

New Road Baptist Church

The Church in Bonn Square



*praying and working
for the peace of the city*

December 2011- January 2012

PEACE to the CITY

is

The vision and prayer of New Road Baptist Church, Oxford

Located in the centre of the city, in Bonn Square,
this congregation is committed to

praying and working
for the peace and well-being of the city
through worship, witness and service .

This vision and mission is based on the Good News that "Christ is our Peace".

In Christ

a new relationship has been opened up between humanity and God

breaking down the wall of contempt between people
and all things in heaven and on earth are being reconciled into God - who is the source and end of all life.

Practically this means that in this place, where a congregation has met for over 350 years:

The peace of God, Father Son and Holy Spirit,
is explored and experienced in worship
is celebrated and deepened through life together in
community and
is lived out in costly acts of compassion and hospitality

All are welcome.

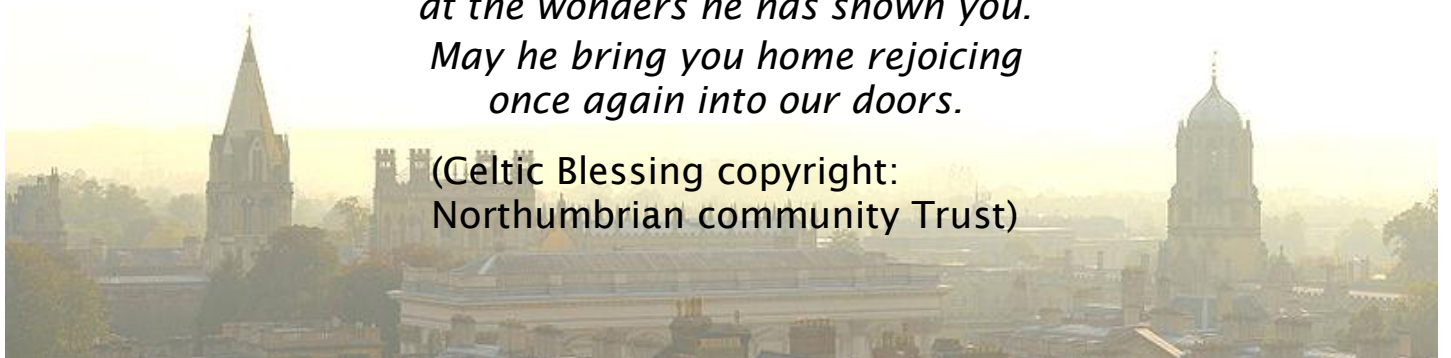
*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you
Wherever he may send you.*

*May he guide you through the wilderness
protect you through the storm.*

*May he bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders he has shown you.*

*May he bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.*

(Celtic Blessing copyright:
Northumbrian community Trust)



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Welcome all

It is tempting to call this edition of the magazine the “adoption leave special” as much of it will be devoted to arrangements for the start of Kat’s adoption leave as she and Jacky welcome Jacob into their family and we welcome him into the church family.

Many people are taking on extra responsibilities over the next six months and Kat has been working very hard to tie up loose ends so that she can focus completely on her new responsibilities.

Thank you to everyone who has been prepared to take things on and who will be stepping into fill any gaps. Remember that we all have a part to play in being welcoming in our customary way. Please take a note of the arrangements that are set out in this edition. And also keep your eyes open for any changes that may have to happen as plans change.

Nick Parsons



Explorers discover what “take my yoke upon you” means

Pastoral care arrangements during minister's adoption leave

We are thrilled and excited that our minister, Rev Kat Bracewell, has been approved to adopt a second child, a four-year-old boy named Jacob. This means that Jacky, Molly and Jasper will have a little brother! It also means that Kat will be on adoption leave from 24 October 2011 to 23 April 2012. We will still see her, though, because she will be around and coming to church with Jacob, and we look forward very much to meeting Jacob and welcoming him into the church family.

While Kat is on leave, pastoral care will be overseen by the deacons. Every regular attender and church member should have a link deacon who is a friendly pastoral contact, and there is a list of deacons and the people they look out for on the notice board at the back of the chapel. So if you don't know who your link deacon is, then please check the board! If you don't have a link deacon, please let me know so that you can be allocated to a deacon. In addition, our student minister Mrs Shona Shaw will be undertaking some of the ongoing pastoral care with the support and oversight of the deacons. We trust that in this way we will be able to support each other in love during the period of Kat's leave. If you have any queries about matters relating to pastoral care, please do contact me or a member of the diaconate.

Deb Rooke
Joint Church Secretary



Services moved upstairs while the roof was being repaired

A word from our minister

As I write this, I am just about to start 6 months' adoption leave, with the arrival of 4 year old Jacob happening imminently. As I attempt to clear my desk, I find that the process of tying up any 'loose ends' is impossible and never-ending! Still, my desk is considerably clearer than normal.

I must confess a certain amount of ambivalence at the start of this period of leave. Obviously I am excited and full of anticipation for the change in family life, but the prospect of being relieved of normal duties is not an easy one. I have found the Scripture passage for my last Sunday service enormously helpful - the reminder that the most important thing in life is loving God and loving others - everything else takes its proper place when those two commandments are observed. I am looking forward to being part of the church community in a different way for this short period of time, to the opportunity of developing relationships with you in a new way.

Many people have asked me how they can best help and support me as Jacky and I help Jacob to settle into our family. The answer, really, is fairly simple. Just do all you can to affirm us as a family, and encourage Jacob to discover that his identity is with us. Whilst it might be tempting for people to try to establish their own relationship with him, the most important thing in the early days is that he attaches to me and to Jacky. You can help this happen by constantly using the descriptions "your Mum" and "your big sister" to him, and by encouraging him to turn to us and look to us.

Another way you can help is by accepting that there are some differences in the style of parenting required for adopted children who have had difficult backgrounds. If I am doing something in a certain way, then there is probably a good reason for it!

And needless to say, please pray for us. It will be an intense time, and the next few months are a gift of time to us, during which we can really face up to some of the biggest issues and set some good foundations in place for the years to come.

If you need to talk with someone during my time of adoption leave, please do contact Shona Shaw, or your link deacon. I know I shall!

With great thanks for your enthusiasm and support at this time - it is so much appreciated.

Yours, Kat

Table Fellowship

This autumn has seen the launch of our Table Fellowship venture – an exploration of communion based in the home. On eight separate evenings, people gather together to share a meal and a communion liturgy. The first Table Fellowship took place at the Manse. The venture reaches a climax on Advent Sunday, 27th November. Please note that worship begins on that day at 12 noon and will include a meal.



Would You Like to Join a Book Group?

Some of us are interested in forming one at New Road to read and discuss a variety of books, probably meeting in the afternoon every other month. If this appeals to you ring or e-mail me and I'll arrange a meeting to discuss possibilities.

Elizabeth Gill 01865 311746
e.gill@btinternet.com



Services at New Road from November to April

NOVEMBER

6	Pulpit Exchange	C	Revd Carla Grosch-Miller, St Columba's URC Emma Smith (plus Andrew Smith)
13			
20	Church Anniversary	C	Revd Dr Pat Took, President of the BUGB
27	Table Fellowship at 12 noon		Revd Myra Blyth, Regent's Park College

DECEMBER

4		C	Revd Colin Norris, Regional Minister, SCBA
11			Mrs Shona Shaw
18	Festival Service Carols By Candlelight	C	Junior Church Leaders Dr Deb Rooke
24	Midnight communion		
25	Christmas Day		Revd Dr Rob Ellis, Regent's Park College

JANUARY

1		C	Revd Dr Rob Ellis, Regent's Park College
8			Mr Jeryl Bayona
15		C	Revd Professor Paul Fiddes, Regent's Park College
22			Mrs Shona Shaw
29			Revd Myra Blyth, Regent's Park College

FEBRUARY

5		C	Revd Dr Nick Wood, Regent's Park College
12			Mrs Shona Shaw
19		C	Dr Deb Rooke
26			Revd Dr Alastair Campbell

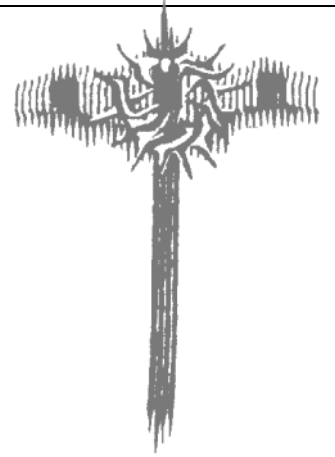
MARCH

4		C	Revd Dr Rob Ellis, Regent's Park College
11			Revd Viv O'Brien
18		C	Revd Dr Rob Ellis, Regent's Park College
25			Revd Colin Norris, Regional Minister, SCBA

APRIL

1	Palm Sunday		Revd Dr Nick Wood, Regent's Park College
8	Sunrise Service		Dr Deb Rooke
8	Easter Sunday	C	Revd Emma Walsh, Regent's Park College
15		C	Revd Colin Thompson
22			Mrs Shona Shaw
29			Revd Kat Bracewell

October 2011



To Members and Friends of New Road Baptist Church

Dear Friends

I am delighted to be writing to you again at Anniversary time. We have had a stimulating year, which has included a number of events on Bonn Square helping us to explore a phrase from our Peace Plaque – ‘Seek Another Path’; church learning exercises that have stretched our theological minds and hearts; and more recently, tangible expressions of community through shared Table Fellowship in people’s homes. Alongside all this, we have certainly been kept on our toes in our role as stewards of a building with a long history!

Our Anniversary Service will take place on Sunday 20 November, when we shall welcome Revd Dr Pat Took to lead us in worship. Pat was, until recently, Regional Minister in London, and has now become the Baptist Union President. I am sure you will find Pat’s contribution both interesting and challenging.

This year, our Anniversary Appeal is for the Gatehouse – a joint church endeavour to provide a drop-in centre for the homeless in Oxford. The Gatehouse is at a critical point in its history. It is leaving the rooms on St Michael’s Streets it has occupied for so long, and is moving to a hall at the back of St Giles Church. This move requires extensive renovation work, and a significant appeal is underway. Our Anniversary money will go to this appeal. On 13 November, Andrew Smith and others from the Gatehouse, will be speaking in our service, explaining the importance of this appeal and the current role of the Gatehouse.

I consider it a fine thing that New Road Baptist Church is supporting the Gatehouse, at a time when our own building repairs have caused us to dig deep into our own pockets. A church that becomes insular at challenging times, soon loses its cutting edge and prophetic nature. It is quite right that we keep our vision and our commitments as wide as possible. However, as well as supporting the Gatehouse, I would like to invite you to consider making a gift to the church, to help cover the expensive repairs that our roof has required. You can do this directly to our treasurer, or through the various fundraising activities taking place. The most significant of these events is the ‘Auction Of Promises’ to take place after the Anniversary Service. Please stay for a piece of Anniversary cake, and put your bid in! There is quite a range of promises on offer!

May God bless us at this Anniversary Time as we continue to love God and serve our community. May we be drawn ever closer to one another, and to Christ.

Yours

Kat



Providential Fellowship

With a daughter living in the USA Margaret and I are frequent visitors to America. Our experience of churches there has been limited, but visiting the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina this September we determined to go to church one Sunday. Providence Baptist Church in Hendersonville had a website Margaret liked. And a woman minister.

Should be good, we thought, and so it proved. From the first smiles across the car park and words of welcome, through the familiar-feeling service, to the closing chats with a small but steady stream of people who knew Barrie White and had fond memories of trips to Oxford, throughout we felt very much at home. Also strangely reassuring was the church's problem with the drains that day - New Road had the same only months back ...



Some 10 years old, the church seemed numerically slightly larger than New Road, but with a similar style of worship. It also has a special calling, serving regular Sunday afternoon meals at a centre it rents in a less fortunate part of town. The meal is resourced by the church, feeding the hungry as an act of

worship. It's a practical footprint for work outside the comfort zone of the building and is supported with impressive gifts of food from local businesses. What's more, linked to this is charity clothing, including smart outfits for interviews - important to job applicants in the recession-hit mountains.

Often a number of church members go out to lunch together after the service. We were asked to join them at the local restaurant. In good conversation with six church members similar interests and experiences came to light. We realised how 3900 air miles can't hide the similarities between us, or our shared faith.

We hadn't heard the minister preach that day. She was unwell and her husband Michael preached instead; he works in a church in nearby Asheville. So we had a good, lively sermon from him, then from Julie Merritt Lee herself we had a lovely letter when we got home, reflecting on her time in Oxford in '99 and offering us a very warm welcome next time we're back!

We would heartily recommend it. And even if you're not likely to get there, it's still good to know there are potential friends you haven't met yet.

Providence Baptist Church, Hendersonville NC

<http://providencecongregation.org/>

Roger Tatton

Ride and stride 2011

Once more on a September morning many cyclists from across the county set off on their bikes to visit as many churches as they could to raise money for The Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. People also took up this challenge on foot!

Participants were sponsored for the number of churches visited with half the money going to the above trust and half to the church of their choice.

Well we the Raven family - Phil, Becky, Sophie (Age 10), Alexander (Age 8) and Joseph (Age 4 and on a 'tag-along' bike behind his Dads bike!) set off to see how many churches we could visit in The Witney area - our home territory.



We set off in the drizzle out towards North Leigh, Long Hanborough and Freeland and particularly enjoyed the long downward stretches! Most of the village churches were very pleased to see 5 visitors at once having been quiet for much of the day! The younger members even found time to take part in some children's races at the Long Hanborough fete which we happened to come across! We then returned in sunshine up a few inclines (but with low gears we got there in the end!), back to Witney to visit 8 churches that were taking part in the town. The friendly welcome and plentiful supply of biscuits and drinks at each church spurred on the family to reach the last church 10 minutes before the 6pm closing time!

We visited 15 churches in total over the 4 hours we were cycling and covered over 18 miles - a new cycling record for the family!

Thank you so much to everyone who sponsored us. We raised £183.50 in total of which half comes back to New Road which will be put towards our fundraising appeal.

So next year why not join the Ride and Stride too - it's great fun but comes around very quickly after the Summer holidays so you need to be thinking about it in August!!!

The Raven Family

Deb and Larry Lecture in Kentucky to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible

In September 2011 two of our New Road members, Dr Larry Kreitzer, Fellow of New Testament at Regent's Park College, and his wife Dr Deborah Rooke, a Fellow of the Centre of Christianity and Culture at the College, visited the USA and participated in a programme at Campbellsville University, Kentucky commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible. Both delivered public lectures arising from their research into aspects of the publication and influence of the Bible. The visit was arranged by Dr Glen Taul, the archivist at Campbellsville University and a long-standing friend of Regent's Park College. In addition to their lectures on aspects of the KJB Drs Kreitzer and Rooke were also interviewed for a 30-minute television show which will be broadcast later in the year. Following the interview Dr Rooke posed with the sporting equipment of the Campbellsville Tigers, the University football team. However, it was not all just fun and games, for she also spoke to one of the classes of music students at the University, concentrating on G.F. Handel's Messiah (1742).



New Road Baptist Church
Bonn Square
Oxford
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www.newroad.org.uk

01865 798235

Sunday service: 10.30 am
Crèche and Junior Church
Tea and Coffee afterwards

Weekday Church: 11.00am—2.00pm
Drop in for a cuppa, a chat or quiet reflection

Minister: Kat Bracewell
(On leave until May 2012)

Church warden: David Stevens
(Weekdays 10.30am—5.00pm)
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Deborah Rooke

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Please let me have copy for the next edition by Sunday January 1st .