus stop and found my bus was 21 minutes late. So what? I just sat looking at the night sky. That night, I slept solidly and dreamlessly. The following Sunday, I could not equate the Gibson Hall, where I was having coffee, with the magical space I remembered from Friday evening.

On Remembrance Sunday, having tried twice before (there is always a waiting list) I at last secured a place on Filipa's led session for over 50s at the Fitzwilliam Museum. In Gallery 3, surrounded by familiar and famous works, ten of us built a dance of Lament. One person needed a stick, another used a wheelchair. Each of us carried our own stories. I of course danced for my grandfather, the two German soldiers who saved his life, and the Russian prisoner who healed his foot. Without them, *my* feet would not have been moving in that beautiful space.

We ended with an exuberant use of the space under the ornate plaster ceiling, to *I'm Going to Praise You Like I Should*. And I did. How lovely to read that Lord Sainsbury had two dancers performing at his funeral. For me the language of dance is one of the most powerful forms of worship.

'The doll in the story, did he love with all his heart?'

'He did!'

'But what enables us to know that he loves? His dancing. That is what we will remember, long after love has gone. Art will outlive us all.'

'Ah, but what inspired his art? His love. Love inspires art. Without love, there is no dancing.'

The Whalebone Theatre – Joanna Quinn

<https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/> Type 'Dance' in the search box to see videos.

Jane Bower

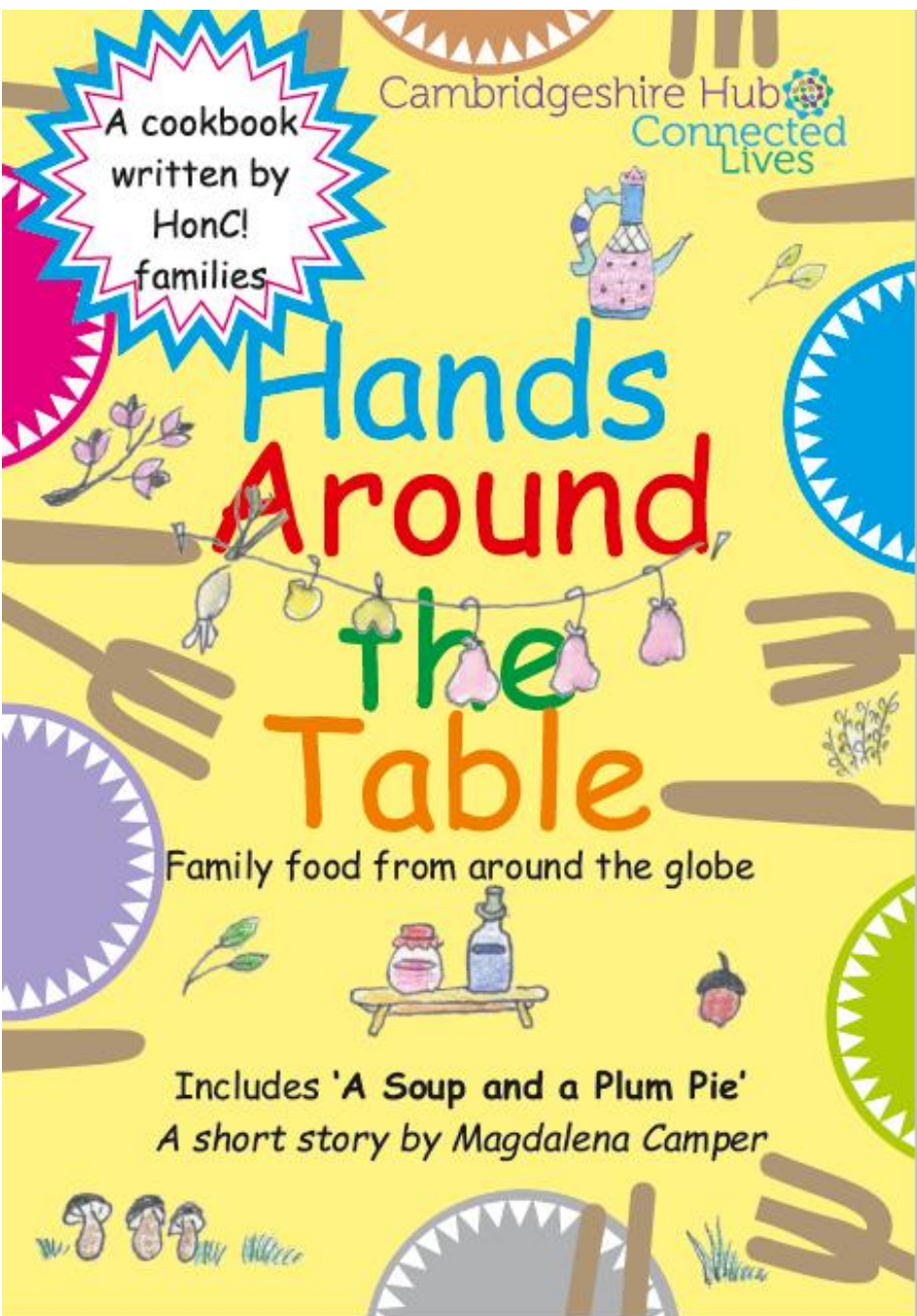
Cambridgeshire Hub 
Connected
Lives

A cookbook
written by
HonC!
families

Hands Around the Table

Family food from around the globe

Includes 'A Soup and a Plum Pie'
A short story by Magdalena Camper



COPIES AVAILABLE FROM DOWNING PLACE RECEPTION, £15

Cambridgeshire Hub Connected Lives

This is a cookbook for everyone to enjoy and a book within a book!

It exists to celebrate the wonderful families, drawn from all over the world, that gather in Cambridge to play, cry and laugh with their young children and one another at HonC! stay-and-play groups.

In the centre of the book is a children's storybook, written and illustrated by local mum, Magdalena Camper. 'A Soup and a Plum Pie' tells the story of how it took a crisis for Mr. Hedgehog and Mr. Mouse to finally become friends.

Taste the recipes.
Delight in the people.
Enjoy the story.

Beautiful things start from small beginnings.



PASTORAL CARE

Nigel's period of sabbatical leave begins immediately after the Christmas Day service and ends on 11th April. He will have much to share on his return from North Wales and Germany.

Since it will not be possible to contact him by email or 'phone, careful thought has been given to how to care for each other during what will seem a long gap! All elders are aware of the need to keep in touch, but please be ready to share something of concern, regardless of whether "your" elder might have picked up the information by another route. Elders in turn will contact Jenny Jacobsberg as Convenor of the Pastoral Care Group, and Margaret Thompson, as Church Secretary. We are very fortunate that retired ministers within Downing Place have agreed to be sounding boards and support colleagues.

CAROL SERVICE PARTICULARLY SUITABLE FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS

Friday December 9th at 10.30am

Everyone is, of course, welcome to this Carol Service. It will be held in Downing Place Church and will also be live streamed on our YouTube channel.

The service will last about 40mins and consist of a few well-known carols and Christmas readings, woven skilfully together by Nigel. It will be an informal occasion starting with tea, coffee and mince pies from 10.30am, followed by the Carol Service at 11am.

Please come along and invite your friends and neighbours.

We are sending information about the service to city centre churches, local care homes, and other organisations catering for those with dementia. As well as watching the livestream, people can watch it on YouTube later.

Jenny Jacobsberg
Convenor of the Pastoral Care Group

FAITH AND SCIENCE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH – A WORKSHOP FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS



January 13, 2023 - January 14, 2023 Location: Cambridge & Online

Speakers: Dr Nick Spencer, Prof. Hugh Rollinson, Dr Ruth Bancewicz, Matthew Fell, Steph Bryant, Dr Denis Alexander, Matthew Gardner, Davinder Gardner, Revd Charmaine Mhlanga, Dr Rachel Siow Robertson

How can we reconcile Genesis and evolution? Does science remove the possibility of miracles? How do non-Christians think about science and faith questions? What does God think of IVF? Explore these questions and many others at our two day workshop designed for Christian leaders – whether ordained, lay, or active and experienced members of a local church. Participants will be equipped to engage with scientific issues in the day-to-day life of their ministry context.

Open to all church leaders – no scientific background required.

Cost: £75/£50 (standard, Cambridge/Online), £50/£30 (students, Cambridge/online)

For more details and registration:

[Faith and Science in the Local Church – A Workshop for Christian Leaders | Faraday \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.cam.ac.uk/faith-and-science)

PARKING ON DOWNING SITE ON FORTHCOMING SUNDAYS

On Sunday November 27th and on all Sundays in December, parking on Downing site will be available to shoppers for a charge of £7, which will be collected by the Rotary Club for charities.

In previous years they have been happy to allow Church members with parking cards to park for free - we suggest making a small donation.

Carols

and choral music
BY CANDLELIGHT

Downing Place Church
CB2 3EL
opposite John Lewis



sung by
aLUMNI
conducted by
STEPHEN ARMSTRONG

SATURDAY 3rd DECEMBER

SHOPPERS' CAROL CONCERT at 5.30pm
EVENING CAROL CONCERT at 7.30pm

Under 16s free
TICKETS on the door £10

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS - WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary. Come and bring friends!

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 7 December | Tim Palmer (tenor) & Hugh Taylor (piano) |
| 14 December | Cambridge Voices Christmas Concert |
| 21 December | Ian de Massini (Festive Organ Recital) |
| 11 January | Ros Hart (violin) & John Richens (piano) |
| 18 January | Adam Parrish (piano) |
| 25 January | Jane Bower (spoken word) & Andrew Black (piano) |

<https://downingplaceurc.org/lunchtime-concerts/>

LOOKING AHEAD - HOUSE GROUPS FOR LENT

A season looking at Jesus' Parables, led by John Proctor.

Further details to follow.




INFORMAL CAROL SERVICE

with well-known carols, particularly suitable for those living with dementia and their carers. Everyone is, of course, welcome.

The service will also be livestreamed via the Church's Youtube channel.

**Friday 9th December,
10.30am for 11am**

Downing Place United Reformed Church

Join us for coffee & mince pies before the service.

For more information please speak to us in the Office, or ring 01223 756635



LECTIO DIVINA IN ADVENT

William & Deborah McVey will be hosting four sessions of Lectio Divina at 8.30am on Friday mornings throughout Advent. The sessions will be held via Zoom - the link to join is

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89435272910?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89435272910?pwd=WmRZWlUyVVNYN2Fva2VHU0dZUUZtQT09)

[pwd=WmRZWlUyVVNYN2Fva2VHU0dZUUZtQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89435272910?pwd=WmRZWlUyVVNYN2Fva2VHU0dZUUZtQT09)

Meeting ID: 894 3527 2910; Passcode: 120818

Please contact Deborah if you have any questions.

DIARY

Services are conducted by the Minister, except where shown

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Thu	01-Dec-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	01-Dec-22	Coffee in the Hub	10:30am	The Hub
Thu	01-Dec-22	Midweek Worship led by Jane Bower	11:00am	St Columba's Chapel
Thu	01-Dec-22	Solidarity Hub Talk and Action: World AIDS Day (see page 7)	7:00pm	Gibson Hall & Hub
Fri	01-Dec-22	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Sat	03-Dec-22	Nightlite	10:00pm -3:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sat	03-Dec-22	Shoppers' Carol Concert with Alumni Choir (see p.20)	5:30pm	Downing Place URC
Sat	03-Dec-22	Carol Concert with Alumni Choir (see p.20)	7:30pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	04-Dec-22	Sunday Worship with Communion led by Revd Nigel Uden with Revd Lythan Nevard	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	04-Dec-22	Open Table Social	7:00pm	Downing Place URC
Mon	05-Dec-22	Officers' Meeting	4:00pm	Downing Place URC
Tue	06-Dec-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	06-Dec-22	Pioneer Minister Management Group	4:00pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Wed	07-Dec-22	Lunchtime Concert - Tim Palmer (tenor) & Hugh Taylor (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	08-Dec-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	08-Dec-22	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion	11:00am	Downing Place URC

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Thu	08-Dec-22	New Cambridge Singers Concert	8:00pm	Downing Place URC
Fri	09-Dec-22	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Fri	09-Dec-22	Informal Carol Service (preceded by refreshments) (see pp 18 & 21)	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Fri	09-Dec-22	Drop In Action: Write for Rights (see page 8)	2:00pm	Emmanuel Room
Sat	10-Dec-22	Church Christmas Fair	10:00am	Downing Place URC
Sat	10-Dec-22	Nightlite	10:00pm - 3:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	11-Dec-22	Sunday Worship led by Revd Alex Clare-Young with members of Open Table	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Tue	13-Dec-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Tue	13-Dec-22	Transition Cambridge Energy Group holiday party	7:30pm	The Hub
Wed	14-Dec-22	Lunchtime Concert - Cambridge Voices Christmas Concert	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	15-Dec-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	15-Dec-22	Gibson Christmas Lunch	12:30pm	Cambridge Regional College
Thu	15-Dec-22	Midweek Worship led by Revd Alex Clare-Young	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Fri	15-Dec-22	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Fri	16-Dec-22	Dementia Compass Concert	2:00pm	Downing Place URC
Sat	17-Dec-22	Nightlite	10:00pm - 3:00am	Emmanuel Room

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	18-Dec-22	Sunday Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	18-Dec-22	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Downing Place URC
Tue	20-Dec-22	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	21-Dec-22	Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini (organ)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Thu	22-Dec-22	Midweek Worship with Communion led by Revd Professor David Thompson	1:00pm	St Columba's Chapel
Thu	22-Dec-22	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	23-Dec-22	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Fri	23-Dec-22	Nightlite	10:00pm - 3:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sat	24-Dec-22	Midnight Communion	11:30pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	25-Dec-22	Christmas Day Worship	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sat	31-Dec-22	Nightlite	10:00pm - 3:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	01-Jan-23	Sunday Worship with Communion led by Revd Liz Caswell	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Fri	06-Jan-23	Epiphany		
Sun	08-Jan-23	Sunday Worship led by Simone Maghenzani	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Mon	09-Jan-23	Officers' Meeting	4:00pm	Downing Place URC
Tue	10-Jan-23	Evangelism & Service Group	7:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Wed	11-Jan-23	Lunchtime Concert - Ros Hart (violin) & John Richens (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sat	14-Jan-23	Cambridge4Ukraine Cultural Event	12:00pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	15-Jan-23	Sunday Worship led by Revd John Proctor	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	15-Jan-23	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Downing Place URC
Mon	16-Jan-23	DEADLINE for booking the Gibson Lunch on Thursday 19th		
Tue	17-Jan-23	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	18-Jan-23	DEADLINE for submitting items for Place Matters		
Wed	18-Jan-23	Lunchtime Concert - Adam Parrish (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	18-Jan-23	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Starts		
Thu	19-Jan-23	Gibson Lunch	12.30pm	Gibson Hall
Sun	22-Jan-23	Sunday Worship led by Revd David Tatem	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	22-Jan-23	Solidarity Scripture Meal (Love) (see p.8)	7:00pm	Gibson Hall & Hub
Wed	25-Jan-23	Lunchtime Concert - Andrew Black (piano) & Jane Bower (spoken word)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	29-Jan-23	Sunday Worship led by the World Church and Public Issues Group	11:00am	Downing Place URC
Sun	29-Jan-23	Church Meeting	12:30pm	Downing Place URC
Wed	01-Feb-23	LGBT History Month Starts		
Wed	01-Feb-23	Lunchtime Concert - Eric McElroy (piano)	1:00pm	Downing Place URC
Sun	05-Feb-23	Sunday Worship with Communion led by Rt Revd Cherry Vann, Bishop of Monmouth	11:00am	Downing Place URC

MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

4 December	David Cornick Liz Caswell Janet Tollington	Bassingbourn Melbourn Stetchworth & Cheveley
11 December	Liz Caswell Penny Flynn John Proctor Nigel Uden	Stetchworth & Cheveley Buntingford St Luke's Cambridge Fulbourn
18 December	Janet Tollington Nigel Uden	St Andrew's Peterborough Fulbourn (3pm) Saffron Walden (5.30pm)
25 December	Simone Maghenzani Nigel Uden	Chieri (Italy) Fulbourn (9.30am)
1 January	Janet Tollington	Buntingford
8 January	Chris Baker Janet Tollington	Burwell Fulbourn
15 January	Liz Caswell Penny Flynn	Stetchworth & Cheveley Melbourn
22 January	Chris Baker David Cornick Janet Tollington	Soham Methodist Buntingford Stetchworth & Cheveley
29 January	Janet Bottoms Liz Caswell John Proctor Janet Tollington	Fulbourn Melbourn Saffron Walden URC Bassingbourn

LECTIONARY FOR DECEMBER 2022 & JANUARY 2023

These are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary, as in ROOTS, the material used by our Children's Ministry team. They may be altered if that is the preacher's wish.

4 December Advent 2

Isaiah 11.1-10
Psalm 72.1-7, 18-19
Romans 15.4-13
Matthew 3.1-12

11 December Advent 3

Isaiah 35.1-10
Psalm 146.5-10 or
Luke 1.46b-55
James 5.7-10
Matthew 11.2-11

18 December Advent 4

Isaiah 7.10-16
Psalm 80.1-7,17-19
Romans 1.1-7
Matthew 1.18-25

25 December Christmas Day

Isaiah 52.7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1.1-4,(5-12)
John 1.1-14

1 January New Year

Ecclesiastes 3.1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21.1-6a
Matthew 25.31-46

8 January Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 42.1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10.34-43
Matthew 3.13-17

15 January Epiphany 2

Isaiah 49.1-7
Psalm 40.1-11
1 Corinthians 1.1-9
John 1:29-42

22 January Epiphany 3

Isaiah 9.1-4
Psalm 27.1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1.10-18
Matthew 4.12-23

29 January Epiphany 4

Micah 6.1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1.18-31
Matthew 5.1-12

5 February Epiphany 5

Isaiah 58:1-9a, (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-9,(10)
1 Corinthians 2:1-12,(13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20





Flowers on Remembrance Sunday by Helen Spring. Photograph by Jess Uden

MAGAZINE EDITOR: Tim Rowland

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

Please send items to both Tim Rowland and Ann Auger
(ann@downingplaceurc.org)

WEB EDITOR: Jess Uden

Please send all items to be included in the February edition to both Tim and Ann by the cut off date of **Wednesday 18 January**.

The February edition will be available from **Sunday 29 January**.