



## CHURCH NEWS

## **Kingston United Reformed Church**

## SEPTEMBER 2025



Credit: Alan Thompson Roots, Brockham, Surrey "Rooted and built up in Him" - Colossians 2:7

## 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

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday 10.00 Mary & Martha's Group

except August

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday 11.30 Church Meeting

**Quarterly:** 

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday 14.00 Crafternoons

**School Holidays:** 

Some 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 September 2025:** 

7<sup>th</sup> 15.00 National Mobile Phone Emergency Alert

14th 10.30 Service & AGM

16<sup>th</sup> 12.30 Men's Lunch at O'Neill's pub

20th 10.00 Mary & Martha's Group

Please also see the e-mailed Weekly Notices.

### **LETTER FROM LESLEY**



Dear All,

Would it not be terrible if the body of Christ were all noses? Would it not be ghastly if we were all left arms? All the same. Every part identical. 'Yes, of course', everyone thinks.

That is until we try to communicate or to work with someone. Then we discover that what we think of as

clear and obvious to us, is not to them. There are people who regularly complain to me about my emails. 'They are unintelligible', they say. 'Bloomin' cheek', I think. 'Clear as a bell', I say. I am not deliberately being obtuse. It's obvious to me...sadly not to everyone, including my nearest and dearest, I might add.

Our views on the faith are different. Some understand the life of Jesus, the cross, the resurrection in one way, and other people have a totally different perspective. Yet we are all important parts of the body of Christ. Our ideas are not threats, they are contributions to a bigger picture.

The differences among us are actually joyous, precious things, however irritating. It is, when we can use it well. It is about us bringing different things and fresh eyes to issues and to the life of the Church. When it comes to us caring for someone, for example, these differences really come into their own.

One person is practical and another can sit for hours saying and doing little. Some can chitter/chat and others can fill in the forms and set the council straight. Our differences are our strength, not our weakness. 'Yes, of course' we say. Please may we remember that when someone crashes in at the last minute, or insists that a form needs to be filled in now, or wants to chat for hours, when we want to leave, or cannot make their mind up what to do when we are decisive. Or does not reply to our texts or emails when we reply promptly. Or the next time they forget the meeting while we were there on time with our papers ready. Or they disappear from the Church's life, not because they are neglectful but because they are embarrassed....'Let me know' we say, which is OK for us with our assertive ways, but not for everyone. I could go on.

The picture in 1 Corinthians 12 makes it clear that from the earliest times it has been a challenge to include those who are different. There will always be a majority view. It is not about tolerance, it is about seeing the value. Realising that, without that contribution, we would be weaker, smaller.

We are blessed in KURC because if we open our eyes, we can see that Christians come from different places. Then, if we pause even for a moment, we will know that means that people will think differently and do things differently.

The best news is that all this including means there is even room for me with my whacky (actually very clear) emails ..and for you.....

Yours, Lesley

### CATHY'S CONVERSATION



I have been lucky to have a couple of short breaks over the last month. It has been good to be somewhere different and absorb those places through my senses. They have left me refreshed and able to look at what is familiar with a little newness and, I hope, heightened sensitivity.

A number of our church community have also had this opportunity for a change of place to sleep. For some of us this has not been so. I think of those of you who are managing some health matter that restricts your opportunities to leave your home or the area around your home. For some of us, the need to work and earn enough to pay the rent and buy food is as far as the pennies can go.

So, it is with much appreciation, I want to thank those of you who have made it possible to do something different within the church - the Generation Zone and coach trip to the seaside, to name but two.

We try to keep you informed of what is available and hope you know that you are welcome to join us.

Of course, we want to hear of your ideas too. Take the risk and share them. There is no harm in trying.

I hope to see you at our AGM on Sunday, 14th September.

Cathy



## **Sally's Stories**



As I write it is Wednesday, 6 August, and we had another Generation Zone (inter-generational worship) this morning! Forty-two guests of all ages came and we had a team of 6 to help lead it. A good number of the children were from Jolly Toddlers/Tots' Praise.

The theme was 'Love One Another'. Before entering the hall, people gathered in the foyer to play some table games and to chat. Once in the hall, we participated in lots of

different activities that we hoped would appeal to all, on one level or another.

**Gathering Prayer** – some liturgy based on 1 John 4:7-12. This was a responsive prayer and also had actions, thus making it accessible to adults as well as children.

**Song** – The hymn 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling' played by Young on the keyboard allowed the children to make a love heart from playdough (made by Ray Erskine) during the singing if the words were too difficult for them to understand. This is known as a parallel activity in inter-generational worship.

**The Bible reading** was 1 Corinthians 13:1-7, again with actions for those who wanted to join in. No pressure!

**Drama** – led by Carol with volunteers from the group. I, So Young and some of our youngsters joined in with this. Then we reflected briefly on HOW we best express love to someone and decided it was through welcome, listening, focusing on the other person and in deeds/actions, not just words.

Everyone then had the chance to decorate a love heart to take home and received the gift of a packet of love heart sweets – very popular!!

We finished with a sending out song called 'We Go with Jesus' (with actions if people wanted to do so). We hope to use this at the end of all our sessions now.

Sally led the sending prayer; again, this was a prayer with responses for everyone to join in and some actions.

Lunch was made by Lesley and Raine and people just stayed on to chat/play/clear up.

I hope you can see that we all had a great time and now that you know a little more about it, might consider coming to support it? Thanks to all those from KURC (adults) who did come; it makes such a difference when you are there and so willing to talk to newcomers and people who normally only come during the week.

The next Generation Zone is on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

Sally

Photos this month are from Natasha Reid:









### **PASTORAL NEWS AT 13. 8.25.**

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

Loving Father, we pray for all those who are unwell and recovering from illness and injury, those who feel overwhelmed by pressure and all whose days are lonely and for whom the hours are long and empty.

Thank you for caring about the people we pray for even more than we do. Thank you for hearing our prayers, even the unspoken thoughts of our hearts today and every day; we ask this in Jesus's name. Amen.



## SEPTEMBER FLOWERS



- 7<sup>th</sup> Cathy Seymour
- 14<sup>th</sup> Lesley & Ray Charlton
- 21<sup>st</sup> Ray Erskine
- 28<sup>th</sup> David & Robin

### Do you ever feel lonely or isolated?

Many people do. That does not mean you are a useless specimen or not lovable. The vast majority of people have experienced this. There are, though, things you can do within the life of KURC.

Firstly, at many times in the day, the foyer is open 10-4. Come in. There will be at least one person to speak to. It is open 6 days a week.

Secondly, there are prayers each day at 10.00 on zoom. We read a passage from the Bible, talk about it and pray.

Thirdly, there is the gathering on a Thursday evening on zoom.

Fourthly, come to worship on a Wednesday at 1.30; or Sundays at 10.00, 11.30, stay for coffee, or 5.00. At the 10.30 services stay for lunch or church meeting.

There is the Generation Zone during school holidays and half terms, the next one is 27<sup>th</sup> August.

There is the trip to the seaside – Worthing - on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

One thing that we know is true - it can be hard to join groups. That is why we have to be so generous in our conversations at these events. Hunt out the isolated person. Look beyond the circle of our pals.

Also, some people find it easier to have a job. If that is you, please be brave and speak up. There are tonnes of volunteering opportunities. And more than that, we will craft something that suits your skills.

Each of us is a loved child of God. We want to help. We know what it is to feel outside in Church.

### Help needed:

When the Generation Zone happens people of all ages worship together; play together; do craft together.

And then they eat.

Would you be willing to be part of a team doing the food? Simple food.

Yes, we also need help clearing up afterwards. Thanks.

Please speak to Lesley.



## RHIANNA'S STORY

I came to hear about Kingston URC from my family, as my mum and little sister used to go to the toddler clubs run by Sally. We would also attend the Sunday services occasionally. I had always wanted to go to church more often in order to connect with my faith, therefore I found out how to become involved with the music. I am now a member of the church band, and throughout the past year have made wonderful friendships throughout the church community. I was recently baptised and am now a confirmed member of the church. I am looking forward to build upon my faith and commit to a wider study of Christianity.

I am a singer/songwriter and have just finished studying music at the Brit School in Croydon. I busk in Kingston on a regular basis too, which has helped me gain useful connections and great opportunities! In terms of my hopes for the future, I intend to release music this year, and hopefully gain an audience who can connect to my songs and my songwriting. Artists who have inspired me over the years include Amy Winehouse, Etta James and Lauryn Hill. I love soulful music and I found that singing at Kingston URC allows me to perform hymns of this genre.

One of my favourite hymns to sing is 'Who Am I' by Casting Crowns. The hymn follows:

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name? Would care to feel my hurt? Who am I, that the bright and morning star would choose to light the way For my ever-wandering heart?

Not because of who I am But because of what you've done Not because of what I've done But because of who you are.



Rhianna's recent baptism and confirmation

## ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

I went to the talk by the Very Reverend Nicholas Papadopulos, Dean of Salisbury, at All Saints Church on Monday, 28 July, at 7.30 pm.

Between January and April 2024 Nick spent three months' sabbatical leave volunteering in occupied East Jerusalem with the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).

The accompaniers were withdrawn after the events of October 2023. Nick's group was the first group allowed back, six of them based in Jerusalem. For the first seven years of his career Nick was a criminal barrister defending and prosecuting, so he is used to assessing testimony.

In his talk he was scrupulously non-political, but said he was not neutral on whether human rights and international humanitarian law was being respected. He showed us slides of people and places he had visited, told their stories and showed how those stories demonstrated specific aspects of violation of international humanitarian law. In some instances, I was struck by the unnecessary cruelty with which orders were carried out – yes, they had to return to Gaza once their 6 year old son had died of cancer in Jerusalem, but did they have to be handcuffed, shackled and left in the van for hours?

There was then a break while we wrote questions and Dr Ruth Valerio, the new Director of Embrace the Middle East, provided some of the historical background and told us about their practical work, for example, with disabled children.

In response to the questions as to what we can do, Nick said pray, educate yourselves about the situation, talk to people about it and donate.

It was a very moving and informative evening. Two local rabbis had been invited, but it was one of the most significant days in the Jewish calendar – Rosh Hashanah.

Christine Thompson

## Following Jesus - Our Family's Journey



I was born into a non-Christian family in Taiwan. My background was in traditional Taiwanese Taoism. It was only after coming to the UK and meeting Ting, who was raised in a faithful Christian family, that I began to hear about Jesus.

My faith journey has not been fast or easy. I have experienced God's leading, patience, and many challenges along the way. I must also admit that I often feel weak and unsure. But somehow, God never gave up on me.

After finishing my studies here in the UK, I was fortunate to find a job in the creative field. This allowed me to stay and build a life

here. Later, our family began to grow. With children, life became more complicated – more stress and responsibilities – but also full of joy and new lessons. I am grateful that God continued to guide us through these seasons.

Marriage and parenting have taught me a lot. Through Ting and our children, I often feel closer to God. Even in moments of fear or uncertainty, I pray that Jesus continues to walk ahead of us and show us the way.

Back in 2010, we moved to Kingston because Ting was completing her second Master's degree at Kingston University. That's when we first came to KURC. We felt connected quickly, especially as Rev. Sukin had studied and lived in Taiwan before – we had something in common. We were also very thankful for Rev. Lesley, who welcomed us even though we were still students then.

After Ting graduated, I found a job in London, and we moved closer to the city to make commuting easier. During that time, we worshipped at Lumen URC near Russell Square station for 4 years.

Later, when our first child was born, we decided to move back to Kingston. It felt like the right place – a good environment for children and a community where we already felt a sense of home.

When I was asked to consider becoming an Elder, I felt both surprised and a little unworthy. I'm still learning what it means to follow Jesus each day. But maybe this is part of what God wants – not perfect people, but those willing to listen, grow, and serve.

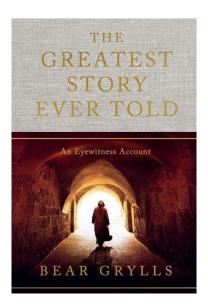
I said yes because I care about this church and the people in it. KURC has been a place where we were accepted, encouraged, and supported over the years. Now it feels like the right time to give something back.

As an Elder, I hope to learn from others, to serve with a humble heart, and to walk alongside people in both joyful and difficult seasons. I still feel nervous sometimes, but I trust that God will guide me – just as He has all along.

Paohan Chen

### BOOK OF THE MONTH

The Greatest Story by Bear Grylls is, in his own words, the most important book he has ever written. It has become The Sunday Times No. 1 Bestseller! It is a retelling of the life of Jesus through the eyes of witnesses. Drawing from the four Gospel accounts, it presents well known events in a fresh way. RRP £14.99 but for a limited time £12.99.



Copies are available from Graham in the Bookshop in the foyer.

Denise Scorer will be editing October's Church News.

Articles and photos to Denise please by Friday, 12 September.

denisescorer@aol.com

### **Archive of the Month**

Rev. Richard Mayo, 'a man of sincere godliness and sweetness of temper', was appointed vicar of All Saints Church, Kingston in 1658. Four years later he was one of two thousand clergymen expelled from the Church of England for refusing to accept the rule of bishops and the instructions of the prayer book. In 1669 there was an official nationwide enquiry into illegal 'dissenting assemblies': Mayo was reported as being a 'teacher' at a conventicle of one hundred persons meeting at a place called Downhall. This was a substantial manor house which stood on the site of what is now Down Hall Road, close to the railway bridge over the Thames. Mayo's independent congregation was the forerunner of Kingston URC, and so Downhall can perhaps be regarded as our first church building.



Downhall in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

### **KURC Men's Lunch**

Friends of Kingston United Reformed Church are invited to meet at O'Neill's pub for lunch at 12.30 on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September. After that the next lunch date is Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November. It is just a casual, social get-together and open to everyone, with or without a connection to the church. Please come along to chat and possibly make new friends.

If you would like more information please contact Alistair Borthwick – email: <a href="mailto:alistair.borthwick@talktalk.net">alistair.borthwick@talktalk.net</a> phone 07930 762853.

## DON'T JUST VOTE, MEET!



Last year Christian Aid launched an initiative called "Break Bread with your MP". At Kingston URC, we already have a good relationship with our MP, Ed Davey, leader of the Liberal Democrats. Our church meeting approved the idea and in June this year we had a meeting in the constituency office.

There were three church members, three members of Kingston u3a climate emergency group, plus Christine who is in both groups. We agreed on a set of questions, which we sent in advance, and each one of us asked one of them. We focused on issues linked to the Climate Nature Bill and majority world debt.

It was a very good meeting. We wrote accounts for the church, u3a and the local media. Ed was very well informed and could answer all our questions with clarity and understanding. He regrets that the topic of climate change has dropped out of public discourse and said he wished more people would contact him about climate change. We agreed that climate change and nature crises are two of the biggest threats to the world, and also discussed the importance of insulating houses and building the right infrastructure.

We then talked about majority world debt. Following the Jubilee 2000 campaign a lot of debt was cancelled. Now it is mainly debt to private lenders such as hedge funds and banks. Many African governments spend more than 18% of their budgets on debt, more than they spend on schools or hospitals. There is a proposal that financial debt could be cancelled if the money is used for climate measures. The meeting helped emphasise the importance of addressing big challenges like climate change and economic inequality and laid the foundation for future collaboration between community groups and our MP.

Christine Thompson has written a much fuller article which can be found in 'Reform', Issue 5, 2025.

### **JOHN SHEPHERD**

John has recently become a member, so the Editor asked John to tell us a little about himself.



I heard about the church from someone who is a friend, neighbour and sometime work colleague. My response was "Are you serious? Me? Go to church? The place will either fall down or I'll burst into flames."

I was put off church because I was forced to attend every day for five years when I was at school.

Anyway, my friend persuaded me to give it a try. I found it infinitely preferable than the jacket and tie

conscription approach that was inflicted on me at school.

Initially, I attended the 5 o'clock contemplative group, because there were fewer people. Once I got to know a few people, I decided to "graduate" to the 10am service to meet more people.

I have done a few things, along with other people, since joining the church. Painted the toilets. Collected and delivered the Easter eggs. Try to keep the weeds under control. The main thing I do is probably the community lunch on Mondays. My main role is "le plongeur" (washing up man) and some serving out of the dishes.

Also, through the church, I have become a Street Pastor.

Ultimately, I am just pleased to have met a lot of good people and have the opportunity to contribute to a community. Thanks to everyone for being so welcoming.





Remember, remember, the 7<sup>th</sup> of September – mobile 'phone emergency alert at 3 pm. *Ed.* 





### SEPTEMBER 2025

The Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October) is dedicated to God as the creator and sustainer of all life.

During this period of the church calendar, many churches celebrate Harvest, (KURC's will be on Sunday, 12 October) thanking God for His provision through the land and food that is grown. It's a time when churches and congregations are called to pay special attention to the responsibility of humanity for the Earth and for all that lives upon it, and to pray for our world. Explore A Rocha UK's season of creation resources at: arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/season-of-creation.



### THE MONTH IN NUMBERS

\$1,306,035 Amount President Trump made last year from endorsing the God Bless the USA Bible.

£40m Cost of renovations to Lambeth Palace, completed this month after a three-year project.

10,000 Christians intending to take part in March for Jesus in Belfast in June. The event was cancelled due to over-attendance.

**6% Rise** in attendance in churches that devote half an hour a week to praying for growth, according to figures presented to the General Synod of the Church of England.

£100 Price of a kilo of sugar in Gaza, equivalent to £87. A kilo of sugar in the UK costs just over £1.

'Reform' Magazine

## Preparing for Ministerial Training with the URC A letter from So Young before she leaves us:

I give thanks to God for His grace in every step of my journey so far. Here in Britain – the place to which God has called me – I am about to begin the next chapter of my ministerial training. I trust that the same God who has led me until now will hold me fast until the day His calling for my life is fulfilled.

Before I share my story, I want to express my deep gratitude to Kingston and New Malden URC, to my family in faith, to the ministers, elders, members and all the fellow workers God has sent to surround me with love and help me to grow.

Through this letter, I hope to share the journey that has brought me to this point of preparing for ministerial training in the UK, along with my commitments and prayer requests.

### God's Call to Britain

In my youth, through the heartfelt witness of a friend, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour. One morning, during early prayer, among several clear answers from God, came a strong call: "Go to Britain."

Without asking a single question, I simply and sincerely answered, "Yes!" Yet I could never have imagined that, years later, I would be training for ministry in the United Reformed Church here in Britain.

From that moment of obedience until now, the memories pass before me like a panoramic view. I am deeply grateful for God's providence, shown through each person He has allowed me to meet – each one revealing God's love.

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." (Psalm 23:1)

### My First Day in Britain

After being warmly welcomed at the airport by members of Kingston URC, the first morning of my life in Britain dawned.

As I tried to cross the road, I found myself confused by the Zebra Crossing – so different from what I knew in Korea. Back home, red and green pedestrian lights change automatically, but here people seemed to cross whenever they wished.

I stood there for quite some time, unsure of what to do, until I gathered the courage to ask an elderly lady with a walking stick how to cross. With a kind smile, she told me not to worry, took my hand firmly in hers, and – waving her stick like Moses parting the sea – stopped all the traffic so I could cross safely. Looking back, I see it as a gentle reminder: when life's road seems blocked, if we call on the Lord, He will take our hand and walk us safely to the other side. This memory still makes me smile – my thrilling first "crossing" in Britain.

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)

### Reflections on Work and Learning

From the moment I first stepped over the threshold of a URC church, God enrolled me in His school.

I came thinking I was here to serve, yet I found myself learning and growing far more through those I had once thought would be the "recipients" of my work.

I experienced the many colours of God's love through moments such as: the warm welcome offered to those sleeping on the streets; their pure smiles; the free lunches given to anyone each Monday; the Coffee Bar and Well-being Hub that always opens its doors to local residents; the fellowship of Bible Study and reflection, both online and in person; cultural exchange through music concerts; worship that considers multiple languages; and a community whose welcome crosses boundaries of race, gender, age, and culture – where people share love, learn from one another, and grow together.

In the UK church, I have learned not to focus on "results" but to reflect on what God truly desires, and to understand His heart more deeply.

I also discovered, for the first time, the value of "rest." In Korea, I had thought that zeal itself would bring completion, but here people treasure each other's need for rest – sometimes even expressing concern for my busyness and encouraging me to slow down. Their words brought me a new and precious kind of comfort.

Of course, there were times when I stayed up late to prepare worship, persistently inviting neighbours to services and events, only to meet with rejection or hurtful words. These moments could be hard and lonely. Yet whenever I saw someone moved to tears of joy during worship, or watched the next generation and our neighbours gradually being transformed in the love of Christ, I knew none of the effort or prayer had been in vain.

Above all, my heart was deeply moved to see North and South Korean believers slowly growing in unity within the caring fellowship of British members who live out God's love in such a tangible way.

"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6)

### Vision for the Future and the Road Ahead

Through this precious journey, the call to be a minister – which God placed on my heart long ago – has been affirmed.

With the encouragement and support of my church family, I will begin my ministerial training in Scotland in September 2025.

For the next four years, I will live in Edinburgh while studying at the Scottish College (Congregational and United Reformed) in Glasgow and at New College (University of Edinburgh).

Alongside these studies in theology and ministry, I will also undertake a placement in a local United Reformed Church, putting into practice in the community what I have learned through my training.

As I prepare to take this step, I feel both excitement and a sense of anticipation mixed with a little apprehension. Yet looking back over the past six years, I see how my life has been richly blessed – even during a season marked by growth and gracious solitude – through God's presence and the love of those God has brought into my path.

God has kept me flexible under His guidance, held me within the discipline of His leading, and strengthened me to stand firm in trusting God when the future was uncertain.

All of this has been God's grace, and I believe that the same love and grace will continue to make my cup overflow. With that faith, I step forward with courage.

I know I am still like a child, so I humbly ask for your continued words of love, encouragement, and prayer – just as you have given me until now - so that I may grow into the full stature of Christ.

And I will never forget Kingston and New Malden URC, my home of prayer and my spiritual home.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect." (1 Corinthians 15:10)

With Gratitude and God's Blessings, So Young



You will be greatly missed at KURC, So Young, and we thank you for your ministry. We pray God's blessings on your studies and do let us know as your future progresses. Ed.





## A prayer for Palestine

By Ana Gobledale, URC – **'Like the olive tree'**. This prayer was originally published in 'Together in Prayer: Palestine', World Day of Prayer 2024

Allah, Eternal One, God of Christians, Jews, and Muslims, Holy One in this place, in Palestine and in Israel, may our faith lead us to bear with all in love, despite differences in faith traditions. Strengthen us to stand with all who are being harmed, even to bear with the occupiers in love, speaking the truth in loving resistance, calling the oppressor back to their humanity. May the legacy of those who have died in the Palestinian occupation live on to nourish the earth from which will arise renewed strength to continue telling the story and demanding justice, like the branches of the olive tree, resisting the strong winds that threaten to erase the truth of Palestinian experience. May the voice of truth, your truth, speak bold and strong bringing hope. Amen.



Harvesting olives in Palestine





## 🙂 🙂 HOLIDAY SMILES 🙂 🙂





### Do you complain when you go on holiday?

These are actual complaints received by Thomas Cook from dissatisfied customers:

- 1. "On my holiday to Goa in India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don't like spicy food."
- 2. "We went on holiday to Spain and had a problem with the taxi drivers as they were all Spanish."
- 3. "The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room."
- 4. "We found the sand was not like the sand in the brochure. Your brochure shows the sand as white but it was more yellow."
- 5. "Although the brochure said that there was a fully equipped kitchen, there was no egg-slicer in the drawers."
- 6. "I think it should be explained in the brochure that the local convenience store does not sell proper biscuits like custard creams or ginger nuts."
- 7. "We had to line up outside to catch the boat and there was no airconditioning."

With thanks to Linda Austin



A young man wanting to enter the priesthood was interviewed by the abbot who explained that there were very strict rules at this particular monastery and he would only be allowed to say two words each year. The young man agreed. At the end of the first year the abbot asked for his two words to which he replied "awful food". At the end of the second year he was asked the same question to which he replied "hard bed". At the end of the third year the abbot asked again and the young man said "I'm leaving". "Thank goodness for that", said the abbot, "you've done nothing but moan since you got here"!



## This and That from Christine T., including some useful websites:

The Joint Public Issues Team's monthly newsletter is always useful reading. This month it is especially relevant and prophetic :

info@jointpublicissues-news.org.uk

So rather than me reproduce all of it, why not read it.

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Ecumenical Accompaniers website:

https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/eappi

Embrace the Middle East website: <a href="https://embraceme.org/">https://embraceme.org/</a>

(With reference to meeting at All Saints pg.10)

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The Scots amongst us - Prayers from your Childhood.

When I went to secondary school, one of the first things we had to do was to learn by heart 8 Church of England prayers to say at assembly. I think we were told that they would be helpful to us in time of trouble. If someone started to say them to me, I think the words would come back. I assume the Church of Scotland used different ones. Given that some of our members are from a Church of Scotland background, I wondered what prayers they would remember.



### The Climate and Nature Bill

Most people who went to see Ed Davey on 2<sup>nd</sup> June had not done something like that before and found it an interesting and enjoyable experience.

Because of the way the British system of Government works, initial contact is via your constituency MP. The Climate Coalition is encouraging people to talk to MPs in their constituencies during the week **13-20 September** about the Nature and Climate Bill. You have to go direct to your MP, I can't do it. And the sooner the better - MPs are busy people.

So far ordinary citizens/taxpayers' pressure has made a difference, the Bill hasn't been kicked into the long grass as people feared. There are 120 charities involved, such as RSPB, the Woodland Trust, WI, faith groups etc.

The best entry point is probably Zero Hour, Climate Coalition or the website of the charity you support. (I would love to give you a direct link but I haven't managed to find one.) Let friends and family know and get back to me if you want more information, questions or comments. As I get more information, I will post it in the Weekly Notices.

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Read • Reflect • Grow

### **READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025**

### **WITHOUT A NAME (unnamed people)**

Monday 1 September 2 Kings 5:1-5
Tuesday 2 September Mark 1:29-31
Wednesday 3 September Mark 12:41-44
Thursday 4 September Mark 14:1-9
Friday 5 September Mark 14:12-16
Saturday 6 September John 20:1-10

### **READINGS FROM 1 SAMUEL (1)**

Sunday 7 September 1 Samuel 1:1-18
Monday 8 September 1 Samuel 1:19-28
Tuesday 9 September 1 Samuel 3:1-21
Wednesday 10 September 1 Samuel 4:12-22
Thursday 11 September 1 Samuel 7:1-12
Friday 12 September 1 Samuel 8:1-9
Saturday 13 September 1 Samuel 9:15-10:2

### **READINGS FROM 1 SAMUEL (2)**

Sunday 14 September 1 Samuel 13:5-15 Monday 15 September 1 Samuel 17:8-58 Tuesday 16 September 1 Samuel 19:1-7 Wednesday 17 September 1 Samuel 24:1-12 Thursday 18 September 1 Samuel 28:3-20 Friday 19 September 1 Samuel 30:3-20 Saturday 20 September 1 Samuel 31:1-13

### **BALANCE**

Sunday 21 September Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
Monday 22 September Genesis 8:20-22
Tuesday 23 September Leviticus 25:1-7
Wednesday 24 September Genesis 1:14-19
Thursday 25 September Matthew 22:15-22
Friday 26 September Romans 14:5-9
Saturday 27 September 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

## NEW SETTINGS, NEW CHALLENGES

### 1 A travelling, wandering race

Sunday 28 September Genesis 12:1-3,10-20 Monday 29 September Exodus 3:7-13 Tuesday 30 September Exodus 14:26-31



# A letter of gratitude and hope To: All members and adherents of United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace and peace to you all.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the faithfulness and generosity you have shown to God's work through your local churches. Your contributions - whether through time, talents, or treasure - have been a beautiful expression of discipleship and community.

### **Celebrating Faithful Stewardship**

In these challenging times, when many families have faced difficult decisions about household budgets, rising energy costs, and the ongoing cost of living pressures, your continued commitment to supporting God's work has been truly remarkable. We have witnessed the church at its best: caring for one another, maintaining mission and ministry, and trusting in God's provision. Your financial contributions through the Ministry & Mission Fund have enabled us to continue our shared calling across England, Scotland, and Wales. Through this Fund, we support ministers' stipends, theological training, Assembly gatherings, and the vital central services that strengthen our witness and ministry in every community we serve.

#### **God's Provision in Action**

We rejoice that in 2024, despite significant economic challenges, your collective giving to the M&M Fund reached £16.2m - slightly behind our budget, but late contributions in early 2025 would have taken us over the budget, had the auditors allowed us to bring them in. This achievement reflects not just financial commitment, but spiritual resilience and trust in God's faithfulness. We are particularly grateful for the additional support from our Synods, who contributed approx. £2m of the amount noted above, demonstrating the interconnectedness of our church family. Total income for 2024, including investment income and grants etc. was £18.5m. While our expenditure of £20m resulted in a deficit of £1.5m for 2024, we remain committed to balancing our budget over the next 4-6 years through difficult, but necessary reductions in central costs and continued partnership between local churches and Synods.

#### **Looking Forward with Hope**

As we move through 2025, we recognise that challenges remain. Economic pressures continue to affect both individuals and churches. Yet we face the future with confidence, knowing that God's call to faithful stewardship remains constant, and that together we can continue to serve Christ's mission in our communities. We have a clear plan: Synods have committed to maintaining their enhanced support, and we are implementing careful budget reductions of an average of 3-5% annually in

our central costs. This balanced approach ensures we remain good stewards while maintaining our essential ministries.

### A Call to Continued Faithfulness

In the spirit of 2 Corinthians 9:7, your giving has been a source of joy and strength to the whole church. As we move forward, we invite you to continue this journey of faithful stewardship, giving "as the Spirit directs and as our means allow." We understand that every church's situation is unique, and we celebrate with those who have been able to meet their full commitments, while also deeply appreciating those who, facing their own challenges, have continued to prioritise the M&M Fund within their means.

### **Partnership in Ministry**

As officers of our denomination, we treasure our roots in local URC congregations and LEPs. We understand firsthand the joys and challenges of local church life, including the financial pressures you face. This shared experience strengthens our commitment to wise stewardship of the resources you entrust to us. Your local church treasurer has received detailed financial information and can answer specific questions about our accounts. If further assistance is needed, our finance team at Church House stands ready to help.

### **Our Deepest Thanks**

To every member who has contributed to their local church, to every congregation that has supported the M&M Fund, and to all who have made this work a priority even in difficult times—thank you. Your faithfulness enables ministry to continue, training to be provided, and the gospel to be proclaimed across our three nations.

May God bless you abundantly as you continue to be faithful stewards of all that He has entrusted to you. Together, we participate in God's wonderful work of transformation, both in our own lives and in the world around us.

In Christ's service,

Alan Yates, Treasurer
Vaughan Griffiths, Deputy Treasurer

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." - 2 Corinthians 9:7



### **Kingston United Reformed Church – Information**

### Ministers:

Rev Lesley M Charlton, tel: 020 8399 4423 e-mail: <a href="minister@kingstonurc.org">minister@kingstonurc.org</a> Rev Dr Suk In Lee, tel: 020 8949 2070 e-mail: <a href="minister@kingstonurc.org">sukin.lee@kingstonurc.org</a> Rev Carol Clack, tel: 07495 746131 e-mail: <a href="minister@kingstonurc.org">carol.clack@kingstonurc.org</a>

### **Church Secretary:**

Cathy Seymour, mobile: 07775 615126 e-mail: <a href="mailto:chsec@kingstonurc.org">chsec@kingstonurc.org</a>

#### 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: so.young@kingstonurc.org

### **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): <a href="mailto:premises@urckingston.org.uk">premises@urckingston.org.uk</a> e-mail (PA to Minister): <a href="mailto:kingstonurc@gmail.com">kingstonurc@gmail.com</a>

### 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 October is Friday, 12 September 2025 Editor: Denise Scorer: denisescorer@aol.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: <a href="https://www.kingstonurc.org">www.kingstonurc.org</a>. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.