



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church



# CHURCH NEWS

Kingston United Reformed Church

April / May 2026



## ***'May Peace on Earth Prevail'***

Peace Memorial in churchyard, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire

[www.kingstonurc.org](http://www.kingstonurc.org)

Charity No. 1131880

*This issue edited by Bron Robinson*

***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 YouTube:***

**<https://www.youtube.com/@kingstonunitedreformedchur2940/streams>**

**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 Gym (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 (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays monthly)

**Wednesday:**

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:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday** 19.30 Elders' Meeting

**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday** 09.00 Women's Coffee Morning

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

**Bi-monthly:**

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

**School Holidays:**

**Certain 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 April/May 2026:**

**7 – 15 May: Christian Aid Week** (contact Ray Charlton)

**14 – 24 May (Ascension Day to Pentecost): Thy Kingdom Come 2026** (contact Sally Butler)

**16 May (2-4pm): Crafternoon** (contact Carol Clack)

**Please also see the e-mailed Weekly Notices.**

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

## Letter from Lesley



Dear All

The big choice is to follow Jesus. To build our lives around him.

Did you know – apparently unrelated fact – that the first news of the landings in Dieppe during World War 2 were brought by Beach Comber, who served in the Canadian army?

If you want to eat an elephant how do you do it? Eat it one bite at a time.

Most change happens gradually, for good or ill. Growth happens slowly, as does decline.

There are many things we can do to look after ourselves, even though the tide is moving in one direction. But intellectually, emotionally, socially we can act – regardless of age – and make changes. However small we feel ourselves to be.

One of the shocking things about the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus is that he warns them. He tells them these things are coming and, somehow, they cannot take it in. We know what that is like. One day you look in the mirror and the 21 year old you think that you are inside has been replaced by an 80 year old. How did that happen...answer ... gradually. Or you find yourself isolated. How did that happen? Or unhealthy. How? Answer: slowly. Slowly a cigarette, a mean comment, a saying 'no' to the social invitation, another glass of wine, a turning over in bed, a bitter thought, another biscuit, another click of the mouse.....small choices but they can have big results.

Are the small, daily choices we are making matching up with God's vision for us?

None of us is all powerful That is God's job.

Equally none of us is powerless either.

How can we serve God today? How can we make the world a better place for those around us?

And Beach Comber? Beach Comber was a pigeon, surely one of the most insignificant of animals. Doing a very important job.

We can all build up or chip away at the foundations of others. Remember all people are loved by God .... even if they drive us nuts.

Yours  
**Lesley**

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## Cathy's Conversation



During this time, we will have celebrated the induction of 5 new elders, Jin Sook Kim, Hyun Ju Lim, Andrew Kasakula, Joanitha Mirembe and Mervyn McCulloch. We will, also, have offered grateful thanks to Ray Erskine and Sue Shaw for their recent time of serving us as elders. Let's thank them all, new and resting, for their dedication to our worship, leading and overseeing the various groups and responsibilities that keep our busy, caring church and building safe and active.

Many of the elders are also trustees of the Kingston United Reform Charity. Non serving elders also play an important role in offering support to the serving elders.

Let us not forget that as members of the church, we too play an important part in the running of the church. Important decisions go to church meeting. We have two styles of meeting, both start after the 10.30 service. The next informal meeting, where share fellowship and food, is on April 10<sup>th</sup>. The next formal meeting will be on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

For us all this is a time of change, new people to get to know. I was searching for a biblical reference to support us as we start the new church year. Whatever your feelings are about the use of AI, sometimes it can hit the spot. We, of course, must develop discernment, but we have always needed it.

“Managing change in the Bible is centred on trusting God's sovereignty, relying on His unchanging nature (Hebrews 13:8), and renewing one's mindset (Romans 12:2) rather than fearing uncertainty. The Bible encourages navigating transitions by fostering courage, seeking God's purpose, maintaining spiritual discipline, and embracing transformation over comfort.”

Talking of change, please note:

### Church Foyer Redesign and Refurbishment Project

As many of you are aware, over time the foyer has developed to be a multiple use area. It now requires attention and possible changes to meet the needs of users. To start this process a small group (Carol Clack, Cathy Seymour and Daryl Maisey) are leading a project to find out the wishes, wants and needs of foyer users that will inform a plan to redesign and refurbish the physical area.

Please don't feel surprised if you are approached to take part in sharing your thoughts as the initial stage is to capture and value as many ideas as possible.

**Cathy**

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## Carol's Contribution



Following the death of my father at the beginning of this year, I have had made several rail journeys to Llandrindod Wells in Wales.

There is no direct train route; the journey includes two changes. There are only a very limited number of trains to Llandrindod Wells and, if one of the first two trains is delayed and the connection is missed, then you can become stranded for a few hours.

This is very stressful and on one occasion I knew I'd missed my connection before I left London. If a train is delayed for more than 15 minutes you can apply for a refund but that does not help resolve the immediate need to reach your destination. I have discovered that customer services are very helpful and on more than one occasion I have reached my destination by taxi. I have travelled routes I would not otherwise have used.

It strikes me that life is a journey of missed connections and diversions. We have a plan to get from A to B, but something comes along which hinders our progress and we get frustrated. We question why? We blame ourselves and get angry. Think we must have got it wrong. But what I have learnt is that missed connections and diversions open new experiences. They offer an alternative way of reaching your destination and challenge your previous expectations. Life is about the journey and the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

Sometimes the worst scenario turns out to not be as bad as we feared – the missed connection demonstrates God's provision for us in unexpected ways.

**Carol**

## Sally's Stories



### Jolly Toddlers Gym

We have established our new Toddler Gym! During half terms and holidays, we are getting more children (17 this last half term). But we have a regular group now of new families and we get 10-12 children (might not seem a lot but we went down to about 2 or 3 before we changed the group).

The important thing to say though is this...

We decided to begin to sensitively make the group more 'distinctively Christian'. We play Christian songs, we have a quote of the week and some prayers on our notice board, we give Christian gifts, have prayer requests.... Last week, we had an Easter service in the church which was optional. Eight families showed interest. I also prayed for one of the childminders, whose 'charge' is in hospital. I pray that we will have some good God-conversations and that people will eventually come to know Christ. (That may or may not be in KURC. I have to say that I do know some families who have started going to church but sadly, not here. The truth is that they may have churches that are nearer to where they live, (with parking!) or maybe their roots are in the Catholic church or they want to get into a church school so they go to the local church... This is a reality of modern life and I have to accept it. It's a win for Jesus but not necessarily us... but we should be thankful that they first encountered God's love here. We are building God's Kingdom). We play a part in someone's journey of faith and it is a privilege to do so, even if only for a short while. A lot of the spiritual nurture and mission happens outside of Sunday services.

What we need, is for all of us to pray for the work.

Here's a prayer you can pray:

Lord Jesus, You loved children and You always welcomed them. Help us to do the same. We pray that our work will grow in both numbers and depth. Open the eyes of the parents and carers to see You in us. May our work and our lives be so winsome, that they would long to explore who You are with us and will become faithful followers. In Your Name we pray. Amen.

**Sally Butler**  
**Children, Youth & Families Worker**

## Pastoral News as at 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026

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

### **Prayer**

*Loving and merciful God, we bring before you all who are having difficulties in life. We pray for those who are struggling with illness, those experiencing stress, anxiety and fear, and those who feel lost, discouraged or alone. Lord, be their comfort and strength. For those facing financial hardship or uncertainly, provide for their needs. Open channels of support for those affected by broken relationships and strength for those who are weak. Give hope to the hopeless and courage to those who are afraid. Surround them with people who will support, love and uplift them and remind them that they are never alone, for you are always near. May your grace sustain them through every trial and lead them into brighter days ahead. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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### **Flower rota for mid-April - June 2026**

April 19 <sup>th</sup>	Shirley Davy
April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Liz and Alastair Borthwick
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Nick and Bron Robinson
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Jean Hughes
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Golding
May 24 <sup>th</sup>	Blank
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Blank
June 7 <sup>th</sup>	Ken Barlett
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Ann Macfarlane
June 21 <sup>st</sup>	Jean Thompson
June 28 <sup>th</sup>	Blank



Please contact me if you can fill any of the blanks.

**Janine Goddard**

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## MARGARET McMAHON

4. 5.29. – 9. 1.26.

*Extracts from Lesley's Eulogy at the Service of Thanksgiving on 30. 1.26.*



How can we summarise the life of this caring, loving, loyal, happy woman who was always there, more concerned about others than herself and always generous?

Margaret was born in Edinburgh to George and Ethel and had a brother, James, who was 4 years younger. Aged 4 she became friends with Elinor who lived next door and they were friends for 90 years. After school Margaret studied at Moray House and became a teacher there of small children. Like many at that time, church was the centre of her social world, and it was at the Youth Club

that she met Billy and they married in July 1956. The following year they moved to London and settled in Surbiton. Keith and then Alison were born and they became the centre of her working life. Margaret was Chair of the local Save the Children Fund, as well as caring for her grandchildren, godchildren and their children and neighbours' children. At church Margaret helped with Parents and Toddlers and taught in the Primary Department.

She was a woman of deep faith in a very Presbyterian way – it was a rock-solid feature of her life with weekly attendance at church. It was assumed that faith did not have to be spoken about, it had to be lived. She was clear-sighted in the face of widowhood and uncomplaining about the indignities of old age.

Margaret was incredibly proud of her heritage – she and Billy were members of the Caledonian Club for 44 years. She had a quiet self-confidence which could trip into stubbornness at times, especially when it came to new technology. Her garden was a real passion and it was always enjoyable walking round the garden and hearing the history of the plants. Margaret also had a very enquiring mind and was very interested in Art and History. She was always the biggest fan of her family. Her unwavering love and kindness will be missed.

She has lived a deep and joyous life. To quote the great Gerry Cinamon .... she is a belter, reminds us that the world is not as evil as it seems.



## PHYLLIS COCHRANE 16.10.30. – 8. 2.26.

*Mostly taken from daughter Marie's Welcome at the  
Celebration of Life Service on 10. 3.26.*



We are gathered in this house of God, not because our mother was particularly religious, but she absolutely lived her life according to Christian values and she loved this church. It was important to her.

She was married in this building on 11.11.51. and enthusiastically joined the Young Wives' group, forging friendships that would help sustain her through the highs and lows of a long life.

She very much enjoyed all the meetings and activities, including helping at the Christmas bazaars and summer fetes.

In due course we four children arrived and regularly attended Sunday School, Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade and the Youth Fellowship. As time went on, and to her great pleasure, our mother witnessed 3 more family weddings in this church, plus the baptisms of 11 of us – her 4 children, followed by 4 of her grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

When possible, Mum and Dad loved to travel, particularly to South Africa and Australia to visit her brother with whom she had a close bond.

In later years, Mum spent many more happy hours here, with friends old and new, helping Steve Wenman with the young children, helping at the Coffee Bar and with the Men's Lunches. Many of her happy times were also spent participating in the group walks organised by Peter Ashdown, enthralled by Peter's knowledge of London.

Our mother was a black and white person and didn't really do shades of grey. She was a fantastic hostess and her extended family gatherings were very much a feature of her life. She will be so greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing her.

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*As a church we are indebted to Phyllis and her family for providing a Christmas tree for our Christmas services every year for over 70 years!*

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## **Christian Aid Week (CAW) 2026: What is planned?**

Christian Aid Week 2026 will take place formally from 10th to 17th May, uniting communities across the UK and Ireland to fight poverty and support vulnerable families worldwide.

This church supports Christian Aid, where funds raised are put into Action to help those impacted by drought, flood, war disasters and injustice.

They currently work in 26 countries with local partners on 410 projects (March 2026).

The Kingston Christian Aid group are planning a few activities, before and after CAW, please come and help, support and if you can donate, these are outlined below.

**1-FUN QUIZ** - We start on 8<sup>th</sup> May with our famous Quiz.  
7pm at the Church. £10/person.

**2-JOINT WORSHIP for CAW 2026** – 6pm 10<sup>th</sup> May at All Saints Church – including a speaker from Christian Aid.

**3- DROP OF ONLY – ENVELOPES - 10 – 17th May**

**We need volunteers** to post envelopes, at a time to suit you, in your street/ road/ housing complex. Envelope returns will come back to you so you don't need to wait at the door to ask for a donation or the envelope back. **This is easy** and takes less than an hour to deliver the envelopes.

**4- DANCING AND COLLECTING in the CENTRE of KINGSTON – 16th May**

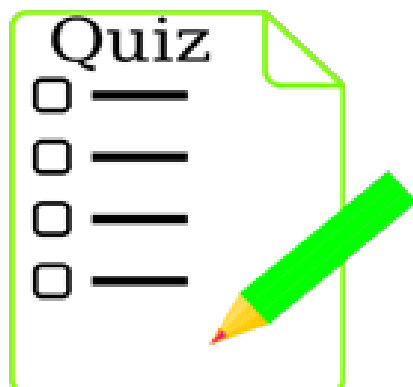
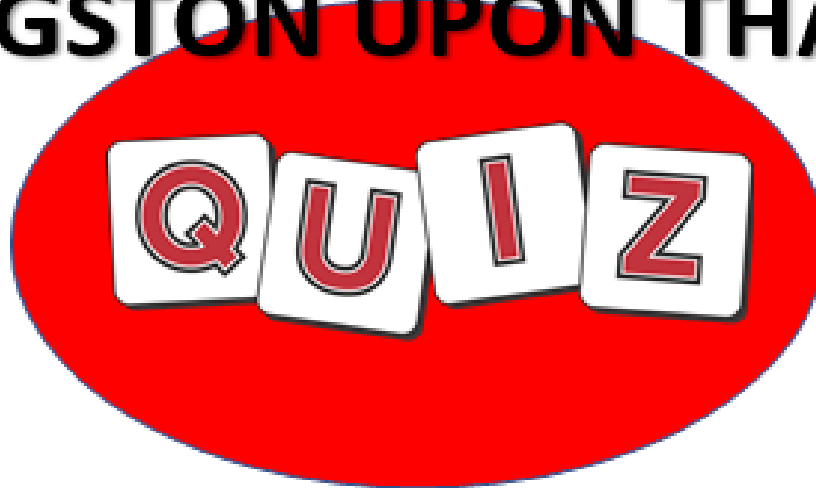
We will be '**Dancing for Good**' in Clarence street and for those not able we will be looking for collectors to shake a can or hold a bucket AND QR Code to collect.



**5-OTHER** : If you want to suggest and do your own fundraising event, – let me know and I will help you make it a success.

**Please speak to Ray Charlton for more details.**

# 2026 CHRISTIAN AID KINGSTON UPON THAMES



**Friday 8th May 2026  
7 – 10pm  
At Kingston United  
Reformed Church,  
Eden Street.**

**£10/person (includes snacks) pay on night -  
There is a paying Bar & Cash Raffle**

**Feedback on the Alternative Christmas Card Dec. 2025. THANK YOU to everyone who contributed in December 2025 towards this. After recovering Gift Aid we raised **£1,967.60** via our Alternative Christmas Card for Christian Aid. Our best ever total for this initiative started by Barbara Fielding and Denise Scorer.**



**6 - MYSTERY CAW 2026 EVENT !**

**A new major event is in development.....**

**This will amaze you.....**

**More Details towards the end of April....**

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**May 14 (Ascension Day) - May 24 (Pentecost) is  
Thy Kingdom Come 2026!**

A global prayer initiative involving many Christian traditions, praying Thy Kingdom Come, Holy Spirit, Come.

Part of this is to pray every day for 5 people whom we would like to know the love of Jesus.

More details from Sally. Look out for what's going on at KURC!

# NEW BIBLICAL SERIES

*The beatitudes*

Join us on this new journey of studying the Word, where we will be studying "The Beatitudes" (Matthew 5:3-12). Your presence will delight us!

**STARTING APRIL, 18TH**

Kingston United  
Reformed Church  
Mayo Hall, EDEN STREET,  
Kingston, KT1 1HZ

Contact: Sally  
07807 348326

A Heartfelt Thank You  
to Kingston United  
Reformed Church



We are incredibly grateful for the lovely Easter Eggs donation, which will bring smiles and festive cheer to children and families in our community.



Dear John and everyone at Kingston United Reformed Church,

On behalf of everyone at Kingston WelCare, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you for your generous donation of Easter eggs.

Your kindness and continued support are truly appreciated. The Easter eggs will bring great joy to the children and families we support, and help make this Easter a special one for them.

As a small token of our thanks, we have shared our appreciation on our social media platforms and would be delighted for you to view or share the video (see the still from the video above).

Thank you once again for thinking of us and for your ongoing generosity to the local community.

With warmest thanks and best wishes, Kingston WelCare

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## Feedback received on M&Ms group

M&Ms is a ...

- Sociable and friendly 'gathering together in God's name', welcoming and supporting each other in a safe confidential space.
- The sessions are themed, well prepared, flexible/interactive, so together we have fun learning through discussion and praying ...and laughing.
- I go away feeling warm inside - loved and blessed.

Do join us on the third Saturday of the month from 10-11.30am.

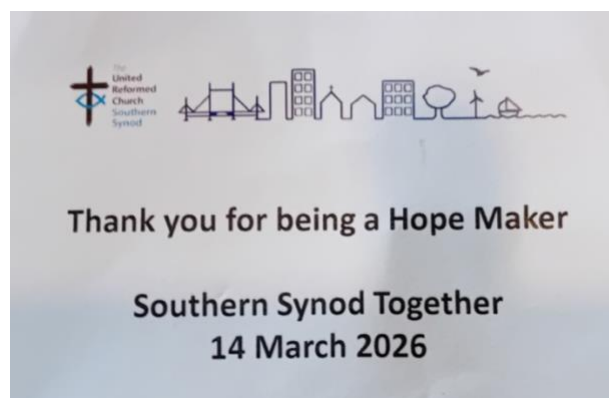
**Sally**

## Southern Synod Together Meeting

At Southern Synod Together meeting on 14th March 2026 Ian Moore, who is the Green Apostle for Southern Synod, told us about the ambitious targets that Southern Synod has to become more sustainable. Some churches were given hero-maker awards for their work on climate justice and KURC was one of them. There is all the work that is being done to make the church more energy efficient and mention was made of our combining prayer and politics in our good relationship with our MP and the article about it in REFORM.

### ***Southern Synod Environmental Charter:***

- A. We believe that creation reveals the glory of God. That we are called to be stewards of God's creation working with all people of good will to make sure that God's earth remains a beautiful place full of wonder, worship, love, justice and peace, by respecting the environment and all creatures.
- B. We challenge ourselves to live simply and in solidarity with the poor not taking unfair amounts of the world's resources or creating waste and pollution.
- C. We commit ourselves to safeguarding life and living sustainably by taking our environmental impact fully into account.



***Christine Thompson***

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## ***Imaginary Letter to Bear Grylls, Author, Chief Scout, Adventurer***

April 2026

Dear Bear Grylls,

Thank you so much for "The Greatest Story ever Told". Our church, Kingston United Reformed Church, over the last few months has had some Zoom sessions devoted to reading the book. By hearing the people closest to Jesus speak for themselves, this has added a whole new meaning to the life of Jesus.

During Holy Week another church in the area joined us, and through the eyes of John (brother of James), we were transported to Jerusalem to share the agony of Jesus, Judas, Peter and Pilate. Following Easter, a lunchtime service will be devoted to having breakfast on the beach with Jesus.

If you plan to write any more books which make the Bible come alive by using eye witness accounts, please let us know.

Blessings,  
*Kingston URC*

*And thank **you** very much Jean for reading these stories to us. Ed.*

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### **Musical matters**



We are pleased to announce that three lunchtime recitals have been arranged for the spring/summer season.

Thursday 14 May at 1.15pm: Michael Bevan (piano)

Thursday 11 June at 1.15pm: Stephen Westrop (organ)

Thursday 17 September at 1.15 pm: Catherine Leonard (piano)

As usual the recitals are free and last about 45 minutes.

Do book the dates now!

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## Good Friday at KURC

All through the Lent period our church, together with other churches in Kingston, had a very intensive programme. On Good Friday, as in previous years, ministers and members of many churches in Kingston gathered in the Mayo Hall for a tea with Hot Cross Buns which was followed by the Walk of Witness.



The cross was carried through the main streets of Kingston and everyone gathered on the square near the Bentall centre to listen to the prayers, and the singing of a choir from All Saints Church.

Passers-by also had a chance to sing with them, as the leaflets with the words were distributed around in the crowd.

After the Walk of Witness people gathered in our church and we had the readings from five ministers, their testimonies and we all sang hymns. The service had a shade of solemnity but the service and speeches uplifted the spirits of all present.

After the service there was 'Generation Zone' for anyone who wanted to attend, including families with children. We decorated small pizzas and our chef Ray quickly baked them – they were very delicious!

Sally told the story of Jesus' Passion Week by using various props in the "magic box". Adults and children wrote short prayers in the middle of flowers, folding them and placing them in the pool of water – and watched that they all miraculously opened in the water, exposing the prayers! (*more pics on KURC Facebook page*).



And of course, any Easter cannot be without Easter Egg Hunt! The children were so excited and ran around with their parents looking for eggs! They really enjoyed their finds!

We owe all our happiness, existence and all to someone who is Our Creator and who sent his Son on the cross to die for our sins and transgressions!

**Natasha**

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## Wider World

### Big Tech Good or Bad – Find Out

**When:** Saturday 25 April, 11am-6pm (Registration will open at 10:30)

**Where:** London South Bank University (LSBU) Hub, 116 London Rd, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6LN

**FREE**

To book go to <https://www.globaljustice.org.uk/>

We'll look at the effects all this is having on the environment, communities, health and food systems. And looking to the future, we'll discuss how we harness technological development for societal good, and whether we need to go even further, fundamentally reducing our use of and reliance on digital technologies.

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### Southern Synod Big Day Out!

**When:** Saturday 20th June 2026 10-4pm

**Where:** Shires Oast, Tunbridge Wells, TN12 6PY

Everyone welcome for this brilliant day to be together for worship fun fellowship learning and sharing

More details on the slideshow here (this link will download a Powerpoint) [synod day](#)

**Look out for tickets and how to book**

If you or your church can help please get in touch with Rev Ruth Armstrong  
Contact Ruth at [ruthlucy@live.com](mailto:ruthlucy@live.com) or text 07778 689 872

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### Commitment for Life Partner

The [Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre](#) continues to provide rehabilitation services to children with disabilities in the Gaza Strip as part of its initiative "Heart to Heart, from Jerusalem to Gaza." They write 'Despite the current challenges and circumstances, our comprehensive rehabilitation services alongside the Mother and Family Empowerment Program continue to operate at full capacity, with 210 children enrolled in the comprehensive rehabilitation program. We are committed to standing by our children and their families in all circumstances, to provide the best possible support and care, tackling the future with great optimism for smoother days ahead where every child can live in peace.'

They ask for our prayers.

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### What was said to MPs in the National Emergency Briefing?

Look out for more details.

*Christine Thompson*



## A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips

### April 2026

Celebrate new life this Easter and have a go at growing something! April is the perfect time to try to grow something edible or, if you are a seasoned gardener, to encourage someone else to try. Salad leaves or herbs are a great place to start and will reduce your reliance on those oh-so-convenient supermarket salad bags.

**For indoor space**, try 'micro-greens' (vegetable leaves harvested soon after they open)

**For greenhouses**, try sowing salad leaf seed mixes.

**For outdoors**, beetroot, lettuce, onion and pea plants are frost-resistant so can all be planted outside in April.

As you sow, thank God for the opportunity to grow food, and pray for those communities that are facing food shortages and famine.

### May 2026

**Support pollinators.** Nothing says Spring like the buzz of a bee! But these precious pollinators are declining due to habitat loss, climate change and agricultural intensification. Wednesday 20 May is World Bee Day, so look around to see how you can improve habitats for bees and other pollinators.

Read more about bees, butterflies and habitats that support them in our Target 25 resources at [arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/target-25](https://arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/target-25). Sow a pollinator friendly seed mix, make or buy a bee hotel, let some wild flowers grow in your garden, and don't use pesticides. Pray that our pollinator populations will increase.

For more about World Bee Day visit: [awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/world-bee-day/](https://awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/world-bee-day/)

For more practical ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature, sign up to A Rocha UK's Wild Christian email: [arocha.org.uk/wild-christian](https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian)

## Fred Randall's writings

Every year we receive money from Fred Randall who was once a stalwart of this church. He was church secretary for many years.

His writings are still bringing an income which the family generously hand over to us  
The books are:

- Basic Sociology
- British Social Services

Both jointly attributed to FJ Wright who wrote the original editions, although Fred did do massive re-writes on both.

- British Government and Politics

All three were published in the 1970s by M&E Handbooks. In addition, Fred wrote a number of ad hoc articles and short stories (including for the BBC). Maybe it is less likely that those are still producing income!

We are grateful.

*Lesley*

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

If you are interested in meeting and chatting to others, please come along to O'Neill's pub for lunch at 12.30 on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May. This is a casual, social get-together and open to everyone, with or without a connection to Kingston United Reformed Church.

Another lunch is planned for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July.

If you would like more information, please contact Alistair –

Email: [Alistair.borthwick@talktalk.net](mailto:Alistair.borthwick@talktalk.net) or phone 07930 762853

## AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) conference



Meet Judy King.

Judy is my son, Andrew's speech therapist and she's in the costume she's devised for running the London Marathon.

As a sign of her imaginative thinking, she's produced a range of widgets that she's attached by velcro to her tutu. Unlike my son and others like him, Judy, like me and most of you, can speak. She's intending, however, as she runs to hand one of the widgets, e.g. 'water' to anyone who hands her a container of water as she runs. Also one that says 'jelly babies'! If she sees fellow runners looking stressed she's got encouraging messages to hand them, 'You've got this!'

She is raising money for 1Voice and, as you can see, on the back of all the widgets there is information about 1Voice.



I took the pictures when Andrew, his carer, Henry Serunjogi and I met Judy and others on March 31 at the University of Leeds for a meeting organised by 'Communication Matters'. It was a meeting for AAC users – 'augmentative and alternative communication'.

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About 15 people attended who, like my son Andrew communicates by means of a computer mounted on their wheelchairs. It was an astonishing sight, the AAC users accompanied mainly by carers but also some family members.

The AAC users presented reports. Without doubt the most impressive was Beth Moulam, Ph.D. She, with another woman, updated us about an on-going survey of the attitudes and experiences of AAC users on a range of topics such as mental health issues and challenges and stresses in relationships (parents, partners, friends). She also plugged her own forthcoming book, *How to Live AACiously; A Guide to AAC*, to be published in November.

We also met Jamie (I did not get his last name) and his able-bodied wife. Jamie is employed in one of the hospitals in Leeds. Any disabled patient has the opportunity to speak with him and he is able to assist them and answer questions or sort out complications relating to their treatment. He operates his communication device by using his right hand to waggle a toggle switch.

There were inadvertent problems that cropped up during the conference. One user asked a question but couldn't be heard as he had the volume on his communication device set too low. By contrast, during lunch we could not help but overhear the comment by someone to her friend because she had set her volume TOO HIGH.

It was an astounding event to attend and hugely encouraging to be aware of many people who had been enabled to speak, through their communication aids, as well as people like Judy King who train people to use them.

**Revd Bruce Stuart**

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*By the way, if you don't know what Widgits are ...*

*They are simply-drawn, colourful symbols, each illustrating a single concept in a clear and concise way. These symbols can aid communication, understanding, learning and independence and help people realise their full potential. More info here:*

[https://www.widgit.com/about-symbols/widgit\\_symbols.htm](https://www.widgit.com/about-symbols/widgit_symbols.htm)

## What is your Act of Hope?

*This is taken from the April 2026 edition of URC News update*

<https://urc.org.uk/urc-news-update/>



*Photo credit URC News Update*

News reports and social media can often make us feel that the UK is more divided than ever. The voices of those who spread hate or seek to pull communities apart can be loud, but the voices of hope, care and kindness are louder.

Across Wales, Scotland and England, United Reformed Church congregations, community groups and local projects show up for people in their neighbourhoods every day.

As part of the national A Million Acts of Hope week of action (13–20 May), the URC is inviting you to help celebrate these everyday acts of connection by sharing your photos and short videos.

More information will follow from the URC. Meanwhile, resources, including a "how to" pack, poster and social media images, are available at [millionactsofhope.org/community-hub](https://millionactsofhope.org/community-hub)

## A Story from the past

Max Mosley became a British businessman, lawyer and racing driver. He served as president of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the governing body for Formula One. Mosley was the youngest son of [Sir Oswald Mosley](#), former leader of the [British Union of Fascists](#), and [Diana Mitford](#). In his teens and early twenties, Mosley was involved with his father's post-war political party, the far-right [Union Movement](#) (UM). In that capacity he came to speak at a Manchester University Student Union debate in favour of a motion that was considered racist and/or fascist. The student union put their best debater up against him. The hall was packed. He was listened to in stony silence. No one heckled him. Heckling doesn't work against a good speaker like him. It energises them and they use the heckler's remarks to help score their points. The motion was roundly defeated. He went away looking very subdued and crest fallen.

***Christine Thompson***

## Crafternoons 2026

Either bring your own craft projects and work in the company of other crafters, make new friends, share ideas, drink tea and eat cake.

And / Or

Try out the craft ideas offered on the day.

**Dates:** Saturdays 16<sup>th</sup> May, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 19<sup>th</sup> September and 21<sup>st</sup> November

From 2-4pm

At Kingston United Reformed Church

For more details contact Carol 07495746131

£5 per family

## Carry the Spices

Singaporean Doctors in Medical Missions and Pastoral Ministry

*This is taken from an article written by George Chew (member of our Church family), published by Medical Missions Foundation, Singapore, published in 2007.*



George and May Chew

### To Fulfil a Calling

*So often, I have chosen my own selfish nature but the sanctifying activity of the Holy Spirit has guided me: through my mind, to discern the will of God; my conscience, to distinguish what is right and wrong; my heart, to desire God's way; and my will, to follow God's leading.*

My work history has been a mixture of secular and missions work.

Essentially, secular work is often construed as a means of earning a living in the profession or training which one has achieved through education and training at college or university. Whereas 'missions' is considered the church's primary task, it is also an integral part of our calling.

Each situation and background of the individual is different. The question before us is to discover than God calls us to various roles at different times and to meet the challenge of balancing the vocation of work with the vocation of the family.

In my situation, after graduation in 1957, I went on to pursue my vocation to be trained as a paediatrician. I served in the hospital in Singapore to save enough money for post-graduate studies in the UK. Following the completion of training, I felt called, after much inner struggle, to serve in Africa – accompanied by my wife who shared in the calling. We gave ourselves two years of service (1965-67) in this remote place in the Sahel belt of Africa. The main reason was that I promised my wife's parents we would serve this short length of time. They had not met me and were actually staunch Buddhists bewildered by this strange decision to go off to Africa. I had honoured my side of the "bargain" in return for their permission to marry their daughter.

Whilst we were in Africa, May's mother became a convert following investigations from a relative on this puzzling behaviour of her Christian son-in-law. She started to worship at Katong Bethesda Brethren Church.

We returned to Singapore in 1969 with two young children and no financial resources, and had no choice but to stay with my parents. As a doctor with more than 10 years' experience after graduation and armed with post-graduate qualifications, I sought employment with the Singapore Health Service as a Medical Officer – Specialist Officer. Later, I went into private practice as I had to service a huge mortgage loan after a banker friend helped us to purchase our family home.

### *The Lord Provides*

The Lord provided much remuneration in the three years of private practice in paediatric consultancy. However, the calling came again to “cross over into Macedonia” from the same African church. There was a heart-wrenching struggle and we prayed with all our might. But we submitted to His will and left for Africa in 1969, where we remained until 1977.

We returned to the UK and started life all over again, having survived insurmountable odds in daily living following four military coups in Africa. He blessed us tremendously through my paediatric practice in the UK and supplied all our family needs until I retired in 1998.

We then resumed another period of vocation in China until 2004 when my knees gave way. Not to be daunted by this physical setback I pursued distance learning in biblical studies in the UK and US, and I am now blessed with another calling to serve as a non-stipendiary local preacher and lay-pastor in the UK.

It is perhaps a trifle bewildering. The changing of careers or giving priority to family life is not to abandon a Christian vocation but to seek to fulfil a calling to be faithful in the different circumstances in life. To fulfil a Christian vocation is essentially to embark on a lifelong journey of faithfulness in relationship with God.

It is important to see our work, whether secular or Christian ministry, as giving due significance to its place in the Christian life. The role of a Christian is to be an influence for transforming the society we live in. To this end, it is important to see the core task, not the peripherals in our work, to engage in a transforming ministry and use the opportunities to witness, heal and care.

Reign, King Jesus reign!

**George Chew**

*The full article from 'Carry the Spices' includes many stories of George and May's mission in Africa and China. If you are interested to read more, please email [churchnews@kingstonurc.org](mailto:churchnews@kingstonurc.org) and we can email you screenshots of the publication.*  
*Ed.*

## If Only I'd Known

Queen Victoria once found herself caught in the rain while walking in the Scottish Highlands. She knocked on a cottage door, hoping to borrow an umbrella. The woman who answered didn't recognize her royal visitor – she just saw an interruption to her day. Annoyed at being disturbed, she grudgingly handed over a broken umbrella and quickly shut the door.

The next morning, the Queen's men arrived in full uniform to return the umbrella. "Madam, the Queen thanks you and returns the umbrella that you lent to her." The woman was horrified. "If only I'd known," she muttered, "I'd have given her my best umbrella."

But here's the question: why should it matter who was standing at her door? Jesus tells us a challenging truth: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). In other words, every person who crosses our path deserves our best umbrella – not just the ones we recognize as important, not just our friends, not just the people who can do something for us in return.

The woman at the cottage wasn't wrong because she failed to recognise royalty. She was wrong because she failed to recognise humanity. Every person deserves dignity, kindness, and our best – whether they're a queen or a stranger in the rain.

Today, you'll encounter many people: classmates, teachers, staff, perhaps someone new or someone you usually overlook. Each one deserves your "best umbrella" – your genuine kindness, your attention, your respect – not because of who they are or what they can do for you, but simply because they are human, made in the image of God.

"If only I'd known" shouldn't be our regret. We already know enough: every person matters.

***Found and passed on by Teresa James***

## Dates when access to Hampton Court Gardens is FREE



Friends may like to know that one of our local attractions has free access on the following weekends in 2026:

9 and 10 May

12 and 13 September

10 and 11 October

21 and 22 November

26 December (Wilderness only)

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

## Hope in the Making – Environmental Concerns

A prayer from Commitment for Life

Forests felled or burnt, destroying homes, habitat and carbon sinks.

Floods kill and lay waste.

Droughts sap life and livelihood, bringing hunger and migration.

Plastics and chemicals fill our rivers and oceans, causing death.

The earth cries out in distress but power denies, belittles and prevaricates with self-interest at heart. God, this is way too big for me!

Yet, you call us to be salt, light or yeast.

Small, seemingly insignificant ingredients, but ones that transform and change everything.... including us!

You encourage us to join with others to guide and enable,

And you promise to be with us every step of the way.

Thank you for signs of Hope in the Making:

A small apple tree planted defiantly in the face of opposition,

The woman refusing single-use plastics or to buy produce out of season, small groups working on inspirational local projects,

Farmers turning to regenerative ways

Campaign groups providing inspiration, information and opportunities to write, sign up or march in protest.

Charities working on alternatives for communities and ecosystems affected by climate chaos or environmental degradation.

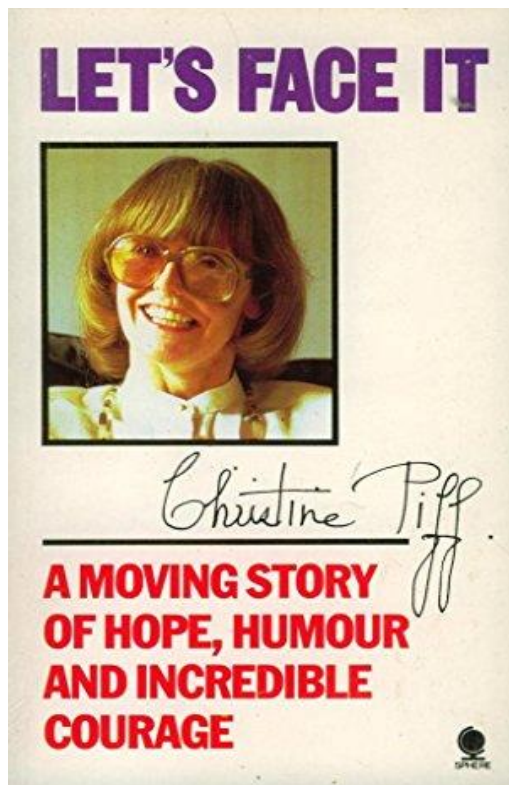
Help us to seek you out and follow, wherever you may be found. Amen

### Evangelism myths

1. Only evangelical churches can do evangelism
2. Evangelism is done through special events
3. The target is to get people to come to faith
4. The target is to get people to come to church
5. Evangelism is project based
6. Big is better than small
7. Churches that 'do' evangelism are not interested in serving their communities.
8. Evangelism is something 'they' do and we do not.
9. Evangelism is a job for experts
10. Words are the only thing that matters.
11. Slick is the most important thing.
12. Evangelism is optional
13. Evangelism is about one off events
14. It is an add on.

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## Let's Face It: the life of Christine Piff



Through Facebook, I read the sad news that this earth lost in October one of the most courageous and kind woman-fighters, Christine Piff. Very few people in our church probably remember me writing about her in Church News approximately 20 years ago. I felt that I couldn't just take this as a fact, but wanted to tell others how much she has done for those people who underwent oral and maxillofacial surgeries or simply were born with some defects in this area. For those people in our society who look different and do not fall into "the standards of ethereal beauty".

It began in the 1980s when Christine led a normal family life with three children, a husband and a part-time job until cancer of the face struck her.

She suffered in isolation and eventually had to wear glasses which held in place her artificial eye, cheekbone and palate, basically, half of her face.

But she survived and after the lengthy recovery and, with the help of her friends, she formed a charity "Let's Face It" for those unfortunate people like herself. The Patrons of this charity were HRH Princess Michael of Kent and the late playwright, actress and performer Victoria Wood.

Christine started giving lectures in schools, placed leaflets with contacts of her charity in all surgical hospitals, spoke on TV and radio about "society and facially disfigured people", wrote books but, most importantly, made such people feel that they are not alone in this world to face their traumas and anxieties. People started joining her charity and it swelled very soon...

I came to know about this charity in Atkinson Morley hospital after I had brain surgery and half of my face became paralysed in the 1990. After I recovered, I contacted Christine and became a member. I started receiving quarterly glossy newspapers which covered not only the UK, but members in other countries like Germany, Australia, USA, etc. Most importantly, nearly all newsletters covered the latest medical techniques and snippets from the major events of each member. For example, a woman who let me know about Christine's death, was Eva Cohen who married a member of this charity Barry Cohen.

John and I went to the charity annual meetings, which were always followed by exquisite lunches, their Garden Parties, and fundraising events. The amount of work became enormous for a fragile woman like her (although many people helped in different ways) so the late Julia Wallace was employed and they made a brilliant

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team with Christine. In later years they even moved together to Westgate-on-Sea to continue their work.

Every year during our Annual Meetings, a sculpture of bronze called “Nefertiti”, which was created by one of the artists for this charity, was presented to a member who achieved some goal for themselves or the charity. The statue represented a faceless woman stretching two arms with a mask in each hand. I must admit that I was not worthy to receive this stature.



However, I have done my “promotional bit” during many years, e.g. in every part of the world I wore a T-shirt with the charity logo, wrote a few articles for newsletters, told a number of people about the organisation and put them in touch with Christine.

This article is a bit lengthy, but I do not know how to cover the enormity of Christine’s ambition and her tireless work for this society. Rest in peace, beautiful and courageous Christine, you deserve it!"

<https://www.lets-face-it.org.uk/>

**Natasha Reid**

## Happy Birthday Vaughan and Isaac!

Vaughan and Isaac share a birthday and here are a couple of lovely photos of the KURC birthday boys celebrating together.



**71 / 17 on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2015**



**82 / 28 on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2026**

A useful(?) tip from Nick's (very brief) period of accountancy training: *You're adding up a long column of numbers and you can't get them to balance: if the discrepancy is divisible by 9, it means that you have transposed two adjacent numbers somewhere. This is proved by these photos. The difference between Vaughan's 71 and Isaac's 17, and between Vaughan's 82 and Isaac's 28, is 54 (divisible by 9).*

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## The Church Archives

Over the past few years an 'Archive of the Month' has appeared in each issue of Church News - generally a photo plucked at random from the KURC archives. I suspect quite a few members have no idea where these archives are kept, how extensive they are, and what they comprise.

The archives are housed in a small room leading off the Centre Hall. They occupy 70 feet of shelving. Some items date back over 200 years!

The material falls into the following main categories:

- Every issue of Church News (dating back to 1916), every service paper (from the 1920s to the 1990s), and every yearbook.
- Church meeting minutes going back to 1800
- Minutes of elders/deacons meetings, the Sunday School/YPD, the finance committee, and the building maintenance committee.
- Boxes and scrapbooks of photographs and 'ephemera' (ie cuttings, posters, leaflets) relating to church members and activities
- Reports
- Sound recordings and videos
- Correspondence and plans relating to major building projects, such as the new lift
- A small library of books relevant to our church.

If anyone would like to take a closer look at this treasure trove, have a word with me, and if you have a specific query I will do my very best to answer it.

***John Fisher (Archivist)***



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## Archive of the Month

The church archives are growing all the time. Recently this photo was donated by a former member of the KURC Boys Brigade Company. It shows the Company gathered outside the church, around 1948.





## International Bible Reading Association - [www.ibraglobal.org](http://www.ibraglobal.org)

### Bible Readings for 15 April to 15 June 2026

Wednesday 15 April Mark 14:27-31, 66-72

Thursday 16 April Daniel 4:28-37

Friday 17 April James 4:13-17

Saturday 18 April Galatians 6:12-18

#### **PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (2)**

Sunday 19 April John 7:40-52

Monday 20 April Exodus 1:6-14

Tuesday 21 April Mark 6:1-6

Wednesday 22 April Luke 6:32-36

Thursday 23 April Esther 3:8-14

Friday 24 April James 2:5-10

Saturday 25 April Acts 10:34-48

#### **THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (3)**

##### **1 Help and healing**

Sunday 26 April Matthew 8:28-9:8

Monday 27 April Matthew 9:9-17

Tuesday 28 April Matthew 9:18-34

Wednesday 29 April Matthew 9:35-10:10

Thursday 30 April Matthew 10:11-23

Friday 1 May Matthew 10:24-42

Saturday 2 May Matthew 11:1-19

##### **2 Signs and lessons**

Sunday 3 May Matthew 11:20-30

Monday 4 May Matthew 12:1-21

Tuesday 5 May Matthew 12:22-37

Wednesday 6 May Matthew 12:38-50

Thursday 7 May Matthew 13:1-23

Friday 8 May Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Saturday 9 May Matthew 13:31-35, 44-52

#### **DOUBTS AND FEARS**

##### **1 Doubts**

Sunday 10 May Exodus 4:1-17

Monday 11 May 2 Kings 5:1-19a

Tuesday 12 May Jeremiah 20:7-18

Wednesday 13 May John 20:24-29

Thursday 14 May (Ascension) Acts 9:10-19

Friday 15 May Acts 11:1-18

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Saturday 16 May	James 1:1-7
<b>2 Fears</b>	
Sunday 17 May	Genesis 12:10-20
Monday 18 May	Genesis 32:3-21
Tuesday 19 May	Exodus 14:10-14
Wednesday 20 May	Mark 4:35-41
Thursday 21 May	John 18:15-18, 25-27
Friday 22 May	Mark 14:32-42
Saturday 23 May	1 John 4:16b-21

**GRACE (2)****1 God's gracious gifts**

Sunday 24 May (Pentecost)	Titus 3:3-8
Monday 25 May	1 Corinthians 12:4-7
Tuesday 26 May	John 1:9-17
Wednesday 27 May	Ephesians 1:3-10
Thursday 28 May	Mark 5:25-34
Friday 29 May	Ephesians 2:4-10
Saturday 30 May	2 Corinthians 5:17-21

**2 Receiving and giving**

Sunday 31 May	2 Corinthians 3:7-18
Monday 1 June	1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Tuesday 2 June	Colossians 1:3-12
Wednesday 3 June	2 Corinthians 9:1-7
Thursday 4 June	2 Samuel 9:1-7
Friday 5 June	Luke 6:27-31
Saturday 6 June	2 Peter 1:3-8

**READINGS IN ISAIAH Chapters 1-39 (1)****1 Rescued from judgment**

Sunday 7 June	Isaiah 1:10-20
Monday 8 June	Isaiah 2:6-18
Tuesday 9 June	Isaiah 3:1-15
Wednesday 10 June	Isaiah 4:2-6
Thursday 11 June	Isaiah 5:1-7
Friday 12 June	Isaiah 6:1-13
Saturday 13 June	Isaiah 9:1-7

**2 The trumpet sounds**

Sunday 14 June	Isaiah 10:1-4
Monday 15 June	Isaiah 11:1-10

## Kingston United Reformed Church – Information

### Ministers:

Rev Lesley M Charlton, tel: 020 8399 4423 e-mail: [minister@kingstonurc.org](mailto:minister@kingstonurc.org)

Rev Dr Suk In Lee, tel: 020 8949 2070 e-mail: [sukin.lee@kingstonurc.org](mailto:sukin.lee@kingstonurc.org)

Rev Carol Clack, tel: 07495 746131 e-mail: [carol.clack@kingstonurc.org](mailto:carol.clack@kingstonurc.org)

### Church Secretary:

Cathy Seymour, mobile: 07775 615126 e-mail: [chsec@kingstonurc.org](mailto:chsec@kingstonurc.org)

### Treasurer:

Christine Chippendale, mobile: 07738 562457 e-mail: [treasurer@kingstonurc.org](mailto:treasurer@kingstonurc.org)

### Children, Youth & Families Worker:

Sally Butler, mobile: 07807 348326 e-mail: [youth@kingstonurc.org](mailto:youth@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): [premises@urckingston.org.uk](mailto:premises@urckingston.org.uk)

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

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## CHURCH NEWS is published bi-monthly

Submissions for the June/July issue should be e-mailed by 1 June to:

[churchnews@kingstonurc.org](mailto:churchnews@kingstonurc.org)

### 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](http://www.kingstonurc.org). You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

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