



The
United
Reformed
Church



CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed Church



**“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.”
Audrey Hepburn**

APRIL 2024

www.kingstonurc.org

Charity No. 1131880

This edition edited by Holly Christie

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.

Letter from Lesley

Dear All,

It is not often that we know that it is the last time.

The last kiss before she leaves. The last period before the menopause. The last exercise class before the accident. The last meal before the war. The last time we see a sunrise before our eyesight fails completely. The last time the child will kiss us in public. The last meeting before they were found out. The last time we hear someone sing before they lose their voice. The last time we go on our holidays to our regular place before we can no longer get there. The last visit before he died. The last drive before someone says 'no more'. The last time we drive before the teenager demands the keys and says, 'I will do it.' The last day in the office before they call us in to a meeting and 'let us go'. The last day of winter before it is spring. The last time they invite us to come before they give up and never do so again. The last time you felt unsure of where the relationship was going before she said, 'I love you.'



Some of us are so busy preparing, worrying, planning the future that we fail to enjoy today.

This day is all we have. Our plans may come to fruition they may not. Today is what is ours.

And in the transitions God is with us. These changes may be shocking and startling to us but they are not to God. The life and death; dark and light; disability and development; optimism and sorrow; betrayal and loyalty; are all known to God.

We are not abandoned nor is any situation hopeless.

God is with us.

Today.

What would you give thanks for today? Now. Not this chair but.....thank God that I can sit in this chair and read this. I have the time, the eyesight, the muscle control. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Yours,

Lesley

Easter Services:

Holy week

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday at 7.00pm on zoom for 30 minutes.

Maundy Thursday supper and Holy Communion at 6 at the methodist church

Good Friday

10.00am gather

11.00am walk of witness

12:00pm worship in URC building

2.00pm worship at the foot of the cross

Easter day

6.30am on Zoom...from the manse garden. Invite your friends from around the world to join us

9.00am

11.00am

5.00pm

All of these services are holy communion.

These are in the 10 most dangerous places to be a Christian.

Eritrea

In Eritrea, persecution and discrimination towards Christians remains extremely high, with an added increase in violence. While some churches are officially recognised, there is still no sphere of life where the pressure on Christians is not at an extreme level in the country, with persecution by the government being the strongest source of pressure.

Pray for God's presence to be known to the Christians in Eritrea's inhumane prison system – that he would enfold them in his arms and strengthen them.

Yemen

Despite falling two places in the 2024 World Watch List, the situation in Yemen is mostly unchanged, with extreme levels of persecution. Yemeni Christians face violations of religious freedom from their family and from the authorities (both official authorities and Houthi rebels acting as local authorities in one third of the country) as well as from radical Islamist groups.

Thank God for the courage and persistence of Yemen's church pastors as they continue to offer hope to the nation's few Christians.

Cathy's Conversation

February and March have been our season of selection and voting for new elders.

An annual event that reaches its conclusion at Easter when we celebrate resurrection and newness.

Thank you to all church members that gave this process their care and prayer.

The elders have been looking at some of our policies. We have them to help us be compliant with current standards for our staff and our volunteers. We do not rush to get them done, we get advice from suitable agencies because they are important. Whatever the criteria we use we know that first and foremost our guidance is from God.

We will have looked at the budget for the next financial year and it will have been presented to the March Church meeting. The way we get to the numbers is through looking at what has happened and then making some predictions about what might happen. The aim is to be honest and fair with our church's financial resources.

Feels a little like "spring cleaning". When you actually look behind the sofa and further into the cupboards. Always there is always dust but also some surprises.

May your surprises be good ones.

Cathy Seymour **Book Review**



I'm Alive!

Not only am I alive but really appreciative of everybody who has, and is, supporting my recovery. The lovely Prayer Group have been a blessing and a tonic. For the first time after sepsis, I have been on a bus on 5.3.2024.

I have to thank the Consultants, Doctors and Blyth Ward Staff who pulled out all the stops to save my life. At my age I've had a DNR notice on my Hospital file for several years, so to spend expertise and money on saving my life, makes it impossible not to feel extremely humble and appreciative.

My memory difficulties have been put down to post traumatic syndrome but somewhere in my mind I can remember Lesley saying 'Bosco's. I'm not quite sure what that may mean but I'm sure Lesley will enlighten me. First of all, I'm awaiting a haircut. After completion I could be ready for anything!

Ann Macfarlane

THEOS by Nathan Mladin.

Subtitle: A Paradoxical Church at a Crossroads. Published by URC

This is a short report (maybe taking just over half an hour to read) about the URC as a denomination in this country. As a relative newcomer to the denomination it was an interesting and informative read.

There are around 1300 URC churches in the UK and this report looks at three aspects of the church:- Aspects of Flourishing; Barriers to Flourishing and Pathways to Flourishing.

With the average size of URC churches being 30 members it was heartening to read how many are punching above their weight by the impact they make on their local community. It notes how even small churches can make a significant contribution to community life with activities like homework clubs, cafes and food banks.

The book examines local challenges such as people-poor churches, aging congregations, a volunteering crisis, the pros and cons of online worship, the impact of Covid, the shortage nationally of URC ministers and bureaucracy.

Different ideas are put forward such as recovering a sense of mission, of more faith sharing, developing Christian maturity, URC structural reform, church planting amongst others. There are several graphs and statistical tables at the end of the book for those who like numbers.

I would recommend as many people as possible read this and hope it leads to constructive debate and new possibilities! Not everyone may agree with it but it does challenge us all to think about the future of the URC in a rapidly changing culture.

The link is

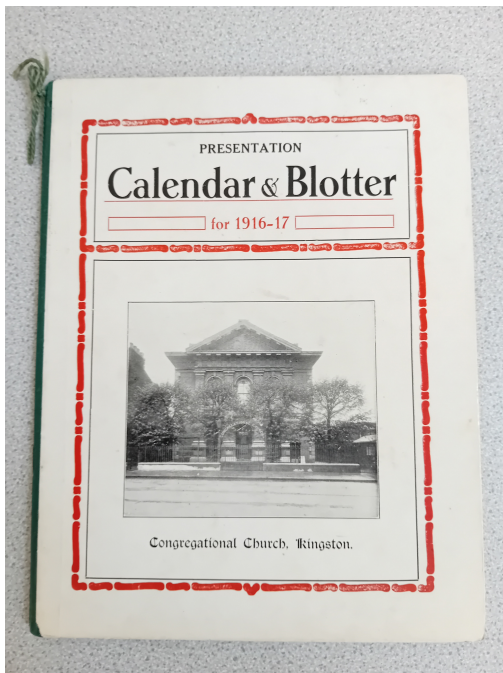
<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/cmsfiles/URC-report-Final.pdf>

I'd be happy to chat to anyone who wants to talk further. All Elders have been asked to read the report as well and have a printed version for those who prefer books so do approach another Elder too.

Sue Shaw

Prayer for Zimbabwe partners By Aulline Chapisa

Dear God, We pray for the resilience of our partners who continue to work in a political and economically challenging environment, that they may be strengthened to stand for the truth despite threats to their lives and the existence of their organisations. We also remember beneficiaries of the Christian Aid partners' work in Zimbabwe, that they may be receptive of the education and support offered to them, especially those living in poverty – so that they may escape the trap of poverty and become self-reliant. We pray for the safety of the Christian Aid partners as they do their work in Zimbabwe during this election year and for peace during general elections. We ask God for wisdom, so that our partners can work in continued shrinking civic space. We pray that our partners continue to strengthen their benevolence and solidarity with people living in poverty. We pray for resources to take the work forward. Amen.



Archive of the Month

Between the two world wars it was customary for our church to issue an annual 'Church Calendar and Blotter'. Ink-blotting paper was a fairly essential item in the days before ballpoint pens and personal computers. Besides several sheets of blotting paper, the Church Blotter contained details of church officers and coming events, plus one or two pages of commercial advertisements. The illustration on the cardboard cover shows the front of the church partially concealed by a low wall, railings, a narrow garden and some trees – all very eco-friendly. The garden and trees were done away with in the 1930s.

John Fisher

Dead lions, golden syrup and the Book of Judges

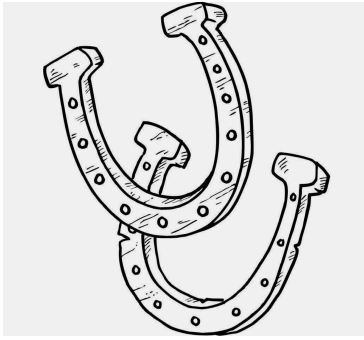
I have always enjoyed Lyle's golden syrup - especially on porridge and pancakes! At a young age I was intrigued by the logo on the green can which shows a dead lion surrounded by bees and a text beneath 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness'. This is the world's oldest brand packaging in continuous use, having first appeared on Lyle's tins in 1885.

The background to this rather unusual piece of commercial art is to be found in the Book of Judges, chapter 14, which tells the story of Samson and how he killed a lion, returning to find that bees had made a comb of honey in its carcass. He later turned this event into a riddle. Do look it up if it's not familiar to you.

Lyles recently decided that dead lions and biblical texts are no longer suitable as trademarks and they have devised a bland replacement featuring a live and happy lion, a solitary bee, and no biblical quotation. We have been assured that the original logo will remain on 'heritage tins' - whatever that may mean.



John Fisher



Wedding

The date has been set and arrangements are being made for the wedding of Graham and me on **Saturday 11 May at 14:30** at the church. After the service there will be fizz, canapes and cake in the Mayo Hall. Everyone is invited to help us celebrate this special occasion. (If you can't be there in person, it will be live-streamed.)

Linda Austin

FOMO*

PRAYER: focus on God, exploring and developing a relationship with God through conversations with God in prayer and with each other.

VIGIL: watching, staying awake and alert, often at night, in order to be with a person

Did you miss the recent KURC Lent 24 hour vigil?

Miss the chance to read Bible passages and talk about something you don't quite understand (even disagree with)?

Miss an opportunity chat with friends about life lived and choices made as a Christian?

Miss enjoying a quiet prayerful break from the day's busy-ness?

KURC 24 hour Vigils (on Zoom) take place at the beginning of Advent and Lent. Over recent years there has been an increasing fluidity during the 6am to 6am period, with people dipping in-and-out depending on their commitments, listening and often actively contributing and learning together. Of course there also prayerful silences, and reading Bible passages.

Try it!

*FOMO = Fear of Missing Out

ECO Tip for April

Fit more active travel into your day and daily routine. Reevaluate your journeys: explore walking or cycling options, or modify your route to include some form of active travel, i.e. disembark a stop early and complete the remaining part of your journey on foot, indulge in a leisurely stroll, or opt for a bike ride along a cyclist-friendly route. Consider connecting with your local Ramblers or cycling group for shared experiences. Use the extra steps or the changed travel arrangements as a prompt to pray for God's creation, nature's preservation and the reduction in fossil fuel usage.



The International Bible Reading Association (IBRA) has been serving the world church since 1882 with the vision of providing the necessary means for the worldwide Christian church to help Christians read the Bible regularly. IBRA readers make a commitment to reading each day the appointed Bible passage and to pray for each other. The Bible should be read carefully and with prayer that the Holy Spirit will help the reader to understand.

IBRA produces Bible reading cards in English and makes electronic versions available in Spanish and French. The list may also be downloaded from our website at

www.ibraglobal.org

[Bible Readings List 2024.pdf \(ibraglobal.org\)](#)

The IBRA publication *Fresh from The Word* offers commentary on these daily Bible readings and is available from the address below.

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

RECONCILIATION

1 Stories of reconciliation

Monday 1 April	Luke 15:11-32
Tuesday 2 April	Genesis 33: 1-17
Wednesday 3 April	Genesis 45:1-15
Thursday 4 April	Acts 15:36-41; Colossians 4:10
Friday 5 April	Galatians 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:14-18
Saturday 6 April	Hebrews 12:14-17

2 Taking steps to reconciliation

Sunday 7 April	2 Corinthians 5:11-21
Monday 8 April	1 John 1:5-10
Tuesday 9 April	Jeremiah 34:8-16
Wednesday 10 April	Luke 19:1-10
Thursday 11 April	Matthew 18:23-35
Friday 12 April	Deuteronomy 19:7-14
Saturday 13 April	John 21:15-19

ARTS IN THE BIBLE (1)

1 The power of song

Sunday 14 April	Exodus 15:1-18
Monday 15 April	Deuteronomy 31:19-22
Tuesday 16 April	Judges 5:1-9
Wednesday 17 April	1 Samuel 18:1-7
Thursday 18 April	2 Samuel 22:1-4
Friday 19 April	2 Chronicles 5:1-14
Saturday 20 April	Psalms 95:1-7

2 The power of song

Sunday 21 April	Psalms 98:1-9
Monday 22 April	Isaiah 12:1-6
Tuesday 23 April	Lamentations 1:1-16
Wednesday 24 April	Acts 16:16-30
Thursday 25 April	Ephesians 5:15-20
Friday 26 April	James 5:13-15
Saturday 27 April	Revelation 14:1-3

LETTERS TO TIMOTHY (1)

Sunday 28 April	1 Timothy 1:1-17
Monday 29 April	1 Timothy 1:18 – 2:15
Tuesday 30 April	1 Timothy 3

**United Reformed Church,
Kingston upon Thames**

Song Recital

**Thursday 18th April
12.30pm Free admission**

Music by Dring, Poulenc, Schumann and Vaughan
Williams



Jane Wilkinson
Soprano



Kyung-Won Lee
Piano

Christine Thompson is Lay Preaching Coordinator for URC South London Synod Area West. We asked what this role involved.

As background, Kingston URC has a constitution that explains how we relate to the wider URC. Maybe we should have a look at it one church meeting. There are two facts that are a background to what I do:

1. The wider URC is divided into Synods (a bit like an Anglican diocese). There are 13 Synods (11 in England). Each Synod has oversight of about 100 churches. South of the Thames is Southern Synod, north of the Thames is Thames North Synod. Southern Synod, which we are in, extends from the Thames to the Sussex coast and from the Kent coast to somewhere to the west of us. (We are actually quite near Wessex Synod.)
2. The Synod is divided into Synod areas and Southern Synod has 5 of them. South London Synod area is further divided into East and West. So I am Lay Preaching Coordinator for South London Synod Area West (quite a mouth full), SLSAW for short.

There have always been lay preachers, and it was a demanding 3-year training course. But the URC never used them as much as the Methodists did. As there is now a shortage of ministers, Southern Synod is encouraging more people to become lay preachers (or, as the new ones will be called, local worship leaders). Because of this, my main task has been arranging assessed services. Which is a bit like doing Sudoku.

So, I've got a church venue and date, now to get the panel. Oh, so and so is booked up for 3 months, someone else can't do that date – start again. I am also trying to get an up-to-date list of lay preachers which has involved chatting to people at a funeral and finding out from someone's daughter!

I pass on information about excellent one-day events that take place (and are for anyone who wishes to attend), suggest it is advertised in the church and persuade people to come. I also make people aware of the lay preaching training course (now much shorter), and suggest they could consider doing it. I occasionally find a lay preacher if a sudden emergency means a church is without a preacher, but fortunately this rarely happens.

The 5 lay preaching coordinators meet with the Synod preaching coordinator and the training officer 4 times a year online or in person. My predecessor used to go to church coffee mornings; so far, I haven't.

If you would like to know more, or have questions, please talk to me, e-mail or phone me.

Christine Thompson

Favourite Website Beautiful Britain – <https://beautifulbritain.co.uk>



I came across this website whilst browsing the internet. It caught my attention because it appears to be privately owned and maintained, rather than a commercial website. The photography is first class. The main sections are:

Out and About ~ Photography ~ Jigsaws ~ On This Day

If you use a website which you feel would be of interest to readers, why not email the next editor. It could become a feature in future editions!

Jean Thompson

Lovely things are all around us

Thank you to the reader who contributed this photo for the Church News.



Crafternoons 2024

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

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:

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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@urckington.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 May is Friday, 12 April 2024

Editor: Bron Robinson, e-mail: bronhr@googlemail.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.