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September 2024

Bike 'n Hike

2024

If you like visiting historic churches in the area do consider joining the Bike'n Hike sponsored church visiting on September 14th. Just turn up with your list and get a signature or stamp to show which church you have visited. You can say which church you would like half your sponsorship money to be donated to. The rest of it supports the Churches Conservation Trust which helps to maintain older churches that are no longer in regular use.

Dear friends,

I pray this letter finds you well.

As we step into a new season together, I am full of anticipation for the journey that lies ahead. Our theme for the coming months is "Harmony," a profound concept that speaks to the very core of our Christian life. Harmony is about more than just getting along; it's about creating a pleasing and consistent whole, living in agreement and unity with one another and with God as the body of Christ.

Romans 12:16 encourages us to "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight." This is a powerful reminder that living in harmony requires humility, a spirit of inclusiveness, and a deep commitment to unity within our community of followers of Jesus.

I believe that as we focus on Harmony, we have an opportunity to bring this concept to life. But to do this, we need your help and ideas. I will be working with the worship team to develop programmes and activities. However we want to hear from you about how we can make Harmony more than just a theme—how we can make it a reality in our day-to-day lives and our shared partnership. We are already planning some exciting activities and events to explore and celebrate Harmony together. For instance, how about a free, open house coffee morning at Cheshunt? It could be a wonderful opportunity for us to invite our neighbours, share some good conversation, and build bridges of understanding and friendship. Over at Broxbourne, we are considering hosting a special Harmony-based commissioning and membership service. It would be a powerful way to welcome new members into our church family, emphasising the unity and love that binds us together.

In Hertford, how does a Harmony bowls competition sound? It's a lighthearted and fun way to bring us together, enjoying each other's company while fostering the spirit of

togetherness. And for those of you who are creatively inclined, what about a church talent exhibition? We could showcase artwork, poetry, needlework, and even have some theological discussions. There's so much talent and wisdom in our community, and it would be a blessing to see and celebrate the gifts God has given each of us.

But these are just starting points. I know that within our churches there are countless ideas waiting to be shared. I encourage each of you to think about how we can bring Harmony to life in our congregations. What activities or events would resonate with you and your families? What can we do together that would draw us closer as a community and reflect the love and peace of Christ?

As we move forward, I invite you to join me in prayer, asking the Lord to guide us as we seek to live in harmony with one another. Let us strive to love without conditions, listen with respect, and nurture peace in every interaction. In moments of disagreement or conflict, may we remember that our unity is found not in our sameness, but in our shared love for Jesus Christ.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions with me or with any of our church elders. Together, we can create a season filled with meaningful, joyous, and harmonious experiences that will strengthen our bonds and deepen our faith.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the common unity of the Holy Spirit be with each of us as we journey together in harmony.

In Christ's love,

Mark

Let us continue to pray:

"Lord, lead us to live in harmony with our neighbours. Teach us to love without conditions, listen with respect, and nurture peace in every interaction. Give us the humility and patience to uphold unity, even when we face disagreements. We ask this in Jesus' name ~ Amen."

Instalment 2 of our Church history by David Davies

The origins of the United Reformed Church in Broxbourne date back to 1780, though they were formally adopted in 1781. See Part 1 of this history in the July magazine for more details.

In September 1811, a 'Declaration of Faith' was drawn up for the Hoddesdon chapel by the Rev. J.J. Richards, President of Cheshunt College. In the same year Joseph Irons became the Pastor. He was the son of a builder from Ware and, when the meeting needed to be enlarged, he is said to have made a new pulpit himself. The group who met in the building were first formed as a Congregational Church in 1811.

In 1841 the Rev. William Ellis, a retired missionary from the London Missionary Society, came to Hoddesdon and, with his encouragement and financial help, a larger chapel was built in High Street, Hoddesdon, on the site of a former pub, the George, at the junction of the High Street and what is now Fawkon Walk. The chapel was opened and consecrated on Tuesday, 27th April 1847 and William Ellis became the first minister. The opening of the building was a big occasion with services in the morning and evening. In the morning the Rev. Dr. Harris of Cheshunt College preached on the text from Acts chapter 5 verse 20, 'And the angel said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life," which he did, for an hour and a half!

On September 2nd 1845 Mr. Ellis and his wife, who was a Quaker, used £93 of their own 'lawful money' to purchase a piece of land next to the chapel and set it up on Trust with a School Building 'for education of Girls and Infants conducted upon Plan and Principles of the British and Foreign School Society'. There were twelve Trustees, six from the chapel and six from the Society of Friends.*

William Ellis was born on August 29th, 1794. He had experience as a young man of the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii), where he helped the inhabitants by producing the first written version of their language. He wrote 'A Tour through Hawaii' in 1825 and the 'History of Madagascar' in 1838. He had been invited to Hoddesdon by the Hoddesdon bell founder and philanthropist John Warner. He settled in the town in Rosehill House, where Rosehill Close now stands, and established a remarkable collection of tropical plants, especially orchids. He presented specimens of his exotic plants to Kew Gardens and the Horticultural Society. He also collected his research in 'Polynesian Researches' in the 1840s. Mr Ellis resigned in 1852 in order to write a history of the London Missionary Society and later went as a missionary to Madagascar. On his return to England, he was active until a few days before his death in 1872.



William Ellis



Mrs Mary Ellis



Inside the Hoddesdon Chapel

Please turn to page 3 to read Mrs Ellis's verses about raising the money for the new Chapel.

* This later became the Hoddesdon Educational Charity which was closed down a few months ago.



Old Chapel, Hoddesdon.

THE HOUSE OF PRAYER.

We live in times when gold can place
 Within the rich man's dwelling,
 All gems of art, all forms of grace,
 The tide of luxury swelling.

Nor there alone, but in the vale,
 Where cottage-fires are glowing,
 The same aspiring thoughts prevail,
 The same swift tide is flowing.

Our cherished homes, our ties of love,—
 All scenes beheld with pleasure,
 This impulse of our nature prove,
 To adorn the choicest treasure.

And shall one scene, the House of Prayer,
 Alone remain neglected,
 As if we found no pleasure there,
 No blessing e'er expected?

Shall we indulge each favourite taste,
 In ceiled houses dwelling,
 While God's forsaken house lies waste,
 Of hearts unthankful telling?

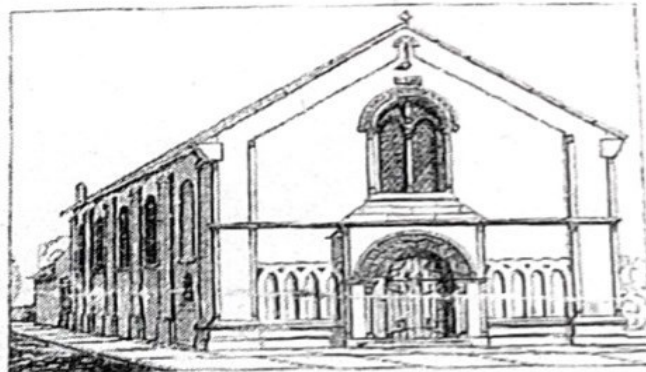
Forbid it, every generous thought,
 And every deep emotion,
 If worth be in the blessing sought,
 Or love in our devotion.

No longer mourn the timely fall—
 The change by all things needed—
 Of lowly roof, and tottering wall,
 Where Age has crept unheeded;

But let us bring our gifts, and raise,
 By cheering hopes invited,
 A roof to echo songs of praise,
 From fervent hearts united.

And let us build a house of prayer,
 As if we felt the duty,
 Which called us forth to worship there,
 Deserved a shrine of beauty;

As if we hoped to join those hands
 Whose holier praise is given,
 In God's own House not made with hands,
 Eternally in Heaven.



New Chapel, Hoddesdon.

by Mrs Ellis
 Written for a Bazaar held in the School Rooms of Union Chapel, Islington, Oct. 21st, 1846,
 in aid of the funds for erecting the new Chapel at Hoddesdon.

115 Verses by Mrs Ellis, 1846, written to sell in aid of funds for the new Independent Chapel (the Congregational Church) in Hoddesdon. The old chapel at Fourways is shown at the top and the new chapel at the bottom.

Worship this month



Sept 1st 10.30 am	Brox URC	Julian Templeton Training and development Officer Thames North Synod
8th 10.30 am 11.45am	Brox URC	Commissioning and Membership Revd Mark Robinson Membership: Liz and Lawrence Sinden, James Smith and Wendy Velasquez Introduction of the Harmony theme. Church Meeting—to approve a grant application
15th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Pearce Robinson—Mark’s son
22nd 10.30 am	Brox URC	New Moderator-elect of the Free Churches Group. Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson
29th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Harvest Service Michaela Lawrence Bring and share lunch

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. It is on Mondays, 2-4pm, in the church hall. Next meeting is on September 9th.

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, to be still and enjoy an oasis of peace - please contact Rosemary Woodall for further information rosemary.woodall@ntlworld.com or to be included in the circulation list.

ADVANCE NOTICES

SEPTEMBER

- 8th Commissioning Service
New Members
Church Meeting—one item
- 29th Harvest Festival—please bring tinned or dried Goods for the Food Bank. If you are able to bring vegetables for decorating the church please let Dorothy Blatcher know.
NB Bring and share lunch.

OCTOBER

- 13th Communion
3.00pm A Time to Remember
Revd Mark Robinson—this will be similar to the quiet and reverent service held last year.

Anyone who has been bereaved recently or in the past is invited.

NOVEMBER

- 10th Remembrance Sunday
- 23rd Christmas Market 10.30-2.00

DECEMBER

- 15th 6pm Carols by Candlelight with handbells



- 22nd Christingle

Dorothy B is in charge of running the Christmas Market again—thank you Dorothy! - and she is requesting that you contact her if you could help in any way. If you would like to book a stall please would you do so through Helen Knight. Tables are £12.00 and £15.00 by the window in the hall.

There will be lunches, refreshments and church stalls.



Broxbourne Food Bank

Please remember to bring donations to the foodbank as our communion offering.

IN OUR CHURCH HALL—September

- 3rd 2.00pm After 8s Mary and Graham Brace Walk on the Wildside
- 17th 7.45pm Friends of Lowewood The Warner Family in the Borough of Broxbourne & Beyond
- 24th 8.00pm SE RSPB Claire Robinson A Wilder Future for the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

- October

- 1st 2.00pm After 8s Philip McKinder History of Copped Hall

Amanda's Eco-Message of the Month : September

Thank you, Dear God, for the rain! September - early frosts or a warm dry Indian summer? Save any rainwater you can, for acid-loving plants or those like astilbes which like damp roots and have been struggling in the hot dry spells. Maggoty apples may be left on the ground or the bird table. The fruit eaters will be pleased and the birds glad to find them.

A wild flower meadow - time to prepare the ground. Dig out patches of grass. Mix yellow rattle seed with some sand and wildflower seed, and sprinkle it over the bare patches. Yellow rattle is renowned as parasitic on grass, but needs cold temperatures to germinate.

Gather up damp/wet leaves and put them in a black plastic sack. If the leaves are dry, sprinkle water on them use a garden fork to prong a few holes in the sack, leave for six or more months as leafmould is full of goodness which can be just added to the garden or plant pots, or mixed with sand and potting compost as seed compost.

Jill Nugent wants to remind us of the following—it is an extract from the *Commitment for Life* newsletter:

United Reformed Church Commitment for Life Sept/Oct 2024

Committed to supporting our global partners **ZIMBABWE**

African Faith Leaders call for Fresh Debt Forgiveness for Africa.

On the 19 July 2024, African faith leaders gathered in Kigali, Rwanda, to plan for the upcoming Catholic Year of Jubilee .



25 years ago, leading up to the previous Jubilee Year, faith leaders contributed towards mobilising over £100 billion in debt relief for Africa. However, the global financial system is rigged. It heavily favours wealthy creditors. Debt piles up far more quickly than any ability to repay. This is the infamous debt trap: damned if you do, and damned if you don't. Poor countries are forced to borrow at rates that are completely unsustainable both for people and planet. Africa pays more in interest than it does on desperately needed social and environmental demands. As the earth becomes increasingly uninhabitable, debt cannot be allowed to be used to enrich the wealthy, as usual.

This must stop. Now.

We at *Commitment for Life* work incredibly hard through our partners to deliver for some of the poorest people in Zimbabwe. But our efforts pale into insignificance against this backdrop of a deeply unjust, global financial architecture.

A Prayer We choose a world of justice, where resources are not hoarded, but equally distributed; in which we work for a world made fit for future generations, caring for one another in peace.

We choose, **we choose God, for God is justice.**

We choose a world of peace, in which people no longer destroy one another, and all are respected for their uniqueness. We choose, **we choose God, for God is peace.**

We choose a world of love, in which God's love for all is known, where each person is accepted and celebrated,

through whom God's purpose for the world is fully revealed. We choose, **we choose God, for God is love.**

We choose a world of joy, where the joy of God in all creation is fêted, where the goodness within all is gladly known.

Where we join creation's song of praise.