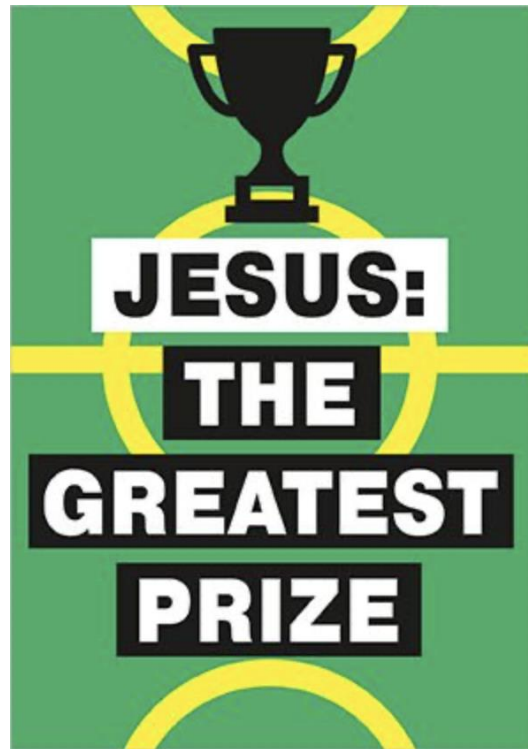




**Hertford**

Cowbridge SG14 1PG



**JULY 2024**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**We aim to be an active Christian Church open to all, meeting together for worship, teaching and prayer and offering loving care and support to all. We work alongside other Christian Churches reaching out into the Community with love**

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Dear friends,

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that God who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

(Philippians 1:3-6)

Reflecting on our shared journey, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunities we have had to grow together in faith and community. This year has been a challenge and a testament to our collective effort and the ways we have partnered in the Gospel. We have much to praise God for and many reasons to pray.

Our endeavours this year tell only part of the story. My report will highlight just a few of the reasons we have to come together in prayer, in praise, and in partnership.

One of our significant efforts was to engage with young people and families in Cheshunt to establish a youth program within the church. We were blessed to have the Synod Children's and Youth Development Officer join us, and I had the privilege of meeting with the families to plan this vision. A youth-led service at Cheshunt was a remarkable moment, showcasing the potential within our young people. However, the program was put on hold due to the relocation of one family due to work commitments and the subsequent departure of another. We remain hopeful and open to where God will lead us next in ministering to youth and families.

New leadership has also emerged within our congregation at Cheshunt. Two members have stepped forward to serve as church leaders. The church has passed a resolution supporting their leadership, and both the Local Area Group (LAG) and Synod have recommended them for training. They will be formally commended for this journey at our next LAG meeting. We ask for your prayers as they prepare for this vital role.

In Broxbourne, our church community continues to move forward. We have received three requests for baptism, which remind us of God's work in drawing people to faith. Our weekly events provide spaces for togetherness and spiritual growth, and our junior church is flourishing. We are thankful to all who help make this a safe and

enjoyable space for the young people. This year, we had the joy of welcoming a new member to our church family by baptism. As our children grow, we must prepare to meet their evolving needs, ensuring our programs and support adapt accordingly. We are now actively seeking new ways to engage with the young people.

At Hertford, we have appointed a local firm of accountants to manage the church accounts, relieving our devoted, long-serving treasurer of this responsibility. The launch of a bowls club has provided a new way for members to connect, and our Thursday open house continues to be a welcoming space for all. The food bank hub remains a crucial service, providing essential support to those in need.

We have celebrated two baptisms conducted by one of our committed worship leaders. Additionally, our efforts to reach out to a local school have been fruitful, and we are working to establish closer ties and a collaborative relationship with the school. This partnership opens new avenues for outreach and ministry.

This year, we also successfully appointed our Pastorate Church Administrator, who has hit the ground running. Their hard work and dedication have already made a significant impact on our daily operations and ministry effectiveness.

Our elders have been working tirelessly, and their dedication has been instrumental in sustaining our church activities and ministries. I am very thankful for their work. However, as you know, they are extremely stretched, and we need more people to answer the call and step forward to help with this important work that God is calling us to. Has God been calling you? It's time to answer the call. Your involvement and support are crucial as we continue to serve our community and fulfil our mission.

All these endeavours, along with our Pastorate conference in February, have led us to our 2024-2025 initiative: HARMONY. Harmony signifies the essence of forming a pleasing and consistent whole, agreement, and unity. Spiritually, it means living in peace and accord with others, especially within the community of believers. As we move forward with this initiative, let us strive to embody harmony in all that we do, reflecting the love and unity that Christ calls us to.

Thank you for your faithfulness, your prayers, and your dedication to our church community. Let us continue to seek God's guidance, support one another, and reach out in love to those around us.

May the Holy Spirit empower us to be a beacon of hope and a testament to God's enduring love.

Blessings,  
Mark



***Baptism of Jaxon Harrington Francis-Thorne.***

We were delighted to welcome the family and friends of Jaxon to witness and celebrate his Baptism on Sunday 23rd June, conducted by John Ellis, one of our committed worship leaders.

This photo shows Megan presenting a Children's Bible and Baptism Candle.

Art drop-in afternoon

Wednesday 17th July

1.45 - 3.30 pm at Broxbourne URC

Come along to relax creatively, no cost, just time to explore

Organised by Jill Nugent

**News from Hertford & District Churches Together:**

A well-attended meeting of representatives from most of the Hertford Churches was held on Monday 3rd June. As well as hearing updates and reports of local events and organisations, here are some points of interest:

- It was decided to give the following amounts: £500 to Christmas Alone in Ware (this includes money that was still held by Hertford Christmas Alone and now Hertford Residents are also included in the Ware Christmas Alone); £300 to Street Pastors Hertford and Ware; £300 to FutureHope; £300 to Young Life Hertford.
- **Possible event next Summer/Autumn.** We would like to use the new Hertford Theatre (Beam) probably in August or early September 2025.

The aim of this would be to invite friends to an event where there would be some Christian content e.g. testimony/talk/discussion/music. This could be a Christian comedian, band, theatre group etc. One suggestion was Tom Elliott, a comedy magician. This would mean HDCT organising and supporting it together, so we would need commitment from the Churches. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please contact Fran or Alison Tyler at Hertford Community Church.

- **Daily Prayer for the Earth and Climate Café:** Two events continue to happen in Hertford. The Daily Prayer for the Earth takes place at midday each day in Salisbury Square. A prayer or poem is read and then a short period of silent reflection. People are invited to join as often or as little as they would like. The Climate Cafe takes place on the first Thursday of each month at 7pm in the Quaker Meeting Room 50 Railway Street Hertford. Again this is a time of reflection and prayer for the earth.
- **Hertford Eco Fest:** The churches have been invited by the Town Council to participate in this. It will take place from 14<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September. There will be an event at Hertford Castle on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September. More information about this particular event is being sought to see if the Churches could have a stand or stall there. Churches are being encouraged to put on events at their buildings to 'raise awareness of the small changes we can all make to reduce our carbon footprint and save money'.

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***Some things God won't ask us to do: - from Cheryl***

- God won't ask what car we drive but if we gave lifts to people who didn't have a car.
- God won't ask how big our house was but how many people we welcomed into it.
- God won't ask how many clothes we had but how many people we helped to clothe.
- God won't ask which diet we were on but how many people we helped to feed.
- God won't ask how many friends we had but how many people we've been a friend to.
- God won't ask our job title but if we've worked to the best of our ability.
- God won't ask how much money we earned but how we used it.
- God won't look at how beautiful we were on the outside but what we're like inside.
- God won't ask if we succeeded but if we tried.

## **Swift Boxes**



A very swift decision from the Elders was called for last Monday. The church was asked if we were willing to have some swift boxes installed on our church premises arising from a local talk on swifts in Hertford last Friday. These were also being installed next door (Bob Hill's) on Wednesday 25th June as they have nested there before. So a quick decision had to be made to have a survey and then agree to them being installed on the same day. So we now have six boxes and will also be lent a "swift caller" who will encourage the birds to nest. Literally – watch this space!



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## **General Election....**

### **Going to the Country**

*Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ... For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities ... Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour. (Romans 13)*

### **When will you go to bed on 4<sup>th</sup> July?**

This month we have a chance to vote for our Members of Parliament, and the leader of the party that can command a majority will form the government. There is a concern that 'voter engagement' is low, meaning that we are not very interested any more. The turnout at the 2019 General Election was

67.3% which was slightly up from 2015. The lowest turnout in a General Election was recorded in 1918 at 57.2%, due to the end of the First World War.

Between 1922 and 1997 turnout remained above 71%. At the 2001 General Election the turnout was 59.4%. For people under the age of forty it is much less.

Should we be concerned? Voting turnout has been fairly stable since 1918 at between 60% and 70%. The numbers that vote in this country are similar to most other countries.

For the first time at a UK general election, those voting at a polling station will need to show photo ID. Voters should check now if they have an accepted form of ID, and if not to apply for free ID, called the [Voter Authority Certificate](#).

To answer my own question, I am not sure when I go to bed on election night. I do not always stay up all night. Election excitement begins to wane in the early hours! Politics seems to be a spectator sport for most of us. We enjoy the shocks and surprises and the live results when the spotlight is a constituency.

The Christian teaching on politics is clear. We should respect those in authority and admire those who seek it. Most people enter politics for good reasons. Perhaps we should remind them they are God's servants.

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### **General Election expressions and terms**

***Here are words and phrases we use at this time and explanations on how they started.***

**Poll** – Again from about 1300, originally meaning a single head, then counting heads, from about 1620s.

**Parliament** – This comes from French meaning a conference or assembly. Dates from around 1300.

**Vote** – Comes from Latin votum “a vow, wish, promise to a god, solemn pledge, dedication.”

**Going to the country** – A phrase from end of 18<sup>th</sup> Century, meaning to call for a General Election and test the mood in the country.

**Canvass** – This originally meant to sift things in a sheet, and then to examine items carefully, then “solicit votes or test support before an election” (1550s).

**Hustings** – From about 1720, it means a temporary platform from which, previous to the Ballot Act of 1872, the nomination of candidates for Parliament was made, and on which these stood while addressing the electors.

**Ballot** – From late 16<sup>th</sup> Century, meaning a box in which balls or pebbles are put to indicate votes.

**Mondeo man** – After the Ford Mondeo, a family car, popularised by a phrase used at a party conference in 1996, though the vehicle mentioned was actually a Ford Sierra. It means the average voter who wants to better themselves and their families.

**Swingometer** – Do you remember when television graphics were simple? This was a device consisting of a dial with a movable pointer, used to demonstrate (on television) how a likely or observable ‘swing’ should influence the outcome of an election. From 1965.

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## **Prime Ministers**

Britain had its first Prime Minister (PM) in 1721 when Sir Robert Walpole took the job; he was a Whig. In total thus far we have had 81 Prime Ministers; this excludes First Ministers and doesn't count separately an existing PM who wins the election and continues in office. If s/he loses but subsequently wins another term, each term is counted separately.

We have had 56 different people as Prime Ministers.

The longest serving one was Sir Robert Walpole, who was PM for 21 years. In length he was followed by the Tory William Pitt the Younger in 1783, then by Robert Jenkinson, the Earl of Liverpool in 1812, also a Tory. These are the first three of PMs who have served over 7 years.

There were 16 PMs in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, 33 in the 19<sup>th</sup>, 25 in the 20<sup>th</sup> and so far seven in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Labour and the early Tories had slightly more time in office than the number of Prime Ministers *pro rata*. Rishi Sunak is the first British Asian Prime Minister.

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**This month sees the start of the Olympic Games in Paris. In describing the Christian life as a marathon race, the writer of Hebrews (12:1-2) challenges us to finish well.**

***‘throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles’ (1)***

As in a normal race, we have to get rid of any burdens that weigh us down (eg possessions, worries, what others think of us) and besetting sins (wrong habits or attitudes). We can cast our burdens on the Lord (Ps 55:22) and be assured of His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).



***'run with perseverance the race marked out for us' (1)*** The Christian life is like a marathon not a sprint race, which calls for endurance. The course is *marked out* for us, as we all have a unique race to run, with its opportunities and difficulties. God knows our path and will provide all that we need to complete the race.

***'fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith' (2)***

The runner keeps their focus on the finishing line and avoids all distractions. Our focus is on Jesus, who has run the race before us (*'author'*), but is the one who can show us how to finish well (*'perfecter'*). We are also surrounded by a ***'great cloud of witnesses' (1)***. These are God's people, both past and present, who are cheering us on!

During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, the British athlete Derek Redmond was running in the 400 metres semi-finals. About 250 metres from the finish his hamstring tore and he fell to the ground in pain. However, his father ran on to the track to support him in completing the race. Let's not forget that whatever we face, God is there beside to enable us to finish the race. The Christian life is like a marathon not a sprint race, which calls for endurance. The course is *marked out* for us, as we all have a unique race to run, with its opportunities and difficulties. God knows our path and will provide all that we need to complete the race.

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*Now for the gentler sport of.....*

### **Short-Mat Bowls**

Unfortunately there have been a few hold-ups with getting our bowls sessions to happen on a regular basis and this will in fact prove equally the case until the Autumn. With people away and bowlers who have already expressed an interest in the middle of their Lawn bowls season, it is a difficult time to get going. Lawn bowls ends at the end of September and this will be the time to have a really big push to encourage new people from outside the church to come and join us. In the meantime, Bob and I will be there on most Thursdays in July, not the 18th though as we are doing some grandparent duties for a couple of days.

Also because of this, Hot Potato Lunch will happen on the last Thursday in July the 25th. Hope you will be able to come along and join in. I shall be purchasing some bowls that are more suitable for short-mat play and we will eventually be able to store all these in a cupboard in the hall corridor that has been used in the past for DIY equipment and paints.

Fran

<b>JULY 2024</b>			
Wed	3	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer Meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches
Thurs	4	10.00 am	Open house Coffee Morning & Short-Mat Bowling Session
<b>Sun</b>	7	10.30 am	Morning Worship Led by our Minister Rev Mark Robinson with Holy Communion
Wed	10	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer Meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches
Thurs	11	10.00 am	Open house Coffee Morning & Short-Mat Bowling Session
<b>Sun</b>	14	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev. Martin Legg
Wed	17	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer Meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches
Thurs	18	10.00 am 7.30 pm	Open House Coffee Morning (Hot Potato Lunch next week) Local Area Group Meeting at Winchmore Hill in person
<b>Sun</b>	21	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Christine Hall from Ponders Ends URC
Wed	24	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer Meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches
Thurs	25	7.30 pm	Open House Coffee Morning & Short-Mat Bowling followed by Hot Potato Lunch – all welcome
<b>Sun</b>	28	10.30 am	Worship led by Martin Bird from All Saints Church Hertford
Wed	31	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer Meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches

***Foodbank opens on Monday, Wednesday and Friday Mornings 10-11 am and on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 10.30 –11.30 am at the Priory, Ware.***

***Enquiries 07851 708470***

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