



CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed Church

MARCH 2024



Photo by Unsplash

www.kingstonurc.org

Charity No. 1131880

This edition edited by Jean Thompson

A warm invitation is given to all who read this magazine to come and share in our services and activities, both in the building and on Zoom

Our Sunday Services:

10.00 – Worship – also live-streamed (with Communion first Sunday monthly)

11.30 – All Age Worship (with Communion on the last Sunday monthly)

17.00 – Reflective Worship (with Communion on the third Sunday monthly)

On the **second Sunday** of each month a **combined service at 10.30**

Replaces the 10.00 and 11.30 services

14.00 – Messy Church (monthly, but Sundays vary) e-mail Sally Butler – youth@kingstonurc.org

Tea and Coffee are served between the 10.00 and 11.30 services and before the 10.30 service on the second Sunday

During the 10.00, 10.30 and 11.30 services there are **group activities for children** of all ages.

Weekly:

Monday:

10.00 Jolly Toddlers (during school terms)

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

12.30 Community Lunch

Tuesday:

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

Wednesday:

10.00 Tots' Praise

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

Thursday:

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

20.00 The Thursday Club on Zoom

Friday:

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

Saturday:

10.00 Prayers on Zoom

Monthly:

1st Tuesday 19.30 Elders' Meeting

2nd Sunday 11.30 Church Meeting

3rd Saturday 14.00 Crafternoon

The Sanctuary is open for private prayer, with access via the Foyer.

Our Foyer is normally open every weekday and Saturday from 11.00 until 14.00 for coffee and tea.

A Problem or Concern? There is sometimes a listener available in the Foyer; if not, please speak to the coffee server or contact Lesley Charlton.

Events to look out for in March 2024:

Saturday, 9th 10.30 Breathing Workshop – pg. 17

Thursday, 14th 12.30 Lunchtime Concert – Michael Bevan (piano) – pg. 11

Lent Discussion Groups – pg. 18

Watch out for details of Holy Week & Good Friday & Easter services.

Please also see the e-mailed Weekly Notices.

LESLEY'S LETTER



Dear All,

Jesus was always busy going about. Was he? Was he really? He was certainly focused on things he had to do. Yet he also had time to heal and teach people. His life was a perpetual stream of interruptions. Jesus was on his way to.... when.... (fill in the blanks from many stories). Jesus was on his way to one place when someone came and asked for his help and he responded to them. Is it possible that the interruptions are our real calling rather than our plans?

'Busy' tends to speak of someone chasing their tail and not having time to minister to those they meet, in which case, Jesus was never busy. In a 1977 piece of research by social psychologists John Darley and Dan Batson, people training for the ministry were asked to prepare a sermon on the good Samaritan. One group was told they were short of time and had to deliver the sermon now. They rushed to the place to do so. On their way there they passed someone obviously in need, with no one else around. Staggeringly 90% of them left the person unattended. They did what they were about to preach against. The pressure of time made them behave in a way contrary to their beliefs.

The key for Jesus is that early in the morning he would get up and withdraw to the mountains to spend time with God. He set his compass and then lived the day truly to what he believed was right for him. We know that we will fail in that effort, unlike him, but having guidelines and time to check the direction of our lives is surely important.

Then there is the business of having enough and not too much to do. We are all called to serve. How are we serving? That does not mean more and more activity. It could be that we are required to go deeper and deeper. One minister was famous for his 10-minute visits. At times I am sure that is OK but, on many occasions, it would not be enough. If you are spending an hour with someone, that means you will not be spending an hour with someone else. Nor doing another form of service.

Are we spending our time in the way God calls us to?

Thank you, God, for this day.

May we use each day to your praise and glory. Amen

Yours, Lesley

CHURCH SECRETARY'S CHAT



I have been delighted to see delicate crocuses and stunning snowdrops. I know that there is still cold, windy damp weather to come that might challenge these seemingly gentle flowers. But are they under threat by the bad weather that I foresee for them? Maybe not, because it is the same every year. Colour and quick growth force its way through the ground; I love to see it and then worry about its robustness. What a waste of my time!!

At this time of the year church secretaries are required to send in annual returns to the Synods. Except for ministers and elders, no personal details are shared. But numbers are. How many members, how many people attend the services we offer - those sorts of numbers.

We are also now in the final quarter of the financial year. Time to think about the budget for next year. More data, more numbers.

Time to worry? Or time to celebrate and reflect? Reflect on all the energy and support that our church has and receives. In that way we can make considered, hopeful plans. God is with us.

“In every life we have some trouble
But when you worry, you make it double.”

Cathy

(Thank you to the people who let me know that they knew the lyrics I used last month. It was ‘Somewhere’ from ‘West Side Story’. How about this month’s quote?)

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SALLY'S STORIES

NO photos, quotations, statistics or even stories from me this month!!

But did youth work happen? Yes!

A lot of what we do is being faithful. We turn up, we try our best, we try again next time. Not always exciting or newsworthy. But it happens. Simple as that.

Please keep praying for me, our volunteers, our families.

A note re **Crafternoons**:

This is NOT a children's event, a youth event or even a family event. Can you please help me and Carol? We would love to make it even more of an all-age event. We do have parents there and it would be lovely for them to meet and make friends with people from Sunday church. Try out a craft OR just come for a cup of tea. Bring your knitting or whatever project you may be working on (if you are!). But do come.

See the Crafternoon Poster on the next page.



WELCOME BACK, SUK IN

After a spell away Suk In was welcomed back at the 10 am service on Sunday, 28 January, followed by chocolate cake in the foyer.



Crafternoons 2024

March 16th **Autumn Colours!**

April 20th **Pet Portraits**

May 18th **Knit and Stitch**

June 15th **Bring your own craft**

July 20th **Camera Capers**

August 17th **Jewellery Making**

September 21st **Spring is around the corner!**

October 19th **Crafty Toilet Twinning!!**

November 16th **A recycled Christmas**

December 21st **Body Art**

Saturdays 2-5pm

Kingston United Reformed Church

£3 per person or £5 per family

Tea, cake and conversation included

For more details speak to Carol Clack or Sally Butler

Pastoral News at 10. 2.24.

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

God of compassion, we bring before you the people we have named. May they feel your loving care and give them strength to face challenging times. We also pray for all who have experienced life-changing events either due to natural disasters or being caught up in war zones; give them courage and strength to rebuild their lives. Amen.

Ray Erskine



Reflections on Jesus – some quotes to ponder:

Question: Why was it the Saviour rode on the cross?

Answer: To get us to the other side.

When is a door not a door?

When it is rolled away.

When is a body not a body?

When it is a_risen

Let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.



Commitment for Life



Bangladesh



Israel & the occupied Palestinian territory



Zimbabwe

Commitment for Life is the URC's global justice programme in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now! The above three regions are currently supported.

Prayer for Global Justice Now

Dear God,

While the world's people are battered by the effects of a cost-of-living crisis, the worst pandemic in a century, and disastrous climate change, the profits of the biggest firms on the planet nearly doubled.

We pray for those who are affected by these injustices, for those whose livelihoods are destroyed by the greed of corporations, for those who are denied access to life-saving medicines, and for those who are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

We pray that you give strength and courage to those fighting for solidarity, equality and justice. May their voices be heard, and their actions inspire others to join them in their fight.

We pray that governments and corporations around the world recognise their responsibility to protect human rights, the environment, and the common good, and take concrete action to promote justice and fairness. Amen.

MONDAY LUNCH-TIME AT KURC



Following last month's competition, two captions were received:

Ready, Steady, Cook!

Kings of **U**nder **R**ating **C**ooking!

The winners are welcome to a meal any Monday of their choosing!

*A Reminder that Spring is just around the corner –
with thanks to Jenny Tarbutt*



Flower Rota for March



3 rd	Ray Erskine
10 th	Bron & Nick Robinson
17 th	Ruth Anderson
24 th	Ken Bartlett
31 st	Easter Workshop

There will be a Workshop on Saturday, 30th March, from 9.30 am to 12 noon to decorate the church and foyer for Easter. Daffodils and foliage would be greatly appreciated, as would volunteers to help with the arrangements – no experience required. Please speak to Janine or Jean if you would like to know more.



Thursday Lunchtime Recitals

A number of recitals have been arranged for this coming spring:

March 14: Michael Bevan (piano)

April 18: Jane Wilkinson (soprano) and Kyung Won Lee (piano)

May 23: Stephen Westrop (organ)

July 4: Anthea Fry (piano)

All recitals will begin at 12.30pm and are free, with a retiring collection. Do book the dates now!

We would also like to draw your attention to the next concert being given by the K3A Orchestra who practise each week in our church. This will take place in St John's Church, Grove Lane on Sunday, March 17, at 3.30pm. It will feature Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, Mendelssohn's Symphony no. 1 and an arrangement of Haydn's Serenade which is being played in memory of Liz Bartlett who founded the orchestra in 2010.

Further details about this concert and the lunchtime recitals can be found on posters and flyers in the foyer.

The Music Support Group



An Easter Note from Lesley:

Do you have friends overseas or around the UK? What about suggesting that they join us for early Communion on Easter Day, 31 March – 6.30 am – on Zoom. Come and worship in the garden and hear the birds sing.

SOME GOINGS ON UP NORTH

As the New Year broke, like John Fisher and his happy band of pilgrims, some brave folk set off from Auchinloch to Stepps to travel along the newly reopened right of way between our two communities.

A way that had fallen into disuse and impassable for many years, now proving a new perspective on our village and its connections with other places.

It was a glorious day, the sun shone with not a cloud in the sky, unlike the day before when the heavens opened and biblical amounts of rain fell.

So a dozen or so folk walked the new track and passed through the new gates up over the hill and back. The views were outstanding, with a clear sky you could see as far as the Trossachs and Ben Lomond.

Nearer to hand were the Kilpatrick Hills and the Campsie Fells glowing in the sunshine. And along the way a chat to the odd donkey that enquired about our journey.

This was a remarkable start to the year and those who enjoyed the walk, even though there was still a bit of chill in the air, said that they would do it again.

So maybe a tradition from Kingston might be transferred to the north eastern edge of Glasgow.

A belated Happy New Year to you all.

Brandon Williams





A ROCHA'S ECO TIP FOR MARCH

Celebrate Spring Immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of the season – breathe in the fragrance of blossoms, observe budding catkins, note different bird songs, spot footprints, or use the Pl@ntNet app to identify spring flowers.

Nature can boost our happiness, so spend time in your garden, on your balcony, and in local green spaces.

Dedicate quality time to appreciate creation's beauty, and thank God for the hope that spring can bring with A Rocha's Lent resources at

www.https://arochoa.org.uk/connect-with-gods-creation-over-lent/

The next copy deadline for April Church News is Friday, 8 March 2024

Editor: Holly Christie, e-mail: holly@thisdemandinglife.com

A Few much-needed Smiles:

Tomorrow: One of the greatest labour-saving devices of today.

Is your stomach flat? Yes, but the "I" is silent.

I don't mean to brag, but I just put a puzzle together in 1 day and the box said 2-4 years.

Due to a shortage of water locally, until further notice there will be no water in the swimming pool in lanes 1, 3 and 5.

!!!!!!!!!!!!

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

Archive of the Month



In the mid-1950s, long before our church had a foyer, the only place where the congregation could socialise after the morning service was outside on the pavement. All the halls and meeting rooms were occupied by departments of the Sunday School and the Brigades. As Sunday shopping was not permitted, it really didn't matter if members of the church blocked the street. Parking restrictions were unheard of, so you were free to leave your car right outside the church in Eden Street.

John Fisher



BOOK OF THE MONTH - 'TOTAL FORGIVENESS'



'Total Forgiveness' by R T Kendall explains God's challenging call for 'total forgiveness'. Answering this call properly may be the hardest act of our lives. RRP £9.99 but 10% off for Kingston URC members for the months of February/March. Please see Graham at the foyer bookshop.

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

PROGRESS ON (our neighbour) UNILEVER'S NEW BUILD



13 October 2022 - work on Unilever's UK and Global Headquarters begins (note KURC in the background).



14 December 2023 – all associated partners came together on the top of the new Campus to celebrate reaching the highest point of the build. Joined by the Mayor of Kingston and the Leader of the Council, the partners responsible for realising the Unilever Campus vision, braved the winter weather to mark the project's milestone.

The Unilever Campus comprises 3 buildings: an 8-storey office building on Eden Street, connected via a link bridge to another 10-storey office building on Brook Street. On St James Road there is a multi-storey car park for 350 cars and 490 bikes with full electric charging infrastructure and changing facilities to facilitate sustainable commuting, as well as a landscaped roof garden. The Unilever Campus will be home to around 2,000 employees and work is due to finish in 2025.

Unilever Press Releases

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



The Christian charity, Open Doors, has revealed the most dangerous places in the world to follow Jesus in 2024. There is a top ten list (and here are just three of them), and how you can pray for Christians who face imprisonment and even death because of their faith.

Source: Open Doors

1. North Korea

[North Korea](#) retains its spot at the top of the 2024 World Watch List. Pressure in all spheres of life for Christians remains at the maximum level. A widely reported arrest of a family of Christians in April 2023 illustrated the extremely high price of being a Christian in the country.

Pray for North Korean Christians who have no contact with any other believer – that God may keep their faith and witness alive.

2. Somalia

[Somalia](#) remains at second place this year, and has seen a significant increase in violence, alongside extreme pressure for Christians. Islamic militants have increasingly focused on identifying and eliminating Christian leaders. Even the suspicion of conversion from Islam to Christianity can lead to life-threatening danger.

Pray for the discipleship of Somali believers, who need equipping to cope with severe persecution.

3. Libya

[Libya](#) has risen on the 2024 World Watch List due to an increase in violence. This follows a major incident in May 2023 in which several converts from Islam to Christianity and expatriate Christians were arrested. The absence of a single central government to impose law and order in the country has made the situation even more precarious for Christians.

Ask that, despite the deadly danger, rumours of God and his love will spread across a nation beset by persecution and lawlessness.

Breathing Workshop – Saturday, 9 March 2024

As I'm sure you know, breathing well is one of the most important parts of singing, whether you're in the choir or a member of the congregation. It can also help with public speaking.

To help us improve our technique, Rhiannon has kindly agreed to run a workshop based on the materials she uses in the Active Breathing Courses she runs on behalf of Voices of Hope.

We plan to run the workshop, in the sanctuary, on **Saturday, 9 March from 10.30am to 12.30pm**, with a short break for refreshments. All KURC members/friends are invited. The workshop will be **free of charge**.

Please let one of us know if you'd like to attend.

Ruth Anderson and John Fisher

Sue Shaw's work with Street Pastors has reached the Air Waves

It probably seems like history, but you may like to know that my writing about working for Street Pastors in the UK and Antigua has resurfaced in a small way radio format!

Late last year I did some recordings for United Christian Broadcasting 2 (not to be confused with UCB1). The first one aired on 8 February at 10.30 am on UCB2. They are excerpts from 'Stories from the Streets' about Street Pastors which I co-wrote with Luke Randall. His recordings are also part of the fuller broadcast.

It is possible to listen to the transmission for around a month on UCB2's catch up, available through Google on UCB Radio Catch Up/United Christian Broadcasters, then scroll through 90 minutes or so to get to my piece.

You may also like to know that I keep in touch with Street Pastors in Antigua via WhatsApp. I also hear from a couple of the men whom I had the privilege to help. They are both well, working and have a place to live.

I hope to go back when I'm more mobile.

Sue

Lent Discussion Groups

We will be joining with All Saints Church and St John's to run the lent groups as we seek to draw closer to God through prayer. The lent discussion groups will reflect on the previous Sunday's sermon held at 6pm at All Saints church, or can be watched on YouTube@allsaintskingston8231.

The guest preachers are all well-known for their books, talks and prayer-based ministries.

The discussion groups will be led by local clergy as follows:

Tuesdays 3.00 pm – 4.30 pm

Venue: St John the Evangelist, Spring Grove

Leader: Rev. Lindiwe Maseko

Booking: vicarstjohnskingston@gmail.com

Tuesdays 7.00 pm – 8.30 pm

Venue: St John the Baptist, Kingston Vale, Kingston

Leader: Rev. Mandy Beck

Booking: mandy.beck@alty.org

Tuesdays 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm

Venue: Kingston United Reformed Church

Leader: Rev. Joe Moffatt

Booking: joe@allsaintskingston.co.uk

Wednesdays 10.30 am – 12 noon

Venue: All Saints, Kingston

Leader: Rev. Sarah Williams

Booking: sarah@allsaintskingston.co.uk

Wednesdays 7.30 pm – 9 pm

Venue: Online via Zoom (hosted by Kingston URC)

Leader: Rev. Lesley Charlton

Booking: kingstonurc@gmail.com

Each group will meet for five weeks, from the week beginning **19th February to the week beginning 18th March**. The sessions will normally last for 1½ hours.

There is a very informative leaflet at church giving full details of this interesting programme. The leaflet also contains information about Lent Quiet Days on Tuesday, 20 February and Saturday, 9th March.



Some members will remember Debby Stevens who used to worship at KURC some years ago. Debby has recently produced a beautiful book - “At His Feet”- of words and images. The words are the result of early morning time spent with God. As we approach Easter, I thought it would be appropriate to end with some of those thoughts. Ed.

Peace (reflection on John 14.25-27)

He comes to you.

Departures: never easy, but this is a monumental one.

He knows He must leave according to His Father’s plan.

He knows that His leaving will trigger His Father bestowing on you what you need for this time, this season, to bridge the gap until you can be reunited with Him.

Peace I leave with you.

Hear Him say these words. Hear the solid certainty of them as well as the reassurance.

Not just peace, but His peace: the peace unshakeable, the peace that let Him sleep soundly in gale-force winds on the lake.

Not as the world gives do I give to you.

Does the world know peace? Can it provide it to us? Possibly in snippets, but oh-so-temporary and ephemeral. Not granite-solid peace granted by our Lord.

Do not let your hearts be troubled

He knows how often we churn over in our hearts the difficulties and problems and challenges we encounter how, if left to ourselves, we would be a washing machine of constant agitation.

Neither let them be afraid.

He knows how fear is a great enemy of ours, how it can bite us and try to burrow in and lodge with us, up-ending our lives and dominating our thoughts and hearts.

Picture Him delivering each of these previous nuggets – this is what He wants you to recall, to know, to live by.

Picture His all-seeing, all-wise, all-compassionate, all-loving eyes, *gazing directly into yours.*

Hold onto this picture and hold onto the deep breath of relief and release which His completely trustworthy words give you

He is true, He is trustworthy, and He will never, ever, ever let you down.

Let this peace – HIS peace – lodge with you, settle in you, suffuse you, and see the events of your life through the lens of His promised peace.



Debby Stevens

READINGS FOR MARCH

BIG STORY: BIBLE FRAMEWORK (3)

Friday 1 March Revelation 19:6-9
 Saturday 2 March Revelation 21:1-7

REBUILDING IN NEHEMIAH (1)

Sunday 3 March Nehemiah 1:1-2:10
 Monday 4 March Nehemiah 2:11-3:5
 Tuesday 5 March Nehemiah 3:6-21
 Wednesday 6 March Nehemiah 4:1-18
 Thursday 7 March Nehemiah 5:1-19
 Friday 8 March Nehemiah 6:1-19
 Saturday 9 March Nehemiah 7:1-7, 70-73

REBUILDING IN NEHEMIAH (2)

Sunday 10 March Nehemiah 8:1-18
 Monday 11 March Nehemiah 9:1-8, 32-38
 Tuesday 12 March Nehemiah 10:28-39
 Wednesday 13 March Nehemiah 11:1-4, 20-36
 Thursday 14 March Nehemiah 12:27-47
 Friday 15 March Nehemiah 13:1-14
 Saturday 16 March Nehemiah 13:15-30

THE GOSPEL OF MARK (2)

1 Authority over evil

Sunday 17 March Mark 5:1-20
 Monday 18 March Mark 5:21-43
 Tuesday 19 March Mark 6:1-6
 Wednesday 20 March Mark 6:7-13
 Thursday 21 March Mark 6:14-29
 Friday 22 March Mark 6:30-44
 Saturday 23 March Mark 6:45-56

2 Holy Week with Mark

Sunday 24 March (Palm Sunday) Mark 11:1-11
 Monday 25 March Mark 11:15-25
 Tuesday 26 March Mark 14:1-9
 Wednesday 27 March Mark 14:10-26
 Thursday 28 March Mark 14:32-52
 Friday 29 March (Good Friday) Mark 15:21-41
 Saturday 30 March Mark 15:42-47

RECONCILIATION

1 Stories of reconciliation

Sunday 31 March (Easter) John 20:1-10

Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

Ministers:

Rev Lesley M Charlton, tel: 020 8399 4423 e-mail: minister@kingstonurc.org

Rev Dr Suk In Lee, tel: 020 8949 2070 e-mail: leesukin@hotmail.com

Church Secretary:

Cathy Seymour, mobile: 07775 615126 e-mail: chsec@kingstonurc.org

Treasurer:

Christine Chippendale, mobile: 07738 562457 e-mail: treasurer@kingstonurc.org

Children, Youth & Families Worker:

Sally Butler, mobile: 07807 348326 e-mail: youth@kingstonurc.org

Missionary:

So Young Jung, mobile: 07786 032770 e-mail: 2005eo@naver.com

Premises Manager and PA to the Minister:

Catherine Treweek, Landline: 020 8549 1888

Work Mobile: 07807 351801 (between 8 am – 2 pm only)

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

e-mail (PA to Minister): kingstonurc@gmail.com

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, 8 March 2024

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.

We also now have a digital collection plate (card reader) at the back of the church

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 X.