

Jan – Feb  
2019

**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

# Record

Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts, EN5 1RH

## Redemption

Some of you may have seen the recent television adaptation of Victor Hugo's novel *Les Misérables*. At the time of writing I have watched the first part, which includes the memorable scene in which Bishop Bienvenu gives the recently released ex-offender, Jean Valjean, hospitality in his home. After being given a meal and a bed for the night, Valjean steals the bishop's silver cutlery and makes his escape under cover of darkness. The next day he is apprehended by the Gendarmes and marched back to the bishop's house with the stolen items. To Valjean's and the Gendarme's amazement, the bishop does not accuse him of theft but maintains that the silverware was his gift to Valjean and adds that he forgot to take the candlesticks as well! The bishop then thanks and dismisses the Gendarmes, and says to Valjean:



"Do not forget, do not ever forget, that you have promised me to use the money to make yourself an honest man." Valjean, who did not recall having made any promise, was silent. The bishop had spoken the words slowly and deliberately. He concluded with solemn emphasis: "Jean Valjean, my brother, you no longer belong to what is evil but to what is good. I have bought your soul to save it from the spirit of perversity, and I give it to God."

The confused Valjean leaves with the silver cutlery and candlesticks. On the road out of the town he encounters a boy and steals his forty sous coin; soon after Valjean is stricken with conscience and undergoes a spiritual crisis:

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What was certain, although he did not realize it, was that he was no longer the same man. Everything in him was changed. It was no longer in his power to behave as though the bishop had not spoken to him and touched his heart.

This is a remarkable story for a number of reasons. First, it is a stunning example of *mercy*. The bishop does not give Valjean what he deserves: the accusation of theft. Rather, the bishop is merciful; he regards the theft of his silverware as a trifling matter compared with the 19 years that have been stolen from Valjean's life in prison. Second, it is a wonderful example of *grace*. The bishop makes his stolen silver cutlery and candlesticks a gracious gift to Valjean. But this is no cheap grace; it costs the bishop, and it comes with an obligation—Valjean is expected to use the money raised by selling the silverware to become 'an honest man'. Third, it is one of the most luminous evocations of *redemption* in all of literature.

In advance of any indications of repentance or change on Valjean's part, the bishop effectively makes a down payment in order to release Valjean from the power of evil and claim his soul for God. It is a risky investment. Will Jean Valjean escape from his past and enter into the redeemed future that the bishop has purchased?

Although we may find the story inspiring, we may also feel that Jean Valjean's situation is very different from ours. But is it? If you reflect for a moment: can you think of someone in authority who was merciful to you? Can you recall a friend or family member who was generous to you? Was there someone who invested in your future without expecting recompense? I can think of many such examples in my life.

There is an even more important sense—a spiritual sense—in which the parallel between Jean Valjean and each of us is very close. Which of us can claim never to have been captivated by resentment or never to have been 'on the run' from feelings of unworthiness? That is why we too need to hear the good news that redemption, and therefore *change*, is possible: "By God's action you are incorporated in Christ Jesus; God has made him our wisdom, righteousness, holiness and redemption." (1 Corinthians 1:30). Bishop Bienvenu implicitly claims this promise for Jean Valjean; do we have the faith to claim this same promise not only for ourselves but also for others? It is the promise of gospel redemption that enables the ongoing transition from doubt to faith and from despair to hope. This is the basis of our Christian identity and our witness to others.

Julian Templeton

## Minister's Study Leave

21 January – 17 April 2019

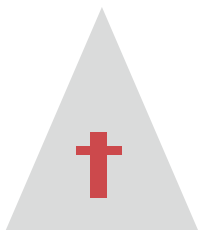
I would like to thank the Elders' Meeting and the Church Meeting for granting my request for a three-month local Study Leave during which I will be relieved of all my regular duties. The reason for this request is to allow uninterrupted time to get more of my PhD thesis written. For pastoral matters, please refer to your elder (and if you don't know who your elder is, ask Tony Alderman). However, if there is an important pastoral or church matter that you consider only I can help with, you may contact me, as I will be mostly based in New Barnet (see email and telephone details on page 1).

Julian Templeton

## Solar panels

Following the decision of the Church Meeting on 18th November, Photovoltaic panels will be commissioned on the south-facing roof of the Large Hall. It is expected that these will produce up to 5.58 kilowatt-hours of electricity for buildings users, with any surplus being fed back into the National Grid.

Julian Templeton



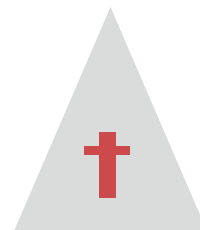
**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

**St John's URC Fellowship Programme for 2019**

St John's URC Fellowship welcomes everyone, irrespective of faith or beliefs. We provide a friendly environment where people can meet, enjoy an interesting talk and to chat over a cup of tea and biscuits.

Our monthly talks cover a wide variety of subjects, interests along with inspirational personal stories.

Come and join us: Membership is £6.00 pa. Entrance £2.00 (inc refreshments). Visitors £3.00. Meetings start at 8pm.



**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

Date	Subject of Talk	Speaker
Wed.16 Jan	The Work of Barnet Rotary	Simon Smith
Sat 16 Feb	Fellowship Tea Dance – 2.30 pm in the Large Hall	
Wed.20 Feb	Desert Island Discs with Ann Kirby	Pat Picken
Wed. 20 Mar	Global Impact of Climate Change & Role of A Rocha Charity	Philip Nalpanis
Wed. 10 Apr	History of Cartoons Hogarth to Private Eye.	Ian Keable
Wed. 15 May	The Work of the Air Ambulance	TBA
Wed. 12 Jun	Fellowship Outing to Methodist Central Hall	
Wed.17 July	Underground Tour of Literary London	Nick Dobson
Sat. 17 Aug	FELLOWSHIP GARDEN PARTY (From 5.30 pm)	67 Belmont Ave.EN4 9JS
Wed. 18 Sept	The Palace of Knightsbridge	Richard Furnival Jones
Wed.16 Oct	History of Theatrical London	Diane Burstein
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Fellowship Tea Dance 2.30 pm in the Large Hall	
Wed.20 Nov	A Personal Tour of New Zealand	David Paul
Wed.18 Dec	AGM- Christmas Celebration in Large Hall ( From 6.30 pm)	

St John's United Reformed Church,  
Mowbray/Somerset Road junction,  
New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH  
<https://www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk>

**United Prayer for Justice**

Please join with others from across different churches on

**Sunday 20 January 2019 at 6.30pm**

**St James Church, East Barnet Road**

(opposite Sainsbury's) for a service to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The theme of the Week is "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue ..." inspired by Deuteronomy 16:18-20, so we will be focusing our prayers on the variety of ways in which local churches are seeking justice together, celebrating what we already do, praying into those situations of injustice and committing ourselves to work for justice and unity within our churches.

# Calendar

## January 2019

Tuesday 8th	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting, Vestry
Wednesday 9th	4:00 pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
Thursday 10th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
Saturday 12th	10:00am	Elders' Retreat, St. John's Church
Sunday 13th	11:00am	Worship Led by Julian Templeton
Tuesday 15th	8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park
Wed 16th	4:00 pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	8:00pm	Fellowship – The work of Barnet Rotary by Simon Smith, Sanctuary
Thursday 17th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
	7:30pm	Local Area Group, Union Church Crouch End
Friday 18th	2:30pm	Community Cafe
	3:30pm	Short Service
Sunday 20th	11:00am	Shorter Worship led by Julian Templeton followed by Special Church Meeting and by Shared Lunch, Large Hall
	11:00am	Worship - led by Julian Templeton
	6:30pm	United Prayer for Justice, St James's Church, East Barnet Road
Monday 21st		Minister's Study Leave begins
Tuesday 22nd	8:00pm	Justice and Peace Group
Wed 23rd	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club
	8:30pm	Men's Group –at the Ye Olde Mitre Inne, High Barnet
Thursday 24th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary
	4:00pm	Finance Committee, Vestry
Sunday 27th	11:00am	Worship led by Andrew and Valerie Mills
	3:00pm	Causeway, Small Hall
Tuesday 29th	2:00pm	Dementia Club
Wed 30th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club

**JANUARY**

**JANUARY**

# Calendar

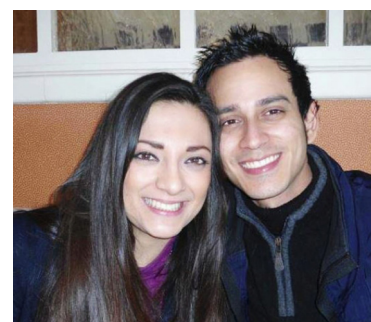
## February 2019

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Friday 1st	4:00pm	Messy Church	<b>FEBRUARY</b>
	Sunday 3rd	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
		11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Rev'd Derek Lindfield	
	Wednesday 6th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
	Thursday 7th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary	
	Sunday 10th	11:00am	Worship led by Helen Snider and Andrew Summers	
	Tuesday 12th	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
	Wednesday 13th	4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
	Thursday 14th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary	
	Saturday 16th	2:30pm	Fellowship Tea Dance, Large Hall	
	Sunday 17th	11:00am	Worship led by David Paul and Richard Harvey	
	Wednesday 20th	8:00pm	Fellowship, Desert Island Discs with Ann Kirby compered by Patricia Picken, in Sanctuary.	
	Friday 22nd		Copy Deadline for the next edition of Church Record	
	Sunday 24th	11:00am	Worship led by Alison Bond	
	Tuesday 26th	2:00pm	Dementia Club	
		8:00pm	Prayer & Discussion Group at 37 Greenhill Park	
		8:00pm	Justice and Peace Club	
	Wednesday 27th	10:00am	Pastoral Team Meeting	
		4:00pm	Weds 4 Kids Club	
Thursday 28th	9:30am	Mainly Music, Sanctuary		
	8:00pm	Men's Group – Curry Evening at The Railway Bell, New Barnet		
<b>MARCH</b>	Friday 1st	2:30pm	World Day of Prayer 2019 Annual Service at St James Church, East Barnet Rd. ALL WELCOME	<b>MARCH</b>
	Sunday 3rd	10:00am	Informal Prayer in Memorial Room	
		10:30am	Elders' Meeting, Vestry	
		11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Sarah Beaumont	

# News from the North London Local Area Group (NLLAG)\*

## Union Church Totteridge Mission Partnership with Trinity Church Harrow

On Saturday 5th January 2019 a service to inaugurate the Mission Partnership between Union Church Totteridge & Trinity Church Harrow was held at Union Church. The Minister of Trinity Church Harrow, David Varcoe, was commissioned as Interim Minister, Rony Padilla was commissioned as Mission Evangelist, and Trustees from Trinity Church were inducted as Elders of Union Church, enabling the Serving Elders of Union Church to step down. Union Church has now transferred to the Metropolitan North Local Area Group. Rony will lead Sunday morning worship twice-per-month as well as the fortnightly Saturday evening TAG (Together and Growing) Bible Study Group in Spanish and English.



Rony and Karen Padilla



## Minister Inducted at Union Church Crouch End

On Saturday 6th Oct 2018 the Reverend Gerry Stanton, Baptist, was inducted as part-time Minister of Union Church. Sarah Beaumont from St John's Church was present.

## Newly Amalgamated St Andrew's Chesterfield Road Church

A Service inaugurating the Amalgamation of St Andrew's Church Borehamwood with Chesterfield Road Church Barnet to become St Andrew's Chesterfield Road United Reformed Church took place on Sunday, 6 January 2019 at St Stephen's Anglican Church led by Julian Templeton (Interim Moderator), and the Synod Moderator, Andrew Prasad, also took part.



\* The North London Local Area Group is comprised of 13 Churches: Barnet, St Andrew's Chesterfield Road; Barnet, Wood Street; Crouch End, Union Church; Colindale, The Hyde; Hampstead Garden Suburb, Free Church; Finchley North, Trinity; Finchley, St Margaret's; Muswell Hill, Tetherdown; New Barnet, St John's; New Southgate & Friern Barnet, Christ Church; Trinity Church, Mill Hill; Trinity Golders Green; Whetstone, Christchurch.

## Next GREEN CHRISTIAN -BARNET session

**SAT. 26 JAN**

**10.45 am to 1.00pm St John's URC**

Alan Pryor will be sharing the RESULTS of the Climate Change Questionnaire. In addition: Holly Peterson, from Operation Noah charity, is returning to help us consider: **"How to measure our own Carbon Footprint"**.

Holly was a main speaker at our «Action» event last Sept. She will also introduce the topic of **"Disinvestment from fossil fuel companies"**.

There will be a brief video on **"HOW NOT TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE"** which brings some fun to an interesting topic.

We will also be seeking for **"Any Questions"** to be made and hopefully some useful answers - together with a **"News and Information"** time.

Looks an interesting and relevant programme. All are very welcome including friends from any background who just want to come as 'Observers'.

**Tea & Coffees, etc, from 10.45.** please come if you can. Worth the Effort!

More details: email: [ants8424@gmail.com](mailto:ants8424@gmail.com)  
Ph: Ants; 07990 793 046

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER New and East Barnet Branch

**T**hank you all for helping at the successful WDP preparatory Conference held on Saturday 3rd November 2018 in the Sanctuary

There were 33 of us including Dorothy Peryer, Marion Hopwood, Joan Coombes from St John's URC helping in the kitchen and Ron Mobbs on Audio Visual and Revd. Julian Templeton giving a welcome and prayers.

Maggie Pickford (National President of WDP) stayed with me on Friday night and on Saturday she gave a good presentation for the conference preparing for the March 2019 WDP Annual Service prepared by Christian women of Slovenia.

Thank you WDP Committee for helping with welcoming and stall sales. The £32.21 left was donated to St John's URC Organ fund.

Many thanks to Pat Picken for being in charge of the catering. People attending approved of the new venue, and definitely want us to repeat again in 2019/20.

We hope do another WDP conference at St John's URC for 2020 service in November 2019, as well as a WDP Summer tea party in large hall in July, 2019.

Marjorie I. O'Connor (WDP Sec.) + Pat Picken.



## SLOVENIA

**Annual service  
Friday 1st March 2019  
2.30pm**

**St James C of E.  
(opp. Sainsbury's, New Barnet)  
All are welcome  
Refreshments afterwards.**

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St John's URC Fellowship invite You to a

# TEA DANCE

At St John's United Reformed Church in Large Hall, Mowbray Road entrance/Somerset Road, New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1RH.



SATURDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2019

2.30pm – 4.30pm (doors open 2.00pm)

Entrance £5 (entertainment, refreshments & raffle)

With popular, local musician, Chris Sausman on keyboards/vocal. Come enjoy music, don't have to dance.

Have a cup of tea/coffee, sandwich and cake.

**ALL WELCOME**

Proceeds: For St John's URC Organ Fund.

