BROXBOURNE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MAGAZINE

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November – the month of remembrance – gunpowder, treason and plot. Children used to be on street corners asking for a penny 'for the guy' – a floppy person shaped sack. Burning 'guys' was the point of the bonfire and the quite dangerous fireworks which were fired off in most back gardens. We were allowed to enjoy the thought that traitors would be punished. Today the fireworks are safer, more spectacular and mostly restricted to organised displays. While Traitors is a TV series – a game where the traitor wins and the 'faithful' are thwarted and derided.

Dear Friends,

November brings us once again to Remembrance Sunday. We gather to remember those who have died in war, the lives interrupted, the families who have lived with loss, and the suffering that continues long after the fighting has ended.

Yet remembrance also asks something of the living. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). These words come from the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus speaks of a world shaped by God's purposes. A world in which the poor are blessed, those who mourn are comforted, and those who hunger for righteousness are promised that their longing will be satisfied.

I find it an amazing vision, especially when we consider the world as it is today. Across the world, people continue to live with the consequences of war, injustice and displacement. Even in our own communities, there are people carrying grief and anxieties that others may never see.

What does it mean, then, to be a peacemaker? Does it begin with how we regard one another, whose suffering we are willing to recognise, and whether we have the courage to challenge the things that diminish human life?

The resurrection of Jesus gives us reason to believe that violence and death will never have the final word. God's future holds the promise of life restored. As we remember this November, may that hope shape the way we live, the decisions we make, and the care we show for one another.

Good wishes,

Mark

This month's magazine has been something of an experiment and it has certainly not been easy to retain the usual format. If anything that has been submitted could not be included it may be possible to include it next month.

Editor Julia Davies juliadavies890@btinternet.com

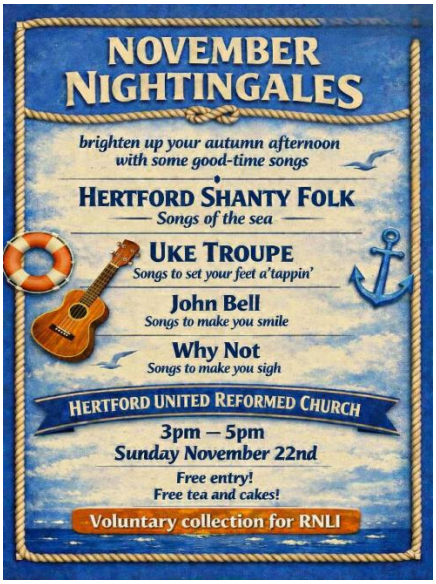
Amanda's Eco update:

I'm going to start, somewhat unusually, with a TV programme that I saw earlier in October. The part I saw showed a small fishing boat with a purse net spread out to catch tuna. Two brave diving photographers went into the net to film the tuna as they were caught. As the net pulled in tighter, the fish started to panic, getting their heads trapped in the net and unable to breathe. The photographers, getting dangerously battered by the panicking fish, had to clamber out of the net. It was horrific to see.
They then showed a huge factory ship with huge nets pulling in whole schools of tuna at a time. The comment was made that they needed to get the tuna out alive, because the longer they were dead in the water, the more their quality deteriorated, and the less they were worth!
The point was also made that whole areas of the oceans were clear of tuna schools and the predators which feed on them. Because of the factory ships. I found this a very frightening prospect.

I am not vegan or even vegetarian, and I do like tuna, but I do not want to contribute to this barbaric trade and robbing of the oceans, so I am thinking hard. I think at the moment I will only eat tuna if it is line caught, which way seems at least fairer and to limit catches.
Back to the usual. Cold winds - so cover vulnerable plants, or bring them inside or in cold frames over-winter. Raise pots out of puddles.
Pile dead wood, fallen leaves into piles in a sheltered corner of the garden. Perhaps put a wooden cover on top to keep rain off. Hedgehogs, small mammals and insects can overwinter there. If you have one, time to put out a hedgehog house in a place out of the wind. If you have dry leaves perhaps put some inside the house. Make a hole wide enough for hedgehogs to enter and leave your garden as they search for food before hibernation.
To make an insect hotel, drill different width holes in pieces of wood or tree branch offcuts. Insect hotels need to be in a south-facing dry position, well off the ground.
Or leave hollow plant stems and seed heads for insects to hibernate.
Butterflies, particularly small tortoiseshell and peacock, will go dormant over winter and may use your house. However, if it warms up, they will wake up, but there will be no natural food outside for them. So, if you find a sleepy butterfly, suggest you gently coax it into a box and put it somewhere cool like a shed or garage to overwinter. Check it and make sure it can escape in the Spring.

Christmas plants: poinsettias are Mexican and do not like cold. If you buy one, make sure it's British grown and hasn't already been subjected to cold conditions on its journey. Don't buy from market stalls or shops with draughty displays. Wrap well as your last purchase before heading home. Move away from cold windows at night.
Christmas cactus: need 12-14 hours of darkness to form their buds. Don't over- water or leave in a puddle, only water when top 1" is dry. Most of all, avoid draughty windows or vents, and keep it always facing the same direction, or the buds will drop off!





Events in November

3rd 2pm After Eights 'My creative journey' Amanda Sutherland

8th Remembrance Sunday

17th Art Drop-in

11th Bible Conversation

14th Elders' Awayday

18th Elders, 10.30 Manse

22nd Hertford URC 3pm-5pm November Nightingales

24th Tuesday 7.45 for 8. SE Herts RSPB Local Group talk – Tom Moat, Harold's Park Wildland Manager ' Harold's Park Wildland, Nazeing'

Eco Church from Jill Nugent

Eco church is a project run by the Christian eco charity, ARocha UK, designed to help churches care for the natural environment. I am leading the elders through the online survey as we work together towards, hopefully, a bronze eco church award. Hertford URC have already achieved a bronze award. The survey is split into 5 sections – Worship and Teaching, Buildings and Energy, Land and Nature, Community and Global Engagement, Lifestyle. At some stages on the eco journey we shall need a little help from you too. I hope that it is not only going to increase awareness of why and how we should care for God's creation but also increase our enjoyment of it. I shall keep you up to date as we journey on.

Christmas Choir—Calling all those that love to sing!

We are gathering a small group to sing an item or two at our Carols by Candlelight service on Sunday 13th December. 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 and a final practice before the actual service. 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

Cold times are coming…

Do you or any of your friends, relatives or neighbours have an un-needed coat?
Wrap Up UK is an annual project run by Rotary Clubs working in partnership with Hands On London. 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

Worship this month

Nov 1st 10.30 am	Brox URC	John Ellis Followed by Church Meeting
8th **10.15 am**	Brox URC **And/or War memorial**	Revd Mark Robinson Remembrance Sunday 10.45 Parade to the War Memorial or stay for a service led by Laurence.
15th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson Communion
22nd 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson
29th 10.30 am	Brox URC	John Ellis
Dec 6th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Chris Hall **Toy service** – Please bring news toys and gifts for the Women's Refuge.

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 – November 11th 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)

The United Reformed Church

URC Broxbourne

Mill Lane EN10 7BQ

website https://nlvg.org.uk



Christmas Craft Market



Saturday 28th November

10.30am – 2.00pm



20+ craft stalls as well as…

home baking/preserves, plants, Christmas stall, toys, gifts, books, puzzles & more, plus refreshments & light lunches.

Free Admission

Charity no. 1152449 10% to Herts Musical Memories & Disasters Emergency Cttee

Come along to view our summer photographic competition

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 seven church stalls and to help in the kitchen……please diarise it and be there!**

Ben Quant from Churches Together writes:

Hi All,
As you know, we're looking for volunteers at the Foodbank, especially for our management team.
Can you please point your congregations towards the following information:
Appeal for volunteers on our website: https://broxbourne.foodbank.org.uk/2026/10/23/come-work-with-us/
Video describing the work and various volunteering opportunities: https://youtu.be/XAKoKpTlrO4?si=hEbNz8XdmcWlbRj4 (only four and half minutes - could you show it in a church service?)
Job description for management team members: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IJUCmxPAUKJ4OYeq8rxD26Ro4B8BbPQjzbXvoOyBl48/edit?usp=sharingPeople can register an interest or find out more through the details on our Contact Us page: https://broxbourne.foodbank.org.uk/contact-us/ (linked to on the above webpage) or by getting in touch with me.

Thanks! Ben

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Report by Amanda and Cheryl

Both Broxbourne and Hertford Churches participated and joined in the tea with wonderful home baked cakes on October 18th to celebrate the winning entries. All the photos were displayed and the prizes were awarded as follows:

1st prize (Boots voucher) adult wildlife and nature photograph – Ian Woodall

Frozen sea at Patagonia

2nd prize Laurence Sinden

Spider

3rd prize Jill Nugent

Fungus on a tree trunk

1st prize Children's Open Alice Woodall White Swan



Apologies for the missing pictures which the editor was unable to insert!

Trust and a Question Worth Asking

Does trusting God mean knowing what God will do?

It is one thing to trust God when we believe that everything will turn out well. It is another to remain faithful when doing what is right may cost us dearly.

Does trusting God mean believing that everything will work out as we hope? Or can trust remain real even when the future is uncertain and the outcome may be painful?

There is a passage in the book of Daniel that brings these questions into sharp focus. Three young men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, refuse to worship the golden image erected by King Nebuchadnezzar. Their refusal places their lives in danger. The king threatens to have them thrown into a blazing furnace.

They tell the king that the God they serve is able to deliver them. Then they add:

"But even if God does not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden statue that you have set up." (Daniel 3:18)

"**But even if God does not."**

I wonder how often we think about those words.

These three young men believe in God's power to save them. Yet they make no claim to know what God will do. Their faithfulness remains, even with the possibility that they may lose their lives.

Their words reveal a faith that is courageous and vulnerable, and one that speaks truthfully about the uncertainty of life.

Nebuchadnezzar has the power to punish them, and he expects that power to secure their obedience. Yet they refuse to give the king what he demands. Their trust in God gives them the freedom to resist, even though they cannot be certain that they will survive.

We sometimes hear people speak about faith as though sufficient trust in God guarantees a particular outcome. Healing will come. A difficulty will disappear. A prayer will be answered exactly as requested.

Yet the experience of many faithful people tells a more complicated story. People pray and still experience loss. They trust God and continue to live with uncertainty. Sometimes the particular outcome for which they have prayed does not come.

I wonder if there is something here for our own understanding of trust.

We may believe deeply in God's presence and faithfulness while remaining uncertain about what tomorrow will bring. And sometimes that trust may give us the courage to do what we believe is right, even when we know there may be a cost.

And so, a question worth asking:

Can we trust God even when we cannot be certain what God will do?