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BROXBORNE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MAGAZINE

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Software and computers in general have done much to expand our capabilities. BUT.....it is really annoying to feel that you have got to be subject to computer manufacturers and software companies. These business people issue new 'improved' versions of things that you have invested your time in and which you are competent to use. Out of the blue you are informed that you will no longer be able to do what you want to in the way that you know how to. This has occurred with the programme which I use for the church magazine. How I shall produce the November issue I don't know as yet. No doubt it will be done somehow or other but it will quite possibly look rather different. I have used Microsoft publisher since I took the job over from Revd David Bradburn who had been the temporary editor. I kept his format and some of the images and much of it survived covid. That is quite a long time in the life of a magazine so maybe we should brace ourselves for a change.

Dear Friends,
For the first time in a very long while, I took part of my annual leave properly this year. I stepped away from the usual routines of ministry, spent time with Tessa and visited with family. People I love were all around me. Together we entered into conversations that had nowhere particular to go, we shared meals, laughed freely, and enjoyed the times when simply nothing needed to be done.

I came home grateful.

Perhaps it is fitting that I returned as we move towards Harvest. Harvest usually turns our attention towards what has been produced: the fruit, the vegetables, the grain, the food placed before us. We give thanks to God for the earth and for those who work upon it. We remember too that while some tables have plenty, others remain painfully bare, and gratitude must always keep company with our concern for justice.

Yet there is another part of harvest that I have been thinking about. Before anything can be gathered, much has to be received. The earth receives seed. It receives rain and sunlight. The seed lies hidden for a while before anything appears above the soil. Growth has its own time, much of it beyond our control. Perhaps human beings are more like this than we sometimes realise. We spend so much of our lives doing. There is work to complete, people who need us, responsibilities that cannot simply be put aside. Even within the church, where we speak so often about service, it can become easy to measure faithfulness by how much we are doing.

My leave reminded me that receiving is also part of being human before God.

Jesus understood this. The Gospels sometimes show Jesus withdrawing from the crowds, going away to pray, sitting at a table, sharing food, accepting hospitality, sleeping. These moments belong within the life and ministry of Jesus. We give a great deal of ourselves. Sometimes we need to receive too. I think I had forgotten that.

Being away with Tessa and just being among siblings and friends reminded me that there is a time to sit, to talk, to laugh, and sometimes to do very little. And somewhere in all of that, I began to realise again that rest is part of the life God gives us.

Harvest can invite us to give thanks for these gifts too. And as we bring our thanksgiving to God this year, we might also remember that there are people for whom rest is difficult to find. Especially for those working long hours because there is never quite enough money; those caring for someone they love; and those who wake already tired because life is asking so much of them.

I have come back from leave knowing how much I needed the time away. I am thankful that I had it, especially the time with family. Perhaps this Harvest, alongside everything else for which we give thanks, we might think about rest. About whether we allow ourselves to receive it. And about those for whom rest remains difficult to find.

With every blessing,
Mark

Christmas Choir—Calling all those that love to sing!



For the last two years our small singing group has sung at the Carols by Candlelight Service. Our efforts made each service even more special and have been greatly appreciated. And just as importantly – those of us that sang had fun and thoroughly enjoyed singing together.

Building upon that experience and success, we want to create some more harmony as we head for Christmas 2026. We are gathering a small group to sing an item or two at our Carols by Candlelight service on Sunday 13th December.

Our choices will not be too ambitious or too serious but will be enjoyable! We have already got a few people interested in being part of the group along with Debi to support and lead us, but would love a few more to join us. We intend to have one practice for about an hour after the service on the morning of Sunday 6th December, hopefully another practice sometime during the following week – at a time by mutual agreement - and then a final practice before the actual service.

We would give you the music in advance. The only criterion for joining the group is that you enjoy singing!

Is this you? Hope so. If so, please speak to Rosemary – 07740 460118 or Dorothy B. – 07582 159294



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Cold times are coming...

Do you or any of your friends, relatives or neighbours have an un-needed, good quality coat lurking in your –or their- wardrobe, or loft, or even on a peg under the coats that you use regularly?

Does someone need that coat more than you?

Wrap Up UK is an annual project run by Rotary Clubs working in partnership with Hands On London. Asking the question **‘would YOU wear this?’** its sole aim is to collect coats for distribution to charities supporting adults and children across the UK who struggle to keep warm during the winter months.

Coats are distributed via homeless shelters, refugee centres, organisations supporting the elderly, women’s refuges, children’s centres and other charities helping people in crisis.

Please help if you can by putting your spare coat(s) in the collection box in the church entrance. It will only be there **until the end of November.**

Thank you, Rosemary

PS: Thanks to your generosity, in 2025 we collected over 60 coats. They made a warmer winter for refugees served by the Herts Welcomes Refugees charity: the women’s refuge that we support with our Toy Service; Isabel Hospice and the Hertford Pantry. Men’s and boys’ coats are in highest demand. Let’s do it again!



Mary wrtes:

Photography competition Social event

Sunday 18th October 2.30-4.30pm at Broxbourne URC.

All are welcome to view the photos submitted by both Churches in our Pastorate for this competition arranged by Amanda from Broxbourne and Cheryl from Herford.

Tea/coffee and squash available with cakes.

Come and see which photos you would have chosen as best in the display.

Thank you to all who entered.

Christmas Market Sat. 28th November

Please note that our annual Christmas Market will be held on the above date 10.30am until 2pm

If you are available to help in any way on that day, even for a limited time, please email or speak with Dorothy Blatcher dabtwain@hotmail.co.uk

If you are of a "crafty nature" and would like to hire a stall please message Mary Bite hallletssec@hotmail.com

More information to follow during the Church service notices and also next months magazine.

My Mosaics at this years May Market

Angela had a stall selling mosaic glass jars/light holders.

If anyone purchased one of these she wants to specify the following instructions. Albeit slightly late in the day.

Please use LED lights only with these jars. Do Not use candles, tea lights or naked flame in or near these.

Items requested for the Youngest members of Junior Church

Please if anyone has the card game Happy Families or magnetic fishing game and has no longer use of these, we would be really grateful to add these to our stock of games.

Events in October In our Church Hall

6th After Eights A tale of two bears Robin Clayton 2pm

15th Friends of Lowewood Museum: Two Aerodromes and a Dragon's Tooth Refreshments from 7.30pm – notices 7.50pm – meeting commences at 8pm.

24th Hoddesdon Music Club 7.30 pm Galin Ganchev piano, Bach, Mozart, Chopin and Brahms.

27th SE Herts RSPB Local Group Peter White 'The River Beane and Other Chalk Streams' 7.45 for 8pm. Contact: Dorothy Blatcher

Events in November Church Meeting Sunday 1st after the service.

Sunday 8th 10.15 Remembrance. 10.45 parade to war memorial. All age Service continues in our church for those not going to the war memorial

Saturday 22nd Hertford URC 3-5pm November Nightingales with Hertford Shanty Folk, UKE Troup and more. Free entry!

Christmas Market Saturday 28th 10.30-2pm. Preparation and set up Friday 27th.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS....

**ART DROP IN will be on Tuesday 13th October
2-3.30 in the Broxbourne Lounge.**

Amanda's Eco hints for October

El Nino – there is a lot of concern about a super El Nino, causing extreme winds and possible flooding. Whether it will reach Britain, I do not know, but it pays to be aware. Check your roof for missing, loose or cracked tiles. Check for dodgy branches on trees near your house, and moving or tying down any loose garden furniture etc, which could cause damage if blown about. Make sure you know where your house insurance is! Make sure you have a decent torch and batteries to hand in case of power cuts, reliable hot water bottles in case of heating failure, decent/clean flask to store hot water so you can make a hot drink in a power cut.

Well, despite the odd hot day, the weather is definitely turning to Autumn! Birds are unlikely to be nesting now, so it's safe to trim back shrubs/bushes/ivy. But please don't cut off any berries, and leave enough cover for them to shelter and find insects for food.

While the soil is still warm, there is still time to plant new holly, hawthorn and other berry bushes to provide future food. And to get any flowering plants in to overwinter for next Spring, to provide blossoms for bees and butterflies. Sow broad beans under cover.

Back to birds, now that the weather is getting colder, it is safe to start using bird feeders again, but to avoid infection they need to be scrubbed clean every week and repositioned regularly. Also, warning from bird charities, beware of poor quality peanuts, which can carry aflatoxin fungus, a bird killer.

Robins can lose 10% of their body fat keeping warm on cold nights, so they need to keep their feathers in good condition, avoiding fatty foods like bacon fat. They may also use old nestboxes for shelter, so suggest that you could wash them out with boiled water.

Thankfully, we can provide different sized seeds, fat blocks and mealworms. Also apple slices, strawberries and soaked raisins are recommended by bird charities.

If you don't want the local squirrels to take the birds' food, try sprinkling chilli pepper over it. Squirrels can't stand it, but it doesn't deter the birds.

With the threat of wet weather, raise flowerpots off the ground, using pot feet (expensive!) or rough stones, to avoid plants sitting in puddles, or slug invasions. And also a layer of grit on top will deter slugs and snails.

Save any bubblewrap and use it to wrap pots against frost. A gardening programme also suggested grouping pots together to conserve warmth, and protect against wind damage. Plastic bell covers are cheap, but do work if pinned down to the pot.

To save heat, check your house for weak spots, eg round doors and windows. Try lining curtains as a double layer, and close curtains as the sun goes down to keep heat in.

Worship this month



Oct 4th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Gary Bentley and Natasha Appiah
11th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson Harvest Festival Communion Please bring Pantry donations for the Food Bank. Bring and share lunch—please let Diane or Rosemary know what you would like to bring.
18th 10.30 am	Brox URC	John Ellis
25th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson

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 Diane Price 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 second Tuesday of each month. If you are interested in attending a meeting please speak to Brenda McAuliffe or Marion Hall - or just go along at 2pm.

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 or to be included in the circulation list.

BIBLE STUDY Fortnightly in the Oasis Room at 2pm on Wednesdays –Oct 14th etc. Speak to Laurence Sinden. Tea/coffee and biscuits. ***Laurence would be very pleased to see more people coming along to this cheerful group. The sessions don't usually last much more than an hour and the conversations are wide-ranging although prompted by the initial Bible reading. There is generally amicable disagreement.***

THE HIVE YOUTH GROUP Fridays 4-6.30pm (working with Broxbourne and Wormley Parish)

Christmas Market November 28th —coming up rapidly and Dorothy would love to hear what you can do to assist. Maybe you could set up on Friday November 27th? There is an opportunity to help sell things on the one church stall.....please diarise it and be there!

Thank you Amanda for these photos:



On September 6th, Laurence was commissioned as Elder by Mark. Congratulations and welcome to Laurence.



On September 20th, Natasha was commissioned by Mark as a Locally Recognised Worship Leader. Congratulations from the very proud congregation.

Next to the lift on the first floor is a small library. If you happen to pick up an interesting book do let the editor know. One book is 'Life's Tapestry' by Martin Goldsmith. Martin had lived in Stanstead Abbots for a long time before moving south. Sadly he died earlier this year. Formerly a missionary, Martin became a lecturer at All Nations College. His book is described as having humour and penetrating insight.



Rosemary writes:

The Hive is buzzing!

The Hive, our new Youth Group and the brainchild and baby of Maggie, our Children's and Youth Worker, opened its doors for the first time as planned on Friday 18th September from 4.30 – 6.30pm.

We were delighted to welcome 7 young people, ranging in age from 8 to 14 years who buzzed in!

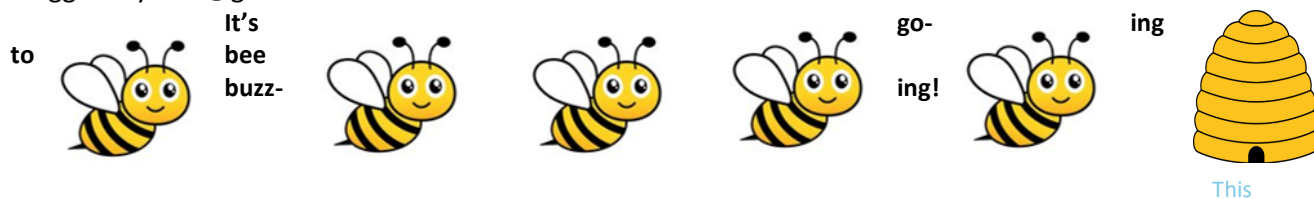
During the two-hour session they were busy bees, playing table tennis, snooker, and board games; chatting and doing drawings. After a break when they enjoyed squash and snacks, we all listened attentively during the 'Hive & Thrive' session when Chris House told a simple and practical story about God's love. Later everyone helped to clear up before, after a raucous game of Traffic Lights for the younger ones, the session finished with a lively game of football – four 10s and under versus three 11s and over!

It was a particular pleasure to witness the interactions between the ages. This was a happy session and a really positive start to this new venture.

The Hive will take time to develop and grow and, if you would like to, you can be part of that process in one of the following ways:

- ♦ Donating a clean bean bag (the sort you sit on, not throw!) or rug for the Cosy Corner. (We now have enough throws and fairy lights – thank you to all who donated these.)
- ♦ Joining a team of church adults to support Maggie, Chris and the Young Leaders approximately once a month on a rota basis – to chat to the youngsters, to be a listening ear, to help with an activity, to play a game – or just to be part of a team where everyone has something to give and something to learn.
- ♦ Praying for the success of this venture, that The Hive will be a place where every young person feels welcomed, valued, safe and encouraged to be themselves.

If you would like to be part of this exciting initiative, please speak to Maggie on 07481 940337 or maggiourcyouth@gmail.com.



After Apple-Picking

by Robert Frost

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight
I got from looking through a pane of glass
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough
And held against the world of hoary grass.
It melted, and I let it fall and break.
But I was well

Upon my way to sleep before it fell,
And I could tell
What form my dreaming was about to take.
Magnified apples appear and disappear,
Stem end and blossom end,

And every fleck of russet showing dear.
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.
And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
The rumbling sound
Of load on load of apples coming in.
For I have had too much
Of apple-picking: I am overtired
Of the great harvest I myself desired.
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
For all
That struck the earth,
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
Went surely to the cider-apple heap
As of no worth.
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.