

C H U R C H N E W S

Kingston United Reformed Church

MARCH 2023



Primroses – courtesy 'Beautiful Britain'

WORSHIP & EVENTS DIARY – MARCH 2023

The following is the anticipated diary for March, but please see the e-mailed Weekly Notices, particularly for daily prayers, Bible Study and other Zoom sessions. Updates, together with further KURC activities, can be found in the events calendar on the KURC website.

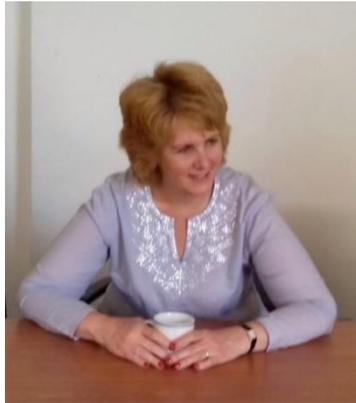
Wednesday, 1 st	10.00 Tots' Praise 14.00 Lent Study
Sunday, 5 th	10.00 Worship & Communion – also live-streamed 11.30 All Age Worship 17.00 Reflective Service
Monday, 6 th	20.00 Lent Study - Zoom
Wednesday, 8 th	10.00 Tots' Praise 14.00 Lent Study
Sunday, 12 th	10.30 Combined Worship – also live-streamed 11.30 Church Meeting 15.00 Joint Confirmation Service at All Saints 17.00 Reflective Service
Monday, 13 th	20.00 Lent Study - Zoom
Wednesday, 15 th	10.00 Tots' Praise 14.00 Lent Study
Saturday, 18 th	14.00 Crafternoon – A 'lush' afternoon
Sunday, 19 th	10.00 Worship – also live-streamed 11.30 All Age Worship 17.00 Reflective Service & Communion
Monday, 20 th	20.00 Lent Study - Zoom
Wednesday, 22 nd	10.00 Tots' Praise 14.00 Lent Study
Thursday, 23 rd	12.30 Lunchtime Concert (see pg. 17)
	<i>British Summertime begins – clocks go forward</i>
Sunday, 26 th	10.00 Worship – also live-streamed 11.30 All Age Worship & Communion 14.30 Messy Church 17.00 Reflective Service
Monday, 27 th	20.00 Lent Study - Zoom
Wednesday, 29 th	10.00 Tots' Praise 14.00 Lent Study

ADVANCE NOTICES:

Saturday, 29th April 10.30 – 14.30 Clothes Swap

Saturday, 20th May – Southern Synod Training Day (see pg. 21)

LETTER FROM LESLEY



Dear All, We have all been through a terrible time. We were isolated. It has been traumatic.

To make things even worse, there is a general sense now that everything is back to normal and we need to get on. Oh, and all those things we did not do in 2019/20/21, we need to do them now. All those people; we need to catch up with them. Now. Get moving.

Alongside that there is the reality. Death. Illness. Premature aging. Stressed, angry people. Politics falling apart, prices mounting and war on mainland Europe. For those of us who were reading things to help us prepare, we knew what was going to happen. More illness. More safeguarding issues. More anger. More death, not covid death. More mental health challenges. More challenges for children developing as is normal. This thing has happened and it will take years for us to assimilate it.

Where is God in this? Why has this happened? And if our faith means anything, should we not be able to deal with it better than other people do? Should we not be the smiling cheery ones looking after other people? If Jesus was around, how would he be dealing with it?

Sometimes you can keep up the laughter and light banter only because you keep on the move. The minute we stop and listen to people, then we know things are tough. If our faith means anything, then it means something in the middle of the sadness. Not pretending that the sadness does not exist. 'How are you doing?' 'Fine' is often a lie. Being with people is a real gift - being alongside them as much as possible. Sometimes it is too much, of course. We are not helping people if we collapse under the strain. But to listen to another. To pick up the phone. To visit. To stay with the sadness rather than force people to lighten up.

Where is God? With us in the middle of this. Lean on God. Pray. Stop. Silence. Read the psalms if we run out of words (especially angry words).

Where is God? In nature, creativity, exercise, movement, fun things, acts of generosity. These are gifts for our restoration. Let us use them.

Where is God? Alongside us with God's flaky, fumbling and falling people. Let us lean on one another. Take the time and know it matters so to do.

Yours, Lesley

Memo from Martyn



Last month I mentioned some of Charles Dickens' writing that I'd read over Christmas. This month I thought I'd share a quote from "The Cricket in the Hearth" that struck me.

It comes from the chapter headed "Chirp the Second" and reads: "Caleb was no sorcerer, but in the only magic art that still remains to us, the magic of devoted, deathless love, nature had been the mistress of his study; and from her teaching all the wonder came."

Isn't that what the Christian faith is all about, "the magic of devoted, deathless love". (Though we might hesitate to use the word "magic", I think it is a reasonable word to use for the wonderful effects love can have.)

When you look around at all the other failed systems and philosophies ("the other magic arts"?!) maybe love is the last one remaining to us. (I'm reminded of 1 Corinthians 13 v 13 – "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.")

And wasn't that the love Jesus showed us and the love we are called to show to others?

Good Friday & Easter



7/4	Good Friday	10.00 Gather
		11.00 Walk of Witness
		12.00, 13.00 & 14.00 Worship
8/4	Saturday	10.00 Easter Workshop
9/4	Easter Sunday	06.30 Zoom (top half dressed!)
		09.00 Worship
		Breakfast
		11.00 Worship
		17.00 Worship

Look out for fuller details and for those of Holy Week.

Sally's Slot

Crafternoon last month went well. Despite a number of our regulars (lovely that we have those now!) being away, numbers were still good as families are bringing others along. Word of mouth is our friend! Carol organises a great event. We were experimenting with printing, using different everyday materials and paint. Out comes the leftover netting from a pack of clementines, bubble wrap, bottle tops and even children's toys (the wheels dipped in paint and rolled along the paper make great textures). Jenny Milner has a Gelli Printing Kit (too tricky to explain so do ask her). A selection of the finished results are on the notice boards in the church and also on the next page. Thanks to Sue Shaw and Bron Robinson for their help with refreshments/clear up. If you can help: **Make cake, Serve teas, Wash/wipe up, Set up tables, Clear away/clean afterwards**, let Carol or I know! We need you because it's a busy session with lots of guests and 'many hands make light work'!

There was no Messy Church in January as we were busy with the New Year Party. Approximately 30 people attended this all-age event (11 months to 90!). There really was something for everyone: colouring in 2023 posters, soft play for the children, a 'Wishes and Intentions' banner for everyone to sign with their hopes for 2023, karaoke and food/chat for everyone. We had some newcomers turn up. Huge fun! Photos with captions are included in this magazine.

Great news! We have officially become an Eco Church, winning a Bronze Award from the charity A Rocha. Future plans include: a creation themed service with a guest speaker, a **Clothes Swap on April 29th 10.30-2.30**, and trying to 'green' the outside of our building with plants and flowers. You will notice that we now have two bins in the foyer – one for recyclable items and one for non-recyclable. Food should continue to be put in the bin by the coffee bar and, if possible, plastic should be rinsed before placing in the recycling bin.

Finally, I was speaking with a Children's Worker friend recently about all-age activities. She said something that has really resonated and stuck with me. I think it's important for all, no matter our age, especially given our commitment to be a Children and Youth Friendly Church that: **'Your presence and personal conversation are vital'**. Simply turning up to events that you may think are just for the kids and being seen, is vital for the children, and indeed for our midweek parents/carers. Having a conversation is vital in their welcome. This does not mean that you have to sign up to work with them! But just be there,

supporting and taking an interest. So please join us for parties or visit our groups. Please chat to them after the service. It really does make a difference. Thank you.

Sally Butler
Children, Youth & Families Worker



Holly Christie will be editing April's Church News. Articles and photos to Holly please by Friday, 10 March.
holly@thisdemandinglife.com

Pastoral News at 17. 2.23.

Icy weather and other mishaps are causing people to need various forms of support. Pray for all who experienced the unexpected.

**Out of care for people's privacy,
names are not included
in the Pastoral News section of the
online Church News**

Let us pray

Loving God, we thank you for the health we have and may we never take it for granted. Sometimes our mind can feel like a battlefield where the enemy can wreak havoc. Daily pressures can take their toll mentally and emotionally. You have given us a mind with the power to bring health to body, mind and spirit if we use the tools you have given us. We thank you for giving us peace as we know you suffer with us as we wait.

We also pray for all who have experienced life-changing events, including those in war-torn and environmental wreckage, murder and domestic violence. Our prayers too are for those who support other people, whatever the circumstances. In Christ we pray. Amen.



Greetings from Robin & David in Glasgow!

Well, we are sort of settling in after our move from London to Newton Mearns in Glasgow in mid-September. 25 years in our London house with a big attic, and a very short time span from selling and moving, meant that not all our “stuff” had gone to charity or auction down in London so, at the moment, we are regulars at our local auctioneer putting further items in to continue the downsize.

We've moved from a 1930's mid-terrace into a 1980's 10 flat block with 4 blocks on the whole estate so just 40 flats in total. Newton Mearns is in East Renfrewshire on the south side of the city and was, previously, mainly agricultural or mining. When our estate was built, the builders bought 11 acres of land that our flat faces out onto; of course, as agricultural land was sold to developers, we have pockets of estates dotted around us. Patterton railway station is less than 10 minutes' walk away with two trains an hour into Glasgow Central station and, in the other direction, Neilston is the final stop, and this is where I have joined Neilston Parish Church. Being Church of Scotland, it is run in a very traditional way. For example, when we have Communion it's really special and takes place quarterly so you can't miss it.

Neilston was a manufacturer of cotton (with Paisley a short distance away) and agricultural. However, with superstores and the motorway nearby, Neilston is now served by a butcher, a local co-op and a couple of convenience stores, and is now used mainly by commuters to get into town. Neilston Parish Church has been a worshipping community and ministry since 1589 and has served the people of Neilston far longer but, like all Christian communities across the UK, we face the same challenges and work. So, despite it being a 'chocolate box' of a Church, and to me it really is, there are challenges for all who attend, and it will be a continual battle to keep it relevant to those it serves. Like KURC, we have Messy Church, a lunch club, links to a local foodbank and a thriving Boys' Brigade run by one of the mothers. A new primary school is being built behind the Church halls; we have a community swimming pool that battles to stay open with the cost of fuel to heat it and a local library built in the 70's that also struggles to serve its community. We've pencilled in to join the Neilston swimming pool to keep us both healthy(ish). Apart from Patterton station, there is literally nothing in walking distance of the estate so no Spar, Co-op or even a post box. In fact, if you want to send post you just leave it hanging out your letter box and the postie takes it for you! In addition to the post driving here, our daily papers are driven here each morning and David is the paper boy for our block when he gives our pair of Corgis their first walk of the day at 6.30 each morning.

We've got a small river running at the edge of the estate that separates us from a neighbouring golf course, and 30 yards from our flat is the

neighbouring field of sheep that fascinate our two dogs. We also have four deer that roam about the estate, so the rules are that dog owners keep their dogs on leads so that the deer aren't frightened away. We are very fortunate, it's a pretty special place, and it's nice to come back to after going into town to see a film etc. We had David's niece and her family over for Christmas Day lunch, which was lovely as, for many years whilst in London, it wasn't often possible to be together.

The hymn says "the Church has one foundation....." and I have been very fortunate with the foundation from KURC which is, hopefully, helping me with my transition to the new Church community in Neilston. It's good to have the Church Magazine and news from Catherine and Lesley about the goings on at KURC!



Neilston Parish Church

With very best wishes, Robin & David

--ooOoo--

Flower Rota for March



5 th	Wil Bryan
12 th	Vacant
19 th	Steve Wenman
26 th	Liz & Ken Bartlett

If anybody would like to take 12/3 or any of the other vacant Sundays, please have a word with Janine.

RETURN TO ANTIGUA 2023

When my French friend, Florence, invited me to stay in her Antiguan home, we had no idea she would fall ill when I was due to visit. So, unexpectedly, we spent a lot of time together indoors. However, I managed to venture out and see old friends.

I spent a lovely morning with O., a young man with a troubled childhood and prison experience, who is now working on a building site and keeping on a straight path. His employer really values him and his workmates love how he keeps them all cheerful. He had a real encounter with God when in prison and, though he doesn't go to church, he hasn't lost his faith.

I also met up with N. who successfully completed a seven-month programme at Crossroads Rehabilitation Centre and is now a self-employed gardener and completely sober.

Pastor May, an independent church worker, devotes herself to the residents of impoverished villages, Gray's Farm and Green Bay. I helped her out with her children's Sunday School classes and made pastoral visits to three homes. One poignant visit was to K., a twenty-year-old with learning difficulties. He has recently had a nervous breakdown after suffering bullying and stays home (see photo next page), hardly venturing out. There is so very little support for people on the island with his kind of issues and a lack of understanding towards people struggling with their mental health.

There was a general election while I was there, a time known locally as the 'silly season'. Sadly, there were many confrontational incidents between opposing parties, vandalism and personal vitriol of candidates. There were also dubious night-time arrivals of planeloads of people from another continent, leading to speculation of people trafficking.

Back in 2019, thanks to my friend Florence, I was introduced to Lady Sandra Williams, the wife of the Governor General. Our meeting set off a chain of events which has now resulted in Street Pastors Antigua receiving a donation of around £25,000 from Halo, a charitable foundation. This will be put towards funding a Street Pastor proposal to provide a base from which to offer long-term support to rough sleepers. It will take some time and massive efforts to raise the additional funds, but it is a very promising start.

Since Covid when there were lockdowns and curfews, Street Pastors Antigua has been struggling to send out teams on evening patrols. However, they do manage to provide a soup kitchen most Wednesdays with support from a

range of churches. Thanks to the internet I can keep in touch with news, using websites like the Antigua Newsroom and Daily Observer and, through WhatsApp, with the Street Pastors.

Antigua is indeed a beautiful place for a holiday but behind the scenes there is much poverty, corruption and injustice. Please pray for Antigua and for the Christians there to be salt and light in their communities. Remember Barry, the Street Pastor coordinator, as he tries to promote the work and recruit new members.

Sue Shaw



With Pastor May and her outdoor Sunday School class in Green Bay, a predominantly Hispanic area.



With Pastor May visiting a home in Gray's Farm village where K. lives.

Cystic Fibrosis

You may remember that we have a special collection each year at the Gift Service for Cystic Fibrosis. This is in memory of Ann-Marie Crump, who came to our church and died of Cystic Fibrosis on Christmas Day when she was 11.

We had a very nice letter from the Cystic Fibrosis trust thanking us for the donation of £269.70. They asked for their thanks to be passed on to everyone who contributed. If that includes you, thank you!

The money is used for their ongoing research work into the disease, its causes, how it is passed on and how it can be treated. They also support families affected by Cystic Fibrosis who are in financial difficulties and campaign on behalf of people affected by the disease.

If you want to know more about Cystic Fibrosis and the work of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, their website is www.cysticfibrosis.org.uk

We have officially received our **Bronze Eco Church Award**
(the Logo is shown on the front page of Church News)



To make a financial donation to Kingston URC, please see the final page

LENT STUDIES AT KURC

Give Your Brain a Workout! Let's Memorise Bible Verses Together!

Have you ever wished you could remember a particular Bible verse? It was on the tip of your tongue but not easy to recall? Come and join us, starting Wednesday, 1st March and for the following 5 Wednesdays at 2pm.

We will also offer an online session on Monday evenings at 8pm starting Monday, 6th March.

Led by Sue Shaw, it will be a fun-time, learning together those verses that have helped you or someone else.

Sally Butler will also be on hand to teach one significant word using British Sign Language.

Each in-person session will start at 2pm and last for around forty-five minutes. They will be held in the downstairs meeting room next to the office. Come along and give your brain a good workout!

Hope you can join us. Contact Sue on sue.shaw24@gmail.com if you have any questions or want the zoom link for the Monday online session.

Details of other local church Lent studies will be available in the foyer.

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Pilgrimage Speaker Event – online

On Tuesday, 7th March at 7.30pm there will be a Speaker Event on Pilgrimage with published author and academic Dr Nick Mayhew-Smith. He will address the subject of 'Celtic Pilgrimage', which is a way of connecting to God through sacred sites in the landscape.

Nick is a researcher and writer specialising in Celtic, outdoor and nature spirituality. His first major book 'Britain's Pilgrim Places' (2011) was made into a BBC television series called 'Pagans & Pilgrims' in 2013. Since then, he has written 'Naked Hermit' and the best-selling guide, 'Britain's Pilgrim Places' with Guy Hayward of the British Pilgrimage Trust. He is currently working as deputy head of Southlands College at Roehampton University, London.

Tickets cost £10 and if you can't make the event, money spent will be invested in a new missional venture, 'Spiritual Practices Pilgrimages', which creates opportunities for the spiritual but not religious to experience sacred Christian places and practices. To buy tickets visit <https://sppilgrimages.eventbrite.co.uk>

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South London Synod Area Meeting - 22nd January 2023

Sometimes it can be easy to forget that we are a part of a denomination and not an island on our own. Attending the South London Synod meetings certainly remind you that we are part of a denomination bigger than Kingston URC and that decisions made by the wider church can have an impact on us.

At this meeting the main issue was the deployment of stipendiary ministers in the URC. There were lots of facts and figures, but basically there are not enough ministers of Word and Sacrament to go round; in Southern Synod there are 34.25 ministers to cover 138 churches. We are very fortunate at Kingston URC to have a full-time minister, but that is not the trend across the denomination. In one area of Surrey/Sussex 3 ministers share 39 Churches!

So how will churches be led in the future?

- By teams of enthusiastic elders.
- Every member ministry – Yes, that's you and me!! No, we are not all trained ministers, musicians, public speakers or missionaries. But we are all loved by God and a part of the church with all the gifts and talents God has given us. Each and every one of us is important because we are the body of Christ and, as Paul explains, all are vitally important. "Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. (1 Corinthians 12:14-18)

The meeting then discussed the proposed process for installing the new leadership of a church when a vacancy comes about. Enter the Visionary Companion; a visionary, entrepreneurial, imaginative person who would facilitate discussions to find the best form of leadership for each individual church.

Yes, there may be implications for us in the future but, for now, let us continue to hone and use the gifts and talents we already have in abundance to serve and nurture our community. I am reminded of the final verse of the carol, In the Bleak mid-Winter:

What can I give him
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb
 If I were a wise man
 I would do my part
**Yet what I can I give him
 Give my heart**

We all have something to give, however big or small, and all is valuable and important.

The meeting then turned to the reports from finance, buildings, youth, etc. before ending with the blessing. There was the buzz of chatter as people prepared to go home and a chance to network more with others in our Synod area. **Carol Clack**

NEW YEAR PARTY PHOTOS



Cartoon Game for starters



The children had fun



Lots of food



Sally & Sue showed
Abba how it was done



Bron & Nick have been
booked for the next
production of 'Grease'



Stefan enjoyed himself



Beth kept an eye
on things

Thank you to all involved for a fun, relaxing time.

To make a financial donation to Kingston URC, please see the final page

KURC's Music Support Group

Ken and I have decided it's time to step down from leadership of the Music Support Group, having been involved since its beginnings in 2014. To start with, the group was formed to raise funds to buy a second-hand grand piano for the church. Sulhee Kim, music coordinator at the time, was the inspiration behind this as, in addition to playing the organ, she was a first class pianist.

The grand piano sparked a flowering of musical activity. A first concert included piano solos, duets, chamber music, Finlay Forbes on piano accordion, a small choir and a gayageum orchestra played by Korean members and friends in traditional costumes.

Inspired by the success of the concert, the church choir was resurrected, to lead congregational singing and to enable those who did not play instruments to enjoy making music. The band continued to accompany the 11.30 service. Music at the church has developed over the years thanks, largely, to our Korean music directors who are with us courtesy of Suk In Lee and the PCK (Presbyterian Church of Korea). Currently our music is in the capable hands of Haeun Lim supported by Rhiannon Bone, conductor and Ruth Anderson, pianist.



Lunchtime recitals, the inspiration of John Fisher and Nigel Tunley, have become a feature of church life. The first, a duet recital, was given on the grand piano in November 2014 by Sulhee Kim and a colleague, Paul Thame. The ongoing programme which includes, among others, recitals on cello, flute and guitar, violin and solo voice, gives enjoyment to audiences drawn from KURC and the wider public and also provides valuable performing experience for young musicians.



A challenge taken on by the Music Support Group just before Lockdown was to raise money for a new digital organ, the old pipe organ, sadly, having become too expensive to repair and maintain. Thanks to generous gifts from members a substantial sum was raised and the new organ installed in December 2021. Haeun Lim gave a first lunchtime organ recital just before Christmas 2022.

Happily, Ruth Anderson and John Fisher have agreed to take on leadership of the Music Support Group and became Chair and Secretary from January 2023. They have asked me to say that the Music Support Group would be happy to recruit new members and I know Haeun and all the choir would be delighted to welcome new choir members.

Liz Bartlett

Lunchtime Concert

The next lunchtime recital will be on Thursday, 23rd March, at 12.30 pm. Gideon Gray (cello) accompanied by Michael Bevan (piano) will be playing Beethoven's cello sonata No. 4 in C and Brahms' cello sonata in E minor.

Finlay & Georgina Forbes' New Details

Address: 18 Murrell Court, St Neots, PE19 1LL

Tel: 01480 774001

Finlay's mobile number and email address remain the same.

Reassurance

At a recent church service, a rector made reference to a churchgoer who said he could not make this week's service as the communion wine would take him over his weekly limit.

Rest assured, attenders of KURC, we use non-alcoholic wine!

(With acknowledgement to The Times on 17. 1.23.)

William Henry Monk



This month marks the bicentenary of the birth of William Henry Monk: not a name that will be familiar to many, but a person who deserves to be remembered for two significant achievements. It was Monk who composed what is surely the most well-known Victorian hymn tune: *Eventide*, to which we sing 'Abide with me'. And it was Monk who was responsible for editing and publishing one of the most important and popular hymnbooks of all time: *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

The energetic Dr Monk was professor of music at King's College London. In the 1850s he became aware of the need for a universal, standardized Anglican hymnbook which would replace numerous small independent publications and, effectively, act as a companion to the Book of Common Prayer. He and a committee of like-minded enthusiasts amassed a collection of 273 hymns from a surprisingly wide range of traditions: Latin, Greek, German and evangelical (ie dissenters and Methodists), and the book was published in 1861. It was so successful that it has passed through many editions and is still in print. The latest version now has 847 hymns, including many of our modern favourites. It is estimated that 170 million copies of *HA&M* have been sold over the last 160 years.

Monk composed and arranged a large number of the tunes for the early editions of *HA&M*. No fewer than 21 of these can be found in *Rejoice and Sing*, including *Evelyns* ('At the name of Jesus') and, of course, *Eventide*. (His other famous tune, to the words 'All things bright and beautiful', is not included in *R&S*.)

Eventide was reputedly written in just 10 minutes: it is a remarkably simple and seemingly ordinary tune, but its secret perhaps lies in the harmony of the third line and the way in which it perfectly matches the words of the hymn. It has been sung at every FA Cup Final and every Rugby League Cup Final since the late 1920s, and even made an appearance at the opening of the London Olympics in 2012!

John Fisher

'WE QUIT' said Extinction Rebellion on December 31, 2022



Keep the date. Choose Your Future – 21st April and beyond – The Big One – Houses of Parliament – 100,000 people.

Did 'We Quit' mean that sensible policies on energy use and the production of 'stuff' had been achieved and the target of keeping temperature rises to below 1.5C would be met? Very sadly it did not.

Extinction Rebellion has decided to temporarily shift away from public disruption as a primary tactic.

It would be lovely to know that reasoned argument always prevailed. It does not. Most movements that promoted causes we now think are obviously correct, eg the suffragettes, had to use disruptive tactics to gain attention. Very brave people were prepared to risk their lives doing dangerous 'stunts' to draw people's attention to the DANGER we are all facing. For what cause would you go up a gantry and dangle over the motorway?

Formed in late October 2018, XR is focused on bringing about radical change to save the environment, aiming their message at the media and the UK government.

Among their many policies is the request to cut carbon emissions to net zero – a target XR believe is attainable by 2025.

XR also want the government and the media to tell the truth about the reality of climate change.

This movement has been backed by several notable names, such as the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, and ex-Green Party leader, Caroline Lucas.

I have been pleasantly surprised at the number of 'Pillars of the Community' who are members of Extinction Rebellion. It is certainly not all wide-eyed extremists. And distressed at the woman I met who thought it was appalling that people should be inconvenienced. Wide scale fires (France, Spain, Portugal, Australia, the USA), extensive flooding (Cumbria, Yorkshire, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) and climate refugees are all going to be VERY inconvenient.

XR now says 'We recognise and celebrate the power of disruption to raise the alarm and believe that constantly evolving tactics is a necessary approach. What's needed now most, is to disrupt the abuse of power and imbalance, to

bring about a transition to a fair society that works together to end the fossil fuel era. Our politicians, won't do it without pressure.'

There are things we can do individually, and many of us do, but the big changes HAVE to be done by politicians.

100,000 is the number of signatories on a petition that gets a question raised in Parliament. So XR is aiming to have a 100,000 people round Parliament starting on 21st April 2023.

To sign up to be there, go to <https://extinctionrebellion.uk/the-big-one/#connect-in-person> or speak to me.

To support financially, View the [Crowdfunder](#).

For more information, go to <https://extinctionrebellion.uk/> or speak to me.

For local information, go to www.kingstonhive.org.uk

And if you think the present system will see you out - it may do (depending how old you are), but it certainly can't continue for your children and grandchildren. The longer we delay, the worse it will be. If we act decisively NOW, we can avoid the worst.

Christine Thompson

ECO CLOTHES SWAP



One of the suggestions from the Eco Survey was to hold an Eco Clothes Swap, ie bring some clothing that you no longer want and exchange it for something else (rather than throwing it away).

The date for this has been set for Saturday, 29th April, from 10.30 to 2.30 and all, including children and teenagers, are welcome! It will be in the Mayo Hall and refreshments will be available from the coffee bar.

The clothes themselves don't have to be labelled 'eco'! People can drop off clothes from Sunday, 23rd April to Friday, 28th April.

A poster will go out nearer the time, but I'd be grateful if you could spread the word with friends, neighbours, and on social media etc.

Thank you!

Sally (and the Green Group)

CHRISTIAN AID

Thanks to everyone who contributed and donated to the Alternative Christmas Card - **we made just over £1,500 this year.**

Christian Aid and other charities are working to deliver essentials to survivors of the terrible earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Your contributions are most valued. For such a terrible disaster as this, I recommend donating via the DEC website if you can. [Home | Disasters Emergency Committee \(dec.org.uk\)](http://dec.org.uk)

Alternatively, please speak to me. Many thanks.

Ray Charlton
Mobile: 07785220369

For Ray's interesting article on his recent visit to Sri Lanka helping street children, please see the attachment to Catherine's email of 15 February.

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SYNOD TRAINING DAY

A date for your diary. There will be a Southern Synod training day on 20th May. These are excellent and are open to anyone who wishes to know more about taking worship and/or reflecting on their faith. They are not just for lay people.

Christine Thompson

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During a recent frosty spell, Jenny Tarbutt spotted this on her kitchen window – one of many beautiful spiders' webs that were around at the time.

And the study continues...

I have been a student now for getting on for 6 months and it continues to keep me very busy.

Assignment deadlines have been and gone with the promise of more to come. The module on Theological Reflection introduced me to the pastoral cycle. This way of reflection encourages you to take an experience, explore it and then reflect on it from the Bible, liturgy, other sources and then make a response. Although it's described as a cycle, it becomes a spiral as your response will affect how you view a similar experience in the future which you will explore, reflect and respond from a new starting position.

Submitting assignments has been a learning curve. Correct referencing, proof-reading, remembering how to use power point and then the exciting app called Turnitin. Turnitin looks at your essay for possible plagiarism and points out words or phrases or whole chunks of writing that may have been taken verbatim from somewhere else without referencing it correctly.

Most of my college lectures are on zoom, so it's a treat to go to Manchester in person and meet up with other students and teachers.

In the next few months, I will continue the Mission and Evangelism and An Introduction to the History and Doctrine of Christianity modules on line. In March and April I will travel to Manchester for a community workshop, a weekend looking at safe boundaries in pastoral practice and a Northern College weekend where the United Reformed weekend students have the opportunity to study in person.

Please pray for me as I continue in my studies and for safe travel as I travel between London and Manchester.

Any offers to feed my cats, Spot and Florence Pearl, when I am away would be appreciated – I am usually only away for a couple of nights at a time.

Carol Clack

Archive of the Month

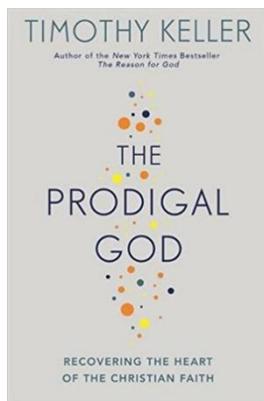


The Junior Department of our Sunday School, photographed in 1950. The leader was Marjorie Moore – no relation of Gordon as far as we are aware. The children are in the Upper Hall of the old Halls of Remembrance, which stood on the site of our present Richard Mayo Hall.

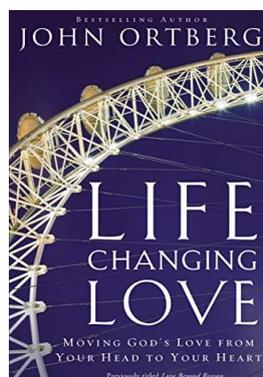


BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MONTH

We have two this month:



The Prodigal God
(Recovering the Heart of
the Christian Faith)
by Timothy Keller
at £8.99



Life Changing Love
(Moving God's Love
from your Head to
your Heart) by
John Ortberg at £11.99

Graham in the Bookshop in the foyer will be very pleased to get these books for you at 10% off the purchase price.



TRANSFORM TRADE

Did you see the headlines?



In the middle of January a new report, in partnership with the University of Aberdeen, uncovered the appalling mistreatment of Bangladeshi garment factories by big fashion brands. The story was picked up by the **BBC**, **The Evening Standard**, **The Guardian**, **Drapers** and the **Daily Mail** to name a few.

It's important news – suppliers are reporting that brands are paying less than the cost of production and, as a result, factories are unable to pay Bangladeshi minimum wage.

The headlines are depressing – but we know there's a solution.

Right now, brands get away with treating their factories poorly because there is nothing keeping them in check.

Over 10 years ago, people saw a similar situation with UK supermarkets – and demanded change. UK supermarkets are now accountable to a Watchdog which monitors how they treat their suppliers – the farmers and workers who grow the food we eat.

We need the same for the fashion section. **Email your MP to call for a Fashion Watchdog today and help stop big fashion brands' unacceptable behaviour.**

Received by Sue Shaw on behalf of Transform Trade

Spotted in Facebook recently:**“It’s just a Toddler Group!”**

Never underestimate a toddler group. **NO**, it’s not “just a toddler group”, it’s a place where so much wonderful work is done, often unseen, often overlooked, but where life-changing and supportive actions take place. It’s a place where those who walk through the door can put down their little ones, the bags of nappies and snacks and spare clothes and also put down the burdens that they carry, that weigh so heavy on their shoulders.

The toddler group is a place where people have and do walk the same path as you. Where there is always someone to wipe your tears, to listen to you as you pour out the anguish about the sleepless nights, the potty-training, the biting, the behaviour, the feelings of inadequacy. It’s a place where hugs are freely given and are as needed as cups of tea.

A place where those who run the groups look forward to them as much as those who come along. They are places where you are missed and where we watch your little ones grow and celebrate their milestones with you. They are places where “hop little bunnies” takes on a special role as people see development in your children, seeing them from learning to lying down to standing up unaided, to bobbing, to launching upwards, to jumping and finally to hopping and then realising that school is on the horizon.

Toddler groups are supportive places where help can be pinpointed, referrals to food banks made and clothes shares used by all. Places where you can ask for help and know that someone cares and will do their utmost to provide or assist in getting you the help you need.

Toddler groups are places of fun and joy and laughter and candles and cakes and craft and glitter. They are places where incy wincy and twinkle twinkle and the wheels on the bus are sung with great gusto by those with amazing voices and those with amazing enthusiasm, and it doesn’t matter who you are! They are places where grandparents and parents and brothers and sisters and aunties, uncles, cousins and childminders come together and share stories and chat and build friendships, many of which become life-long.

So, **NO**, it’s not just a toddler group, never just a toddler group. It’s a changing and evolving supporting community and there is room for you too!

Submitted by Sally



Ray Taylor's Surprise 90th Birthday Party 18. 2.23.



Congratulations, Ray. Onwards and Upwards!



URC Pilgrimage to the Holy Land



Spend 10 days in Jerusalem and Galilee on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The trip takes place from 16-23 October and will be led by the Revd. Bill Bowman, Convenor of the Candidates and Students Committee for Southern Synod, in association with Mc Cabe Pilgrimages.

For more information, please telephone 07905 499815.



To make a financial donation to Kingston URC, please see the final page



READINGS FOR MARCH

2 Our Father in heaven

Sunday 26 February	John 1:14-18
Monday 27 February	John 17:1-5
Tuesday 28 February	Exodus 3:1-6
Wednesday 1 March	John 17:6-10
Thursday 2 March	Isaiah 2:2-4
Friday 3 March	Psalms 103:19-22
Saturday 4 March	John 18:33-37

3 Your will be done

Sunday 5 March	Psalms 40:4-8
Monday 6 March	Colossians 1:15-20
Tuesday 7 March	John 6:35-40
Wednesday 8 March	Acts 2:43-47
Thursday 9 March	Isaiah 25:6-9
Friday 10 March	1 Kings 19:1-8
Saturday 11 March	Exodus 16:13-18

4 Bread of heaven

Sunday 12 March	John 6:48-51
Monday 13 March	Psalms 103:8-17
Tuesday 14 March	Acts 7:54-60
Wednesday 15 March	John 21:15-19
Thursday 16 March	Psalms 27:7-12
Friday 17 March	Ephesians 6:10-20
Saturday 18 March	John 17:11-14

5 Deliver us from evil

Sunday 19 March	Psalms 56
Monday 20 March	Psalms 121
Tuesday 21 March	John 17:15-19
Wednesday 22 March	Psalms 145:10-13
Thursday 23 March	1 Chronicles 29:10-13
Friday 24 March	John 17:20-26
Saturday 25 March	Revelation 11:15-19

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (2)

1 Passiontide: the coming of the kingdom

Sunday 26 March	Matthew 24:1-14
Monday 27 March	Matthew 24:15-28
Tuesday 28 March	Matthew 24:29-44
Wednesday 29 March	Matthew 24:45-51
Thursday 30 March	Matthew 25:1-13
Friday 31 March	Matthew 25:14-30



Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

A warm invitation is given to all who read this magazine to come and share in our services and activities

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e-mail (Premises Manager): premises@urckington.org.uk

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Premises Assistant:

Georgi Todorov, Landline as above.

How to contribute to Church News:

Contributions on matters of reflection and opinion as well as reports of activities are welcome.

Copy for **Church News** must reach the editor by the second Friday of the month.

The next copy deadline for April is Friday, 10 March 2023

Editor: Holly Christie E-mail: holly@thisdemandinglife.com

FINANCIAL DONATIONS to KURC can be made in a number of ways:

Complete one of the forms at the back of the church to set up standing order payments.

Make regular cash gifts at the Sunday services. By using the offertory envelopes, you allow the church to reclaim Gift Aid.

You can also pay directly into our bank account: sort code 20-46-73, account number 60921289 and quote Kingston United Reformed Church Charity.

*Kingston United Reformed Church is a member of the **Local Ecumenical Project** in Kingston Town Centre with its partner, **All Saints Parish Church** in the Market Place.*

The town centre ministers meet regularly.

*We are a part of **Churches Together in Kingston**.*

*Kingston URC is also affiliated with the **Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK)** and the **Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK)***

You can also keep in touch with worship and activities at our church through our website: www.kingstonurc.org. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.