



CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed
Church

www.kingstonurc.org



December 2025 / January 2026



Courtesy of Alan Thompson FRPS

www.kingstonurc.org

Charity No. 1131880

This edition edited by Ruth Anderson

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.

Forthcoming Events (*more details later in this Church News*):

Suh Young's Organ Recital – Thursday 27 November, 1pm

Piano Recital – Thursday 18 December, 12.30pm

Christmas Services and Activities – 28 November to 31 December

Men's Lunch – Tuesday 13 January

Please also see the e-mailed Weekly Notices.

Letter from Lesley

Dear All



I looked out of the window of the room where I was praying and there was a jay. Beautiful, large, rarely seen garden bird. Flashes of blue with light brown plumage.

Along from it there is a roll up roll down parrot that we bought when our daughters were very little. It is bright, simple, colourful and always brings a smile.

Further along there is an ornament made of pearl shells that we brought back unscathed from Kalymnos. How did we manage that, it is so fragile? The shiny pearl is a delight. But.....

The jay was only there for 30 seconds then it was gone.

The parrot reminds me of my pal David who died aged 40. We were on holiday with him when we bought it.

The shell ornament reminds me of the sponge divers who risk their lives to bring up the shells. Many die.

Joy and then very quickly the shadow.

The other day we received a bit of good news. Someone in the room went straight into practical mode with conversation about tax and liabilities. When they left someone else said, 'are we not allowed just to be happy?'

Brene Brown would say the bravest thing we can do is to be joyful. Holding onto it. Too easily and quickly we rehearse tragedy. We assume the joyful are immature and revert to being pessimistic and cynical.

In this season are we brave enough to be joyful?

Babies make us smile; they soften our eyes and warm our hearts.

The baby born in the manger lights the room.

Ah yes, but Good Friday is coming.

We know. We know. We know.

But can we not just hold on to the joy of the baby born in the manger? God who comes in human form to be among us? Can we not just hold on to it and be glad?

Let's try.

Yours,
Lesley

Church Secretary's Chat



Is it Ok to say that I enjoy winter? I enjoy wrapping myself up with extra layers. The paraphernalia of gloves, hats, scarves and boots. It's a bit like finding old friends again. I like the candles and twinkling lights giving light in the dark. I enjoy the challenge of the dark too.

Then, of course, as the nights lengthen, we have the advent of waiting for Christmas, which happens every year. Each year brings different challenges and delights.

At a recent daily prayers session, we were pondering on the Holy Spirit. We reminded ourselves that it is expressed through hope, peace, joy and love.

We, as a church, have been through a lot and many changes, yet still we meet, still we become members and participate in the running of God's church. I am confident that people have heeded the signs of the Holy Spirit and we are grateful.

I look forward to being with you and wish you a hopeful, peaceful, joyful and loving Christmas.

X
XXX
XXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXX
X
XXX

Cathy Seymour

Carol's Contribution

I wonder if you have noticed the Christmas lights in Kingston town centre?

Sparkling bright and white, heralding the season of Christmas.
On closer inspection they celebrate Kingston upon Thames
Not the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

It strikes me that in the world around us
Christmas is about getting us to spend as much money as we can

To refurnish our houses – delivery guaranteed by Christmas
Stack our tables high with more food than we can possibly eat
And pile presents high around the tree.

There is a focus on huge family get togethers – the traditional Christmas
And all the 'stuff' to make it great.
Where is the baby Jesus in all this?
Born in a lowly stable
Messiah
Saviour of the world.

As we plan and prepare for Christmas
In whatever form it takes
Let us remember to make Jesus the centre
And what we can give him.

Christina Rossetti asks the question
*'What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man
I would do my part,
Yet what can I give him,
Give my heart.'*

Wishing you a season of peace, joy and hope.



Carol

Pastoral News as at 19 November 2025

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

Prayer

Loving God, your power to heal and comfort all who grieve is beyond our understanding. We ask that you will journey with us as we focus on your natural wonders seen in tree and flower, green pastures and sparkling waters. Each day, as we acknowledge our changing emotions, we know that we live in you and you in us. Grant us courage and peace as we approach your ultimate gift, your son Jesus Christ. Amen

Thank you from Phyllis Cochrane

Phyllis Cochrane would like to thank church members for their good wishes on her 95th birthday.

Holly Christie and Phyllis Cochrane ('Nana') at Phyllis's 95th birthday celebration.



GLYN ROBINSON

Lesley's address at Glyn's Funeral on 17.10.25. (abridged)



Glyn grew up in Putney Vale. But let no one think that because she lived in Putney Vale and died in Surbiton that she has not travelled. She travelled widely as a fan of Eric Clapton and Derek and the Dominoes. She spent a month working on a kibbutz in Israel in 1969, and the following year travelled to Marrakech for a month. The next year Glyn and her sister went aboard a ship to Australia as £10 pound tourists, and ended up in the dancing troupe as the on-board entertainment!

Her sister came back to the UK, but Glyn stayed in Australia until 1973 when she and a boyfriend travelled overland on public transport from Oz to the UK. It took them a year, going through Asia including Afghanistan, Indonesia, India and most of Europe. She stayed in the UK for a couple of years before returning to Australia, where she lived in Sydney working for the Department of Transport, responsible for creating road safety campaigns. She remained in Australia until the death of her father in 1989 when she returned to the UK to live with, and take care of, her mum. During that time in Oz she attended a church made up largely of Chinese people.

Upon returning to the UK, she assumed a similar working role in road safety with the UK Department of Transport, where she remained until she retired. Her work impacted the lives of many, helping to create many beloved road safety characters and campaigns such as the Hedgehogs and Think!

Glyn loved travelling to different places and exploring nature, other cultures and as much history as possible. Various holidays included Costa Rica, a Nile cruise, Berlin, Samos with excursions to Ephesus and Petra, and the Alhambra in Granada.

Glyn loved her family - her parents, sister and nephew. She shared a love of theme parks and scary rides with her nephew and together visited as many as they could. What a tremendous support they have been in this last season.

Glyn has been a rock-solid member of this church. She served as an Elder, worked with the young people in the Sunday groups and with The Boys' Brigade in the Anchor section. Who will forget her role as one of the ugly sisters, with Janine, in the Church Pantomime of Cinderella? Or the time when she organised a sheep trail round the shops and outlets of Kingston, having members of the church knit sheep and then she set off to ask and find people to display them, organising parents and children to hunt. She was a woman with a slightly wacky sense of humour and did

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many things to help others very quietly. She was a voracious reader with a wide taste in books.

Glyn was loyal and trustworthy and was a woman with firm opinions. She was a woman of prayer, regular in worship on a Sunday even when she was really ill.

Glyn was dedicated, made and sustained friendships easily, yet was self-contained and private. Her faith was deep and shaped her. Now the battle is over. Yes, we would have liked her around for longer but the body can only take so much. What do we take forward? What shall we allow to shape us? Love, loyalty, lack of whining, enjoying small things, helping others and not needing to be the star of the show - humble would be a good word. Much to teach and so much to mourn.

MARY WILLIAMSON

Lesley's Address at Mary's Funeral on 20.10.25. (abridged)



Mary Williamson was born in Barnet and spent most of her childhood in Cambridge. Cambridge was only interrupted by a short spell living in the States and when, during the war, she was evacuated to her beloved Lake District.

After leaving school she went on to study psychology at London University but her heart was firmly in Cambridge where she met John, who was one of her father's students at Cambridge.

They married soon after she left university and went to live in Kells in Ireland where John took up his first post as a minister. After three years they returned to England to a church in Kenton and then they moved north to Birkenhead in 1963 where John was a URC Synod Moderator. In the early 90s they came back to London and then settled in their final home in Hampton where, for several years, Mary was able to help her daughter, Margaret, look after her grandson Carl after school. They settled into the life of the church in Kingston, Mary helping with the pastoral care and serving on the coffee bar.

John died of a heart attack in 2005 and Mary never got over it. They were totally devoted to each other and had the most wonderfully happy marriage. Sadly, without him, Mary often felt lost and social situations became a bit of a struggle.

They had three children (Margaret, Moyra and David) and two grandchildren (Neil and Carl). David died in 2019 at a particularly poignant time when Mary herself first needed carers, but she did manage to get to Merseyside so that she could share his final days and hours close by him. David's death compounded John's, and her sadness and frailty mounted.

Mary believed that the prime purpose of her life was "to serve", in other words to help anyone in need. When her health eventually deteriorated what upset her most was her feeling that nobody seemed to need that help any more.

This dedication to care was exemplified when her older sister was admitted into hospital late in life and Mary insisted on driving hundreds of miles several times a week to visit her. In the end fate took over when she fell asleep at the wheel on her way home and crashed the car off the road into a ditch. The joke was that Mary was a veritable Mr Blobby – in the last ten years of her life she had never-ending falls and accidents but she always bounced right back up, not once injuring herself, other than bruising her ribs.

Even when she could not get out, she was always gracious to her visitors, enquiring how they were and wanting to know their news. She had good relations with her neighbours, and hers was the toilet that the postie used on his rounds!

She reached the grand old age of 98 and, other than undergoing a difficult gallbladder operation in her late fifties, she enjoyed extremely good physical health - this despite being the world's greatest sugar and biscuit addict. Her love of the countryside, of walking and of gardening kept her active and fit until her 90s and, when walking the Samaria Gorge in Crete in 1993 with Margaret and Carl, she was proudly the oldest, yet the first to finish. She was also a huge poetry fan and by her bedside in the care home there were dozens of poetry books.

Her final years were a rollercoaster of emotions, one minute requesting that she be taken to rehabilitation to learn to walk and escape the care home and the next minute praying to God to let her pass so that she could join John and David. The family are thankful to have had a bit of the smiling old Mary back before she died and that her final end was relatively quick and painless.

This is not the place to debate life beyond this life. Indeed, it is a matter of faith. But if God is God, then God will give her a welcome. The certainty is that the struggle of the last season of her life is over and now she rests.



A Message from So Young

(So Young is currently studying theology at Edinburgh University)



Hello to my Kingston URC family!

I am extremely busy and buried under a pile of essays: I've been submitting small, medium and lots of longer essays almost every week. My exams continue until 18December. Things have been quite hectic. However, I am beginning to find real joy and interest in theology and I'm truly grateful for this time of learning and studying with other students from around the world. Please remember that my Kingston family is always in my heart.

God bless
So Young

News from Suh Young

Our organist, Suh Young, has three splendid pieces of news for us:

First, she has successfully completed her MA in Music Education at University College, London (with distinction). Many, many congratulations Suh Young!



Second, she is going to be giving a 45-minute lunchtime organ recital for us on 27th November (see the notice in this issue about forthcoming recitals). We get a brief taster of how good her playing is at each service, but on this occasion she will be serving up a real banquet.

Third, she is applying for a graduate visa which will enable her to stay in the UK and continue as our organist and pianist for another two years! It is difficult to put into words how delighted and grateful we are.

Flowers for December 2025 and January 2026



7 December	Free
14 December	Camilo Fernandes
21 December	Free
28 December	Free
6 January	Free
13 January	Natasha and John Reid
20 January	Free
27 January	Free

Janine Goddard

If you are able to fill one of the above gaps, or would like to contribute later in the year, please speak to Janine.

Maybe there is a special occasion you would like to mark? An anniversary you would like to commemorate? A loved one you would like to remember? Or perhaps you simply enjoy seeing fresh flowers in church on a Sunday?

Fundraising Request

Please consider signing up to the annual Movement for Good's "12 Days of Giving", where we stand a chance of winning £1,000 in their £120,000 draw (£10,000 a day for 12 days). If you'd like to support this, please click on the link below and enter our charity number (KURC's is 1131880) then click "Search" - then select "Faith" and follow the instructions.

<https://movementforgood.com/#nominateACharity>

You have to give your email address, but you can opt out of being contacted in any way. **To maximise our chance of success, please nominate by 30 November 2025.** The final deadline for nominations is 15 December 2025.



Christmas Memories



Christmas 1962: the coldest winter in England for two centuries. Snow began falling thickly on Christmas Day and huge snowdrifts soon built up in the park that we used to walk across on the way to church. The park-keepers did their best to shovel the snow off the main paths. I was young and not very tall, and recall being led through this seemingly endless white tunnel, barely able to see over the top. Later that week our water pipes froze; Dad spent hours defrosting them with a paraffin heater.

John Fisher

When I was about 10 years old, my mother was full of apologies when she wished me 'Happy Christmas', explaining that she couldn't find my present! She had hidden it from curious and prying eyes, and couldn't remember where! One night well after the festive season was over, I was woken by my mother who, with a big smile, handed me my present (sheepskin mittens) which she had just found!

Teresa James

In my early twenties I spent four months in Toronto from October to January one year and was generously invited by a local family, who were friends of friends, to spend Christmas Day with them at their home in the suburbs. They had a son of about my age – early twenties – who had recently acquired a new and rather powerful motorbike.

After lunch he suggested it might be fun to make a tour of Toronto's suburbs, uncluttered by regular traffic on Christmas Day, and invited me to join him as a pillion passenger. Absence of traffic was more than compensated for by presence of terror, as I clung on for dear life on the back of the bike, petrified by the excursion's disregard for speed limits, traffic signs, hazard warnings, keeping to the right, slowing down at junctions etc etc...

'What a truly memorable experience!', I spluttered to my hosts when we got back, little imagining that the experience would still be lodged indelibly in my memory some 60 years later!

Vaughan James

Seven years old, I gazed at the tall, bushy, Christmas tree topped with a silver star at the end of my hospital bed. I gazed at it for as long as I could stay awake, believing that it was a sign that I might live. I felt so afraid the tree was going to be removed along with the silver star. The same Christmas brought me just one lovely present: Enid Blyton's *Nature Lover's Book*. A few hours later the nurse put it on the radiator behind my bed. On opening it many of the beautiful photos were unfortunately stuck together. Next Christmas – tales of happier times!

Ann Macfarlane

In 1977 I was minister of the Northwood Hills URC. I took the Christmas morning service which was a joyful celebration of the day. Many families were in church. I enjoyed speaking with people after the service and was almost the last to leave. I walked the short distance to the church's manse and changed clothes. About ten minutes later a church member collected my wife, Chris, and me and drove us to Heathrow where we got on a flight to JFK, New York. By the end of the day, we were part of a family reunion with my American relations in suburban New Jersey in the home of my father and stepmother where I had grown up.

Bruce Stuart

We were sitting in a strange room on Christmas Day, with other people I didn't know eating and drinking at different tables. It felt odd, as we had always celebrated our family Christmas at home. So where were we and why were we there? My five-year-old self was puzzled. Looking back over all these years, I realise that the arrival of my baby brother the following May must have been why we dined out for the only time ever at a hotel on Christmas Day.

Christine Wise



It's OK to be different

I struggle with putting the wide variety of vowel sounds into print. The logic is not consistent and it can trouble me. Learning to read was a challenge because I couldn't rely on the letter combinations within words to produce the right sounds for my London accent. As a result my writing was untidy, as I explored word options.

It was only when I was in my 30's that an educational psychologist gave this a name, dyslexia. There are many different ways to struggle with reading and mine was quite specific.

In the meantime I had become a teacher. I actually think that my struggles made me a better teacher than I might have been.

Long after I qualified to teach I was given a computer to prepare and record my work. I am quite sure that this was a relief to the people that needed to read my hand written work. Then came predictive text. But it was using American spelling so I needed to be careful to keep to English spelling. So the paper dictionary was still a necessity. Now we can use AI to support our writing. Someone I know describes AI as the Assistant Intern. That is keen to help but still requires careful review.

I still need a dictionary to check the unfamiliar. I still write clumsy sentences. I still hesitate to read some words. Once the internal stress rises I can still no longer really see the words I am trying to speak.

I have long since questioned by ability to communicate. Sometimes you have to wait as I carefully construct and practice what I want to say. Sometimes you have to laugh with me as nonsense comes out. The good stuff is hiding in there and will be said eventually.

Why am I sharing this with you?

People can so easily underestimate other people who don't conform to what is considered as normal. People can weaponise other's differences and diminish them. What a huge loss of talent can result! We are all complex and unique. God knows this. Let's listen to him.

Cathy Seymour

Archive of the Month

In the 1980s the Surrey Comet was quite a 'meaty' newspaper which regularly featured people and events at Kingston URC. 1981 was designated the International Year of Disabled People: Ann Macfarlane played a prominent part in organising this and ensured that the Comet gave it plenty of publicity. Here's part of one article:



44 years later I decided to ask Ann if she felt it had all been worthwhile, and this is what she said:

'My hectic year carried on after 1981. The year was successful in several ways. Over 300 presentations were given. Businesses and other public buildings realised the need to make entrances and aisles accessible. Language began to be addressed, as well as other needs. Nowadays it is a very different 'hectic'. Instead of me assessing the attitudes of other people and the barriers that exist, people are assessing *me*! I seldom come off well, especially in terms of finance. Being a disabled person is very costly, despite benefits for which one is appreciative. No matter what, happiness and finding fun and laughter is a great medicine and should not be underestimated. There is always time to meditate on the love of God. God is good and endures for ever.'

Church Archivist

Forthcoming Recitals

We have two lunchtime recitals planned.

On **Thursday 27 November at 1pm** (NB not our usual time of 12.30pm) our organist, Suh Young Lee, will give an organ recital which will include a selection of works by J S Bach and the tuneful 'Suite Gothique' by the 19th century French composer Léon Boëllmann. (This ends with a gripping toccata which is easily a match for Widor's!) Refreshments will be served afterwards.



On **Thursday 18 December at 12.30pm** Soraya Verjee will give a piano recital with the theme of 'Dreaming'. Her programme will be the perfect escape from the rush and bustle of Christmas preparations.

Both recitals are free, with a retiring collection.

And while on the subject of organs...

Five years ago during one of the lockdowns, Hansol Kang, our organist at the time, made a number of excellent video recordings of herself playing short, mainly meditative pieces on our **old** organ. These can be viewed at www.youtube.com/@hansol4865

You will find 27 videos in total, lasting around three minutes each, featuring composers such as Bach, Grieg, Mendelssohn, Elgar, Schubert and Rutter.



You will also find a video of Hansol giving a recital on the new pipe organ at the Presbyterian music school in Seoul where she, Haeun and Suh Young all studied.

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

Online Advent Retreat 2 – 6 December 2025

URC Spirituality are running an online Advent Retreat
- **Waiting for the light: advent online retreat** – from
7.30am on 2 December 2025 to 9pm on 6 December 2025.



Venue: Online

Ticket: Free

There will be three sessions each day:

7.30 - 8.00am: a portion of a psalm, leading into silence

Noon - 1pm: a shared [slow reading](#) of one of the readings of the day (lectio divina)
followed by a little sharing

7.30 - 9.00pm: sessions led by a variety of people, to include Neil Thorogood, Andrew Brown and Jacob Bali (*Ed: For those who don't know, Jacob Bali is Rosette Bali-Oming's son. He grew up in Kingston URC and is currently minister at Trinity URC, Wimbledon*).

For previous online retreats some people have attended all the sessions, weaving the rhythm of the retreat into their week, and others have dipped in as they are able. Sessions will be sufficiently self-contained for this to work as a 'retreat in daily life' for whatever sessions people can make.

All the sessions will be on the same Zoom link.

Please book at: https://urc-spirituality.org.uk/urcsp_event/advent-online-retreat-2/ after which you will be sent the zoom link for all the sessions.

Christian Aid Carol Singing

The Christian Aid Carol Singing will be on 18 December from 5pm to 6pm in Clarence Street.

We will meet at KURC at 4.30pm as usual.



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



ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS CARD 2025 - PROCEEDS TO CHRISTIAN AID

We are again putting together an Alternative Christmas card, where you send me a greeting and make a donation to Christian Aid. We shall then assemble all these greetings into a special Christmas card to our URC friends and associates.

All monies received are going to the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal to support families subjected to violence and poverty: refugees from conflict and famine, so they can buy food and lifesaving supplies.

Your Greeting

Please pass to me your personal greeting. Send it via email, text message, photo or pass me a hand written one which I will scan. **Be creative** then I will incorporate it into our card.

You can also leave the greeting with Catherine or Georgi in the office, marked for my attention.

Your Donation

You can give me a CHEQUE made payable to Christian Aid, give me CASH or alternatively make an ELECTRONIC DONATION via our donation machine in the church. In the reference field put in CA ACard (for Christian Aid Alternative Card). OR your Donation can be made via the CHURCH's BANK ACCOUNT. Sort Code: 20-46-73. ACCOUNT No. 60921289 and in the reference field state CA ACard.

By when?

I need to have your greeting BY **WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025** after which the card shall be assembled to include our Christmas Service schedule.

Please let me know if you want to receive the Card via email in electronic format, or if you want a traditional paper copy.

Many thanks.

Ray Charlton
Christian Aid Rep for KURC
Tel 07785 220369
ray.charlton@outlook.com

Christmas at KURC



Friday 28 November

0600 A Day to Pray (till 0600 Saturday 29 November)

Saturday 29 November

10.00 Christmas Workshop to decorate the sanctuary and foyer

Sunday 14 December

10.30 Pop up Nativity and Gift Service

17.00 Advent Reflection

10.30 Korean Language Service at New Malden URC

Wednesday 17 December

13.30 Carols in the foyer

Thursday 18 December

17.00 Carol Singing for Christian Aid in Kingston town centre (meet 16.30 at KURC)

19.00 Curry at [Monty's](#) (please sign up so we can book you a space)

Sunday 21 December

10.00 Worship Service

11.30 Coffee & Carols

17.00 Carols by Candlelight

Wednesday 24 December

13.30 Christmas Eve Worship

16.00 Christingle Service in the building and on zoom

23.30 Christmas Eve Holy Communion

Thursday 25 December

10.00 Christmas Day Worship

Lunch in the building will take place after the service. Please book your place.

Sunday 28 December

10.00 Traditional Worship

11.30 All Age Worship

17.00 Reflective Worship

Wednesday 31 December

23.30 Watchnight Service at New Malden URC

KURC Men's Lunch

If you are interested in meeting and chatting to others, please come along to [O'Neill's pub](#) in Kingston for lunch at 12.30pm on **Tuesday 13 January 2026**. This is a casual, social get together and open to everyone, with or without a connection to KURC.



Another lunch is planned for Wednesday 11 March 2026.

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

Generation Zone

Join us during the school holidays for a time of all-age worship, craft, games and conversation followed by a simple lunch. All welcome.

11am Wednesday 18 February 2026

11am Wednesday 27 May 2026

11am Wednesday 22 July 2026

11am Wednesday 2 September 2026

Plus 1pm Good Friday 3 April 2026

Church News goes bi-monthly

From 2026, *Church News* will appear every two months rather than 10 times a year, as is normally the case now. The six editions will be for February/March, April/May, June/July, August/September, October/November and December/January.

Each edition will be scheduled to appear shortly before the beginning of the period for which it is valid and, as now, will be distributed by email to subscribers with hard copies made available to those who need them.

The copy date – i.e. the deadline for contributions to reach the relevant editor – will be around the middle of the month before the relevant validity period. So, for example, the copy date for the June/July edition will be mid-May and the edition's appearance date late May.

As now, each edition will include notification of the copy date for the following edition and the name and contact details for the relevant editor

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Church News Survey

As we change the frequency of Church News, we would welcome your feedback on the magazine. Which sections do you enjoy reading most? What would you like to see more of? Are there areas you think could be improved?

We invite you to complete a short survey by clicking on the link below or scanning the QR code to the right.



<https://forms.gle/GP7VCkhmc6vsPV1h6>

Online completion will facilitate collation of the results. However, hard copies of the survey are available at the back of the church for those who need them.

Alternatively, you can contact the Church News editors at churchnews@kingstonurc.org and ask for a copy of the form to be sent to you by email or post.

The deadline for completion of the online survey and return of hard copy / emailed forms is **31 December 2025**. There is a box for the return of hard copy forms at the back of the church.

And while on the subject of magazines...

The latest issue of Reform Magazine (the URC's monthly magazine) highlights some of the past and present problems the magazine's name has caused, most notably current problems caused by confusion with a certain political party. The magazine would like to tap the brains of its readers and is inviting comments on the following:

1. Any trouble the name has caused you.
2. Whether you think it's time to change the name.
3. If the name is changed, what it should be.

If you would like to contribute your thoughts on any of the above, please email reform@urc.org.uk, or write to Reform Magazine, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT, by **1 December 2025**.

Prayer for Palestine

By Samar Hashweh, Methodist Liaison Office, Jerusalem



Photo credit: Christian Aid



God of resilience and love,

We come before you with hearts that ache for Palestine, a land steeped in history and yet marked by enduring conflict. We see the pain in the eyes of those who have lost their homes, their loved ones, and their sense of security.

The weight of the past is heavy, and the present is fraught with uncertainty. Yet, even in this challenging reality, we hold fast to the belief that hope can take root and flourish.

We pray especially for the young people of Palestine, who carry the dreams of a future they have yet to fully experience. May they find solace and strength amidst the difficulties, and may opportunities for growth and peace become tangible realities in their lives.

We remember the families striving to maintain hope in the face of adversity, their resilience a testament to the enduring human spirit. May they be surrounded by support and see glimpses of a brighter tomorrow.

We also lift up the voices of those who tirelessly work for justice and reconciliation, often in the face of great obstacles. Grant them wisdom, courage, and unwavering determination as they labour for a more just and peaceful future.

We recognise that hope is not a passive waiting but an active process of building, sowing, and nurturing. Empower us to be instruments of your hope in the making, through our prayers, our advocacy, and our solidarity with the people of Palestine. May our collective efforts contribute to a future where justice prevails, where peace reigns, and where the inherent dignity of all is upheld. We trust in your promise of renewal and your unwavering love for all your creation. **Amen.**

Smiles

- A teacher was observing a little girl drawing and asked her what the drawing was. The girl replied 'I'm drawing God'. The teacher blinked and said 'But no one knows what God looks like!' The girl replied 'they will in a minute'
- A small boy went to church with his grandmother and joined her when she knelt down to pray, copying her when she buried her face in her hands. After a short while he whispered 'who are we hiding from granny?'
- The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back at Sodom and turned into a pillar of salt. Young James nodded with understanding: 'my mum looked back once while she was driving and she turned into a telegraph pole'
- A minister was talking to one of his congregation. He said 'when you get to my age you spend a lot more time thinking about the hereafter'. He received the reply: 'well, I often go into a room and think whatever did I come in here after?'

And a couple of holiday snaps...



Cape Town, South Africa
(outside a church coffee shop)



Southwold, Suffolk



International Bible Reading Association - www.ibraglobal.org

Bible Readings for December 2025

THE CHARACTER OF GOD: the God who comes (continued)

1 The hope of Israel (continued)

Monday 1 December	Micah 5:2-4
Tuesday 2 December	John 10:11-18
Wednesday 3 December	Isaiah 9:6-7
Thursday 4 December	Genesis 49:10-12
Friday 5 December	John 6:25-40
Saturday 6 December	Numbers 24:15-19

2 A great light

Sunday 7 December	John 8:12-30
Monday 8 December	Isaiah 9:2-5
Tuesday 9 December	Psalms 94:17-23
Wednesday 10 December	John 10:1-10
Thursday 11 December	Jeremiah 23:3-8
Friday 12 December	John 15:1-7
Saturday 13 December	1 Peter 5:1-6

3 The way

Sunday 14 December	Isaiah 8:11-15
Monday 15 December	Deuteronomy 18:14-22
Tuesday 16 December	John 14:6-10
Wednesday 17 December	Isaiah 53:9-12
Thursday 18 December	Ezekiel 37:26-28
Friday 19 December	Revelation 3:14-22
Saturday 20 December	John 11:21-27

EMMANUEL: GOD WITH US (1)

Sunday 21 December	Isaiah 60:1-6
Monday 22 December	Matthew 1:1-17
Tuesday 23 December	Matthew 1:18-25
Wednesday 24 December	Matthew 2:1-6
Thursday 25 December (Christmas Day)	Psalms 98
Friday 26 December	Matthew 2:7-12
Saturday 27 December	Matthew 2:13-15

EMMANUEL: GOD WITH US (2)

Sunday 28 December	Matthew 2:16-18
Monday 29 December	Matthew 2:19-23
Tuesday 30 December	Isaiah 63:7-9
Wednesday 31 December	Psalms 148

Bible Readings for January 2026**FINDING JESUS****1 Finding the young Jesus**

Thursday 1 January Luke 2:13-20

Friday 2 January Luke 2:22-35

Saturday 3 January Luke 2:41-51

2 Encounters

Sunday 4 January Mark 2:3-12

Monday 5 January Luke 7:1-10

Tuesday 6 January (Epiphany) Luke 19:1-10

Wednesday 7 January Mark 1:32-39

Thursday 8 January Mark 3:19b/20-35

Friday 9 January John 18:1-12

Saturday 10 January John 20:1-18

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (1)**1 Christ's ministry begins**

Sunday 11 January Matthew 3:1-17

Monday 12 January Matthew 4:1-11

Tuesday 13 January Matthew 4:12-25

Wednesday 14 January Matthew 5:1-16

Thursday 15 January Matthew 5:17-26

Friday 16 January Matthew 5:27-37

Saturday 17 January Matthew 5:38-48

2 Instructions and reassurance

Sunday 18 January Matthew 6:1-8

Monday 19 January Matthew 6:16-24

Tuesday 20 January Matthew 6:25-34

Wednesday 21 January Matthew 7:1-14

Thursday 22 January Matthew 7:15-29

Friday 23 January Matthew 8:1-17

Saturday 24 January Matthew 8:18-27

NAMES: PEOPLE AND PLACES (1)

Sunday 25 January Genesis 2:19-25

Monday 26 January Genesis 28:10-22

Tuesday 27 January Genesis 17:1-27

Wednesday 28 January 2 Chronicles 7:1-16

Thursday 29 January Exodus 20:1-7

Friday 30 January Isaiah 62:1-5

Saturday 31 January Hosea 1:1-11

Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

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How to contribute to Church News:

Contributions on matters of reflection and opinion as well as reports of activities are welcome.

The next copy deadline (February / March edition) is Friday 16 January 2026

Editor: Jean Thompson – jeant@btinternet.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 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.

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