

New Road Baptist Church

The Church in Bonn Square



*praying and working
for the peace of the city*

CHURCH MAGAZINE

JAN-APRIL 2018

PEACE to the CITY

is
The vision and prayer of New Road Baptist Church, Oxford
Located in the centre of the city, in Bonn Square,
this congregation is committed to
praying and working
for the peace and well-being of the city
through worship, witness and service .

This vision and mission is based on the Good News that "Christ is our Peace".

In Christ

a new relationship has been opened up between humanity and God
breaking down the wall of contempt between people
and all things in heaven and on earth are being reconciled into God - who is the source and end of all life.

Practically this means that in this place, where a congregation has met for over 350 years:

The peace of God, Father Son and Holy Spirit,
is explored and experienced in worship
is celebrated and deepened through life together in community and
is lived out in costly acts of compassion and hospitality

All are welcome.

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you
Wherever he may send you.*

*May he guide you through the wilderness
protect you through the storm.*

*May he bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders he has shown you.*

*May he bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.*

(Celtic Blessing copyright: Northumbrian community Trust)



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From Paul Hernandez

Dear Friends, welcome to the latest edition of the church magazine the first for 2018.

So much has happened since the early autumn when we had our last edition. As our former Minister Revd Kat Bracewell left us for Windsor, we are now seeking a new church minister. Since the summer, we have appointed Rev Wale Hudson-Roberts as our moderator.

The events continue which you can see via the latest church website.

We have had the church anniversary as well as Christmas and now we move to Lent and soon it will be Easter. Sadly, we lost our dear friend and organist John Woodward.

With a new year, there are new possibilities so I pray that you will enjoy the latest articles for the current newsletter.

Praying Lent This Year



Lent Reflections by Paul Hernandez

As of this writing, we find ourselves in the middle of the period of lent in the run up to Easter. How are you preparing for this? If you are like me you've probably given up your favourite food or drink. But of course this is just one part of the lenten calendar. I enjoy the different prayers, reflections and devotions associated with this part of the Christian season starting with Ash Wednesday right up to holy week culminating in Easter Sunday which falls on 1st April 2018. I see lent as the chance to grow closer to God and be thankful for all He has given us. After all, in the Lord's prayer we pray give us our daily bread. One theologian the Rev Dr Scott Stoner, Director of Living Compass Faith and Wellness Ministry recently wrote about how he helps his congregation begin preparations:

"Lent is a time for introspection and self-reflection, a time to reflect on the core of what it means to live a Christian life. And there is nothing more central to that life than loving—loving with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind.

For people of faith, love is not an abstract or feel-good concept, but an urgent call to radically incarnate love in how we relate to God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

Their diverse and rich voices encourage us to understand that in order to prepare for the new life of Easter, we need to be intentional about discerning what it truly means to both give and receive love with our whole being. "

I agree with Dr Stoner. It is in gathering together that we can share our reflections and insights about the significance of the cross in what Christ did for humanity. He did this out of love for us (John 3:16-17) an important event as we journey through lent to Easter.

It is my prayer that in this season of tent we find ourselves in God's presence and His love overflows on us so as to help us live an abundant life.

JOHN WOODWARD

John was born in Oxford in 1949, to Albert and Ivy, the youngest of 4 children. Both his parents, and both sets of grandparents were members of New Road along with myriad aunts, uncles and cousins. He had a happy childhood and along with his brother and sisters attended New Road from the beginning of his life. John's faith and the church, and this one in particular, were a very important part of his life. He was brought here as an infant for dedication and was baptised here as a young man in 1967. Before he died he had recently told a close friend that he had never felt alone due to God's unfailing presence.

John served this church in so many ways as a deacon, recorder, fabric steward, pianist and organist. As a young man he taught in the Sunday school and led the young people's group. He loved music from a young age and learned the piano, was head choirboy at St Cross Church in Holywell, and sang in the New Road choir after his voice broke. He joined the Oxford Operatic society and sang in many Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. But his passion was always church choral and organ music, and eventually he learned to play the church organ much later in his life, taught by Peter Reynolds. He had a great feeling for accompanying hymns in a sensitive way, and loved the Trumpet stop, especially for Easter and Christmas services.

John left school at 17, he loved helping in the garden and greenhouse at home and had hoped to make horticulture his lifelong career. His dad thought otherwise!! He joined the family business, then later joined the Civil Service Commission in London. He returned to Oxford after his father died in 1969.

At this time John felt he was called to the Baptist ministry, he commenced theological studies and became a lay preacher. Alas his required Greek exams were unsuccessful and he was not able to pursue this calling, but he remained a lay preacher for many years. We met through the young people's fellowship and married in 1974. We had a very happy marriage, highlighted by spending time with our extended family and friends; Christmas was always a very special time of year with ever increasing numbers of lights featuring both at home and at church.

In 1996 John left the Civil Service and had the opportunity to train at Pershore Horticulture College to finally fulfil a life dream to train and work as a gardener, gaining his certificate in 1997. He was an artist, whether it was in garden design, floristry, flower arranging or sugar craft - he could turn his hand to most practical skills and had such an eye for the beauty nature provided. He loved the garden in the Cotswolds he helped design, and found working there brought him enormous peace. He loved the snowdrops in early Spring and said to me earlier last year;

“They are such brave plants, they take such a battering and are so fragile when they appear through the ground, but even through the harsh winter weather, they push up and are so delicate, yet very strong. The wind never blows them over or snaps the stems” Sounds familiar?

Hills, mountains and travel had always been a significant part of his life's journey. From the wonderful Cotswolds and picnic Sundays at White Horse Hill, to the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, the crags and peaks in Hong Kong, glimpses of Mt Blanc from Verbier and Geneva, and above all “that mountain” in Cairns in Far North Queensland.

One of John's proudest achievements was climbing Sydney Harbour Bridge – he had no head for heights at all, but was determined to make the climb and did so with his usual stoicism. The view was spectacular!

Like us all, John climbed many smaller hills in his lifetime, but he climbed the mountain of his life following his cardiac surgery and complications, four years ago, with such courage, inner strength, calm and determination, to achieve a miraculous recovery.

When his cancer was diagnosed he accepted it with his usual grace and courage.

He approached his final ghastly illness with his same stoicism, until he could climb no more.

He died in October 2017.

“Though hills and high mountains shall tremble,
Though all that is seen melt away,
Thy voice shall in triumph assemble
Thy loved ones at the dawning of day”

Erica Woodward February 2018



Baptist together News 24th January 2018 to 2nd February 2018 by Debbie Rooke.

The loneliness of the long distance carer

A recent study explored the lives of churchgoing carers of people with dementia – and revealed several lessons for churches

What's mindful worship?

It's wider than any style, says a Baptist minister - and has the potential to revolutionise and reform church worship

Look before you tweet!

What would Jesus say to Donald Trump, Theresa May, Mark Zuckerberg ... ?

'Because I try and write from a place of honesty, my faith comes through in the poetry'

World champion slam poet Harry Baker on his journey from shy teenager to confident performer... and his faith

Looking for a new resource to help you journey through Lent?

Our reviewers assess some of the latest titles

Reviews:

The Explorer by Katherine Rundell

The winner of the Costa Children's Book Award for 2017 will slow your soul and make your heart beat faster.

Songs of the Spirit by Megan Daffern

No better way to journey through Lent than to root our prayer life in the Psalms - and Daffern is a wise guide.

The Art of Lent: A painting a day from Ash Wednesday to Easter by Sister Wendy Beckett

This beautiful, pocket size book is the perfect gift for those who are on the fringes of church as well as for those who want to explore alternative and creative ways of praying around the spiritual themes of Lent and Easter.



Janet's story

"If TaC (Teach a Child - Africa) had not selected me, I still don't know where I would be now and what would have happened to me."

"I had no hope of continuing my secondary education because my mum had nothing that could support my schooling." Janet Achienge's family grew up in poverty, lacking even a paraffin lamp that Janet could use to study in the evening. She often went without food when funds were low. Her dream was always to work hard and to go to a good secondary school, but it seemed as though she would never afford it.

Luckily, TaC was able to step in to help Janet achieve her ambitions. Janet is currently at Moi University, studying a bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery. Graduating in 2022, Janet hopes to become a doctor and start her own clinic in her local community. This represents just one of the long-term goals that TaC can accomplish through providing a determined individual with an education.

A multiplier effect in the region is able to occur, with educated students providing services to the local population that may never have been accessible otherwise. Janet, by hopefully beginning her own clinic in the local area, will not only improve healthcare, but employ residents from the province. A localised approach that prizes the importance of community helps to prevent a "brain drain" of young students, discouraging them from moving away from the region after they have graduated. Janet's story reflects the long-term impacts TaC has on the local community.

Janet says herself that "knowledge from school helped [her] to fit in different communities." She can now better integrate with different cultures and people. At university, there are far more opportunities accessible for her than in the small province she grew up in.

Moreover, in Kenya, girls account for 59% of the total illiterate youth population. By encouraging young women like Janet to pursue an education, TaC takes steps towards decreasing the disparity between men and women enrolling in schools, especially in rural areas. Educated women are more likely to marry at a later age and have fewer children, meaning fewer dependents on the household. **If you wish to sponsor a child like Janet through secondary school, visit Teach A Child -Africa www.tac-africa.uk or speak with David or Pamela Steele or email dsteale@tac-africa.org**

Perhaps most importantly, however, are the personal developments of the student as a result of TaC's funding. Janet says: "If TaC had not selected me, I still don't know where I would be now and what would have happened to me." She may never have become the confident, gifted and driven person she is today.

If you wish to sponsor a child like Janet through secondary school, visit 'Teach a Child - Africa' at www.tac-africa.uk or speak with David or Pam Steele, or email dsteale@tac-africa.org.

Oxford Street Pastors

THE CHURCH *IN ACTION* on the streets of Oxford

The Oxford Street Pastors are a group of volunteers from all Christian denominations who care about their community and take the opportunity to continue the work of Jesus by engaging with people directly on the street. We send a team of people out in Oxford each Saturday night and also the Friday after pay day each month, usually from just after ten pm to around four am, with the aim of helping wherever the need arises. When we go out onto the streets of Oxford, we carry practical items such as flip flops, water, emergency blankets and lollipops. We are willing to engage with people whatever their perspective on life and wherever they hang out and our help is usually very much appreciated in return. Street Pastoring takes place all over the UK and indeed many other parts of the world. It was started in London by Les Isaac in 1993 and since then has grown into a movement involving over 12,000 volunteers throughout the UK. The Street Pastors have three main aims:

To care – about our community

To listen – to anyone who needs to talk

To help – practically, emotionally and spiritually.

Oxford Street Pastors was started in 2010. We currently have a team of 26 and are very happy to welcome more volunteers into our group. New Street Pastors can be anyone who has been committed to a church fellowship for at least one year and they complete a number of training courses which take place on Saturdays or during weekday evenings in the locality. These courses cover subjects such as mental health and issues around drugs and alcohol, and undertaking these courses means that we are better equipped to help others.

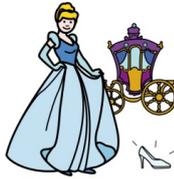
If you think you may be interested in Street Pastoring, you are very welcome to come out and observe one of our Friday or Saturday night shifts. We are also grateful for donations as these help to ensure that our work can continue.

Our contact details are: streetpastoroxford@gmail.com

Or you can phone our Coordinator, Petra Turner, on 07910 758363



Nuggets from the Mint House (Oxford Centre for Restorative Practice) By Dr Rosie Chadwick

	<p>We're consulting with local partners about the practicalities of our proposed 'Morning After the Night Before' project. This project aims to offer restorative options when a night out in Oxford goes off the rails. A highly experienced restorative justice specialist (Linda King) is helping us with this. Linda will report back to the Mint House Board in March, at which point watch this space!</p>
	<p>Thanks to everyone who raided their cupboards and/or collected items that we've gone on to sell on EBay. Thanks, too, to Poon for the magnificent curry that made our autumn quiz night and to everyone who pitted their wits on the Christmas quiz. At the last count our income from fundraising in 2017 was a mighty £981.</p>
	<p>Cinderella: Who knew you could feel sympathy for the wicked stepmother? That was one result of the fairytale-themed restorative conference facilitated by Kat at our January network event. Kat deliberately chose a familiar story so we could quickly get into our roles and look at what had caused the conflict and how it could be put right. Everybody left with a new perspective.</p>

Coming up....

	<p>Restorative practice and student discipline and welfare We'll shortly be holding our second training session for college junior deans and others involved with student discipline and welfare, looking at how restorative approaches can prevent conflicts from arising and help resolve them when they do. More intensive training will follow in the summer for 'graduates' of the first two courses.</p>
	<p>Our lunch time network event on 22 February will hear first hand from someone with first-hand experience of restorative justice. On 23 March we hope to be joined by Kevin Hood, a visiting academic, who'll be talking about restorative practice in Canada.</p>
	<p>Rev Prof Michael Taylor, who recently joined us a trustee, is researching what it means to be a restorative city. We hope this will help us help Oxford on its way!</p>
	<p>The Charlton Living Legacy Fund generously awarded us a final tranche of funds to employ a centre manager. Once we've mapped out what's needed for the 'Morning After' project we hope to press the button on recruitment...Meanwhile, please let us know if you know someone who might help us as treasurer, or with social media.</p>

He is... **By Janice Laidlaw**

He is all the dawns of summers,
Birds clattering orange beaks, feet, feathers,
In joyful song,

He is lifetimes, all puzzles' disguised,
Woven into plaits,
In one simple triune rhyme.

He is all the endings of love wrapped up,
Ecstatic angles dancing,
Ribbons of oneness

All gifts wholly assured.

He is all the cells of mind and body,
A transitioning perfume
In a wide-awake slumber of bliss

He is all of this. And more.

He is sparks and sapphire
Above a watching world,
Verdant lawns and shrubs,
Bulbs and buds,
Silver waters and webs,
Miracles from savannah lions,
To commonplace flies and tadpole eggs,

He is everyman/woman's breath
From every walk sipped,
From the winds of endless space;
The fine, the ice, the elemental earth,
Entrusted.

What shall we do to say 'thank you'?

The roar, the chirrup.,
Even the buzzing lauds His name

As the tadpole matures, leaves the lily, to take it's own form of flight with
Him,
So let us strive to do the same.

Future events for your diary in 2018

Debbie Rooke is running on 23rd March 2018 in Israel in aid of the Bethlehem Trust, a charity helping local Palestinians. We wish her well in her latest marathon.

Oxford Mail Ox5 charity Run 2018 in aid of the Oxford Children's hospital on 25th March 2018 at Blenheim Palace. (Ps Yes I'm taking part as a runner so wish me luck, too!)

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday 29th March, 30th March and 1st April 2018. See service sheet for details

Spring Harvest 2018 in Skegness 2nd to 6th April 2018. This year's theme is *ONLY THE BRAVE*

Collections for Christian Aid week 14th -18th May 2018. If you wish to volunteer collecting at Oxford Railway Station between 7.30am-9.30am and 5-7pm, please see David Potts for more details.

Oxford Art Week exhibition, workshops refreshments and talks from Thursday 17th May 2018 to Sunday 20th May 2018. Mike Lowe and Richard Kidd have agreed to lead us through these sessions. Once again volunteers are needed over the four days so please see Marion Fiddes. The sales are going to Freese, Kolkata through the "Painting for Freedom" charity. See <http://www.paintingforfreedom.co.uk>

New Road Baptist Church
Bonn Square
Oxford
OX1 1LQ

www.newroad.org.uk

01865 798235

Sunday service: 10.30 am
Crèche and Junior Church
Tea and Coffee afterwards

Weekday Church: 11.00am—2.00pm
Drop in for a cuppa, a chat or
quiet reflection

Minister: Vacancy

Church Administrator: Richard Haggis
(Weekdays 0900-2pm)
officenewroadbaptist@yahoo.co.uk
01865 798235

Church secretary: Dr Rosie Chadwick

Church treasurer: John Chadwick
john.chadwickofardington@hotmail.co.uk
01235 832619

Magazine editor: Paul Hernandez

Please let me have articles by 30th April 2018

