

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

## What's on

**Sunday 24 August: 10:30 AM.**

*Lance speaking*

*Friday 29th August 7pm at the church building - farewell for Simone*

**Sunday 31 August: 10:30 AM.**

*Malcolm speaking*

**Monday 1st September: Mentoring training**

**Sunday 07 September: 10:30 AM. Malcolm speaking**

**Saturday 13 September: SCIENCE & FAITH: ENEMIES OR ALLIES?**

**Sunday 14 September: 10:30 AM. Church service**

**Sunday 21 September: 10:30 AM. Church service**

**Sunday 28 September: 10:30 AM. Church service**

*3-5 October: Young Professionals' retreat*

**Sunday 21 December: 10:30 AM. Carol service**



## Farewell for Simone 29 August, 7PM

We are having a send-off for Simone at the church building. Over the last few years, Simone has organised for bills to be paid at the building and beavered behind the scenes for the benefit of all of us, as well as being a great friend to many of us.



Please bring a plate of something tasty to share, and let Oge know what you are bringing so she can coordinate the food.

Many thanks, Penny

Charity number : 1207942

## Learning to Forgive Like Jesus

We're part-way through our series on Matthew 18 and Jesus' vision for his church. Much of the chapter is about humility and forgiveness. With that in mind, may I offer a few thoughts on the topic?

*"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matthew 6:12)*

Forgiveness is at the heart of Jesus' teaching—and it's meant to be at the heart of our lives too. In the Lord's Prayer, we're taught not just to ask for God's forgiveness, but to connect it directly to how we treat others: "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."

The early Jewish understanding of sin as a kind of "debt" helps us see what's really going on in this prayer. Sin isn't just moral failure—it's a debt we owe to God, a weight we can't repay. When we pray this line, we're asking God to cancel that debt, trusting in his mercy and grace. But here's the catch: we can't ask God to cancel our debts while refusing to let go of the debts others owe us.

Jesus reinforces this right after the Lord's Prayer:

*"If you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matthew 6:15).*

That's a hard truth. It means we can't separate our relationship with God from our relationships with each other. An unforgiving spirit is out of sync with the gospel.

Matthew 18:21–35 drives the point home. Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive—“up to seven times?” Jesus replies, “Not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” He then tells a story about a servant who was forgiven a massive debt by his master but refused to forgive a small debt owed to him. The parable ends with the unforgiving servant being thrown into prison. Jesus’ warning is blunt:

*“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”*

Forgiveness isn’t about pretending nothing happened. It’s about choosing to let go of bitterness and giving up the right to get even. That takes courage, especially when we’ve been deeply hurt. But it also takes faith—faith that God sees the full picture, and that he’s already poured out more grace than we could ever need.

We see that grace in Jesus himself. As he hung on the cross, he prayed,

*“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).*

He didn’t wait for apologies. He didn’t nurse resentment. He loved enough to forgive in real time, even while being wronged. This kind of forgiveness doesn’t just heal relationships—it transforms communities. It frees us from the poison of bitterness and opens the door to reconciliation.

**Suggestion.** Why not make Matthew 6:12 part of your daily prayer this week? Ask God not only to forgive you, but to shape you into someone who truly forgives others. Reflect on what’s blocking your heart. Is there someone you need to release? Is there grace you’ve received that you haven’t passed on?

God’s grace is bigger than our failures. His mercy never runs out. Let’s be people who reflect that—who know we’re forgiven, and who forgive freely in return.

Your brother, Malcolm

## Watford Contribution Details

**Church bank account:** Three Counties churches of Christ HSBC

**Sort Code:** 401915

**Account Number:**

04759613

Watford Media



## SCIENCE AND FAITH

### Enemies or Allies?



**Saturday 13th September**  
10am – 1pm

ALEXANDRA PARK SCHOOL  
RHODES AVENUE  
LONDON N22 7UT



**David Hutchings**  
Fellow, Institute of Physics  
and Research Fellow,  
University of Durham



**Douglas Jacoby**  
MTS, DMin, Athens  
Institute and International  
Bible Teaching Ministry

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