

ESTD 1901

The Recorder

February '25

News and views from Redland Park &
New Brunswick United Reformed Churches



Vestry Vibes by Dougie Burnett

Dear friends,

I hope that Christmas was a good time for you and brought you a sense of joy and hope. For some Christmas can be a time of difficult memories and anniversaries, but even so we can still feel for something of the hope and joy that comes with that celebration of Immanuel – God with us. Getting back into the swing of things after Christmas can be quite challenging. All the Christmas decorations are packed away for another year and January can seem quite grey and mundane. But this is also part and parcel of the season of Epiphany. That starts on January 6th (The Feast of the Epiphany) and takes us all the way to the beginning of Lent. The stories that we read at this time from the gospels start to pick up something of the significance of Christ. You can find those readings on the page that Angus provides as part of The Recorder. In this coming year we are working our way through Luke’s gospel. But the first story that we hear about Jesus’ public ministry comes from John’s gospel. It is the story of the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee – the story of turning water into wine. That is one of those iconic gospel stories that has a fame that goes well beyond the pages of the Bible. But I sometimes wonder if it is also one of those stories where we can’t see the wood for the trees. We get so distracted about the matter of water into wine, that maybe we don’t see the wider significance of what John is on about. I think that for John it is very much about abundance, or life in all its fullness. This is his entry point into the rest of his gospel. It is very much what his gospel is all about.

As we look around us in the world at the present moment in time there is much turmoil and chaos. Politically, that is very much so in the United States. Some what seem to want to grab more and more for themselves. John’s gospel reminds us that this is not the world as God intended it. God intends abundance for all with rejoicing and sharing. That needs some discernment and proclamation. So, we work on through the stories



of Jesus. They are set in our everyday world where remarkable things happen nonetheless. Our world can seem grey and mundane, even alarming at times, but there is always hope. Learning to discern where the hope lies is very much part of our calling as disciples of Jesus. Happy Epiphany!

Dougie

Pause for thought

Singing Britten's *War Requiem* as a teenager opened up the poetry of Wilfred Owen to me. Owen was killed just a week before the end of WWI. That close to the armistice that was so expected seemed to make his death all the more tragic. His words never seemed more true "My subject is war and the pity of war; the poetry is in the pity."

As I type this, Sunday 19th, the ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas should have come into effect. Over a hundred Gazans have been killed by IDF bombing **since the ceasefire was agreed** earlier this week. Why? This deal, agreed on Wednesday, was substantially the same deal worked out last May. How many have needlessly died in the conflict since then?

I hope this is the last time I shall return to these statistics:

The death toll in Gaza from Israeli strikes since 7th October 2023 is 46 707, according to the Gaza Health Authority, which is run by Hamas. That is just over 2.2 % of the population. This includes an estimated more than 17 942 children. The equivalent percentage, if this had happened in the UK, is a death toll of **1.49 million** including 558 000 children. What would we do if something caused this loss of life in the UK?

Israel says Hamas's figures cannot be trusted. The UN treats the health ministry's figures as reliable. The World Health Organization has [voiced](#) full confidence in them. Israel is not allowing international journalists, including the BBC, independent access to Gaza, making it difficult to verify the facts on the ground. Worryingly, the *Lancet* medical journal, estimates that the death toll from traumatic injury is actually 41% higher than that reported by the health ministry.

What do we pray for in this situation? How are we part of the answer?

Worship details

... at Redland Park

Sunday morning worship is at 10.30 a.m. (at Redland Park and on Zoom)

February 2nd Rev Dougie Burnett, including Communion

9th Rev Dougie Burnett

16th Rev Dougie Burnett

23rd Rev Dougie Burnett

Zoom log in: 732 001 8996 passcode 8cC7Zv

Sunday evening worship at 7 p.m. via Zoom - *Questions God asks*

February 9th Why are you crying out to me?

23rd Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?

Zoom log in: 815 4053 7777 passcode 087103

Cell groups – both via Zoom

Mondays at 8 p.m.

Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m.

For both, the Zoom log in is: 732 001 8996 passcode 8cC7Zv

... and at New Brunswick

February 2nd Angus Gregson, including Communion

9th Kate Wintle

16th Jenny Low

23rd Astrid Domingo Molyneux



Other dates...

... at Redland Park

February Wed 5th Elders' meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Tue 11th Organ meeting at 11.30 a.m.

Sat 15th Organ Treat with Jonathan Price at 10.30 a.m.

Tuesdays 4th, 11th and 25th at 1.15 p.m.

Paul Walton plays Louis Vierne's Organ Symphonies

Outreach:

Wednesdays: Bristol Churches Winter Night Shelter 12.00 - 2.00 p.m.

Students doughnuts 3.30 - 4.30 p.m.

Thursday: Warm & Welcoming Space 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

... at New Brunswick

February Tue 4th Joint churches prayer meeting. Hosted this month by Kingsholm at 7.30 p.m.

Mon 17th Bible study and prayer evening (and cake) at 7.30 p.m. The last of Ephesians: ch. 6:10-24 -
"Be strong with the power of prayer"

Sat 22nd The first Craft and Preloved Fair of 2025 at the Greenway Centre from noon - 3 p.m.

Fri 28th Southmead Quiz at 7 p.m.

People news... from New Brunswick

from Brenda Drake

We are sorry to hear that several of our folk have been unwell over the last month. We think of our dear friend **Pat CJ** who has had a spell in Southmead with a respiratory problem.

Unfortunately **Angie** has had a fall and again spent some time in Southmead. We understand that she has broken her arm.

Elaine has also had further problems with her condition which has meant she has not been able to share with us on a Sunday.

We were saddened to get news of the passing of our dear friend **Ruth**. After the closure of New Kingsland, Ruth became a regular worshipper with us at New Brunswick, often sharing her talent of piano playing at some of our services. Our thoughts are with **Peter** and the family. May they be assured of our prayers and support at this difficult time.

Others of our Fellowship have been laid low with the winter bugs that are doing the rounds. Fortunately they have only been out of action for a short period.

Jen S is still very much in our thoughts and prayers. It is good to hear that she is now out of hospital. Because of access to her flat it has not been possible to return there. So at the moment is staying in a hotel at Cribbs Causeway. Whenever you visit Jen always sends love and greetings to all at the church.

We uphold all these people to God and ask for His healing whatever they may be. We also remind all these friends that we are also here to offer any practical help if they need it, along with our prayers and thoughts.

CELEBRATIONS!

We send birthday greetings to the following folk who will be celebrating during February. 3rd Becky and Lisa, 8th Morag, 17th Jo H.

May all these folk enjoy a very happy day and know God's richest blessings in the coming year.

There may be others who have something to celebrate during February may they, too, enjoy these occasions as they come along.

....and from Redland Park

from Carol Fry

Since the last *Recorder*, we were very pleased to welcome a new baby to the church – **Beth** and **Neil Noyes** had baby **Oliver** in early December – just in time for Nativity! Congratulations to them all. [Ed: Oliver felt so much at home during his first service at RP - the carol service - he slept through the whole thing.]

We think members of Redland Park whose health we pray for: **Peter** and **Anna Ambrose**, both with ongoing health issues, and of **Suzie Atkins** who has also had hospital treatment over Christmas and we pray for better health for her. **Jane Beazer**, mum to Suzie, is suffering from a bug which is delaying her ongoing treatment, and has had to stay home for a while, so please pray for a speedy recovery.

David Hayden is also having back problems but hopefully making slow progress, so neither he nor **Viv** are able to come to church at present; we pray for better health for them both. **Jane Rogers** has been undergoing treatment recently, and we pray for better health for her.

There are other members and friends with health issues at present and we pray for them all, and for those of our friends in nursing homes or care homes and unable to come to church; we are blessed with technically-able people who host our services on Zoom.

TERRY KING

We are very sorry to report the death of our long standing friend Terry King on Saturday 18th January. He recently moved into Westbury Gardens Nursing Home after a long stay in Southmead Hospital and died peacefully there.

Terry was the go-to man at Redland Park for anything practical, mechanical and technical for many years, as well as being a friend to many, and we will miss him very much. All of our thoughts, prayers and love need to be wrapped round **Sally**, who had been caring for him at home for a while, and for **Sarah** and **Florence**.

MARGARET PRIGG

Margaret died in November and Dougie led her funeral on Friday 13th December 2024. Margaret and her husband Tom were members of Redland Park for many years and lived in Avon Court in Clifton. Tom died several years ago but Margaret



was still a regular

attender until about 2022 when she moved to Avenue House Nursing Home in Cotham.

Margaret was born and raised in Bristol and her family still live around the area. Margaret and Tom had two daughters and also fostered many other children. She is now at peace.

JANET OWEN

Some of you will also remember Janet Owen, who died on 6th January 2025, just a few months after her husband, Mal, died. They were members of Redland Park for many years, bringing up their four boys there, before transferring to Trinity-Henleaze URC. May she rest in peace. We pray for God's comfort for the family.

From Christian Aid, a prayer for world leaders

Jesus Christ, you are the King of Kings,
and in your name all things are possible.

We pray for our earthly leaders.

May they model your leadership of mercy, justice, and love.

May their hearts break like yours when they see the destruction and pain that greed has caused to planet and people.

May they work together to seek solutions which benefit all of creation.

Amen.



What's been happening?

PRAYERS FROM THE DOVES:

At Redland Park, people were asked to write a prayer on a dove and place it on the Christmas tree.

We are asked to pray for:

Marion.

Nick, who is struggling with self-harm and lack of sleep.

Matthew, that he be less of a burden to his loving parents and family.

Moira and Eleanor, that they find a way through their grief following Christopher's loss.



And:

Dear Lord God, thank you so much for your gift of Jesus.

We pray for all those working in the emergency services over Christmas.

Please God, make 2025 a more positive and rewarding year for all.

Pray for tolerance and understanding between all people.

May peace come to Gaza, they have suffered so much.

I pray for peace in the world, in Syria, Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine and all places of conflict.

I pray that the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will enter everyone's heart.

Pray for peace in the world, love and hugs to all at Redland Park.

Lord of peace, bring peace among families, peace in our country, and peace in our world.

Pray for love and understanding and for peace.

PRAYERS ON THE STARS:

At New Brunswick, people wrote prayers stars and hung them on the Christmas tree.

My apologies - I was too slow to note them down to share with you this year.



Redland Park Youth tackle the Climate Crisis

from Andy Grand

On a Friday last November it was my pleasure to join the young people and talk about Carbon footprint calculators. I started by asking what they knew about Climate Change, whether they had noticed the extremes of weather we are having around the world, like the floods in Spain; and whether they found it worrying. For a Friday evening this was a bit too much like school so I was met with a lot of silence. They did however know that big city life was producing pollution that was warming the planet. Did you know the US produces enough CO₂ each year to make a blanket 30 cm high over its entire surface?

I talked about our own impact on the carbon dioxide being pumped into the atmosphere. Then we looked at various online Carbon Calculators. As the young people took to their phones they were suddenly much more in their element. Tapping away and discussing the various options in the questions being asked about homes, heating, transport, food and lifestyle they soon found themselves getting an idea of their own or maybe their family's Carbon footprints. Some were "Climate Villains", others much closer to the average UK resident and some heading to "Climate Hero" status.

We ended up by talking about ways we can reduce our carbon footprint. The calculators give advice on how to do this. Travelling by public transport or going electric, not buying so much stuff, maybe going veggie or vegan (not so popular) some or all of the time, having our own solar panels maybe and if we are going on long flights maybe offsetting all our Carbon by supporting tree planting or other schemes to help take the CO₂ back out of the atmosphere. Maybe soon we'll be flying around in electric planes as Emily Warne suggested, but we're not quite there yet. In the meantime we all need to do our bit to reduce our carbon footprint. These are some of the sites we tried out with varying success.

clevercarbon.io

carbonfootprint.com

climatehero.me

footprint.wwf.org.uk

ecotricity.co.uk/carbon-footprint-calculator

Maybe give one or a couple of them a go yourselves and see what you can do to slow the pace of Climate Change.

***A message from the* BRISTOL CHURCHES SHELTER**

We appreciate all the volunteers; those that prepare meals, serve lunches, our prayer team and all of you who have supported in some way over phase 1.

To date we have provided shelter for 15 guests in a six week period; currently six of those have moved on. The guests have enjoyed the meals and talking with volunteers and getting to know each other. One of our guests has found employment whilst being at the shelter and others have started courses. It is great to see when our guests move on to accommodation.

As staff we continue to meet with the guests for 1:1's providing support with their move-on plans and any other help that is needed. We are in close contact with St Mungo's and BHN (Bristol Hospitality Network) as they provide valuable support.

After the Christmas Phase, we thank all those who helped in some way over the Christmas period. Christmas can be a difficult time for some of our guests and they appreciated someone to talk to and a safe place to stay. We will be giving Christmas presents to all our guests, with grateful thanks to a local church.



A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips for FEBRUARY

Make 'enjoying nature' your priority. From bird watching, to writing about or drawing something that inspires you in nature, growing your own fruit or veg.

Or visit an area of outstanding natural beauty somewhere in the UK - be sure to fall in love with nature in a new way this year.



Coming up...

The “Organ Treats” Concerts

The concert in December with Andrew Kirk playing was great and an early Christmas present for the audience. There were over 100 people present.

The “Organ Treats” series continues into 2025 using the same format with cakes and tea or coffee at 10.30 a.m. before the organ music which starts at 11.00 a.m. for about 45 minutes. By the time you read this, Nigel Nash will have given the first 2025 concert. The other dates we have arranged are:

February 15 th	Jonathan Price
March 22 nd	Peter Clements
May 24 th	John Talbot

Also in early 2025 Paul Walton, the Assistant Organist at the Cathedral and the University Organist is to play a series of six concerts in 2025. This is likely to be a spectacular series, because Paul is to play all the organ symphonies by Louis Vierne (1870-1937). “Organ Symphonies” developed in the 19th century, particularly in France, with composers such as Guilmant, Widor, Vierne and Dupré.

Vierne composed for many different instruments and groups. He had a difficult life. He was born virtually blind, but regained some sight after surgery when he was 6. Despite this he still needed to use Braille. He studied with César Franck and Widor and in 1900 was appointed as the organist of Notre Dame in Paris, where he stayed until his death in 1937.

His six symphonies are marvellous pieces of music, full of variety. Gerard Brooks, Director of Music at the Westminster Central Hall and a Professor at the Royal Academy of Music said that these pieces have “lyrical themes and a strong sense of architecture”. He also suggests that “the sadnesses of Vierne’s life were projected through his music ... resulting in music that is at times joyful, at times restless and tormented”. They require a superb player and we are fortunate that Paul Walton is to play at RP. They also require a well-resourced organ.

These concerts will start at 1.15 p.m. on Tuesdays:

January 28th, February 4th, 11th, 25th, March 4th and 11th

There will be a retiring collection at each concert. We encourage you to attend – it is a great opportunity for Redland Park.

Know Your Elder

Ron Lyle at Redland Park

Where did you grow up?

Edinburgh. We lived at Newhaven, a fishing village on the shores of the Firth of Forth. My Dad's family went back there for generations, many hundreds of years. My family were all seafaring, latterly working as Shipping Pilots for the nearby Port of Leith. My Dad and all of his brothers went on to qualify as Deep Sea Captains and sailed the seven seas.



A memory from your youth?

Sitting under a willow tree in the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh with the sun filtering through. My dear Grandma used to take me there on Sundays. I must have been about 4 at the time. It was a memory uncovered in a hypnosis session during my clinical training! I had been asked to recall a time when I had been really happy.

Who/what led you to faith in Christ?

My family were church-going. My father in particular had a strong faith, probably due to the nature of his work. He had been through some difficult and dangerous times on the Atlantic convoys running the gauntlet to deliver food tanks and armaments to the Russians at Murmansk. My Uncle David's ship was actually sunk by shellfire from the Scharnhorst, a German pocket battleship, and he spent the rest of the war in a German Prisoner of War Camp near Bremen. I continued to attend our local Church of Scotland and was confirmed there. I distinctly remember feeling a physical change in my body during the confirmation service. Another formative influence was the school chaplain, Tom Lothian, who had many an interesting tale to tell from his work as a Psychologist treating traumatised battle casualties during WW2. He introduced us to new ideas such as existential philosophy. I have never lost my faith although there were times when attending church was not always

practical when living well out in the countryside near Aberdeen. I particularly remember however the very atmospheric and richly decorated medieval chapel at King's College, University of Aberdeen, which I could attend regularly while living in a Hall of Residence just over the road. Preachers would come from literally all over the world to preach there. Very uplifting.

Why did you start worshipping at RP?

I had been attending RP for a time while still resident at Clevedon from about the middle of 2023 before our move to Clifton.

Something particularly good about living in Bristol?

I am more of a country person, I don't particularly like living in cities. There is the "Café society", I suppose, and the choice of good places to eat. The parking problems I could do without !

Something you really value about RP?

A gathering of people of Goodwill with a sincere belief in God. Interesting people to talk to. The different Christian traditions coming together in worship e.g. Korean, Zimbabwean, is particularly enriching. The Monday Cell meetings are very much appreciated. Sermons are well prepared and thought-provoking. Everyone needs a Church Home and I feel I have found mine here.

Keeping up with the vicar, part 151

Here are the lectionary readings for February. With Easter being relatively late (we were a couple of Sundays into Lent by the end of February last year) we get a longer period to look at Luke's account of some of Jesus' most difficult times until the Easter narrative. Luke also goes to some lengths to make clear what Jesus' mission was really about, and how the disciples gradually grew to understand this for themselves - crucial if they were going to grow the church, which Luke goes on to record in part two of his account - the Acts of the Apostles.

And we carry on from January with an extended look at the latter part of 1 Corinthians, where Paul takes head on some real problems in that

fledgling church. Typing that made me go back and look at what follows, so I'm going to jump out of this month's readings now.

Chapter 11, verse 17 starts a section about how the church in Corinth were making a mess of their fellowship, of shared meals, of communion. Apart from the passage we often hear in the communion service, vv23-26, chapter 11 doesn't feature in the Lectionary at all so maybe it deserves a focus now.

A crucial verse is 11:29. What does Paul mean about the necessity of "recognising the body of the Lord" as we share bread with each other? It's where we may well disagree with Roman Catholics. Does Paul mean it literally? If we read chapters 10-12 as a whole, he's talked about *the church* as one body (10:17), criticised them for not living it out, and explained why that's so wrong. And he continues to describe the church as the body of Christ into chapter 12 (vv12-13 and 27). Is that what v29 is talking about?

Both RP & NB are celebrating communion on February 2nd.

Maybe each of us needs to heed Paul's injunction in 11:28 to examine ourselves before we "eat the bread and drink of the cup".

Please come back to me and share your understanding of this.

In chapter 15 Paul tackles some rather theological discussions. I don't think they're always immediately straightforward (but that might just be me). Why not have a read through those readings and discuss with someone else what you think they're getting at.

Many preachers use the lectionary readings as a basis for their preaching. The suggestion is to read them sometime in the week before Sunday worship so that if they are the ones used, it might help you get a bit more from the sermon.

	OT	Psalm (usually)	Gospel	NT
Feb 2 nd	Jeremiah 1:4-10	71:1-6	Luke 4:21-30	1 Cor 13:1-13
9 th	Isaiah 6:1-13	138	Luke 5:1-11	1 Cor 15:1-11
16 th	Jeremiah 17:5-10	1	Luke 6:17-26	1 Cor 15:12-20
23 rd	Gen 45:3-11,15	37:1-11,39-40	Luke 6:27-38	1Cor 15:35-38,42-50

Deadline for contributions for the
March *Recorder* is **15th February**.

Please send your contributions
to the editor, Angus Gregson
email: angus.gregson@btinternet.com
or by post to the *Recorder* at the Church
address at the bottom of this page.

Many thanks to everyone who
has contributed to this edition..

Minister: Rev. Douglas Burnett
0117 330 9910
douglasburnett@wwmail.co.uk

Secretary: Les Fry
07769 253279
lesjfry@hotmail.com

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Whiteladies Road, Wigton Crescent,
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BS6 6SA BS10 6DY
redlandparkurc@gmail.com newbrunswickurc@gmail.com