



**August 2024**

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There is much talk of AI—mostly it centres around it as a threat to our mastery of technology. I hadn't knowingly come across AI until the creation of this edition of the church magazine. Each time I copied one of Dorothy Blatcher's photographs on to the page I was offered a helpful suggestion for a caption. 'A group of people sitting around a table' or 'a group of ladies sitting at a table'. I feel reassured. If that is as close as AI can get to describing the photos then it is disappointingly limited. No reference to the delicious food! The people sitting at the tables had all given permission to be photographed and were happy for the photos to be printed—do ask if there is anyone you don't recognise.

Dear friends,  
Prayer is a powerful tool!  
We know that almost all of us have found ourselves wanting to pray at some time in our lives. How do you pray: in silence, out loud, with activity, or some other way? Often, we pray during times of crisis, seeking something from God—whether material, physical, or spiritual. While this is a common view of prayer, it is much deeper than that. Prayer stems from recognising our need for a close, abiding relationship with The Almighty, our Maker. This relationship reveals the true value of prayer, benefiting not just ourselves but others as well.

Prayer can take many forms. Silent prayer, aligning our thoughts with God's Will, can be comforting and healing. Praying out loud can be a source of strength. Incorporating our prayers into our daily activities and connecting with God amidst the busyness of life can keep us connected to God through all we do. Each form is valid and valuable, reflecting our unique ways of building a relationship with God and seeking the well-being of family, friends, and neighbours.

During times of crisis—illness, financial hardship, or emotional struggles—we naturally turn to God for help. While seeking God's help in prayer is important, prayer is not merely a tool for crisis management. It deepens our connection with God, helping us see God's presence in both good and challenging times. Remember, while prayer is not always answered in the way we expect, it is answered in accordance with the Will of God and for the good of the situation.

As people of faith, we are called to hold events, situations, issues, and people in prayer. We bring these to God not just because it is right, but because it nurtures our relationship with God and is a powerful tool of transformation and healing. Scripture shows that God desires an abiding relationship with us. It is God who

makes the first steps toward us, speaks to us, and we respond through prayer and action.

Intercessory prayer, or praying on behalf of others, is a profound act of love and compassion. When we pray for others, we lift their needs to God and acknowledge our interconnectedness as children of God. This practice comforts those in need and strengthens our own faith, reminding us of God's power and presence in our lives. As a pastorate, we meet online every Wednesday evening for prayer, and I invite you, if you are able, to join this important gathering. It is a time of communal strength and shared faith, and your presence would be a blessing.

Prayer is vital to me, and I am certain it is to all of us. Belief in the power of prayer is not misplaced; it is faith in God's power and what God has done and is doing for us through Jesus Christ. Even when we don't know what to say and we sit, stand, or walk in silence, God hears us.

"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27)

Let us pray: Our Father in heaven, may Your name be forever honoured and praised, may Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Blessings,  
Mark

Look out for messages based on the idea of Harmony as shown here.



## HARMONY

*The essence of forming a pleasing and consistent whole; agreement or unity. Spiritually, it signifies living in peace and accord with others, especially within the community of believers.*

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. (Romans 12:16)

## Worship this month



<b>Aug</b> 4th 10.30 am	Brox URC	All age believers' baptism—Maeve and Isaac Revd Mark Robinson
11th 10.30am	Brox URC	All age service Dorothy Blatcher
18th 10.30am	Brox URC	All age service with Communion Chris Hall
25th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Evodian Fonyonga Junior Church Games led by Dorothy Blatcher
<b>Sept</b> 1st 10.30 am	Brox URC	Julian Templeton Training and development Officer Thames North Synod
8th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Commissioning and Membership Revd Mark Robinson Membership: Liz and Lawrence Sinden, James Smith and Wendy Velasquez

### REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR DIARY

**COMET** Please come along if you enjoy togetherness - that is meeting friends over a cuppa in the church hall and having a chat and possibly a game of Rummikub. There are occasionally special sessions such as fish and chips. Please speak to Dorothy Kelso if you are interested. It is on Mondays, 2-4pm, in the church hall.

**SHORT MAT BOWLS** Every Thursday evening in the church hall. Please speak to Alan Earl if you would like to join.

**AFTER EIGHTS** is now open to gentlemen as well as ladies. A programme of interesting talks in the church hall on the first Tuesday of each month from 2pm-4pm. If you are interested in attending a meeting please speak to Brenda McAuliffe or Marion Hall - or just go along at 2.00pm.

**REGENT REGALE** an informal get-together for gentlemen on the last Wednesday of the month.

**PRAYER GATHERING** every Wednesday at 8pm via Zoom for approximately 45 minutes. All are welcome to come and pray silently or aloud, or to be still and enjoy an oasis of peace - please contact Rosemary Woodall for further information [rosemary.woodall@ntlworld.com](mailto:rosemary.woodall@ntlworld.com) or to be included in the circulation list.

## NOTES FROM THE 2024 AGM

The AGM was a time of community. It was a positive and enlightening experience, full of engagement and many light moments. The sense of togetherness and mutual support was truly heart-warming..

The Minister's report was published in our July magazine and will be in the Church Life Report.

The Elders' report will be included in the Church Life report.

Appointment of Elders. Natasha Appiah was unanimously appointed to the Eldership. Dorothy Blatcher stepped down, with regret. There are only 3 Elders: Rosemary Woodall, Natasha Appiah and Amanda Harwood (our very busy Treasurer) – this is not viable without practical and prayerful support from others and 'doing things differently'.

### Appointments and vacancies

There are outstanding vacancies for a Secretary and for a Health and Safety Officer. Dorothy Kelso would like to pass over archiving responsibilities. Offers to fill vacancies are welcome.

Reports from our representatives for church activities and functions and on outside bodies will be published in 'Church Life 2023-24' which will be circulated to our fellowship. All were thanked for the many ways in which they serve our church.

### Church Meeting

### **Worship and services**

a Harmony theme for 2024-5: Mark introduced the logo and verse for the theme.

We are planning several special events. b. All-age Baptism service: Sunday 4 August. Baptism of Maeve and Isaac Velasquez. c. Membership service: Sunday 8 September. Church meeting has approved applications from James Smith, Liz and Laurence Sinden and Wendy Velasquez. d. Harvest service: 29 September followed by faith lunch. e. Christmas Services Sun 15 December 6pm. Carols by candlelight with the Broxbourne Handbell Ringers . (The Handbell Ringers' charity is the Essex and Hertfordshire Air Ambulance. We agreed to support the Air Ambulance and SENSE 50:50 for this service. ) Sun 22 December 10.30am\_Christingle service. In support of The Children's Society. We agreed that all donations would go to the Children's Society just from this event.

**Christmas Market** Saturday 23 November. Dorothy B with Helen will run the market. As a one-off, the tithe from the market will be our 2024 contribution to Young Life Hoddesdon.

**Financial Report** – accounts as at 31 December 2023 were accepted subject to approval by the Independent Examiner.

**Pastorate website** – the new website will go live by the end of July. *[Now end of August. Ed]*

**Essential electrical work** was agreed to be carried out at the end of July.

**Safeguarding and safety** - Stepanka will undertake verifier training and meet with Safeguarding Deputies to review DBS records and safeguarding policies.

Anyone in the church on their own is encouraged to let someone else know that they are.

An update was given on selling 99 High Road.

Our church building will gain a few Swift boxes.

Date of next church meeting: Sunday 27 October



**AFTERNOON TEA FOR COMET AND THE CHURCH  
FAMILY HELD ON JULY 22nd 2024**



It was a pleasure to welcome Gordon and Dorothy Kelso after several weeks when they had been missed at Comet.



The next meeting of Comet will be on September 9th.

From Dorothy B

**ADVANCE NOTICE OF URC EVENTS**

8 September Commissioning and membership Service  
29 September Harvest service followed by faith lunch  
6th October Pastorate lunch at the Highland  
13 October 3pm A Time to Remember

27 October Church Meeting following the service  
10 November Remembrance  
15 December 6pm Carols by Candlelight with the Brox-  
bourne Handbell Ringers  
22 December Christingle service



Amanda writes:

**Here is the Gift Day total for 2024.**

It's £2,490, a good total, with grateful thanks to everyone who donated.

(It is down on 2023's total of £2683 by £200.)

**Amanda's Eco-Hint of the Month : August**



With thanks to [GardenersWorld.com](http://GardenersWorld.com) Keeping your garden safe for birds:

Anywhere that birds congregate can harbour diseases. Bird feeders and bird baths should be scrubbed clean every month.

Salt in food should be avoided eg peanuts, suet, leftover food eg pastry.

Chemical pesticides (on slugs, aphids, caterpillars) can work their way up the food chain, and seriously harm birds.

Netting (used to protect fruit and veg) can trap birds. Make sure the netting or mesh is taut, not floppy; use hoops or canes to hold the net up and pin net down to the soil, keeping it taut. Recheck frequently.

Hedges: cutting hedges early may frighten off nesting birds or fledglings, even in August or a warm September.

Cats!!! Place bird tables/feeders within a few metres of dense planting/ hedges as an escape.

If you are owned by cats, add a bell to their collars, as a warning. Also keep them in (? feed them?) at dawn or dusk, when birds are most active.

**Broxbourne Food Bank**

Please remember to bring a donation to the foodbank. The current need is for the basics meat, fish, etc .