



Winchmore Hill United Reformed Church July and August 2023



St Paul's Recipe for Prayer

We appreciate this 'pastoral letter' from Dr John Strange, Elder at Palmers Green URC, occasional organist at Winchmore Hill and, professionally, Music Therapist.

'Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

St Paul is comforting and reassuring the church at Phillippi, but we should be careful how we interpret his words. The verse could be read as a prediction – if you do this, God will respond like this – which we may or may not find reflected in our own lives. When our experience seems to contradict St Paul, could it be because we are reducing Paul's subtle, carefully chosen words to a simple maxim: whatever you're worrying about, just ask God for what you want to happen, he will see to it and then you will feel peaceful because your worries have all gone away. But Paul does not actually say that God will 'see to it'. His meaning is better reflected in the words of a well-loved old hymn: 'O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer'. It is *the act of praying itself* that can bring us peace. I remember praying, aged 17, that the girlfriend who had broken up with me would change her mind. I doubted very much that God would consider that a good idea, and in the event God didn't. But I went to sleep in relative peace! Jesus's Gethsemane prayer, '... yet not what I want but what You want,' reminds us that it is alright and natural to pray for what we wish for, even when we do not expect to receive it. We should let no-one tell us that our prayers have 'failed' because we 'lack faith'.

Some years after St Paul was writing, the Gospel writers report Jesus as saying, 'Ask and you shall receive'. However, most commentators interpret this as a promise that if we ask in His name, that is to say for what is in our deepest best interests, God's response will satisfy our need. If we ask in ignorance (as we often do) we may be reassured that God will not give us what we crave – not even to teach us a lesson! Thankfully the outcome of prayer is in God's hands, not ours.

At another point in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' words, taken out of context, might seem to question the need for prayer altogether: 'Your heavenly Father knows that you need these things'. But if we look at the context, it is clear he isn't saying 'don't pray', but 'don't worry that God will ever forget what you need'.

Moving from petition, asking for ourselves, to intercession, praying on behalf of others, we might ask how we dare imagine that God needs us to point out what a person, a church, or a country needs. But that is not why we pray. Prayer for others is often presented as ‘placing them in God’s hands’. Knowing they are already in God’s hands can be a great comfort.

Intercession is valuable in two further ways. First, as I was reminded recently at ‘A Place for Coffee’, the person prayed for may feel comforted by knowing people are praying for them, and this assurance, with or without any miraculous intervention, may ease their pain and speed their recovery. God has a mysterious way of conveying the love and concern we feel to the object of that concern. Secondly, and rather disquietingly, when you are praying for a particular person or cause God may answer by showing you that in fact there is something *you personally* can do to help, which may not have struck you. This might be experienced as a direct revelation or simply as a prick of conscience – am I praying for her/him as a substitute for visiting or phoning?

On returning to the opening text, I realised I had skated over an essential ingredient of Paul’s recipe for receiving the peace of Christ – thanksgiving. Before you ask anything, give thanks for what already is, and has been. When approaching another human being for help, it is always wise to start by thanking them for something they have already done, or given you. Of course, God is ever ready to bless and therefore does not need to be ‘softened up’ in this way, but we, as the petitioners, need to remind ourselves at the outset of all God has given us. As another old hymn has it, ‘Count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.’

In affectionate and respectful memory of Kathleen Mary Young (1927-2023)



Kathleen grew up in Hendon and attended Hendon County School. When university education was still largely a male privilege, Kathleen must have been committed and determined to graduate from London University where she studied History and Divinity. She became a teacher, finally as a Head of Department and Careers Adviser at the flourishing Woodhouse College in North Finchley. It was as a teacher that she met Margaret, also a church organist and Methodist Local Preacher; what began as a house-share became a close friendship of kindred spirits. Kathleen is pictured here at our 275th Church Anniversary in October 2017 chatting with Adrian West. Margaret is seated on the left of the photograph.

Moving from Hendon Brent Street URC, Kathleen became a member of Winchmore Hill URC in February 1979 and a year later was ordained as an Elder. For many years she supported Kathleen Hipkins in the church’s ministry of prayer for healing. During the 1980’s Kathleen was Girl Guides’ District Commissioner responsible for ensuring that outdoor activities, including camps, met all legal requirements. She planned the annual Church Parade services for Brownies held at Winchmore Hill which were always very well-received. With her wide and perceptive knowledge of the scriptures, as well as leading Bible Studies for many years, in ‘retirement’ Kathleen was a very popular lay preacher across the Synod and she served the wider church with distinction in her term as President of the Lea Valley District Council of the URC.

We may wonder how Kathleen found the time and energy to pursue so many interests. She was an accomplished dress-maker and loved making cakes. We know that she urged us all to give her our used stamps for sorting ... ‘Embrace the Middle East’ is the fairly new name for the Bible Lands

Society, the 160-year old Christian charity which produces Bethlehem Carol Sheets. Kathleen supported its core mission as an ecumenical development charity and became a trustee. Her particular focus was a school for blind children, originally in Bethlehem and visited by Helen Keller, for which she raised significant funds amounting to tens of thousands of pounds over many years, by diligently collecting and trading stamps, assisted by her brother Gordon and, of course, Margaret. (See below: The Stamp Fellowship and Embrace the Middle East.)

Kathleen was adept with information technology and kept her computer up to date as a tool for fund raising and an aid to living as she and Margaret were less able to get out and about. We know, too, how much Kathleen and Margaret enjoyed time spent at their property in Hopton on the Suffolk-Norfolk border where they also participated in the life of the Methodist Chapel.

Kathleen's family and friends were saddened to learn that she was struggling against leukaemia but Kathleen had a capacity for accentuating the positive, an illustration, in extremis, of her faith. The old Woodhouse School motto can still be seen over the stage at the college, 'Cheerfulness with Industry'; clichés are seldom adequate but are often apposite. Kathleen's funeral took place on 29th June and, in our prayers, we continue to commend her to God's gracious keeping, with sadness but also with thanksgiving for a remarkable, quietly courageous, fellow pilgrim and an inspiring example of Christian devotion and humility.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

in Church at 10.30 a.m. followed by tea/coffee and conversations

July:

2nd Chris Hall, Local Leader at Ponders End, service includes Holy Communion

9th Martin Wells

16th Terry Silvey

23rd Rev Jim Gascoigne, joint service with Palmers Green, 40th Anniversary of ordination.

Tea/coffee, fruit juice, wine and canapés, al fresco weather permitting.

30th July Lisa Hamblin

August:

6th Rev Mandy James, service includes Holy Communion

13th Rev Dr Emmanuel Frimpong

20th Elders leading a joint service here with Palmers Green

27th Terry Silvey leading a joint service **at Palmers Green at 11.00**

September:

3rd Rev Martin Legg, service includes Holy Communion

Flowers during July and August will be given by Bryant Ambrose for grandparents; by Dawn and Nick, and Sally and Cliff for their wedding anniversaries; by Jim Gascoigne for his parents, Peggy and Aubrey; and remembering Sue and Jean, and Sheila Dumayne.

SOME MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



with our Brownies

(Saturday performance to be confirmed)





CHURCH / PASTORATE SUMMER OUTING

We are organising our first post Covid Outing this year.

- A walk-through Enfield Town Park on 15th July 11am - 2pm onwards
- Along the New River
- As far as the "Crown and Horseshoes" Pub
- Lunch and drink(s) inside or in the Beer Garden
- And plenty of Conversation!!
- Also, perhaps a short brain activity!!
- Do sign up.
- Meet: At the 329 bus stop (Essex Rd./St. Anne's School) outside Cecil Court



Estelle Muller



Praying together for the churches and the needs of our area.
Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Grange Park

Normally first & third Tuesdays:
4th and 18th July then 15th August, 10.30-11.15 a.m.

Forum meeting at 19.30 on **Tuesday 26th September 2023**,
provisionally at WH Baptist Church.

Everyone welcome.

Zoom Link for prayer together (Meeting ID: 746 8020 4904 Passcode: 8zq1F7)
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74680204904?pwd=TjJhQnBIYVVuUzNRY3ZXQTJ6MHEzQT09>

Elders Meetings are planned for 13th July and 10th August at 19.00 in the Chaplin Parlour, if needed. Our quarterly **Church Meeting** was due in June but we have been occupied by vacancy matters; may we await our next quarterly meeting after worship one Sunday in September? (Ed)

The **Local Area Group** Steering Committee will meet on Tuesday 11th July at 19.30, at Trinity Church, Enfield. Nominated members vote (when necessary) but members of all the churches are welcome to attend and join in discussion.

Copy deadline for news to share in September, please, by Saturday 19th August.

THE STAMP FELLOWSHIP

The Stamp Fellowship's fundraising through stamp collecting and selling began 77 years ago with a group of soldiers stationed in Jerusalem during the Second World War. They discovered a home for blind children and were determined to do something to help.

After the war, one of the soldiers, Eric Peacock, started selling stamps to raise funds. He made £20 in the first year, and the Stamp Fellowship has gone from strength to strength ever since. From its modest beginnings in 1946 the Stamp Fellowship has gone on to raise several thousands of pounds each year for the Helen Keller Centre, near Jerusalem.

The vital funds are raised by selling on the gathered stamps and postcards to collectors and are then donated to the Helen Keller Centre, which works with blind and visually impaired Christian, Muslim and Jewish children. ¹

(The Helen Keller School was formerly run by Biblelands (Embrace) but was transferred to the local ownership of the Terra Sancta Schools network in 2016. The school provides holistic education for children who are visually impaired. They now also offer nursery and some primary education for mainstream students.)

EMBRACE THE MIDDLE EAST

Visit the website <https://embraceme.org/who-are-we>

or go directly to a short video <https://youtu.be/kAbOsBy1qWM>

¹ 2006 Explanation by BibleLands' head of fundraising, Tricia Pruden
<https://www.christiantoday.com/article/biblelands.hopes.to.break.fundraising.records.with.stamps/5877.htm>



SYNOD GREEN DAY



Celebration – Reflection – Action

at Cores End URC, Buckinghamshire SL8 5HZ
on Saturday 8 July 2023

A day for all ages to reflect on the wonders of God's creation – and our care for it



10.30 am
11 am
1 pm
2 pm
3.30 pm
4 pm

Arrivals and refreshments
Worship, sensory walk and bible exploration
PICNIC LUNCH
Workshops and Activities (around 5 Eco themes of teaching, land, buildings, engagement and lifestyle)
Worship in the Meadow and Tree Planting
Tea and departures



Limited places – book at modpa@urcthamesnorth.org.uk



As we contemplate the damage that we, over so many years, have inflicted upon this beautiful garden created for us,

give us the wisdom to know where we, as individuals, can make a difference, by the things we do, and by speaking out.

We give thanks for those whose courage has awoken the world, in part, into action,

and we ask that the eyes of all be opened to the task before us, to make good again that which has been badly spoiled, and live as stewards of this fragile world. Amen.

Both prayers are written by John Birch, a Methodist Local Preacher and writer.

Creator God, who placed this planet and all its resources into our care,

encourage those who now remind us of our responsibilities, both to you and future generations, to do all that is necessary, whatever the cost, to save this world that we call home,

so our children and theirs might not look back, both in shame and anger, at what we, in denial, have failed to do.

Amen.

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