

# The Watford Word

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

## What's on

**Sunday 22 February:** Church service.  
Malcolm speaking on *Philippians*  
2:19-30.



*Calling the ladies who lunch!* Lunch after church for those that can make it. Bring your own butties 🍞

**Tuesday 24th February:** prayer and fasting for Ukraine. Prayer meeting, 8 PM.

<https://zoom.us/j/94343688982?pwd=HegDco8712KmqT2CPIYoYato6Bs8GS.1>  
Meeting ID: 943 4368 8982. Passcode: 660680

**Sunday 01 March:** Church service.

**Sunday 08 March:** Church service. *Philippians* 2:3-11.

**Friday 13th of March:** 7:30 PM. The next meeting of our *Spiritual Practices* group will be looking at the spiritual practice of solitude. ✨

**Sunday 15 March:** Church service.

## Events further ahead

**Saturday, 14th March:** UK children's ministry training day: London and South

**Friday 03rd to 06th April:** European International Campus Ministry Conference, Paris, France

**Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th May:** UK & Ireland mature singles retreat – "Trust In The Lord"

**Friday 24th to 27th July:** ICCM Preteen Camp

**Saturday 25th to Friday 31st July:** ICCM Teen Camp

**Friday 11th - 13 September:** UK & Ireland Young Professionals Retreat in Chesham.

**Sept 30th - Oct 04th:** Celtic Spirituality Retreat.

**Friday 30th October to Sunday 01st November:** Autumn Student Retreat for the UK & Ireland.

**Thursday 12-15th November:** UK, Ireland and Nordics leadership retreat.

## Reflections on Philippians 2:19-30

Most of us know Philippians 2:5-11 well. It's one of the great passages of the New Testament. Christ emptied and humbled Himself. He became obedient to death, even death on a cross. It's stunning theology. But in verses 19-30, Paul shows us what that theology looks like in real life.

### Christ emptied Himself

Timothy seeks Christ's interests, not his own (2:21). Epaphroditus risks his life for the work of Christ (2:30). Paul sacrifices personal comfort for the joy of others (2:28). This is not theory. It's flesh and blood discipleship. It's the "mind of Christ" lived out in believers. We may know our doctrine well. But are we embodying the mind of Christ in the way we treat one another?

### "In the Lord": The Atmosphere We Live In

Have you noticed this repetition: "I hope *in the Lord Jesus...*" (2:19); "I trust *in the Lord...*" (2:24); "Receive him *in the Lord...*" (2:29)? We are learning something how Paul *thought* about following Jesus. His plans are made in the Lord. His confidence is in the Lord. His relationships are in the Lord. Christ is the atmosphere of everything.

It's easy for you and I to drift. We begin to live "in Watford." Or "in Britain." Or "in anxiety." Or "in career pressure." Without noticing, Christ becomes something we believe in rather than the sphere we live in. What would it look like for us to make "in the Lord" a lifestyle?

### Genuine Concern or Subtle Self-Interest?

Paul says something striking about Timothy:

*“I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ” (2:20–21).*

That word “genuinely” means authentic. Not performative. What are we seeking? Comfort? Recognition? Or the interests of Jesus Christ? In a very individualistic culture, genuine concern stands out.

### **The Gospel Is Work**

Timothy “served as a slave” with Paul (2:22). Epaphroditus nearly died “for the work of Christ” (2:30). The gospel is good news. But it produces costly labour.

We rightly care about sound teaching. We should. But this passage asks whether we are equally committed to gospel work? Not just preaching, but: Service, encouragement, financial generosity, visiting, emotional investment, risk-taking. The message of Christ creates a people who work hard for one another’s joy.

### **Honour the Humble Faithful**

Paul says, “Hold men like him in honour” (2:29). Epaphroditus wasn’t an apostle or a famous preacher. He was a messenger who became ill, serving the church. Why would Paul need to tell them to honour him? Perhaps some questioned his effectiveness or misunderstood his illness. Perhaps they undervalued unassuming service. It is healthy congregations to honour sacrificial faithfulness.

So who do we honour? The quiet servants? The carers? The encouragers? The ones who take emotional risks for others? We should be generous with our gratitude.

### **Anxiety Redirected, Not Denied**

It’s interesting that the same word group appears here for: Timothy’s concern (2:20), Paul’s anxiety (2:28), and later, “Be anxious for nothing” (4:6). Not all anxiety is the same. There is anxious

worry rooted in self-protection. But there is also deep concern rooted in love.

Paul worries about how the church is doing. He longs for their joy. His concern flows from love, not self-centred fear. Anxiety is common to us all. Many carry burdens others cannot see. The answer is not to switch off emotion. It’s to take our concern to Christ. We can care deeply without being controlled by fear. .

### **Risk Is Normal in the Work of Christ**

Paul says Epaphroditus “risked” (literally “gambled”) his life. Christian service involves vulnerability: Physical risk, emotional cost, financial sacrifice, and reputation loss. What risks are we willing to take for Christ? Inviting a neighbour into our home? Having an awkward but honest conversation? Giving more generously than feels safe? We are safe with God. But we are not promised comfortable circumstances.

### **Why This Matters for Us**

Philippians 2:19–3 challenges individualism. It confronts busyness. It calls us to examine our motives and to honour humble faithfulness. It normalises risk for the sake of Christ. Above all, it reminds us that the story of Christ’s self-emptying is not just something we admire. It is something we are called to live.

Your brother, Malcolm

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### **Watford Contribution Details**

#### **Church bank account:**

Three Counties churches of Christ HSBC

**Sort Code:** 401915

**Account Number:** 04759613




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### **Watford Media**

