

THE NEWS



November 2026

The Magazine of Potters Bar United Reformed Church



Remembrance Sunday 8th November

"They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them"

Dear friends,

One of the many duties that fall under the heading of Elder, particularly during the time of vacancy, is the writing of the Minister's letter that features at the beginning of the Monthly News.

I propose to expand this question somewhat and pose it slightly differently.

"We haven't had a full-time Minister, shared with another Church or Churches, for at least 12 years and what do we have to show for it?"

My answer would be "quite a lot". The Church is still here and holding regular Church Services every Sunday, with a pool of visiting Ministers taking our Services, and ensuring that the Christian Message and the preaching of the Gospel, is enacted. Whilst there has been an inevitable fluctuation in Member numbers, we have welcomed new Members and Adherents and have an active Eldership and Management Committee. Regular monthly musical concerts and Charity Lunches take place, and the annual and well supported Quiz Night has recently taken place. Much fun and laughter at that event although I can't remember who won (*or he's too embarrassed to admit it – ed.*).

My other "Church" is my Croquet Club. It has similar, probably identical challenges, although these are "ball centred", in that the idea is that a physical ball needs to go through a physical hoop. Not much difference otherwise. Except that the Club faces eviction in four years' time unless their lease is renewed. That's a big hoop to get through.

God Bless.



Frank Palmer

On behalf of the Elders



Church Officers and Elders

Interim Minister: Reverend David Aplin

Serving Elders

David Aplin, Revd.	07900673529	**Lettings Officer:**	Jane Wood
Alastair Maclean	653636		Mobile: 07879 687569
Janet O'Connor	856967		
Frank Palmer	873179	**Chairman Premises & Finance Committee**	
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Treasurer (Asst): Alastair Maclean Tel: 01707 335238

Two words...If only...

If only things were different...

If only I could change my world I'd be happy...

If only I had other friends, life could be so much easier.

We'd all like to change things, make life more comfortable, make it less of a problem.

There was once a Muslim teacher, a man who'd lived his life faithful to his beliefs. "When I was young," he said, "I prayed for the strength and courage to change the world. But however hard I tried nothing much seemed to happen. As I got older, I changed my prayer and asked for the power to change the people around me, but even that seemed hard to do. Now I'm an old man and I simply pray to God for the grace to change myself."

That's where change begins. Not in trying to shake the foundations of the world but in looking at ourselves with open eyes. Realising that if we want to change anything we have to begin with ourselves. It's no good criticising your neighbour, said Jesus, because he's got a speck of dust in his eye if your own eye's full of it.

Change begins with me, and it can begin today. Change in the little things, in the way we see each other, the way we react to other people. And the amazing thing is that when we begin to change, so do other people !

Eddie Askew

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Janet O'Connor, your editor of The News, has severe sciatica at the moment, which is causing her great pain whenever she sits down – not the best situation to be in when sitting in front of a computer is part and parcel of her editor role.

She's receiving medical attention and physiotherapy, and we wish her a speedy recovery and a return to normal life and normal service. Janet is at the heart of so much that goes on in our church, so her enforced absence leaves a big space to be filled. We miss you, Janet. You are in all our prayers!

Communion Service Sunday 4th October – led by Revd. Jonathan Hyde



Arriving early, I found Jonathan already in the car park clutching what looked like the results of a good afternoon's tree pruning, which he then proceeded to decorate our pulpit with. It was the lead-in to an explanation of the ***Jewish festival of Shabbat*** *which had concluded the day before.*

He'd brought in some willow branches from his garden, Jonathan told us, to help give a sense of a ceremony Jesus would have been very familiar with and would have observed each year. We would probably call it the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles and it looked back to an account in Leviticus where the Jewish people had been told to remember their flight from Egypt: how God had protected and led them through the desert, and how they'd built temporary shelters along the way.

Leviticus 23 connected the festival with harvest time. Beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after gathering the crops, the people were to celebrate a festival to the Lord for seven days. On the first day, they were to take branches from palms, willows, and other leafy trees, and build simple three-sided shelters with roofs that had openings left so that people could look up and see the stars. The festival was a happy occasion, and families were encouraged to spend the week sleeping in the shelter.

John 7:2–43 described Jesus in the temple during this festival and recorded how he revealed himself as the light of the world. The passage provided a helpful picture of Jesus participating in the Jewish customs of his time, customs that had shaped his life. We should recognise and embrace that heritage in our worship.

Our three readings and the accompanying addresses illustrated challenges Christians faced in today's world.

The reading from **Deuteronomy, chapter 4** offered guidance to the Jewish people on how they should follow God. It repeated many of the teachings and laws found in Exodus. The people had been with Moses, preparing to enter the Promised Land. Moses would not make that journey with them, so he'd warned them to remain faithful and obey the laws God had given, reminding them of a time when they had strayed badly and been drawn into relationships that led them towards the worship of Baal.

The challenge for Christians today was how, in a country where religions are often treated as being of equal value, we expressed our conviction that there was one true God clearly and respectfully, without being misunderstood or accused of intolerance. How we affirmed our faith in God while speaking with humility and respect.

The Jewish people entering the Promised Land had faced a similar challenge when they'd encountered long-established forms of worship. Moses' instruction had been genuinely radical: When you enter the land, remain faithful to the laws God has given you. That call to faithfulness continued to speak to us: hold firmly to what God has revealed, even when surrounding beliefs are more popular. But we should also recognise our own tendency to wander and respond with humility.

The second reading was from **Romans 13**, a demanding text that many people studied in depth at theological college and which had been central to Martin Luther's thinking, profoundly influenced the Protestant Reformation. Paul had written to the church in Rome during his third missionary journey. Christians there lived under Roman rule and had faced severe persecution, particularly under Nero. Yet Paul told them to submit to the governing authorities. For a community facing punishment and bloodshed, that teaching must have been exceptionally hard to hear.

Now we were to imagine hearing the same passage in a German church in 1936 or 1937, amid Hitler's lies and the brutality of the Nazi regime. If we had been there, would we have resisted the government—or concluded that faith required us not to overthrow the established order? It could be argued that this tension helped explain why many Germans had been slow to resist. Even those who had opposed the regime, including Dietrich Bonhoeffer, had had to confront a profound question: when did obedience to authority cease to be faithful, and when did resistance become necessary?

People living under totalitarian regimes had repeatedly faced this dilemma. At what point did you comply, and at what point did you refuse? The argument was sometimes made that even a cruel dictatorship was preferable to complete anarchy—but that did not make the moral choice easy.

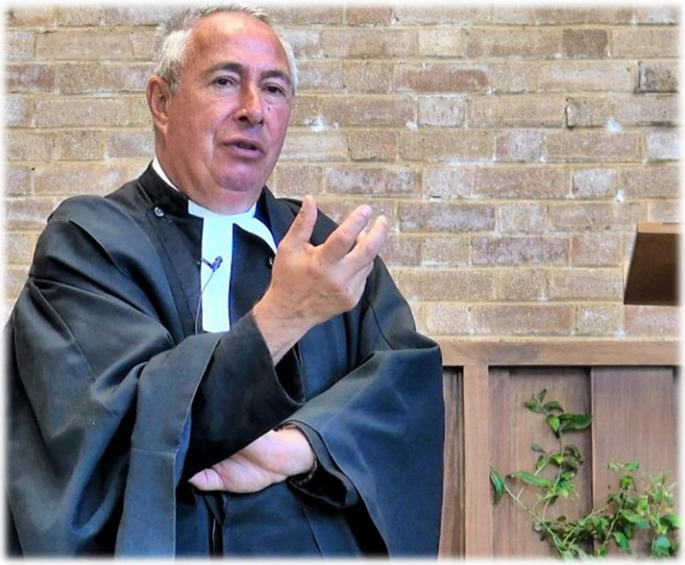
The church in Rome had faced persecution of appalling cruelty. Christians had been blamed for the fire in Rome, and the violence that followed had been merciless. Receiving a letter that said, in effect, "obey the authorities" would therefore have been deeply challenging. With that picture in mind, we were to imagine a German congregation sitting in church under the Nazi regime. Ministers and congregations had had to decide whether to comply or to make a stand, knowing that members of the Gestapo might be present and that defiance could lead to arrest. Did you protect your congregation and guide them as best you could within the system, or did you openly resist?

For anyone whose loved ones had been imprisoned or killed, this passage must have been painfully difficult to receive. It also raised a wider question that many people ask: why does God permit such evil? *(and Jonathan will address this question at a later date*). For now, the passage invited us to consider how the Church should respond to authority when faithfulness, conscience and personal safety pulled in different directions. Jonathan wondered what persecuted congregations truly thought as they heard these words. It was part of the challenge of our faith.

Our third reading was from **Matthew 22.** The episode had taken place near the end of Jesus' ministry. He had been teaching in the temple during a busy festival period, with his disciples and many others gathered around him. The scene might have appeared calm, but hostility had been building. The Pharisees had approached Jesus with the Herodians. Their alliance was significant: they were not seeking an honest answer, but an excuse to accuse him. They'd asked, "Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?" Either answer had its dangers. Supporting the tax could have alienated the people; opposing it could have been treated as rebellion against Rome.

The Roman coin carried Caesar's image. Such coinage was unacceptable for temple offerings, so worshippers exchanged it for suitable currency. Yet the same people had been required to pay Roman taxes with imperial money. For faithful Jews, paying tax to an occupying power—whose culture and worship conflicted with their own—created a profound moral and religious tension.

Jesus had immediately exposed their motive: "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me?" He'd then asked them to show him the coin used for the tax and when they'd identified Caesar's image, Jesus had replied: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." His answer had avoided their false choice and turned the challenge back on them.



The passage raised questions that remained difficult:

- What should we do when our taxes supported policies or activities we opposed?
- Was disagreement a justification for withholding what the law required?
- How did we honour legitimate civic duties while remaining faithful to God?

Christians had wrestled with these questions throughout history. We might object to how public money was used, but Jesus' answer called us to distinguish between our obligations to earthly authorities and our ultimate allegiance to God.

The encounter also reminded us that Jesus understood what it was to be pressured, misrepresented and confronted by hostile people. When we faced difficult situations, we could pray with confidence: he had been there, and he knew what it was like.

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"To laugh often and much; to win
the respect of intelligent people and
the affection of children; to earn the
appreciation of honest critics and endure
the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate
beauty; to leave the world a bit better
whether by a healthy child, a garden patch
or a redeemed social condition; to know
even one life has breathed easier because
you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Roy Purton - 1931-2026



The church was full to brimming for Roy's Service of Thanksgiving on 27th October – testimony to the love and esteem in which so many held Roy. It fell to John Derkach, Roy's son-in-law, to give the Eulogy. And as is so often the case, it added depth to our picture and memories of a good friend of the church.

Roy had been very clear about the ceremony he wanted, John told us; choosing the church, the hymns, the music, the readings – and three memories that had shaped his life.

The Blitz - Roy remembered the Blitz fondly as a young boy. It had not been Hitler's bombs that stayed with him, but the fun: Saturday-night parties hosted by his extended family, running into Sunday morning and filled with joy and fellowship - quite literally rolling out the barrel for soldiers home on leave.

The dance hall - where he'd caught the eye of a beautiful young woman across the room. She'd danced with him and later become his beloved wife, Doreen. Together they'd built a wonderful life and a loving home for the family they adored and raised in Potters Bar.

National Service in Germany – Roy had loved it and thrived on it, making new friends, trying new things and discovering a world beyond North London. He'd taken up boxing and lost all his teeth - but kept smiling, then he'd wisely moved on to the less dangerous sport of alpine skiing.

These experiences had fired Roy's lifelong passions: sport, travel and, most importantly, friends and family.

In many ways, **sport** had been Roy's life: golf, bowls, running, cycling and swimming - always swimming. He'd loved the beach and the sea. If you did not play golf, he almost pitied you; if you could not swim, he thought you were an alien. In later years, he'd watched almost any sport on television -except darts. "It's not a sport," he'd said, "if you can drink a pint of beer while doing it."

Travel had been Roy's other great love. He'd visited Africa, Europe and Asia, but above all he'd loved America. Compared with austerity Britain, it was, to him, a land of abundance: Cadillacs and skyscrapers, Hollywood and diners, over-easy eggs and double-door fridges. He'd played golf with Doreen around the world and cycled across France with his friends in baggy shorts and a flat cap, with no helmet and certainly no Lycra. He'd walked the Great Wall of China with daughter Lynn, followed the Tour de France on foot with his son Simon, and completed the London to Brighton cycle ride with all three of his children.



His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren had meant everything to him - a balm after losing Doreen in 2002.

He'd been the ultimate self-made man. Well read, intelligent and curious about both ideas and people; through hard work, energy and commitment, he'd built a successful business in Barnet and become known for his reliability and integrity, delivering on time and on budget, maintaining exacting standards, and always paying his debts in full and on time.

His success had not only been the result of hard work. He'd had tremendous personal charm: an irresistible gift for being liked. Think of him and you saw a tall, dapper man, full of enthusiasm and positive energy. He'd loved conversation but hated gossip. He'd never had a bad word for anyone and forgave those who spoke ill of him.

In later years, he'd found new love with his great companion, Vanessa. Through her, he gained new friends, a new family, and new interests in Scotland.

Roy had played every role a man can play: son, brother, friend, husband, father and patriarch. He played them all to perfection. He'd remained fit and independent into his 96th year, and passed away in his sleep after a short illness.

Above all, Roy had wanted us to remember him with a smile, because that was how he lived: with enthusiasm and positive energy, an open mind and a big heart.

And Roy's daughter Lynne wrote to us after the Service: "*I wanted to write to thank you and all your amazing congregation members for making our father's memorial service such a special day. Please extend our thanks to Richard for stepping in and doing a great job, we really appreciated the effort and enthusiasm that made it a truly memorable occasion*".

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Lunchtime Recital Friday 2nd October – Edward Tait (piano)



It was unusual, as Alastair commented, that in Edward we had both a pianist and a composer. Also, at (*we think*) the age of 20, he'd been unable to outgrow the picture he'd sent us with his CV, so he was instantly recognisable.

His own composition, Cloches V was dedicated to a friend who could only play with the right hand. And as we know from an previous recital, that's no easy task.

Programme:

Ravel, Sonatine
Edward Tait, Cloches V
Chopin, Ballade No. 1
Grieg, Humoresque Op. 6 No. 2
Scriabin, Piano Sonata No. 4
Schumann, Herberge

And in fact, it was the only piece that he played with a score. We were about to learn why when the fire alarm went off, and we had to vacate the building (*a test it later transpired*).

That was a 'first' for our recitals as well, and it certainly curtailed the questions.

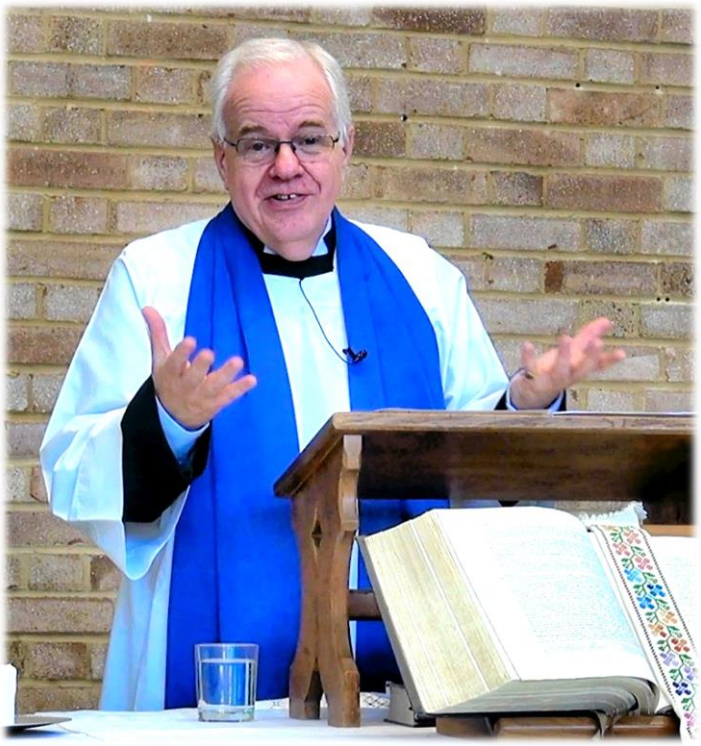




Much to enjoy in the recital, but we are only offering a 'taster' on the website – Cloches, the Humoresque and Herberge.

We hope we'll see Edward again in 2027.

Morning Service Sunday 11th October – led by Canon Richard Osborn



A fine autumn morning to welcome Richard back to lead our worship. At this time of year, we notice the days growing shorter and, as Richard said, autumn seems truly to have arrived: we have entered what John Keats called the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". As the evenings draw in, darkness seems to arrive before we are ready for it. So Richard reflected on Light in Scripture.

Light and darkness were themes about which the Bible spoke powerfully. At the beginning of the Bible, in Genesis, God said, "Let there be light." At the opening of John's Gospel, we heard something more wonderful still: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." John was not speaking about the light of the sun; he told us that the light was Christ himself.

The shortening days could remind us of something we easily forgot: our hope did not depend on how much light surrounded us. Christ's light was not governed by the seasons, and it did not grow weaker as the nights grew longer.

There were times when life felt dark; in grief following the loss of a loved one; in uncertainty, loneliness, or fear; and in the conflicts and suffering that affected communities across the world. There were conflicts and dark places across our world, and this was an anxious time for many.

Yet the promise of the Gospel was that we were never abandoned to darkness. Christ was with us, and his light continued to shine. We were called not only to receive that light, but also to reflect it, so that his light shone in us and through us, and that those walking through dark periods in their lives might catch a glimpse of hope and remember the words of St John: **"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."**

At first sight, the readings from **Philippians 4 and Matthew 22** might have seemed to address very different subjects, Richard told us. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus had told a story about a wedding banquet. In Philippians, St Paul spoke about rejoicing, prayer, anxiety, peace and the things on which we should set our minds. Yet the two readings were united by one important question: **How did we respond to God's invitation?**

In Matthew's Gospel, a king prepared a wedding banquet for his son. The parable was a picture of the Kingdom of God. God was the king, Jesus Christ was the Son, and the banquet represented the joy and fellowship of God's kingdom. The remarkable truth was that God invited us—indeed, God invited everyone; it came to us as an act of grace.

But every invitation required a response. We could accept or decline. The danger was not always that we deliberately rejected God: we might simply become so absorbed in our own lives that we left no time for the One who gave us life. The people in the parable had other priorities. Did we make room for God? Did we make time for God?

In Philippians, Paul had written: "May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!" He'd not said, "Rejoice when everything is going well." He'd said, "Always be joyful." Paul had known that life was not easy – writing from imprisonment. He had experienced suffering, rejection and hardship. Yet through it all he could still say, "Rejoice."

Christian joy did not depend on perfect circumstances; it depended on Jesus Christ. We might tell ourselves that we would be happy when our health improved, our family difficulties were resolved or the future became clear. Yet none of us knew what the future held. Christian joy said, "Even when I do not understand everything, God is with me; even when life is difficult, Christ has not abandoned me; even when questions remain unanswered, I still have hope. Even in darkness, there is light"

Paul spoke directly to our lives: "Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart." Paul was not claiming that Christians never worried. Worry was part of the human condition: we worried about our families, our health, money, the future and circumstances beyond our control. The question was not whether we worried, but what we did with our worries. Paul's answer was simple: bring them to God. When we were worried, afraid, anxious, or unsure what to do, we prayed. And we prayed with thanksgiving.

Paul offered one of the Bible's most beautiful promises. God's peace, which was beyond human understanding, would guard our hearts and minds in union with Christ Jesus. He did not promise that every problem would immediately

disappear, but we no longer faced them alone. God's peace was God's presence in the midst of trouble, keeping our hearts and minds safe.

We also had to face the difficult ending of Matthew's parable. The king had found a guest who was not wearing a wedding garment and ordered him to be cast out. The severity was shocking, but the detail was allegorical: accepting God's invitation was not simply a matter of saying "yes" and then continuing exactly as before. We were called to leave behind the old garments of sin and put on a new way of living: a life of love, forgiveness, generosity, holiness and compassion, modelled on Jesus Christ. As Paul had said, "Put into practice what you have learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you." In other words, do not merely hear the Gospel—live it day by day. Do not merely come to the banquet—let the banquet transform you.

Richard had five Lessons for us;

1. **God had invited us.** The banquet was prepared, and God's grace was offered to us in Christ.
2. **We had to respond.** We should not allow busyness, worry or competing priorities to push God to the margins of our lives.
3. **We were called to rejoice in the Lord.** Our joy was not based on a perfect life, but on knowing Christ, who'd given himself on the cross to save us from our sins.
4. **We could bring everything to God in prayer.** When anxiety came, we need not carry it alone; we could take it to the Lord with thanksgiving.
5. **We could live in God's peace.** The peace of God, which passed all understanding, would guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.



The invitation had been issued to all of us, and the joyful banquet awaited. We might not know what the future held. We might worry about the present or about what lay around the corner. But we did know who held our future, both in this life and in eternity. And for that reason alone, we could join together in saying, "Rejoice!".

There are sometimes small things that you observe that stick in your mind. With Mary Deller up for two Bible readings and a hymn in between, Richard sat her down on one of the communion chairs to sing the hymn and shared his hymn book with her. So thoughtful, so Richard!

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Diary for November

Sun	1	11.00	Morning Communion Service led by Mr Martyn Macphee
Tue	3	14.00	Elders' Meeting
Fri 6	12.15		Lunchtime Recital by Augustin Cornwall-Irving - LUTE
	13.15		Charity Lunch
	14.30		Phoenix Whist Group ***(every Friday!)***
	19.00		Choir practice ? (TBA)
Sun	8	10.45	Remembrance Sunday Service led by Pastor Peter Gooch
Thu	12	10.30	Events Meeting
Sun	15	11.00	Morning Communion Service led by Reverend David Aplin
			Followed by Church Meeting (*bring lunch*)
Sun	22	11.00	Morning Service led by Reverend Jonathan Hyde
Wed	25	14.00	Knit & Natter Group
Sun	29	11.00	Morning Service led by Reverend Jonathan Hyde

Rotas for November

Pulpit Supply

1st Martyn Macphee 8th Pastor Peter Gooch 15th Reverend David Aplin 22nd Reverend Jonathan Hyde

29th Reverend Jonathan Hyde

Duty Officer

1st Frank Palmer 8th David Ramsay 15th Frank Palmer 22nd Janet Green 29th David Ramsay

Communion Preparation

1st David & Chris Ramsay 15th Marian Poulton

Bible Readers

1st Robert Hillyard 8th David Ramsay 15th Frank Palmer 22nd Marian Poulton 29th Mary Deller

Coffee

1st Chris Ramsay 8th Margaret Hillyard 15th Chris Ramsay 22nd Marian Poulton 29th Chris Ramsay

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Morning Service Sunday 25th October – led by John Wainwright



Good to have John and Sue back with us again. And a pleasure to sing Happy Birthday to Sue - as well as to Chris Ramsay who was celebrating her 80th birthday. Which meant cake for us all after the Service!
Buoyed up by advice from his late mother's college principal that there was "nothing wrong with using good material more than once; if it is not worth repeating, perhaps it was not worth using in the first place", John presented us with a memory test. He showed us an object and asked if we recognised it. In fact, we needed to go back to January 2022, because it was a Mezuzah, traditionally fixed to the entrance of a Jewish home, and inside was a small parchment scroll, the text of which began with the Shema—the Hebrew word meaning "hear":

> *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*

This was one of the Bible's central teachings; followed by the command to love your neighbour as yourself. And that was John's theme for the day.



Love God, Love Your Neighbour, Love Yourself

"Love" could describe many kinds of affection: love for God, between spouses, between parents and children, for animals, or for creation - though English used one word for a wide range of experiences. Jesus had identified the greatest commandment as loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Why should we love God? Because God first loved us.

Whilst some religions portrayed people as appeasing a deity to avoid harm or gain an advantage, the Christian message was different. John 3:16 said that God loved the world and sent His only Son so that whoever believed in Him need not perish but would have eternal life. That promise gave hope for life beyond death, but it also offered a loving relationship with God here and now.

Scripture presented a God who desired a personal relationship with us. We did not need another person to mediate every encounter; we could approach God directly. When Moses had asked

whom he should name as the One who had sent him to lead the Jewish people out of Egypt, God had replied, "I am." The name pointed to God's abiding presence. God had been with us in the past and promised to be with us in the future, but above all He was present with us now. We could experience that presence in church, but also in the quietness of a room, at home, or anywhere else.

With All Our Heart - John Wesley had spoken of the "warmed heart." Faith was more than academic knowledge about God or the Bible; it was a living relationship that awakened passion and devotion. One of the strengths of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements was their renewed emphasis on heartfelt love for God.

With All Our Soul - not a word we used often today, but here it suggested the whole self. Loving God with the soul was expressed through our way of life. We were called to live fully in the world without allowing its values to govern us. We could not divide ourselves into separate public and private selves: Christian faithfulness applied in both spheres. None of us was perfect; the important question was whether we acknowledged our sin and whether our relationship with God was changing us. By God's grace, it should make a visible difference in our character.

With All Our Mind - Peter's first epistle urged Christians to be ready to give a reason for the hope within them. Loving God with the mind meant understanding why we believed and learning to answer sincere questions about faith. That might require training, regular worship, reading, and thoughtful discussion.

With All Our Strength - Love was not a soft option. Christian organisations supporting persecuted believers or defending Christian convictions often faced determined opposition. Loving God with our strength meant acting with courage, perseverance, and practical commitment.

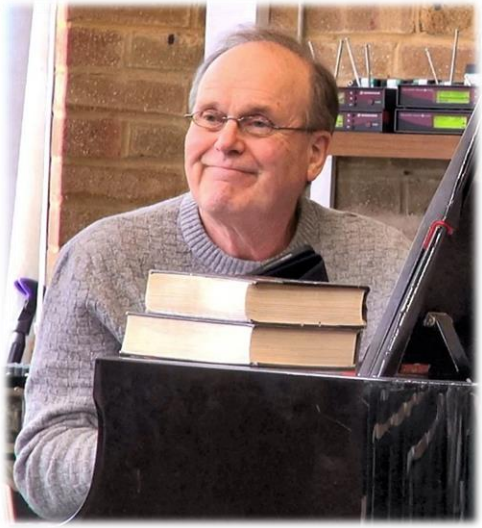
Loving Our Neighbour - We were also commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves. This did not require agreement with everyone, nor did it mean avoiding every conflict. Jesus made peace, but He did not pretend agreement with the Pharisees when truth was at stake. To love our neighbour was to seek another person's good, even amid disagreement.

Love began at home - with respect for spouses, children, parents, and other relatives. We would not always agree, but patient respect helped relationships endure.

Within the Church - we might believe that we were right, but we still needed to listen. As John Wesley had emphasised, disagreement did not need to destroy love. Christians could disagree honestly while continuing to respect one another. Love also required practical care. When did we last ask about someone's wellbeing, telephone a person who was unwell, write to someone facing a difficult time, or visit someone who felt isolated? And this should extend beyond our own congregation to Christians in other local churches, including those who worshipped differently from us. The early Church had sometimes been described with the words, "See how these Christians love one another." Its members were not free from disagreement, but their mutual care had been distinctive.

Anyone in Need - through the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus had shown that our neighbour was anyone in need. Loving someone did not always mean giving money; that might not be the wisest response. It meant showing concern, seeking the person's good, and demonstrating Christian compassion in a practical way. Sometimes people first became curious about faith because a Christian had treated them with unexpected kindness.

Loving Ourselves Rightly - the command said, "Love your neighbour as yourself." That could sound peculiar, because Christians might hesitate to speak positively about themselves. Yet healthy self-respect was not the same as pride. We could recognise our God-given value and gifts without becoming conceited. If God considered us worth sending Jesus to die for, then surely we had value. We might make mistakes and repeatedly let God down, yet He still loved us and called us to extend that love to others.



Loving ourselves included: caring responsibly for our bodies; eating and drinking wisely; taking appropriate exercise; recognising our gifts; and using those gifts for God's glory.

And John concluded with, " May God help us to love Him more, to love our neighbours more, and to rejoice in His love for us as His children". Amen.

And we were very pleased to have Stephen Jones (well at least his top half!) back to provide the music for our Service. His recovery from a hip operation was progressing well, but the legs were not yet up to operating the foot pedals of our organ. But we've not long to wait.

Lunchtime Recital Friday 6th November - Augustin Cornwall-Irving - Lute



As a performer on lute, guitar, theorbo, and other plucked strings, Augustin enjoys working with a variety of early music ensembles as well as performing as a soloist across the UK and Europe. He has worked with world-renowned musicians and groups such as Dame Emma Kirkby, Dowland Works, and the Taverner Consort, and has performed in venues including Dartington Hall, St John's Smith Square and ZIMIHC Theater Zuilen. Augustin undertook his studies at the Royal College of Music as David Laing Scholar, and as Ian Evans Lombe Scholar, graduating with a distinction in his Master of Music degree, as well as an Artist Diploma. During his studies he had the honour of performing for King Charles from the Welde Lute Book held in the RCM Library. In 2022 Augustin won the RCM Historical Performance Competition, and was also a finalist in the Overstrand Lute Competition.

Programme details when we get them – charity Lunch follows.



