The United Reformed Church

CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed Church

MAY 2025

Have a Blessed Easter!

www.kingstonurc.org

Charity No. 1131880

This edition edited by Stu Chandler

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

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 (except Bank Holidays)
10.00 Prayers on Zoom
12.30 Community Lunch (except Bank Holidays)

Tuesday:
10.00 Prayers on Zoom
10.30 Knitting & Crocheting (1st & 3rd Tuesdays monthly)

Wednesday:
10.00 Tots' Praise
10.00 Prayers on Zoom
13.30 Lunch-time Service

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
3rd Saturday 09.00 Women's Breakfast
2nd Sunday 11.30 Church Meeting

Quarterly:
3rd Saturday 14.00 Crafternoons

School Holidays:
Wednesdays 11.00 The Generation Zone

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 May 2025:

Woman's Breakfast – 10th May
Christian Aid Quiz – 9th May
Christian Aid Week – 11th to 17th May
Crafternoon – 17th May
Generation Zone – 28th May

Please also see the e-mailed Weekly Notices.

Letter from Lesley

Dear All,

We have a young pal who has been a professional athlete. At one stage she was in the top 25 in the world in her sport. She is used to pushing herself. Driving. Ignoring her body when it shouts ‘stop’. She presses on and does what her training requires. She is used to speed and wasting not a moment.

Now though, she is in a new phase. All she can do is wait. Something is going on that she has no conscious control over. She still has things to do though. She has to do the basics and then trust. She needs to keep herself hydrated. Eat well. Rest. But basically, she has to trust that her body knows what it is doing. She waits.

Mother Teresa used to get up every morning and sit in silence and listen to God. And every morning God used to be in silence listening to her. Trust. Something is going on and we cannot rush it. God knows what is happening on. God knows how it works. We have to trust in God.

That can feel very unfamiliar. We are used to understanding. At the very least trying to understand. We are used to getting things going. Making things happen. Not waiting for someone else to deliver. Somethings though take time. Yet while we wait, there are things that we have to do. We need to do the basics well.

Pray.

Worship.

Serve.

God is at work among us.

My young athlete pal? She is pregnant.

So are we.

Yours

Lesley

Carol's Musings

At the beginning of April, I went to the theatre to see Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience but ever since, I have been singing about the colours of his coat – it was red and yellow and green and brown and scarlet and…. Which got me thinking.

Joseph was given his coat by his father because he was the favourite son, and the rest of the story happens because of the jealousy of his brothers.

However, it crossed my mind that as God the Father does not have favourites, he has a technicolour dream coat for each one of us. I then imagined an enormous rail of coats waiting to be claimed by their owners. On closer inspection, I noticed that every coat was bespoke; made to measure with the recipients' name on the label.

Then two thoughts to ponder

1. I wonder how God feels about the coats that He is never able to present.

2. Do we sometimes take our coats off and hang them on the back of the door, and, forgetting to put them on again go our own way. Until perhaps we stop and realise that we need to put that coat back on.

God's unconditional love and grace means that we can put that coat back on many times. We are after all God's special ones so let's wear our coats and show off the dazzling colours of God's love.

Carol Clack

Flower Rota for May 2025

May 4th – Wil Bryan

May 11th – Jean Hughes

May 18th – Margaret Golding

May 25th - Neela

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

Cathy's Chat

Now is the season of changes for KURC. You have voted and people have responded to this, and we have new elders. How grateful we are for this annual change. Each year of the church we say goodbye to some serving elders and greet new elders. Some of you reading this will know what that feels like.

A lot happens in this church, even within a year, so even returning elders need time to be reacquainted.

Each elder is given a particular responsibility to focus on and this supports the work of the whole church and ensures that the elders' meeting can consider and cover all the aspects of our mission.

I write this before the April church meeting so I am unable to record the who's who, as elders need the support of the church meeting before the changes can be actioned. Sometimes, the workings of the church governance can seem clunky, but it is worth the creakiness because it aims to take everyone with it.

For more information you can access 'The Manual', which is the handbook of the URC (via the https://urc.org.uk website).

With that in mind I ask that you remember our ministers and elders regularly in your prayers.

Thank you for the creative responsive people who collected our gifts of Easter eggs for Welcare. They have been delivered and we have received this letter of thanks from Sue Skrobanski, director of Welcare *(please also see page 15 – Ed.).*

"I just wanted to let you know how much the children loved the Easter Egg gifts. They were absolutely thrilled to receive them, and it brought them so much joy. We held an Easter activity session at WelCare last Tuesday, and handed out the eggs at the end—it was the perfect way to wrap up the day."

Cathy Seymour

Sally's Stories

Although there are no children at the Mary and Martha group, I realise that it is still families work. We are all someone's mum grandma, (great grandma!), daughter, sister....!!

This month we had a coffee morning rather than a breakfast. There was no talk but we had an icebreaker and then lots of prayer. Lots of chat too.

The icebreaker included making up a story about seeing two giraffes at Hampton Court Bridge... if you want to be involved with craziness like this, do join us on Saturday 10 May!!

That will be Sheila's final meeting before she returns to Brazil so we want to say a huge thank you for her inspiration and input in making this lovely group happen.

Sally Butler

Pastoral News as of 14th April 2025

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

Prayer

May God bless us with his peace,
Peace in your heart and peace in your home,
Peace for yourself and peace for your loved ones,
Peace for today's decisions and peace for tomorrow's plans.
May God's restoring, reassuring peace surround you always.
Amen.

Kingston Street Pastors – looking for volunteers

Kingston Street Pastors are volunteers from different Kingston churches, out on the streets of Kingston every week to care, listen to and help those in need. Prayer Pastors are back at the URC doing the vital work of praying for and supporting the team during the patrols.

We are out on Friday and Saturday nights from 8pm-2am, and two afternoons per month from 4-9pm. We are looking for volunteers for both roles and times, so if you think this might be for you, please contact Rose by email or phone:

Rose: kingstonstreetpastors@gmail.com or call 07869 818500.

We'd love to hear from you!

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Christian Aid Week activities 9th – 17th May 2025

9th May - at 7pm. Our Christian Aid Quiz - at the URC

£10 per person pay at event, cash or card. There will be a light snacks and a paying bar and a cash raffle. *Sure to be a brilliant, fun-filled evening!*

If you have any unwanted gifts for the raffle please let Ray Charlton know.

11th - 18th May - Drop Off Only Envelopes

For your road, if you would like to drop off envelopes and be a Post Box for their return please speak to Ray – this is really easy to do!

Dancing and Street Collection - Saturday 17th May

Clarence Street Starts 12:45 - Practice in our Hall from 11:00
Singing 12:45 - 13:00 then Dancing 70,000 Steps 13:00 - 13:30pm - we need over 25 people dancing to our "Favourite dancing tune" . It gets the most votes every year and everyone says " I am really looking forward to doing it again next year!"

Please come and join in, if you can wiggle you can do this!

We need dancers and people to collect money.

General

There are many difficult problems in the world, as ever. Christian Aid, working with local partners in very difficult situations, ensure that some help gets through to the most vulnerable.

If you would like to help with Christian Aid, even only for a few hours per year, please speak to Ray Charlton to discuss how you can help.

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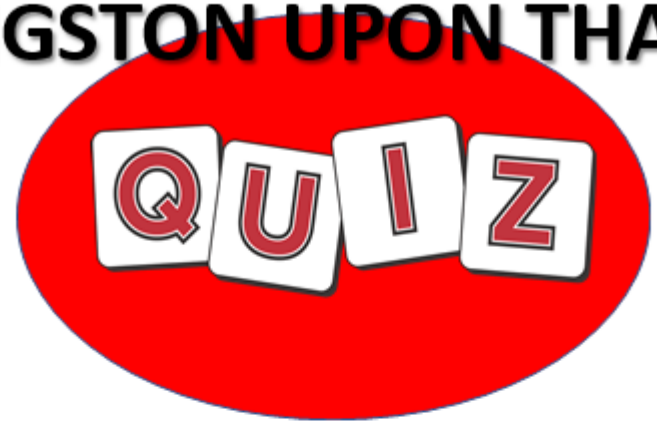
2025 CHRISTIAN AID QUIZ

KINGSTON UPON THAMES



christian aid

Friday 9th May 2024
7 – 10pm
At Kingston United Reformed Church, Eden Street

£10/person
pay on night
(includes a light supper)
There is a paying Bar
& Cash Raffle

Organised by Kingston Christian Aid Group . All monies raised go to Christian Aid (England and Wales charity no. 1105851) Part of CAW 2024

Ray Charlton

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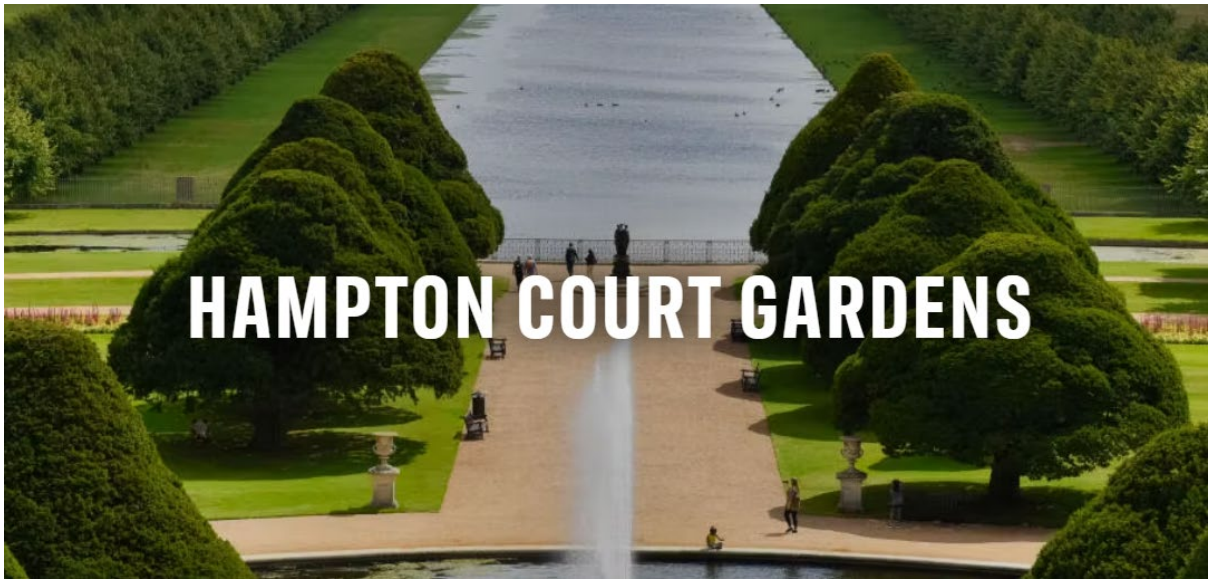

The fabulous gardens at Hampton Court Palace will be open free of charge on the following dates:

10 May and 11 May
01 July to 06 July
13 September to 14 September
18 October to 19 October
22 November to 23 November
26 December (The Wilderness garden only)

Garden Highlights:

Summer sees the spectacular herbaceous border in the Great Fountain Garden at its best, while Queen Mary II's Exoticks come out in the Lower Orangery Garden.

The Great Vine grapes are harvested at the end of the summer, followed by autumn colours in the Tiltyard and Wilderness as deer rut in Home Park.

In the winter, striking outlines of trees stretch across Home Park and, if we're lucky, snow highlights the topiary of the Privy Garden.

All year round, our Kitchen Garden grows fruit and vegetable crops that fed the Georgian royal family in the 18th century.

The gardens come to life in spring with over one million flowering bulbs in the Wilderness and a riot of colour in the formal gardens.

Teresa James

Smiles & thoughts

A pastor had dinner at the home of a couple at his church. After he left, the wife said to her husband “I think he stole our spoon!” This bothered her for a whole year. A year later the couple had the pastor for dinner again. Unable to resist, the wife asked, “Did you steal our spoon last year?” The pastor replied, “No, I put it inside your Bible”.

When I was a kid, I wanted to play the guitar really badly and after years of hard work, practise and dedication, I can now play the guitar really badly. Strike a chord?
Hymns for Christians over 65 years old:

- Go, tell it on the mountain – but speak up
- Guide me O, thou Great Redeemer – I’ve forgotten where I have parked the car
- Precious Lord, take my hand – and help me up
- Blessed insurance
- It is well with my soul – but my knees hurt

“On some positions, cowardice asks the question, is it safe?
Expediency asks the question, is it politic?
Vanity asks the question, is it popular?
But conscience asks the question, is it right?
And there comes a time when one must take a position that is not safe, nor politic, nor popular but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Not all wounds are so obvious. Walk gently into the lives of others.

Linda Austin

Easter 2025?

A local school in Twickenham recently movingly staged the Good Friday and Easter story. “Hello, Jesus”, said the vicar afterwards, “I heard every word you said”. “Oh, well”, replied Jesus, “I am used to shouting”. “How come?” asked the vicar. “The position I play in rugby involves me shouting instructions” said Jesus.
“I like it”, said the vicar – “a rugby-playing Jesus”!

Jean Thompson

KINGSTON NIGHT SHELTER 2025

The Night Shelter started in the new year and finished at the end of March. Around 80 volunteers signed up to help serve in various ways such as cleaning the premises, cooking for and supporting the guests.

The shelter was located on Thames Street on two disused floors above the former RBS Bank. Small mobile heaters provided warmth, there was a tiny kitchen, a microwave, a shower and toilets plus a common room where people gathered for food and conversation.

The guests were known to Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness and arrived any time up to 10pm. They were offered a hot meal, snacks, pastries, hot and cold drinks and in the morning could have a breakfast and take away sandwiches. Very quickly a community developed of regular guests. Those of us on duty served the food which usually arrived ready cooked including take away pizzas. Curries and liver and onions were very popular, less so pasta dishes!

In the evening after the tables were cleared we often played card games. Uno was very popular.

It was interesting to meet a range of people from students aged 17 to 20 to older men in their fifties and sixties. There was a variety of nationalities but apart from one or two everyone spoke English. There were a few women guests but most guests were men. Some had various issues that they were struggling with and needed additional support and understanding.

They were provided with toiletries, a towel, a pillow, sleeping bag and a camp bed and slept in small rooms suitable for four to six people.

Over the three months one by one some people were housed permanently. It was great to share in the joy of those who were allocated a home of their own with a door that locked and hot water!

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There were others less fortunate who have gone back to camping or sofa surfing or sleeping in shop doorways. I really enjoyed my time helping, getting to know individuals by name and learning a little of their struggles and stories.

I would certainly recommend people get involved. It was a real privilege and very rewarding. You can volunteer to work one of three different shifts, an evening shift, an overnight shift or early morning. There's always a paid worker on duty to provide structure and support and you work in teams of three or four. Please do have a chat with me if you'd like to hear more.

Sue Shaw

KURC Men's Lunch

Friends of Kingston United Reformed Church met at O'Neill's pub for lunch on 12th March. Future lunches are planned for 12.30 on 12th May and 9th July.

The idea is to meet, chat and make new friends.

It is just a casual social get together and open to everyone, with or without a connection to the church.

If you would like more information please contact Alistair Borthwick – email alistair.borthwick@talktalk.net phone 07930 762853

Alistair Borthwick

Vaughan James will be editing June's Church News.

Please send articles and photos to Vaughan by Friday, 9th May.

(Email: vaughanrjjames@gmail.com)

Thank you from Kingston Welcare!

Dear Lesley, John and the Kingston United Reformed Church Team

I just wanted to let you know how much the children loved the Easter Egg gifts. They were absolutely thrilled to receive them, and it brought them so much joy.

We held an Easter activity session at WelCare last Tuesday, and handed out the eggs at the end—it was the perfect way to wrap up the day.

Best wishes

Sue

Sue Skrobanski
Director
Kingston WelCare

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Meditation on spending some time with Jesus

From your editor, a meditation led at several 11.30 services over the years, the script of which, I hope you might find helpful. If you have any feedback or comments, please let me know (stu_chandler@hotmail.com).

"The modern world teaches us that money and power are to be prized above all. Jesus teaches us another way. He came to be a loving, kind servant to all and His greatness is revealed in His vulnerability, compassion, sacrifice and obedience.

He delights in us spending time with Him.

Let us Begin…

Sit comfortably, unfold your arms and legs, close your eyes and take a deep gentle breath.

In your mind's eye, picture a sunny meadow, a place you find relaxing and peaceful. The air is fresh, there is a gentle summer breeze and the sun is shining in the distance.

Take a few deep breaths now and really feel the soft grass beneath your feet.
In the meadow, sit down on the grass and look at the deep blue sky. The sun is warm and bright, there are no clouds and a soft gentle breeze permeates your being.

Take some time now to really 'feel' your surroundings, without moving, just mindfully listening and paying attention to the breath as it travels from the nose or mouth down to the belly and back.

A sense of being – rather than doing.

{Pause}

As you sit, totally relaxed and calm, Jesus comes and sits beside you. He looks directly at you and smiles warmly. His eyes twinkle as he gently acknowledges you with a simple nod.

Sitting here, just breathing slowly and deeply, spending time with Jesus. All your concerns and cares melt away.

{Pause}

Listen now.

He may well be speaking to you. Any questions you have, he already knows.

There is only Him and the meadow and you.

You have no need for questions as you delight and love spending time with our Lord and He with you.

He knows everything about you, what is in your heart, every hair on your head numbered and it is obvious to you just how much He cares and loves you. It is wonderful.

You are his child, his delight and wonder. What he says may well be for you alone, for your ears and heart, no need to say anything, just sit, listen and soak up the warm radiance of his eternal company.

{Pause}

Breathing slowly, feeling totally relaxed and at peace with He who cherishes YOU more than life itself.

{Pause}

Finally, Jesus smiles again, his eyes still twinkling as He looks directly at you.
You slowly realise He must now leave the meadow and He stands up and gently wanders into the horizon. As he walks away, He looks back, smiles once more and says to you ‘I will always be with you, To the end of the age’.

{Pause}

You take a few breaths.

The meadow now starts to slowly dissolve in your mind’s eye, the gentle breeze and warn sun evaporate and as you continue breathing slowly, you become aware of your immediate surroundings once again.

When you are ready, open your eyes.”

CRAFTERNOON AND THE GENERATION ZONE - 2025 DATES

Crafternoon quarterly dates:

Saturdays:

17 May

16 August

15 November

2 – 4 pm

Contact: Carol Clack carol.clack@kingstonurc.org

The Generation Zone School Holiday dates:

Wednesdays:

28 May

23 July

27 August

11 – 1 pm

Contact: Lesley minister@kingstonurc.org

Archive of the Month

A church summer garden party in 1958 attended by the minister, Rev. Dick Wood. Can you recognise the young girl in the foreground on the left? *Answer at the bottom of the page!*

John Fisher

Bible Studies Archive

I have various scripts and notes from Ken Bartlett's excellent Bible Study series from the past few years. These are all available as PDF or Word documents – if you wish to receive any of these, please email me (stu_chandler@hotmail.com).

Documents include studies on Mark's Gospel, Philippians, Romans, Peter's Two Letters and many more. Well worth a read and discussion!

Answer for photo: 'Steve' Wenman

A Prayer for Peace (taken from Commitment for Life Prayer Partners' leaflet, available from IBRA).

Eternal loving God, full of justice and peace,

We pray that your justice become more visible in our communities and in the wider world, to dismantle wars and the powers that fan its flames.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will possess our human governments and fallible justice systems and transform it into your perfect reign that caters for peace and extends loving kindness to all Your creation.

We remember students and pupils, in places like Gaza, Northern Nigeria, Ukraine, Myanmar, Syria, and so on, who are caught up in the evil of war and terror and have had their learning disrupted.

God of the weak, may Your power propel and take charge of every peace talk and agreement, and continue to empower programmes like *Commitment for Life*, *Christian Aid*, and *Global Justice Now t*o constantly be your hands and legs in our world, showing your benevolence and bringing hope to many. Especially, we pray Your comfort, restore, and illuminate the state of mind of these students and pupils to cope and be able to carry-on with their learning, as we continue to trust in Your work of justice and peace in our world.

Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

By Maurice Omorojie, URC

Credit: image by Marina Shatskikh, Pexels

IBRA

Read ▪ Reflect ▪ Grow

BIBLE READINGS FOR MAY 2025

Thursday 1 May	Ezekiel 31:3-9
Friday 2 May	Job 14:7-9
Saturday 3 May	Revelation 22:1-5
2 The trees of the field	
Sunday 4 May	Micah 4:1-4
Monday 5 May	Matthew 7:16-20
Tuesday 6 May	Matthew 13:31-32
Wednesday 7 May	Isaiah 55:12-13
Thursday 8 May	Song of Solomon 2:1-5
Friday 9 May	Romans 11:17-25
Saturday 10 May	Isaiah 61:1-3
READINGS IN JOSHUA	
1 Into the promised land	
Sunday 11 May	Joshua 1
Monday 12 May	Joshua 2
Tuesday 13 May	Joshua 3
Wednesday 14 May	Joshua 4:1 – 5:1
Thursday 15 May	Joshua 5:2 – 15
Friday 16 May	Joshua 6:1-14
Saturday 17 May	Joshua 6:15-27
2 Living in the land	
Sunday 18 May	Joshua 7:1-15
Monday 19 May	Joshua 7:16-26
Tuesday 20 May	Joshua 9:3-21
Wednesday 21 May	Joshua 13:1-14
Thursday 22 May	Joshua 22:10-31
Friday 23 May	Joshua 23
Saturday 24 May	Joshua 24:16-33
THE GOSPEL OF LUKE (3)	
1 Working for God's kingdom	
Sunday 25 May	Luke 9:1-27
Monday 26 May	Luke 9:37-45
Tuesday 27 May	Luke 9:46-62
Wednesday 28 May	Luke 10:1-24
Thursday 29 May (Ascension)	Luke 24:50-53
Friday 30 May	Luke 10:25-42
Saturday 31 May	Luke 11:1-13

Reflections for these IBRA Bible Readings can be found in 'Fresh from the Word'.

The book can be purchased through Graham at the Bookshop in the foyer at £12.59, which includes a 10% discount.

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Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

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Rev Carol Clack, tel: 07495 746131 e-mail: carol.clack@kingstonurc.org

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Missionary:
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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 June is Friday, 9 May 2025
Editor: Vaughan James – vaughanrjjames@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.
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 Instagram.

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