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PLACE MATTERS



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Cover Photograph - Twilight Courtyard by Jess Uden

*Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Elders and Members of
Downing Place United Reformed Church*

FROM THE MINISTER

A Spiritual Classic

In the year that the United Reformed Church was born, so was a masterpiece of spiritual writing. Henri Nouwen's *The Wounded Healer* explored ministry in the contemporary society of 1972. Alluding to an early fifteenth century classic by Thomas à Kempis, Nouwen strikingly observes that 'the imitation of Christ does not mean to live a life like Christ, but to live your life as authentically as Christ lived his.' (103)

The book's contention is that ministers' credibility and effectiveness will be found when they 'recognise the sufferings of the time in their own hearts, and make that suffering the starting point of their service.' (xiv) Ministry is offered out of the minister's own experience of life, and as she or he puts their own 'search for authenticity at the disposal of others'. (103)

By contrast with the minister who is high and lifted up on a pedestal, or austere and obscure in their study, Professor Nouwen argues for what he calls 'hospitality'. He does not mean that hospitality which invites another for a meal, though that is a good thing to do. Rather it is 'that the minister knows where they stand and whom they stand for, but ... also ... allow others to enter their life, come close to them and ask them how their lives connect with hers or his.' (103) The 'wounded healer' often has no answers, save that they manifest hopefulness by companionably 'waiting for tomorrow' beside a hopeless person. After all, says Nouwen, that 'is an act of discipleship on which we follow the hard road of Christ, who entered death with nothing but bare hope.' (77)

The Cambridge years of my service with the Church have demonstrated to me times without number how profoundly ministry is about the hospitality of walking alongside one another, be it on the mountain top of exhilaration when something thrives, on the valley bottom of despair when all seems lost, or on the plateaux of routine and ordinariness. Times without number, those have been the intimate personal moments of weddings, baptisms and funerals, and seasons of shared celebration or anguish. There has also been the adventure of walking together towards becoming Downing Place Church. None of these require ministry which is an aloof isolation nor one which rushes ahead, looking back over the shoulder, frustratedly shouting 'follow me; keep up!' The wounded healer is simply 'there', on the same journey, on the same peak, in the same slough.

Since 2010, in our quindecentennial togetherness as people and pastor, I have learned four things as I have never quite learned them before. In itself, that is testimony to the fundamental truth that ministry is an eternal learning curve.

Theological Richness

The first is that this has been the richest theological phase of the past forty-five

years since I entered The Congregational College in Manchester. The stimulus that you have been to my exploration of the great theological themes has been unparalleled. There has been the sense that you have kept me on my toes, correcting my factual errors here or pronunciation there, and that matters. Simultaneously, though, there has been the enriching and unceasing mutual discovery of what it means to say that God is as God is in Jesus Christ. God is as God is in the carpenter of Nazareth – the ‘Jesus of history’. **This Jesus is captured in the Gospels, as a person of wisdom and acuity, of unsurpassed power and unutterable love, of supreme sacrifice and ultimate victory.** For me, exploring that Jesus both with you and for you has been more fruitful in these years than ever before. It has opened me to the Christ of faith as I have witnessed the discipleship of careful and articulate thinkers, knelt at the pavement bedside of homeless people, or been caught up in the Church as it grappled with the harsh implications of loving the past, and learning from it, but not being able to live there. That exposes us not just to a rabbi from another era and another place, but to the living One, who is covenanted to be *our* God today in Cambridge just as much as to be the God of first century Palestine or even pre-history’s Eden. **God is as God is in Jesus Christ.**

Inclusion

The second consequence of the ministry we have shared is that I have been deeply **impacted by both churches’ commitment to inclusion.** This was not new to me as either a matter for careful consideration or for genuine commitment. One cannot work in an African nation shaped by apartheid, or an English coastal town impacted by AIDS, without knowing that striving for inclusion of people discriminated against is an irresistible imperative, whether the cause of discrimination is race, sexuality, **ability, identity, or whatever.** Being with St Columba’s and then Downing Place Churches, though, where it became my lived reality, exposed me to the gentle insistence of taking it ever more seriously. It was increasingly obvious that for me **there is an unassailable logic in the ‘golden rule’ of so many religions and philosophies** – that I regard others as I would want them to regard me. I am not required to have the *same* experience to be a wounded healer, so much as to **recognise that others’ honouring my lived reality is the measure by which I must honour theirs.** Understanding is not always about knowing in my own life, but about respecting what others tell me they know in theirs.

God’s New Thing

My third discovery because of our partnership has been the dramatic exposure to God doing a new thing. I once worked with someone who opined that part of **the churches’ problem was that they only ever expected God to do what God had always done.** That is not the witness of Scripture. God is forever up to something different. Isaiah hears God say we should not dwell in the past but **look for the new thing God is doing.** And what else is Jesus than God’s ultimate and determined quest for a reset, a turning of creation back up the right way?

God does not seem to do water treading. Indeed, can God spell status quo? Where the Holy Spirit is allowed free rein, there is always something renewing going on. **And** how amazingly we encountered that! She has been crucial to our mutual voyage of discovery from what we had been into what we were being called to be!. From my love of tradition, I have come to realise that tradition itself does not want us to revere the ashes, but to keep the fire kindled in ways as relevant to our times as did our forebears to theirs. How very much we have learned from each other, as our Churches of Christ, Congregational, Presbyterian and widely diverse other traditions have come together in Downing Place Church. It has not been the crusade of one person, or even of an influential cabal, but the mutually discerned and courageously risked commitment of us all to see what new thing God was doing, and to join in.

Knitting a Sheaf

And finally, I have discovered over the past year, as never before, how vital it is to recognise the imperfections of what we offer as members of the Church. St Paul suggests that we are clay jars with the fragility of a terracotta flowerpot. (II Corinthians 4.7) When a sharp frost comes, they can be damaged. So, during forty-one years of earthenware ministry, I have not always gotten everything right; my personal pottery is cracked. Likewise, when church life experiences the sharp frost of disagreement, we, too, are at risk of being damaged. What we have experienced over the past year, staff and members alike, has given us a stark reminder that we ought not be too self-congratulatory or complacent about what we have achieved through union and redeveloping the building. And that has been at the same time as the global community has been as volatile as many of us can recall. We are human – flawed and frail. We are not faultless. But God is gracious, using us despite our defects. Ours is to draw upon that grace, with gratitude and humble acknowledgement that we are nothing without it. Being treated graciously ourselves, we are called to the ‘seventy times seven’ forgiveness to which Jesus beckons us.

Thus restored, we are beckoned back to the coalface of serving God’s mission that is rooted in reconciliation – being both reconciled and reconcilers. Though not a happy play, Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* (1594) finds Marcus seeking to restore the peace of Rome. Even as the play bristles with political and familial intrigue and tragedy, towards its close, Marcus speaks to us in today’s world and in today’s church, too:

‘O, let me teach you how to knit again, this scattered corn into one mutual sheaf’

Titus Andronicus Act 5, Scene III, 71f William Shakespeare 1564-1616

Conclusion

The Christian minister’s life, and that of those alongside whom they serve, means being wounded healers, who forever strive to live their life as authentically as Jesus Christ lived his, where woundedness and wholeness intermingle. We are not called to

flawlessness but to faithfulness. Over a lifetime, there are *kairos* moments to be grasped, ‘wow’ moments to be revelled in, and errors to be recovered from. Through them all, there is God’s covenant love, revealed supremely in Jesus Christ. And there is no other word with which I would leave you. For the privilege of receiving that costly love through you, and of sharing it with you, thanks be to God.

And may that covenant love bless us all whatever the future offers and asks.

Nigel Uden

A note from the Editor –

Nigel ... and Ann ...

A game of FA football begins with 22 players on the field, and a referee. But on each long side of the ‘pitch’, sit up to five ‘substitutes’, on a bench. They are ready to stand in for any players who, in case of injury, exhaustion or strategy, come off the field.

Each edition of our *Place Matters* magazine includes a contribution ‘From the Minister’. You will enjoy his piece in this edition: and you should treasure it because Nigel Uden’s well-earned retirement begins at the end of July. I’ve known for some time that I’d like to ask some DP members, both lay and ordained, to send me something for those ‘From the Minister’ pages, in the months when Downing Place is ‘in vacancy’, and several members have already kindly accepted my invitation. I did something similar during Nigel’s three-month sabbatical in 2023, when John Proctor entitled his contribution “from the Substitutes Bench”!

I am grateful to Ian Strachan for accepting my challenge to assemble a Celebration and Thanksgiving for Nigel’s ministry within Cambridge and the Eastern Province of the URC, and far beyond it. You will find that tribute in this issue of *Place Matters*.

And – just two days ago, as I write – many of us found, in our email inboxes, an announcement from Nigel: “Ann Auger has accepted an offer of employment and will start on 11 August 2025 working in the Bursary of Newnham College as a Finance Administrator, focusing on student finances”. In the meantime, Ann continues with us at Downing Place URC until the end of July. On page 2 of this magazine, Ann is listed as the Downing Place ‘Finance and Compliance Officer’, but that only begins to capture Ann’s generous and wide-ranging contribution to our community. In particular, Ann contributes content to each edition of *Place Matters*, and it is Ann who assembles it, page by page. With her agreement, I have

proposed that we aim to publish a ‘Thank You, Ann’ article in the September *Place Matters*: not least, because it doesn’t seem right to ask Ann to publish her own appreciation.

Ann and I send greetings and best wishes to all our readers.

Tim Rowland
29th June 2025

NIGEL UDEN – IN APPRECIATION



In the May edition of *Place Matters*, and at a recent Elders’ Meeting, Nigel reflected on his life as a ‘jobbing parson’, as a generalist, as a ‘jack of all trades’, noting that it’s rare for anyone to be good at everything. Finally, in his last months of service as our Minister, we have found something to disagree with him about. There would be few who have had the privilege of encountering Nigel during his 40 years of exceptional ministry who would disagree with the acclamation that, in all that he has said and done, he has truly been a ‘master of all’.

Pamela expresses it well:

I am two weeks older than his late mother would have been and feel I have therefore the right to speak out if required.

‘You’re a pain Nigel!’

‘Why?’

‘Because you have too many gifts and skills. You can do everything. That can’t be right!’

Giles, who worked closely with Nigel as Lay Worker and Administrator at St Columba's from 2007 to 2014, recognised some of these gifts at his first meeting:

I vividly recall my first encounter with Nigel. I was part of a group taking him out to dinner during the interviews process to find our new Minister. We went to a local Italian restaurant. When the menus arrived, I pointed out a rather unusual pasta dish, which the Italians call strozzapreti. 'What', Nigel asked, does 'strozzapreti' mean?' 'Priest-choker', I replied. He didn't flinch when I ordered it. This, it seemed to me, was just the kind of Minister we were looking for.

And so, Nigel arrived with a bang – literally! Elaine remembers Nigel's induction well, for all the wrong reasons.....

Obviously we all wanted the day to go well and smoothly but that was not to be! The usual St Columba's efficiency was in place to ensure refreshments would be ready after the service but it seems we had far too much plugged in. With the urn, dishwasher, coffee maker etc. etc. we managed to overload the electrics! There was a strong smell of smoke/burning and we blew out the system. All was well in the church, so nobody realised but me that there was a problem. I ended up running round on the outside to grab candles from the chapel and by the time the congregation came out of the church after the service I had candles lit everywhere, as there were no lights, and I had plugged a whole load of extension cables from my house to allow the refreshments to be done! Nigel of course took it all in his stride, as we came to realise was what he always does, and I'm pretty sure that some church members thought the candles were done for effect!

Quite a spectacular start to our new Minister's arrival, but at least he learned that the staff could cope with all that was thrown at them at short notice!

The breadth of Nigel's skills includes an ability to relate to all, across the generations.

Isobel, in her final days, reflected on how much she derived from being a member of the Church. That she would never forget how much she enjoyed Nigel's visits, and all the goodness that comes from him. He had been a significant comfort to her in her later years, and she wished him a wonderful retirement.

At the other end of the age spectrum, during a recent Junior Church session, Elza and Lorraine talked with the children about their memories of Nigel.

They recalled the humour and fun of some of his Sharing Together talks, appreciating his visual aids and the small gifts he gave them from time to time.

They remembered particularly the occasions when they were given yellow balls symbolising the sun and Jesus as the light in our world. This had become a favourite toy at home for one of the youngest members of the group.

There were also laughs as they recalled the introduction of a toy chicken to demonstrate how Jesus looks after them like a mother hen protecting her chicks under her wings, and the showing of Christmas presents when Nigel had brought his new remote-control car that the children figured out how to drive in church.

They also remembered fondly the All-Age services with the building up of the creation story during a service, and placing crochet figures on a table to create the nativity scene during the carol service, as well as helping Nigel lighting the candles during Advent. Another happy occasion was when the Junior Church returned to our new Downing Place building after Covid, celebrating with a party. The children loved being shown round the building, particularly the balcony, and enjoyed Nigel playing the keyboard and teaching them some joyful songs that they could accompany with percussion instruments.

In conclusion, the children want to thank Nigel for being kind, welcoming, praying with them during Communion services and visiting them at home. They knew that he thought about them and cared for them. They would miss him and hoped that a new minister would have the same good qualities!

Every one of the members of the congregations of St. Columba's, Emmanuel and Downing Place churches is unique, and each has their own experience of Nigel's ministry. There will be much to be said in praise of his preaching, conduct of worship, and administrative skills. But for some, it was his footwear. Laura, Pamela's nine-year-old granddaughter commented:

'Nigel, your shoes are very shiny!'

That is, indeed, always the case.

All will agree, however, that these shoes have followed a path of commitment to pastoral care which has been exceptional. Everybody who has come into contact with Nigel during his ministry will have their own reflections of the Christian, loving, caring, support, and going beyond that has been the foundation of Nigel's pastorate ministry. Our contributors share three of their personal reflections.

In training for ministry at Northern College, Nigel's Principal was Chris' former CWM colleague, the Rev'd Dr Jack McKelvey, who pointed Nigel in the direction of South Africa and whom Nigel visited faithfully every time his travels took him anywhere close to Manchester. It was a great privilege for Chris to

travel with Nigel when he conducted Jack's graveside funeral and preached at his Thanksgiving Service earlier this year. Just one example of the wider pastoral care that Nigel has exercised alongside his ministry in Cambridge.

Another of his many ministries has been to Pamela's family, especially while Martin was ill, and when he died. Nigel quickly learned about their four children and their gifts and needs, and then about the grandchildren, in some detail. They all enjoy his friendship and interest.

And Giles and Sophie were especially delighted when he led the prayers of intercession at their wedding at Little St Mary's, which along with John Bradbury's preaching made this a truly ecumenical celebration.

Chris has known and worked closely with Nigel in several roles, dating from before he came to Cambridge to be Minister at St Columba's and Fulbourn Churches.

In every case, I encounter the same 'Nigel';
Never stinting in caring as pastor and as friend;
Incredibly meticulous in preparation, with every word so carefully selected;
Generous in showing thanks and appreciation;
Encouraging everyone in a meeting to contribute, but with none feeling under pressure to do so;
Leadership in every ministerial role to which he has been called, in South Africa, in local churches, as Synod Moderator and as Moderator of General Assembly.

Margaret recalls a 'brief encounter':

If I may be allowed a non-St Columba's/Downing Place memory, it concerns hearing my name called across the crowded concourse of East Croydon station - Nigel, bound for the Southern Synod office a few minutes' walk away, had spotted me on one of my weekly "Granny" visits. (We had first met at Westminster). His recall of names and faces is a gift for any minister, and a significant aspect of his pastoral calling. This, coupled with a sure sense of what the liturgy requires Sunday by Sunday - freedom, order and participation are key - to make worship a lived experience. We are going to feel that loss deeply, alongside the actual departure of someone whose sense of humour is infectious, and who has no peer as a people person. If only a few more of us might work as hard as he does...

And Giles attempts the impossible, to sum up what Nigel has meant to us all.

Nigel's ministry has been such an extraordinary blessing for St Columba's and Fulbourn, and now for Downing Place. His warmth, humour, and holiness run through everything he does. He has brought an exceptional care and attentiveness to every conceivable aspect of the role, whether in liturgy, pastoral care, preaching, or the many group and committee meetings that make up modern church life. His sermons are always nothing less than profound and illuminating, wrestling deeply with scripture and the brokenness and joys of our world. I can vividly recall some of these sermons years later, and talking theology with Nigel has always been a joy.

Nigel's skill and knowledge as a musician has been particularly welcome in a place where music making is so central to worship, and I am sure many will recall with astonishment and delight his sponsored 12-hour hymn-playing marathon. This was a feat that both figuratively and literally raised the church roof.

Giles and Chris have both worked with Nigel on the Board of Governors at Westminster College and have come to appreciate all the more the depths of his wisdom, vision, and dare one say, patience. Chris was Clerk to the Governors when Nigel was Convenor and is certain that it was Nigel's calm and caring leadership, under God's guidance, that enabled the staff to keep the College afloat in difficult times, particularly during the covid years. Westminster is another institution that will mourn his retirement.

And so, finally, and fittingly, knowing Nigel to be so fond of acrostics, Yvonne's tribute is a triple:

Now what can we Note about Nigel?
Intelligent, Industrious, Inspiring,
Godly, Giving and Gifted,
Eloquent, Esteemed, an Example,
Legendary, Laughing and much Loved.

For all of this, and for so much more,
We thank you Nigel.

With grateful thanks for the contributions from Elaine Barker, Pamela Cressey, Elza de Bruin, Lorraine Thornton and the children of the Junior Church, Yvonne Norgett, Isobel Packman, Margaret Thompson, Giles Waller and Chris Wright, this appreciation was compiled – on commission from the Editor – by Ian Strachan.

SONYA SIREAU - A PROFILE

"The gospel shines brightest on the margins"

I was born in Blackpool – the land of donkey rides, ballroom dancing and fish and chips. It was there, in Blackpool, in a postnatal clinic, that I first met my husband Nick - though neither of us remembers it! Our mothers struck up a friendship after giving birth around the same time, and our families stayed friends as we grew up. Many years later, during our university years, Nick and I got together, and we were married soon after I graduated from Bath University, where I studied BEng Mechanical Engineering with French.



Nick and me, seated on the left, as our families holidayed together in France about 1980

Most of my working life was in the NHS, as a Clinical Engineer and Clinical Scientist, first at the Royal Brompton Hospital in London, and then at **Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge**. **While working in the NHS, I also completed an MSc in Clinical Engineering at Cardiff University.** At **Addenbrooke's**, I led a team **providing technical support for anaesthetic machines, ventilators and other medical devices**. I later co-founded a team called Clinical Engineering Innovation (CEI) because I was passionate about seeing design and engineering principles applied in the clinical setting to solve clinical problems and design new medical devices and systems.

I always believed in a God, however I became drawn towards the teachings of Jesus through the pages of a small red Gideon Bible which was given to me at school. My parents were not churchgoers, yet they believed I should make up my own mind about faith. And so, I did.

As a teenager, I went to every kind of church I could find. I found inspiration, and I hit plenty of roadblocks. At one point, because the words from that little Bible had impacted me so much, I asked the Gideons how to become one of **them so I could share it, just as it had been shared with me.** That wasn't allowed, though. Only men could be in the Gideons, unless you were married to one. I also dreamed of being a pastor or a missionary — **but again, in the tradition I'd landed in, women weren't even allowed to speak in services, let alone lead.** That became the beginning of what I now think of as a long sequence of “no's” - closed doors where I was hoping for a welcome.

Not only was the theology of my early church life restrictive about gender roles, it was also firmly opposed to anything LGBTQIA+. And as I grew older and clearer about my own identity, I found myself increasingly at odds with the kind of faith I'd once clung to. For a time, I walked away from church altogether - not because I no longer believed, but because I couldn't bear to keep compartmentalising parts of myself in order to belong.

Still carrying a sense of vocation, I studied Applied Christian Studies at The Workshop, a course in Applied Christian Studies offered by the Anvil Trust[?]. It no longer runs as a course but information about it is now available here: <https://workshop.org.uk/circle/what/>. I began Pioneer Ministry training in the Church of England. However, I ultimately chose to leave that path due to the **Church's treatment of the LGBTQIA+ community, which I found deeply painful,** and because I became increasingly uncomfortable with remaining part of a state-linked church.

Throughout all those years, I was still looking for a church where I could bring my full self. That's when I discovered Open Table at Downing Place URC. These simple, powerful services became a space where I began to reconnect my **spirituality, gender and sexuality in ways that felt whole and hopeful.** I wasn't just welcome; I was included, even celebrated.

It was Alison Binney who encouraged me to explore the wider life of the church. I was so glad she did and I then became a member of Downing Place. We held a Thanksgiving and Blessing there for our youngest child when he joined our family. I remember looking out at the gathered community as we said to him: **“these are your people”.**

We have three children — two grown-up, in their twenties, and one energetic five-year-old. I recently stepped away from the NHS to focus on parenting, and to start a new vocational direction. I have training as a Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P) facilitator, exploring how attachment theory and therapeutic relationships can be translated into real-world support for families. I'm especially

interested in supporting different kinds of families including those formed through adoption and fostering I'm passionate about helping churches become places that wrap caring community around families who are creating different kinds of families.

I love being involved with the work of Connected Lives, a local charity that champions trauma-informed, relational approaches to parenting. I sometimes help Helen Bell, facilitating COS-P and supporting Connected Lives as it grows. I am also a volunteer with Home for Good / Safe Families, a charity working to find loving homes for every child who needs one, and to strengthen the community, especially churches, to support them.

As part of my discernment, I'm now completing the Seedbeds Pioneering Ministry course. Seedbeds mission is 'To discover, nurture, empower and release a new Community of Pioneers, able to see God's love and shalom flourish in their local communities.'

Seedbeds [offers](#) a course in Pioneer Mission which I hope will lead to

becoming a Lay Pioneer Minister, accredited by the URC Assembly. See <https://seedbeds.org/newbegin-pioneering-hub-2/> I've realised that pioneering is where my heart is. I'm fascinated by the idea of reinterpreting the gospel for real communities, designing new forms of spiritual gathering that speak into people's daily lives. I'm interested in how we can build hopeful, therapeutic, even healing communities — not just clubs for shared interests, but spaces where people become more whole through love, difference and belonging.

Alongside this, I've loved being part of Solidarity Hub at Downing Place — a space for spiritual seekers, evangelicals, queers, deconstructing Christians, and the tired. There, we evolve liturgy, tell our stories, explore queer theology, and build each other up. We're not all alike. And that's kind of the point.

I've come to believe deeply that the gospel shines brightest on the margins — that it is, in its essence, liberation and hope for the ones the powerful overlook. I'm passionate about a church that lives that out: that chooses the preferential



Sonya and Nick with their children

option for the poor, that believes God's good news really is for all of us.

That's why it means so much to be entrusted with the responsibility as an Elder at Downing Place. Not because I have all the answers — but because, after a lifetime of being told “no,” I get to be part of saying “yes.” Yes to inclusion. Yes to possibility. Yes to the belief that God is still moving, still calling - and inviting each of us, in all our complexity, to belong and build something sacred together.



FROM OUR ECUMENICAL CORRESPONDENT

VII : The Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

We are hearing much this year about the Council of Nicaea having laid a **foundation of Trinitarian Christianity on which all ‘mainstream’ or ‘catholic’** churches build. But of course it did so by stressing one aspect of Christian belief and denying all who did not share that aspect their place in the universal church. Nicaea is feted as a basis of unity, but it achieved that status by defining certain groups with whom no unity was sought.

The Libyan priest Arius, seen as leading the dissent, was exiled, and his followers **condemned. His fault was to argue that God's Son Jesus was begotten by the Father at a specific point in time, making him part of God's creation rather than** existing alongside the Father for ever. Critics asked how, if this were so, Jesus could ever have played the part in human salvation that he did.

Feelings on this question ran high in the fourth century, and the Emperor Constantine sought clarity on this point at Nicaea to prevent Christian disagreement fragmenting the Empire itself. But Nicaea did not end disputes about the Trinity. For another three hundred years there were Arian bishops, Arian Emperors and whole races which called themselves Christian without endorsing the Nicene Creed.

The Radical Reformation encountered in Episodes V-VI of this series saw some of the old questions revived. Denial of the Trinity was one charge against Michael Servetus, burned for heresy in Geneva (though Calvin only wanted him beheaded). The Sozzini family from Siena raised similar questions, and ‘Socinianism’ (teaching that **God had no Son until Jesus’ earthly conception**) won a significant following in Poland and Transylvania. It was not until the late seventeenth century that these ideas began to gain a foothold in Enlightenment England. Sir Isaac Newton seems to have reasoned on these lines in his unpublished writing. The 1689 Toleration Act, though, made belief in the Trinity a condition of legality, which remained the case until 1813.

During the eighteenth century, a number of Dissenting congregations lost their Trinitarian character under the influence of pastors convinced by such radical arguments. This happened less frequently in Congregational churches, but a number of the older English Presbyterian meetings moved in this direction, unless the trustees of their buildings were able to stop them. (There was a consequential tightening, from this time onward, of the wording of chapel trust deeds). The General Baptists, whom we last met in Episode V, proved fruitful soil for Unitarian thinking. There were opponents of doctrinal tests even amongst clergy of the Church of England: heresy proceedings against a Cambridge professor were only cut short by the death of Queen Anne, and in 1774 a petition to end subscription to the 39 Articles of Religion was considered (though rejected) by Parliament. The same year saw the opening of the first purpose-built Unitarian chapel in Essex Street, London.

By this time, though, a distinction was becoming clear between those who, taking **their stand on the Bible but not finding in it any clear statement of Christ's** divinity, advanced a doctrine similar to the Arians of old, and others for whom the main point was liberty of the individual conscience. The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, whose forebears were first organised in 1725, has **stood for free thought ever since, but firmly rejects the label 'post-Christian'.**

In Britain the story revolved around the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, created by earlier bodies merging in 1825. When this evolved a century later into the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, both the older Unitarian and the newer liberal approach were represented. Many modern worshippers under the Unitarian umbrella do not speak of a personal God, nor do they take Scripture as their starting-point.

In 1904 a Unitarian congregation was founded in Cambridge: the Memorial Church and Hall on Emmanuel Road date from the mid-1920s. A guide states that **'We hold Jesus in high regard. We favour a simple and inclusive definition of the word Christian. Thus a Christian is any person who seeks to live in accord with the life and teachings of Jesus, who identified with what is best in the Christian tradition, and who, perhaps, sees in Jesus a revelation of the God who is immanent in all people'. It is clear from this why those who hold the line drawn at Nicaea to be the outer boundary of Christianity may not recognise Unitarians as Christians; but it is equally clear why some Unitarians regret this distancing, see common ground with other Christians and would welcome closer participation on the ecumenical scene.**

Services in the Memorial Church today are not, unlike Quaker worship, held in silence, though they often include a guided meditation. Three times a year bread and wine are shared in memory of Jesus' last meal before his arrest, though the

key word is ‘memory’ and the term ‘sacrament’ is not used. The importance of the quest for truth, but also the absence of creeds which claim to have found that truth, become clear from what is (and what is not) stated and sung in the service. Some emphases - the importance of spirituality, a valuing of love and peace, the duties of service and care for the earth – would be echoed in all Christian groups today. The difficulty lies in what is *not* stated. Unitarians’ critics believe that, in their quest for liberty and comprehensiveness, they have ended with common ground that simply does not say enough.

Augur Pearce



Memorial Church, Cambridge on Emmanuel Road

AN INSIGHT INTO OUR RECENT JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS

At the end of May we started to trace the adventures of Paul. He felt called to go and help people in Europe, so left Troas and went across the sea with his friends Silas, Timothy and Luke (who wrote down the story). They unexpectedly met Lydia, a seller of purple cloth, and some other women. Paul and his friends told them about Jesus and God's love for them. Lydia and others were glad to hear the Good News and decided to follow the way of Jesus. We discussed how we cannot know who we will meet as we try to follow Jesus. As we sang 'One more step along the way I go', we drew around our feet and then discussed how we can try to be useful and cheerful disciples.



On 1 June, we had very few children attending Junior Church as it was the end of the Half Term holiday. Our session was based on the story of Paul and Silas in prison during an earthquake and how, despite the danger they were in, they were able to continue to trust in Jesus and sing songs of praise. As a result, they did not try to escape, and by remaining in prison were able to bring their jailer and his family to be baptised and to follow Jesus. We talked about what we might do if we felt unsafe and what it feels like to be free. We then decorated bird shapes with feathers, imagining that we could feel 'as free as a bird' by turning to Jesus to help us through difficult times.

The following weekend, the children compared their preferred 'superpowers', which led onto talking about the Holy Spirit being given as a superpower to the disciples at Pentecost. We then made doves which we brought into church to show to the congregation.



During Nigel's last service for all ages before he retires, we celebrated Trinity Sunday by thinking about the number three. Three traffic lights, three corners on a triangle, three images in beautiful tryptic by Duccio and Kate Green, and three members of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Parent, Saviour and Companion. As we coloured, sang, and played our instruments, we gave thanks to God for the Trinity.

On 22 June, what excitement there was as we took part in the infant baptism celebration of Mabel, the newest member of our Junior Church! The Garner family was supported by friends and relatives including 12 visiting children and teenagers. Together with our regular members there were 18 children in Junior Church, which was a record for recent years. After welcoming Mabel in the service, we moved into the Hub and Junior Church rooms where we introduced ourselves and were reminded that Jesus welcomes everyone and knows us all by name. After admiring Mabel's beautiful baptismal gown we talked about how it feels to put on new clothes for a special occasion. We then got to know each other as we settled down to play, blow bubbles and do craft activities. Many of the children used fabric, tissue paper, felt pens and gem stones to dress cardboard figures in a way they might like to dress for a celebration. When we are friends with Jesus we are changed for the better, just like putting on new clothes. The older children read Galatians 3:23-29, which likens baptism to having a fresh start, in the knowledge of God's love for everyone, regardless of who we are and where we come from.



Elza de Bruin, Lorraine Thornton and Jess Uden, with thanks to all the leaders and helpers for their contributions to the work of the Junior Church

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT HAT?

DOWNING PLACE VICTORIAN EVENING

To the strains of 19th century ballads, familiar figures transformed by toppers, tailcoats, bustles and bows (only the baby-changing toilet cubicle was adequate for my outfit, though my hat would have preferred a wider door) arrived to tackle a selection of Victorian quiz sheets and add their contributions to a long, broad table strewn with greenery and candles. Our Cold Collation, which would have been *Oliver Twist's* idea of heaven, comprised recipes from Mrs. Beeton, tea delicacies mentioned by Victorian writers, dainties by a Mr. Cadbury and some from an unknown company named Waitrose – all beautifully displayed, on precious plates loaned by Lady Sally Williams, by our two charmingly aproned serving maids, Mrs. Sheila Strachan and Mrs. Lorraine Thornton, who also worked behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the refreshments.



The hall tables were bedecked with exquisite paper creations from Miss Jessica Uden, nestling among delicate mauve and white roses in lace-trimmed glass vases.



After our repast, the entertainment began, heralded by a spirited overture on the pianoforte (actually our keyboard with a fringed purple drape) by our own minister, resplendent in satin lapels and buttonhole, who announced each act with ably alliterative aplomb, memorably **introducing the accompanist** as ‘our very own, marathon-running, mathematics-mastering, meat-eschewing, musical maestro, Mr Mark Daves.’ To aid his announcements he made much use of the provided gavel, though its noise level upon the sounding block caused such pain that he elected to bash a copy of *Congregational Praise* instead, despite being watched by the steely eye of a portrait of Queen Victoria herself.



Turns included recitations, amusing and serious, from Mr. Stephen Thornton, a cello solo from the young Miss Sioned Lee, poems about Victorian women from the pen of Ms Alison Binney (captivatingly attired as the Artful Dodger), an amusing ditty on the trials of spinsterhood from a trio of ladies, an **excerpt from Sir W. S. Gilbert's *Patience*** from Dr. Augur Pearce and Mrs. Penelope Flynn, two poignant Scottish songs from Dr. Alan Rickard, and a most sensitive rendering of Mendelssohn by Revd. Nigel Uden. A highlight of the programme was Mr. David Whitmore, aka the Weightlifting Whitmore Wonder, splendidly sporting top hat, curled moustache, striped T shirt stuffed with bulging (cloth) muscles, and dashing shorts. It took three male audience



members to drag his weight-bar to the stage, where after several abortive attempts, The Wonder managed at last to raise it above head height to admiring applause. Sadly he was exposed as a fraud when the diminutive Miss Catrin Lee took to the stage to clear his prop, walking neatly off with it under one arm.

The results of the quiz were announced – did you know that a *rat* or *ratt* was a small, rounded hairball made from collected human hair, used to add volume to hairstyles? – and the evening proceeded with a Music Hall medley, the meat-eschewing Mark laying aside his marathon-running gear in favour of a bow tie and tuxedo. By a miracle of modern science, the words were projected as lantern slides on to our screen, thanks to the expertise of Dr. David Flynn and Mrs. Kelly O'Doherty. As dusk fell on the stunning, warm stillness of our illuminated courtyard, the lilting melody of *Love's Old, Sweet Song* with its chorus of 'Just a song at twilight...' brought our Victorian experience to a close.

My thanks go to all the above, but in particular to Stephen Thornton and Tim Rowland, who helped me organise the whole event – even though Tim himself was away



and could not attend. As Nigel wrote, purely social events of this kind **'are** important pieces in the jigsaw of any church's life ... such evenings offer something delightful in and of themselves. It was the source of many happy memories for long years to come, not least for me'.

Jane Bower

The Downing Place Social Events team exists to help bring about events which unite us as a church family. If you have any ideas for future events, or would like to join the group, please get in touch. Note that the Team does not necessarily organise events, but aims to find the right people to do so.



Photos by Jane Bower & Jess Uden

MONTHLY SPECIAL CAUSE FOR JULY



The **Down's Syndrome Association** is a UK charity that provides information and support for people with Down's syndrome (DS), their families and carers, and the professionals who work with them. It works to improve knowledge of the condition, and champion the rights of people with DS and their carers.

It provides direct support through helplines, online support groups, and individual assessments; also assisting people find accommodation, health care and benefits. It helps people with DS find work placements and participate in their community.

It makes reliable information available via its website, including film clips of people talking about their own experience, and publishes in printed form too, and it challenges discrimination. It offers particular help and advice through pregnancy and after birth.



It provides advice and training to health care professionals, and to education and research projects. It advises the government (e.g. the 2022 DS Bill) and national reviews (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities, Children's Social Care).

www.downs-syndrome.org.uk; locally, www.cambsdscn.org

WAYS OF GIVING TO OUR SPECIAL CAUSES

- Monthly Retiring Collections on Sunday 19 July and Sunday 16 August (cash, cheque or card)
- Cash/cheques can be left any Sunday in a clearly marked envelope
- Monday and Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts (cash or card)
- Direct to the church bank account (reference SPECIAL CAUSE)
- Via our website - the **'Donate'** button is on the homepage under the large photo of the congregation. Select Special Donations as the fund

MONTHLY SPECIAL CAUSE FOR AUGUST



PROGRESSIVE, STUDENT-LED FAITH IN ACTION

The Student Christian Movement (SCM) is a national group of Christian students, first formed in the late 19th century when it was very much focussed on overseas mission. The national office is in Birmingham, but there is a local group in Cambridge and there are many others in universities and colleges around the UK. The theological outlook is now broadly liberal. The photograph shown was taken last year at the National Gathering, an annual event. It produces a magazine, *Movement*, once a term, which includes an extended interview of someone challenging together with half a dozen 3–5-page articles. Two in the spring 2025 issue are entitled *Faith in Action: ten tips for living out a radical faith* and *What tables would Jesus overturn today?* SCM has a long association with the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and currently organises an annual Bonhoeffer pilgrimage to Berlin to enable students to immerse themselves in his theology by seeing the places and people who influenced him and learning about his courageous discipleship, in the city where he lived. More details, including their 200 churches vision, can be found on their website <https://www.movement.org.uk/>, where there is also an opportunity to donate.



PREVIOUS SPECIAL CAUSES AND DONATIONS



Our monthly Special Cause for May was Christian Aid . We sent a total of £1,864.47 to them as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| • Lunchtime Concerts | £711.78 |
| • Retiring Collection | £658.80 |
| • Other Donations | £120.00 |
| • Gift Aid | £273.89 |
| • DPURC Mission Fund | £100.00 |



A message from Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign, our April Special Cause



To the parishioners of Downing Place Church

Your generous donation to help us to help refugees settle in the Cambridge area is much appreciated.

Thanks to you all and best wishes on behalf of the Trustees

From our York Street annual donations, now the Downing Place URC Mission Fund



Cambridge Churches Homeless Project write:

I am writing to confirm receipt of and thank you for your recent generous donation of £1,000.00 to Cambridge Churches Homeless Project. [

This will make a vital contribution to our work with the homeless in Cambridge, for which we are wholly dependent on the generosity of local churches, individuals and businesses.

On 1st September 2024 the Bishop of Ely appointed Revd. Kristian Hewett as **the new Bishop's Officer for the Homeless.** This is now a full-time appointment with a remit to provide practical and chaplaincy support to the homeless community in the Cambridge area, wholly funded by CCHP and the Cambridge South Deanery.

We are developing a chaplaincy course in association with Ridley Hall in Cambridge with an emphasis on helping church members to minister to the homeless and vulnerable and on equipping them to serve.

Once again, thank you for your support. Our ability to provide these services is wholly dependent upon the support provided by our generous donors and volunteers and we would ask that you extend our thanks to your congregation. You can be assured that your donation will be put to best use in support of the homeless community in Cambridge.

Cambridge City Foodbank also received funds from the Downing Place URC Mission Fund and write:



I wanted to personally extend my sincere thanks for the recent generous donation to Cambridge City Foodbank from Downing Place URC.

Your kindness and generosity are deeply appreciated and make a real difference to those in our community who are facing hardship, ensuring they have access to food and the help they need during difficult times.

We truly appreciate your kindness and generosity. Your gift is not just providing essential supplies - it is offering hope to those facing hunger.

Thank you again for standing with us in our mission to end hunger in Cambridge, and please do pass on our gratitude to your congregation.

CHRISTIAN AID MARKS ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY



Christian Aid (CA) celebrated *80 Years of Hope* with a service of thanksgiving and reflection in Westminster Abbey on Thursday 12th June; Owen and Pat Saxton, and William and Deborah McVey were among those present.

The Bidding included: “In these 80 years, Christian Aid has witnessed the unstoppable power of hope in action; providing long-term development support and humanitarian relief worldwide, highlighting suffering, tackling injustice and championing people’s rights. With global partners, Christian Aid has reached millions, helping them overcome poverty,

rebuilding lives, and facing the challenges of today. Together we work to build a world where everyone can live with dignity, equality and justice: work rooted and grounded in love”.

We saw Tessa Henry-Robinson for the URC amongst diplomats, civic leaders and church leaders present, with hundreds of supporters and volunteers, and a number of school groups. We heard the Bishop of London reflect on the organisation’s history and aims; and Jerry Pillay, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, preach on what is being achieved today. We saw a very lively young poet Storm Cecile presenting a poem *The unstoppable power of hope* (though sadly we couldn’t hear her: even Westminster Abbey has its AV problems!) We were invited, by a school student, to re-commit ourselves to putting hope into action.

The organisation’s history was remembered, particularly in banners and posters paraded around the abbey. CA was founded in the aftermath of the second World War, when churches in Britain and Ireland joined together to support refugees across a devastated Europe. In the 1950s, Christian Aid Week was established, with the first ever nationwide house-to-house collection, and support was extended to Palestine, Korea and China. In the 60s, partners were found in Biafra, Kenya, India; and CA helped form the Disasters Emergency Committee and the World Development Movement addressing poverty and racism in the US.

The 70s saw efforts to explain the root causes of poverty, and the launch of the New Internationalist magazine . In the 80s CA fed many in Ethiopia and Mozambique, led a mass lobby for more development aid, and created the South Africa Coalition demanding an end to apartheid. The 90s saw continuing challenge to unfair trading arrangements, and help for refugees in Kosova. In the new millennium, CA helped half a million people following the Asian tsunami, and the *Make Poverty History* campaign publicised how more money flows *out of* poor countries than *into* them. Since then, CA has campaigned for action on climate change, and tax justice; and of course it has continued to provide long-term as well as short-term support through partners on the ground.

We remembered our own favourite poster: *Christian Aid: we believe in life before death* from the years around 1980 when we organised materials for fifty local area organisers (and some 1800 collectors) in Cambridge and surrounding villages in Christian Aid Week; and also the many members of our former and present churches actively involved over the years – particularly Hilary Campbell of Cherry Hinton Road URC.

We heard the Kingdom Choir sing *We are marching in the light of God!*, and an Elgar anthem *The spirit of the Lord is upon me*; we sang four good hymns, and heard some **splendid organ music**, with one of Owen's favourites: **Harold Darke's *Meditation on Brother James' Air*** immediately before the service began.

The abbey bells rang loudly as we left. Pat and I crossed the square to the Methodist Central Hall where we found an excellent lunch, in company with others who had the same idea. We recommend the *Wesley Café* if you're ever in the area yourself!

Owen and Pat Saxton

Now Sheila Porrer reports on Christian Aid activities nearer to home –

Thanks to everyone for your generosity in supporting Christian Aid Week in Christian Aid's eightieth birthday year. Thanks especially to Jane Bower and her colleagues, Alan and Simeon, for their lunchtime concert on Christian Aid's theme of Hope. Jane and Alan's artwork and Simeon's meditative music made this a concert with a difference, which drew our attention to the process of artistic creation and representation in images and music. The figures for money raised will be available soon.

During Christian Aid week we heard about the problems faced by farmers in Guatemala – you can find a short thank you video here - [Christian Aid Week - thank you - Christian Aid](#) or via the CA website.

Another highlight of Christian Aid Week was the special eightieth anniversary

service at Great St. Mary's. It was quite an afternoon – a reception at Clare College with the Master, Loretta Minghella, former CEO of Christian Aid, and many of the Christian Aid leaders, including Patrick Watt, the current CEO, who came to speak to us at Downing Place two years ago.

And of course, the afternoon's preacher, Dr. Rowan Williams, who has done so much for Christian Aid over the years. His sermon was inspirational, the central point of an impressive service encouraging us to keep on working with firm hope, even in these uncertain times. This service can be viewed on YouTube - search on Great St. Mary's Christian Aid service, or try [A service to Celebrate 80 years of Christian Aid at Great St Mary's Church Cambridge. - YouTube](#)



Nick Georgiadis (Director of Fundraising and Supporter Engagement for CA), Patrick Watt (CEO of CA), Rowan Williams and Loretta Minghella (Master of Clare and former CEO of CA), flanked by GSM clergy, at the service. Thanks to Alex Cassidy for the photo.

Christian Aid's work continues all through the year. Go to the website to learn about the *Restore* campaign and the mass lobby of Parliament on July 9th, organised by the Climate Coalition to urge our MPs to be more proactive about the climate crisis, and much more.

Thankyou tea – Saturday 26th July, from 3 pm

Our traditional thank you party will be held on Saturday 26th July, from 3 pm, **at St. Mark's Church, Newnham**, on the Barton Road, in their Community Centre. There is a map of the Church at [Community Centre & Hall Hire – St Mark's, Newnham](#). Community Centre and car park are behind the Church. We thank St Mark's and the Vicar, Rev. Jim Robinson, for allowing us to use their

community centre for this event. Please do come along to learn about Christian Aid and CAW, meet other supporters and share ideas, and enjoy a cup of tea and cake. You are very welcome, and we look forward to seeing you.

Any questions to Sheila Porrer.

SUMMER HOUSEGROUPS

'My Favourite Things'

The idea of these four August 'relaxed' housegroups is to offer an informal opportunity for people to get to know one another better, in a gentle and enjoyable way - where we can talk as we choose to about things that matter to us, but no one feels obliged to share what isn't comfortable for them. Each week you are invited to bring along your favourite something - and if you'd like to share why you like it so much that will be great (but no obligation for everyone to talk!) The topics will be:

Week one: my favourite song or hymn

Week two: my favourite poem or Bible verse

Week three: my favourite photo or picture

Week four: my favourite food to have with tea or coffee - and we'll quite literally share these!



What you bring doesn't have to be explicitly to do with church - the important thing is that it is special for you for some reason.

The groups will be enabled by Zoe Bennett.

Venue: Downing Place church

Dates and times: Fridays August 8th 3-4.30pm; 15th, 22nd & 29th 2-3.30pm.

It might help to know who to expect, but please just come along on the day if you wish – any or all days, to suit.

Please ask Zoe or Penny if you need a lift. Children will also be welcome.

Penny Flynn, Housegroup coordinator

KNIT ONE KNIT GIVE

**KNITTED ITEMS &
BRIC-A-BRAC TO SCHOOL
TABLE TOP SALE**



**Raising funds for the
Sallymay International
Prep School, Sierra Leone**

**Wednesday 27th &
Thursday 28th August,
10.30am - 2.30pm
The Hub, Downing Place URC,
CB42BQ**



LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection shared between Church funds and our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary.

Wednesday 2 July
No Lunchtime Concert (Ede & Ravenscroft in Church all day)

Monday 7 July
Marika Tsuchiya (marimba)

Wednesday 9 July
Christine Stevenson (piano)

Monday 14 July
Ely Music Collective

Wednesday 16 July
Ruihan Wu (piano)

Monday 21 July
Ian de Massini (organ)

Wednesday 23 July
Christian Dawson (piano)

Monday 28 July
Yoon Seok Shin (piano)

Wednesday 30 July
Erina Ishiyama (piano)

Monday 4 August
Mariko Terashi (piano)

Wednesday 6 August
Charlotte Leeder (soprano)
Ilga Pitkevica (piano)

Monday 11 August
Clara Sherratt (piano)

Wednesday 13 August
Judy Hung (piano & violin)

Monday 18 August
Jane Bower (narration & live
Illustrations)
Ian de Massini (organ)

Wednesday 20 August
Jingshu Zhao & Haoyue Liang (piano)

Monday 25 August
No Lunchtime Concert
(Bank Holiday)

Wednesday 27 August
Alice Bishop (soprano)
Timothy Peake (piano)

Refreshments are available before and after each concert.

Full information about each concert including the programme is available on our website

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

DOWNING PLACE LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

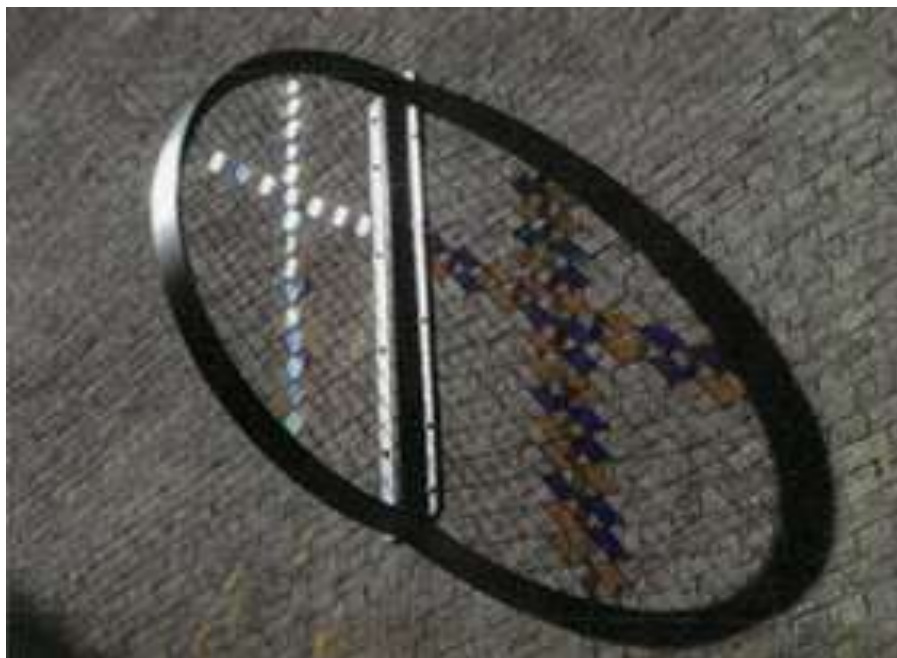
‘thank you for the music’

For many years I have attended concerts with my late husband, Stephen, first at Emmanuel Church, hearing magnificent music. Breakfasts, lunches and cakes were available freshly cooked in the kitchens. Delicious. We got to know staff, servers, cooks and musicians, who became friends. It was sad when it finished, but the concerts resumed at Downing Place URC. It is a relaxing, bright concert space and church. The centrally-placed cross on the wall making a positive statement of hope and reassurance. Beyond is the community hub, a welcoming area opening out to a charmingly simple courtyard. Although there are no cooked meals, refreshments are offered. Sitting, talking and sharing invited. Early afternoon, time well spent.

I carry on our tradition of cherished musical experience, remembering special occasions and people. Magic moments. Stephen's smile stays with me. Treasured memories.

When I see the D for Downing outside, it sometimes spills dapples of colour down the wall. Light. Encouragement. Joy. I share that thought with the photograph I took and gave with appreciation from us both.

Judith Lee



JULY DIARY

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|----------|---|-------|----------------------------|
| Tue | 01-Jul | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 02-Jul | NO WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME CONCERT | 13:00 | |
| Thu | 03-Jul | Midweek Worship led by Jane Bower | 11:00 | Emmanuel Room |
| Thu | 03-Jul | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 04-Jul - | <i>General Assembly Begins</i> | | <i>The Hayes, Swanwick</i> |
| Fri | 04-Jul | Meditation Group | 17:15 | St Columba's Chapel |
| Sun | 06-Jul | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00 | Church |
| Sun | 06-Jul | Sunday Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Professor David Thompson | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 06-Jul | Open Table Social | 19:00 | The Hub |
| Mon | 07-Jul | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Marika Tsuchiya (marimba) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 08-Jul | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 09-Jul | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Christine Stevenson (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 10-Jul | Prayer Meeting | 10:15 | St Columba's Chapel |
| Thu | 10-Jul | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 10-Jul | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 11-Jul | Lectio Divina | 08:30 | Zoom |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|--------|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| Sat | 12-Jul | Nigel's Farewell | 14:30 onwards | Downing Place URC |
| Sun | 13-Jul | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00 | Church |
| Sun | 13-Jul | Sunday Worship led by the Revd Dr David Cornick | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 13-Jul | Solidarity Hub | 14:00 | TBC |
| Mon | 14-Jul | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Ely Music Collective | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 15-Jul | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 16-Jul | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Ruihan Wu (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 17-Jul | Midweek Worship led by Dr Janet Bottoms | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 17-Jul | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Thu | 17-Jul | Elders' Meeting | 19:30 | Gibson Hall |
| Fri | 18-Jul | Lectio Divina | 08:30 | Zoom |
| Sat | 19-Jul | Cambridge Voices Concert in honour of Nigel's Retirement (see p.41) | 16:00 | Church |
| Sun | 20-Jul | Choir Rehearsal (last before summer break) | 10:00 | Church |
| Sun | 20-Jul | Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden followed by a Retiring Collection for our monthly Special Cause | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 20-Jul | Church Meeting | 12:30 | Church |
| Sun | 20-Jul | Open Table Communion Service | 19:00 | Church |
| Mon | 21-Jul | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini (organ) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 22-Jul | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|------------|---------------|--|-------|-----------------------|
| Wed | 23-Jul | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Christian Dawson (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 24-Jul | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Dr Janet Tollington | 11:00 | Emmanuel Room |
| Thu | 24-Jul | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 25-Jul | Lectio Divina | 08:30 | Zoom |
| Sun | 27-Jul | Sunday Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden (Nigel's last service) | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 27-Jul | Solidarity Hub | 19:00 | The Hub |
| <i>Mon</i> | <i>28-Jul</i> | <i>Ministerial Vacancy Begins</i> | | |
| Mon | 28-Jul | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Yoon Seok Shin (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 29-Jul | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 30-Jul | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Erina Ishiyama (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 31-Jul | Midweek Worship led by Penny Flynn | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 31-Jul | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 01-Aug | Lectio Divina | 08:30 | Zoom |
| Sun | 03-Aug | Sunday Worship led by members of the World Church & Public Issues Group | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 03-Aug | Hazel's Group lunch in Hub | 12:30 | The Hub |
| Sun | 03-Aug | Open Table Social | 19:00 | Zoom |
| Mon | 04-Aug | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Mariko Terashi (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 05-Aug | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|--------|---|-------|-----------------------|
| Wed | 06-Aug | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Charlotte Leeder (soprano) and Ilga Pitkevica (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 07-Aug | Midweek Worship led by Dr Alan Rickard | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 07-Aug | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 08-Aug | Summer House Group | 15:00 | Rooms 1 & 2 |
| Sun | 10-Aug | Sunday Worship led by the Revd David Cornick | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 10-Aug | Solidarity Hub | 14:00 | TBC |
| Mon | 11-Aug | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Clara Sherratt (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 12-Aug | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 13-Aug | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Judy Hung (piano & violin) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 14-Aug | Prayer Meeting | 10:15 | St Columba's Chapel |
| Thu | 14-Aug | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Professor David Thompson | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 14-Aug | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 15-Aug | Summer House Group | 14:00 | rooms 1 & 2 |
| Sun | 17-Aug | Sunday Worship followed by a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 17-Aug | Open Table Communion Service | 19:00 | Church |
| Mon | 18-Aug | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Jane Bower (narration and live illustrations) & Ian de Massini (organ) | 13:00 | Church |
| Tue | 19-Aug | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|--------|---|-------|-----------------------|
| Wed | 20-Aug | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Jingshu Zhao & Haoyue Liang (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 21-Aug | Midweek Worship led by the Revd Dr Janet Tollington | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 21-Aug | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 22-Aug | Summer House Group | 14:00 | Rooms 1 & 2 |
| Fri | 22-Aug | Meditation Group | 17:30 | Emmanuel Room |
| Sun | 24-Aug | Sunday Worship led by the Revd Mark Burleigh | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 24-Aug | Solidarity Hub | 19:00 | The Hub |
| Mon | 25-Aug | NO MONDAY LUNCHTIME CONCERT (Bank Holiday) | 13:00 | |
| Tue | 26-Aug | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 27-Aug | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Alice Bishop (soprano) & Timothy Peake (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 28-Aug | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Elizabeth Caswell | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 28-Aug | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Fri | 29-Aug | Summer House Group | 14:00 | Rooms 1 & 2 |
| Sun | 31-Aug | Sunday Worship led by members of the Worship, Discipleship & Spirituality Group | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 31-Aug | Solidarity Hub | 19:00 | tbc |
| Mon | 01-Sep | Officers' Meeting | 10:15 | Minister's Office |
| Mon | 01-Sep | Monday Lunchtime Concert - Neil Crossland (piano) | 13:00 | Church |
| Mon | 01-Sep | Worship Group Meeting | 19:30 | Zoom |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|--------|--|-------|-----------------------|
| Tue | 02-Sep | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 14:30 | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 03-Sep | Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Mifune Tsuji Trio | 13:00 | Church |
| Thu | 04-Sep | Midweek Worship led by Dr Janet Bottoms | 11:00 | Church |
| Thu | 04-Sep | Knit One Give One | 13:30 | The Hub |
| Sun | 07-Sep | Choir Rehearsals Begin | 10:00 | Church |
| Sun | 07-Sep | Sunday Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Elizabeth Caswell | 11:00 | Church |
| Sun | 07-Sep | Open Table Social | 19:00 | Hub |

DOWNING PLACE URC CHOIR

Sunday 20 July will be the final rehearsal before the summer break,
We recommence on Sunday 7 September



NIGEL'S RETIREMENT

Cambridge Voices with Pippa Jones will be giving a concert on July 19th at 4pm to raise money for Turtle Dove, finishing around 5.15pm. There will be music by Byrd, Franck, Bach, Saint Saens and others. There will be a retiring collection for Turtle Dove. All are welcome.

July 27th is Nigel's final service and will include Holy Communion. On this occasion, communion will be served from the front of the church, with all coming forward to receive the elements, or a blessing from Nigel. For those who are less mobile, an elder will come to serve them in their seats.

Pippa

MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

| | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| 6 July | Chris Baker Janet Tollington | Wicken Methodist Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford |
| 13 July | Deborah McVey Janet Tollington Nigel Uden | Sawston Free Church Trinity, Burwell Fulbourn |
| 20 July | Chris Baker David Tatem Janet Tollington | Melbourn Bassingbourn St Andrew's Peterborough |
| 27 July | Chris Baker Janet Tollington | Trinity, Burwell Buntingford |
| 3 August | Penny Flynn Deborah McVey Janet Tollington | Bassingbourn St Luke's LEP Melbourn |
| 10 August | Liz Caswell Deborah McVey Janet Tollington | Fulbourn Trinity, Burwell Saffron Walden |
| 17 August | Liz Caswell | Bassingbourn |
| 24 August | Penny Flynn David Thompson Janet Tollington | Melbourn St Luke's LEP Fulbourn (am) |
| 31 August | David Cornick Penny Flynn Janet Tollington | Buntingford Sawston Stowmarket |

LECTIONARY FOR JULY & AUGUST

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.

6 July (Trinity 3)

2 Kings 5:1-14

Psalms 66:1-9

Galatians 6:(1-6),7-16

Luke 10:1-11,16-20

3 August (Trinity 7)

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

Psalms 49:1-12

Colossians 3:1-11

Luke 12:13-21

13 July (Trinity 4)

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

Psalms 25:1-10

Colossians 1:1-14

Luke 10:25-37

10 August (Trinity 8)

Genesis 15:1-6

Psalms 33:12-22

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Luke 12:32-40

20 July (Trinity 5)

Genesis 18:1-10a

Psalms 15

Colossians 1:15-28

Luke 10:38-42

17 August (Trinity 9)

Jeremiah 23:23-29

Psalms 82

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

Luke 12:49-56

27 July (Trinity 6)

Genesis 18:20-32

Psalms 138

Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)

Luke 11:1-13

24 August (Trinity 10)

Isaiah 58:9b-14

Psalms 103:1-8

Hebrews 12:18-29

Luke 13:10-17

31 August (Trinity 11)

Proverbs 25:6-7

or Sirach 10:12-18

Psalms 112

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Luke 14:1, 7-14

7 September (Trinity 12)

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalms 1

Philemon 1-21

Luke 14:25-33



Photograph by Stillvision photography



Flowers for Freda Bradbury by Rosemary Johnston

Photograph by Jess Uden

MAGAZINE EDITOR: Tim Rowland

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:
Please send items to Tim Rowland

WEB EDITOR: Jess Uden

Please send items for the next edition to Tim by Wednesday 20 August.