



Faith – Hope – Love –
Since 1972



CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed Church

December 2023 - January 2024



www.kingstonurc.org

Charity No. 1131880

This edition edited by Sue Shaw

WORSHIP & EVENTS DIARY

The following are the **anticipated** diaries for December and early January, but please see the e-mailed Weekly Notices for the most up to date information and for details of Daily Prayers.

DECEMBER

Sunday, 3 rd	10.00	Worship & Communion – also live-streamed
	11.30	All Age Worship
	17.00	Reflective Worship
Tuesday, 5 th	19.30	Elders' Meeting
Wednesday, 6 th	10.00	Tots' Praise
Sunday, 10 th	10.30	Gift Service
	11.30	Church Meeting
	17.00	Reflective Worship
Wednesday, 13 th	10.00	Tots' Praise
Saturday, 16 th	14.00	Crafternoon – Here comes Summer!
Sunday, 17 th	10.00	Worship – also live-streamed
	11.30	All Age Worship
	17.00	Reflective Worship or Carol Service
Wednesday, 20 th	10.00	Tots' Praise
Sunday, 24 th	Christmas Eve	
	10.00	Worship – also live-streamed
	11.30	All Age Worship
	17.00	Reflective Worship
Monday 25 th	Christmas Day	
	10.00	All Age Worship
Sunday, 31 st	10.00	Worship – also live-streamed
	11.30	All Age Worship & Communion
	17.00	Reflective Worship

JANUARY

Tuesday, 2 nd	19.30	Elders' Meeting
Sunday, 7 th	10.00	Worship & Communion – also live-streamed
	11.30	All Age Worship
	17.00	Reflective Worship
Wednesday, 10 th	10.00	Tots' Praise

For Jolly Toddlers, Messy Church and the Nature Walk, please contact Sally Butler, e-mail: youth@kingstonurc.org

Vaughan James will be editor for February's Church News.
Articles and photos to vaughanrjames@gmail.com, please, by
Friday 12 January 2024.

LETTER FROM LESLEY

Dear All,



Dear All,

Three Y's.

Yes. Yet and Yahweh.

Yes I can. Yes God is with me.

Yes it might be difficult but it is still right.

Yes to beauty. Yes to this day when I am alive.

The positive mindset makes a big difference to the accomplishment of tasks as well as the joy we share with others.

Yet

We cannot do it but I am making moves towards it

Today it is not sorted but we are on the way.

To be on the right path does not mean arrival it means moving towards.

We have not arrived yet. I cannot do it yet. One day . One day

Yahweh

(Yes I know it's a bit of a cheat but can't a woman have an alliterative device every now and then)

God is with us.

Helping us to frame our thoughts

Helping us as we move towards God.

We are not alone.

There are things we can do. Consider our attitude. Consider our view of the struggle. Consider our awareness of the presence that is with us.

Best wishes

Lesley

MEMO FROM MARTYN



As I write remembrance is very much on my mind. Remembrance Sunday is coming up and poppies have appeared everywhere again. They remind us of wars and the loss of life that inevitably results.

We think mostly of wars in the past but also, sadly, of wars that are going on right now in many places in our world.

We are also looking ahead to Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus and the hope that brings.

Together it makes for a season of sadness and joy.

It seems appropriate that Christmas comes after Remembrance Day as the hope we have in Jesus, his birth, life, death and resurrection triumphs over the sadness of war.

It is right that we remember all those victims of wars, past, present and no doubt future but it is also right that we remember the hope that Christmas offers.

Martyn

KEEPING FRIENDS UNITED!

A Useful Tip:

Use WhatsApp to help you support a family member, friend or neighbour and at the same time receive practical and emotional support from others.

WhatsApp Group Messaging with friends and relations of someone who is, say, confined to the house due to illness/disability and needing extra support, is an easy way to keep in touch and share information when any of you in the group visits the friend. Not only does the housebound friend benefit from this coordinated approach but so too does everyone in the group.

As well as WhatsApp's Group Messaging, for staying in touch with friends and family, there is also WhatsApp Broadcast messaging which enables an individual sender to send a message or media to several contacts all at once.

Whereas in a WhatsApp Group, all members can interact and see all of each other's messages, in a Broadcast, interactions are limited to the individual sender & receiver, and recipients can only reply to the sender privately.

Pastoral News

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

A PRAYER

Long-suffering God, we take the path of life, one step at a time, heads up, hearts light. We gaze in wonder at your Creation, our mind eager for the next moment.

Sometimes, though, our hearts are heavy, thinking of those who in pain, grieving. The weight of loss is felt across the world and here at home. This is how it feels when days are hard and a challenge. Yet we sense your presence with us and we thank you. **Amen**

FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER



3rd Wil Bryan
10th. Glyn Robinson plus Christmas workshop.
17th. Available
24th. Available
31st. Available

If anybody would like to give flowers for please have a word with Jean Thompson.

On Saturday 9th December there will be a Flower Workshop when the church will be decorated for Advent and Christmas. Janine would be delighted for helpers to join her from 10am to 12 noon.



Flower arrangement at Ray Taylor's Thanksgiving Service

Sally's Snapshots

Sally Butler our Youth Worker has sent us a collection of photos featuring the young people she comes into contact with.

Below are photos of the young people who attend the new Youth Café a joint enterprise with All Saints Church happening on a Sunday afternoon.



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



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MASTER CHEF AT THE URC? – WELL NOT QUITE

COMMUNITY MEALS

Some of you will know that since November 2020 we have been providing meals every Monday (bar bank holidays) for anyone who needs one on a 'Pay what you can' basis. These meals have been led by Bron and myself who lead on alternative weeks.

We provide a 2-course meal, a main and a pudding, which is eaten in our Foyer or some guests take it away for eating later. It is well received and the hush in the Foyer when all are eating is a silence to behold.

When Bron, Carol and I started this we initially used to hand out 10-15 meals per week, via a counter placed across the front doors, ensuring social distance as it was in the time of restricted access due to Covid.

Now we provide up to 30 meals every Monday as the word gets around.



Paella for30 – taking into account some do not like peas.



Bread and Butter Pudding to go!



Some of our cookery volunteers demonstrating it's fun!

SIMPLY HEALTHY COOKING

Cookery Classes



After we started the Monday Community Meals, we joined Kingston's Good Food Group sponsored by Kingston council via Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA). The Good Food Group brings together community groups, organisations and residents from across Kingston to work towards 'making healthy, nutritious and delicious food accessible and affordable for all. Currently there are over 14 Food Projects across the borough encouraging healthier eating, and reducing food waste.

Here at the URC, we run a cookery course, called Simply Healthy Cooking. This runs over an 8 week period, classes held from 4-7pm, typically on Tuesdays and run within education term times. We typically cook 2 meals each week, and discuss and teach good hygienic and cookery practice, the following sessions are run;

- Breakfasts
- Soups
- Curries
- Veggie Burgers

- Salads
- On the Hob
- Oven Dinners
- Healthy Snacks

These classes are led by Bron, Tricia (a friend of Bron) and myself. All three of us have taken an on-line self-learn course on Food Hygiene, which was interesting and informative and underscores our practice in the kitchen. We have developed a proven set of recipes that are low sugar, low fat and are simple, economical and made from fresh ingredients.

CAN YOU HELP?

As you know Bron and Nick are moving away and Tricia may not be able to help with the next Cookery Course. We need some volunteers to help on Mondays and Tuesdays (from end February 2024) to keep these activities running and allow the current volunteers to have some days off.

Ray Charlton

TOPICAL VERSE**Lifestyle Choices – food for thought**

I chose this bit of pavement
 As opposed to the fists of my dad
 I chose this freezing night
 Instead of the rapist in my house
 I chose this metal park bench
 Because my tenancy ran out
 I chose to live off begging
 As I couldn't afford the rent
 I chose to be beaten in the night
 As my parents didn't approve of my life
 If this is what you really believe
 Then spend a night in my shoes
 I'll spend Christmas at yours
 And you can have my tent

Anon**That's What Christmas is All About**

Tinsel, crackers and a glass of sherry,
 Food and booze, let's get merry
 Cooking, parties and pantomimes
 That's what Christmas is all about.

Mince pies, fine wines
 Christmas pudding, clementines
 Elves and reindeer, ho, ho, ho
 That's what Christmas is all about.

Fairy lights, illuminations,
 Santa Claus, decorations
 Baubles, candles, jingle bells
 That's what Christmas is all about.

Icing the cake, bunches of holly,
 Mistletoe, let's be jolly,
 Indigestion, fuzzy head
 That's what Christmas is all about.

Sending cards, buying pressies
 Watching the tele, seeing the rellies,
 Playing daft games, stuffing the turkey
 That's what Christmas is all about.

Baby Jesus, born to love
 Angels singing from up above
 Dreams and prophecies coming true...

Dressing the tree, staying up late,
 Splashing out, gaining weight,
 Singing carols, having fun
 That's what Christmas is all about

That's what's wrong with Christmas
 People drag God into it too.

Sue Shaw

REMEMBERING



Ray Taylor died last month, aged 90 after months of being bedbound at home.

We celebrated his life on 27 November remembering his good humour and quiet works of service.

A military man, he became a Christian later in life attending KURC with his late wife Stella.

A father, grandfather and great grandfather, he was able to see his first great grandchild shortly before he died.

We also said goodbye to long-standing foyer friend Eddie Kear who died after a long spell in hospital and at home.

Eddie was a cheerful and engaging regular in our foyer and will be greatly missed by our foyer family.

We particularly remember his brother Jeff who often joined him in the foyer.

Eddie and Ray died within days of each other. We shall miss them both.



Singers and musicians of all abilities - we need you!



Wednesday 13th December at 5-6pm

Clarence Street,

Meet beforehand at the

United Reformed Church, Eden Street

from 4:30pm

Organised by Kingston Christian Aid Group - See your church rep.



READINGS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

EPHESIANS PLUS

1 No longer strangers

Sunday 3 December (Advent Sunday) Ephesians 1:1-10

Monday 4 December Ephesians 1:11-14

Tuesday 5 December Ephesians 1:15-23

Wednesday 6 December Ephesians 2:1-10

Thursday 7 December Acts 11:1-18

Friday 8 December Ephesians 2:11-22

Saturday 9 December Ephesians 3:1-6

2 A life worthy of your calling

Sunday 10 December Ephesians 3:7-13

Monday 11 December Ephesians 3:14-21

Tuesday 12 December Romans 8:37-39

Wednesday 13 December Ephesians 4:1-6

Thursday 14 December Ephesians 4:7-16

Friday 15 December Ephesians 4:17-24

Saturday 16 December Ephesians 4:25-32

3 Living in the light

Sunday 17 December Ephesians 5:1-14

Monday 18 December 1 John 2:7-11

Tuesday 19 December Ephesians 5:15-21

Wednesday 20 December Ephesians 5:22-33

Thursday 21 December Ephesians 6:1-9

Friday 22 December Ephesians 6:10-17

Saturday 23 December Ephesians 6:18-24

CHRISTMAS WITH JOHN

Sunday 24 December John 1:1-9

Monday 25 December (Christmas Day) John 3:16-21

Tuesday 26 December John 1:10-14

Wednesday 27 December John 1:29-34

Thursday 28 December John 1:43-51

Friday 29 December John 8:12-19

Saturday 30 December John 5:16-27

Sunday 31 December John 14:6-14

HOPE FOR A NEW YEAR (1)

Monday 1 January John 1:35-39

Tuesday 2 January	John 1:43-46
Wednesday 3 January	Matthew 6:25-34
Thursday 4 January	Lamentations 3:22-26
Friday 5 January	Isaiah 43:1-9
Saturday 6 January (Epiphany)	Genesis 9:13-17
HOPE FOR A NEW YEAR (2)	
Sunday 7 January	Joel 2:22-25
Monday 8 January	Isaiah 35:1-2
Tuesday 9 January	Colossians 3:12-17
Wednesday 10 January	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Thursday 11 January	Ephesians 3:14-21
Friday 12 January	Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-13
Saturday 13 January	1 Peter 1:3-9

THE GOSPEL OF MARK (1)**1 Preparing the way**

Sunday 14 January	Mark 1:1-15
Monday 15 January	Mark 1:16-34
Tuesday 16 January	Mark 1:35-45
Wednesday 17 January	Mark 2:1-12
Thursday 18 January	Mark 2:13-17
Friday 19 January	Mark 2:18-22
Saturday 20 January	Mark 2:23-28

2 Sowing the seed

Sunday 21 January	Mark 3:1-12
Monday 22 January	Mark 3:13-19
Tuesday 23 January	Mark 3:20-34
Wednesday 24 January	Mark 4:1-20
Thursday 25 January	Mark 4:21-25
Friday 26 January	Mark 4:26-34
Saturday 27 January	Mark 4:35-41

CALLING**1 Biblical figures are called**

Sunday 28 January	Isaiah 51:1-3
Monday 29 January	1 Samuel 3:1-10
Tuesday 30 January	Genesis 7:1-5
Wednesday 31 January	Amos 7:14-17
Thursday 1 February	Jonah 3:1-6

The IBRA publication *Fresh from The Word* offers commentary on these daily Bible readings and is available from:-

IBRA, c/o Christian Education,

5–6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH, UK

Tel: +44(0) 121 458 3313 Fax: +44(0) 121 285 1816

Email: ibra@christianeducation.org.uk

Did you know that from Monday to Saturday at 10am every morning you can join others in reading these IBRA bible passages and then spend some time in reflection and prayer?

We meet together online on Zoom (see our weekly notice sheet for the various links) for half an hour.

This is a rewarding time for all who come whether it is just an occasional visit or on a Regular basis. Most people, once they have been want to join in again! It's a great way of connecting with God and others during the week.

Commitment for Life

Prayer Partners 2023

Life-giving Faith Defiant Hope Generous Love

Climate disruption and the environment

A prayer of repentance

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, you brought light into darkness.

You breathed life into nothingness.

You made the world, and it was good.

You made us, and it was very good.

And then things went wrong.

At first, we didn't realise our choices would bring pain and difficulty.

Later, we did realise our choices would bring pain and difficulty but chose them anyway.

The human race has acted with disgrace towards this beautiful world: your invitation for us 'to care' interpreted as 'to dominate', to abuse, to destroy.

And we are truly sorry.

Sorry for species that no longer exist, wiped from the face of the planet, because of our recklessness, thoughtlessness and greed.

Sorry for neighbourhoods and homes, livelihoods and fields being lost beneath the rising tide of vain ambition, ambivalence, prejudice and convenience.

Sorry for children who will only know scorched earth, hardship, dirty air, dirty water, lack, drought, famine and disease.

Sorry that praying this makes us feel uncomfortable and yet powerless to change.

Sorry that our choices now still bring pain and difficulty.

But you are still loving and patient.

Your desire for a world in harmony, peace, shalom is within us.

And so we pray.

And act. **Amen.**

Roo Stewart, Joint Public Issues Team

A Safe Stronghold

I recently became aware that we are approaching the 500th anniversary of one of the oldest and greatest hymns in our hymnbook: Martin Luther's 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott' (or, in the best-known English translation by Thomas Carlyle, 'A safe stronghold our God is still'). Luther was of course



the person who ignited the Protestant Reformation, the 'monk who shook the world' with his fearless and vigorous attacks on some of the practices of the early 16th century Church. Luther had considerable musical gifts and the instincts of a religious poet. He saw sacred songs as a means of developing his religious movement, and Ein feste Burg is his finest and most enduring achievement in the field of hymnody.

The text of this stirring hymn is very loosely based on Psalm 46. In the words of one commentator 'it combines defiance of authority, contempt for the devil and all his works, awareness of one's own weakness and an absolute and joyous trust in God'.

The music may be an adaptation by Luther of a plainsong melody in a Roman gradual. The rhythm has since been simplified, principally by J S Bach, and the tune has been employed in symphonies, operas, marches, film scores, piano duets, cantatas and chorale preludes.

Many translations of the original German words have been attempted. In the late 19th century there were already 45 English versions in existence, and this is now believed to have grown to over 100, including translations into other languages.

When our hymnbook 'Rejoice and Sing' was compiled in the 1980s it was decided to commission yet another translation. This was provided by Rev Stephen Orchard, a URC minister, and you will find it at number 585. The first line is 'Our God stands like a fortress rock'

John Fisher

Archive of the Month

Believe it or not, it is almost 20 years since our kitchen was redesigned and modernised. Here are two photos taken in the 1990s showing the old kitchen with its 'island' worktop and plate warmer (but no dishwasher). The pictures feature some of the regular catering volunteers at that time: Pam Lawler, Margaret Randall, Brenda Ives and Eleanor Barter.



John Fisher

Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

We invite all who read this magazine to come and share in our services and activities

Ministers:

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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 copy deadline for the next (i.e February) edition is Friday, 12 January 2023

Editor: Vaughan James; email vaughanrjames@gmail.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.