



**DOWNING PLACE  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
CAMBRIDGE**

# **PLACE MATTERS**



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*Cover photograph by Jess Uden*

## FROM THE MINISTER

Looking back, I realise that, amongst many other people, there is one older colleague who taught me some vital lessons when I was wet behind the ministerial ears. He was avuncular, wise, and a fine wordsmith. I learned much from him in the two periods we worked together during the eighties, and then again in the nineties.

Soon after I was ordained, the two churches we served wondered whether to unite - yes, I have form; 2018 wasn't the first time. We were struggling with the inevitable issues that arose, not least because they faced what we in Cambridge did not: choosing which building to use. When the temperature was high, it was easy to meet people's opposition and angst by resorting to constitutions and the United Reformed Church's *Manual*. But the Paul to whom I was Timothy used frequently to say, "Ah, dear boy, it's grace not law." Thus inspired by the epistle to the Romans, we slowly but surely navigated the choppy waters, gradually reaching a calmer sea of consensus.

I recognise that for me 'grace not law' has been a watchword ever since. Frequently it has been as if, his hand on my shoulder, my colleague was murmuring "Dear boy ...". And I would pause to think again. It has served me irreplaceably amidst South Africa's *apartheid*, Blackpool's homeless, a Synod's deployment challenges, exploring inclusivity, various trusteeships, church unions, and in innumerable one-to-one pastoral encounters.

Grace, which is rooted in the pattern of Christ and the influence of the Spirit, essentially treats 'the other' not as their behaviour earns but as their humanity deserves. Grace seeks the common good, not just mine. Grace offers the second chance, repeatedly. Grace hears Jesus say, "let the one who is without sin cast the first stone" Grace gets F. W. Faber's point that "the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind".

'Grace not law' isn't a rejection of law. Law exists to give order and consistency, so that societies hold together. But law is not the only life-giving word. Often, as law is adopted, there needs to be a gracious approach which opens us to its potential for ensuring justice and stability. I have discovered that it is as if law provides the foundation, and grace enables the edifice to be built upon it. It's about law with grace.

The essential difference between the two is that law is a human construct, even when inspired and informed by the tenets of Scripture. It's well intentioned, and frequently wise, but only as valuable as the combination of human skills and limitations that framed it. Grace, on the other hand, is God's work, which is

lavished upon us. As the eighteenth-century Scottish theologian, James Fraser of Brae, has it, “faith is not a giving but a receiving grace.” It is what we are offered through Christ’s living, dying, and being raised. That’s why I treasure grace as that merciful love which aspires not to write off the failure, not to condemn the flawed, not to belittle or judge the different, but always to seek a new beginning, another road, a changed approach. And that is what rescues law from legalism, enabling it to fulfil its potential.

So we are bidden to establish grace at the centre of our lives: grace where we live, where we work, where we play; grace both as we govern and in our citizenship; grace both as we lead and as we follow; grace both as we serve and as we are served; grace in our system of criminal justice, so that those who need to be in jail are offered rehabilitation not retribution; and grace in our international relations, which favours jaw-jaw over war-war.

Logically, therefore, grace is also to be a defining feature of the Church. Quite apart from the laws that Jesus came to fulfil, increasingly, there are secular laws by which the Church lives – charitable compliance, copyright, employment, health and safety, safeguarding, to name but a few - and they achieve their intention as we embrace them with grace. How appreciative we are of those from our number at Downing Place Church who enable us to do so; thank you to each of them.

‘Grace not law’ - I realise how grateful I am for that colleague from all those years ago. He has influenced so much ever since. He died just six months ago, having lived what he preached. May we live it, too.

*Nigel Uden*



**FROM FREDA BRADBURY**

I would like to thank you for all the cards and kind messages which I received after falling over and breaking my hip. They have cheered and comforted me a great deal. It was not my plan to finish 2023 in that way as it has complicated my life and ability to go and spend time with Jim in Cambridge Manor. It appears to be a slow process to learn to walk properly again but I am happy to report that I am progressing and hope to join in worship in person in the not too distant future. In the meantime I find the live streaming of the service wonderful. Thanks for that too. May I wish you all a calmer year for 2024 than 2023 has been and may Downing Place flourish in spreading hope in Cambridge through Jesus whom God sent into the world and we have been remembering this particularly over Christmas and New Year.

## JENNY AND MALCOLM MASSEY - A PROFILE

*Jenny writes:* I was born and brought up in Liverpool, and from a very young age I was sent along to the Sunday school at the local Congregational church where my grandfather was a deacon. It was a very active church with wonderful youth leaders who had a lasting influence on me. Dr Stephen Mayor became the minister there when I was 11 years old and it was so nice to meet up with him when I joined Emmanuel. I was impressed that he remembered me after so many years!

I went off to Matlock College of Education in 1965, and met Malcolm the following year at a college dance - dancing is something we have enjoyed all our lives. We started teaching in 1968, Malcolm at Stockton Heath Primary school, in the stockbroker belt outside Warrington and I did my probationary year at Gwladys Street Primary School, right next door to Everton's football ground.

We married in August 1969 and moved to a little cottage outside Warrington. I needed a new job, and with the help of Malcolm's brother, who had connections in Warrington, I was given a post in an inner-city Catholic Primary School. It was a bit of a culture shock as the Head was a nun, and there were three priests attached to the school who used to come in every week to take assembly. However it was a very useful experience and helped prepare me for the next stage in our life.

When we had been teaching for two and a half years, we were accepted to do Voluntary Service Overseas. In September 1971 we were sent out to Papua New Guinea to a college to train New Guineans to be primary teachers. It was run by the Sisters of Mercy and Christian Brothers, who were mainly Australian, and was connected to the Catholic Mission in the nearby town of Wewak. As well as British volunteers, there were Dutch, German and American volunteers. They ran training workshops for mechanics, plumbers and carpenters, so were very hands-on and helpful, not only to the locals but to the priests working out in the bush.

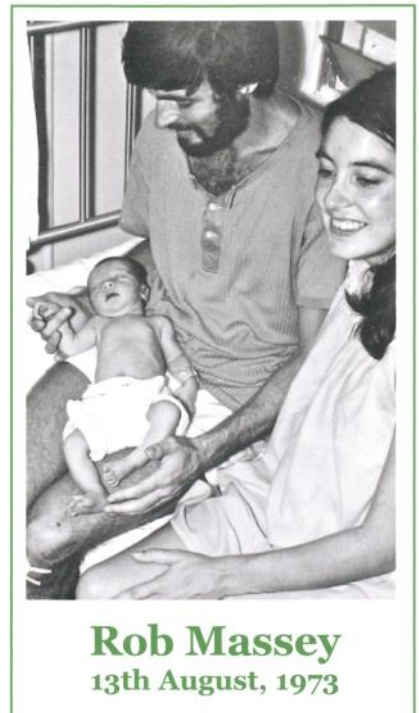
I was lecturing in Science and Malcolm lectured in English and P.E. and we had to follow a strict Australian curriculum. This meant we had to give demonstration lessons in the on-site primary school while our students stood around the outside of the classroom watching through the windows. That was always rather nerve wracking! During term-time we lived on campus in a new three bedroomed bungalow which was built on stilts. This was mainly to keep it clear of snakes, termites and other invaders.

During the long Christmas holiday however, we were sent out to the bush to stay with an English priest, Father Davitt, to find out how and where our students

were living. This was a revelation: they came from very poor village homes, sleeping on a board on the floor and cooking over an open fire. Father Davitt took us around the Sepik region visiting other priests who were mainly German or Dutch. We were able to drive to some of them in his Toyota Landcruiser, at least part of the way. Others could only be reached by canoe or small plane. They really were out in the bush often on their own, so they were usually very happy to see us. It was amazing to see the wonderful local art works, carvings and basket work in such remote places.

During 1972 we became friendly with a young German priest who lived in a very remote area. The Oil Company had bulldozed a 'road' to his mission station, so he invited us to go and visit him on our motor bike. It was quite a journey as we had no idea how far it was, and neither did any of the locals we asked along the way. Needless to say, we were very pleased to see Father Waldi waiting for us along the track. The second time we visited him we went by mission plane, a small Cessna. While we were there, he took us to visit another mission station which was a six- hour walk away. Unfortunately, I became quite ill, and because of the risk of dehydration I was flown back to the hospital in Wewak. It turned out I was suffering from morning sickness. Fortunately, the rest of the pregnancy went smoothly, and Robert was born 13<sup>th</sup> August 1973, much to the delight of the nuns.

We returned to England in time for Christmas that year, and lived with my parents in Liverpool until we managed to buy a house. Malcolm had been given a job at a tough inner-city primary school as soon as he applied to the council, but he enjoyed the challenge. March 1976 saw the birth of our second son, and Malcolm started applying round the country for headships, expecting it to take some time before he was successful. The first interview he had was at Hauxton Primary school, and he was very surprised when he was offered the job. The thought of leaving my family with a new baby was difficult for me, but they were very supportive. In September they helped us move into a house in Stapleford that Malcolm and I had found during the May half-term.



Three years later we moved to an older house in Barton that had a larger garden, where we were able to expand our collection of animals. I started a part-time post at Barton C of E primary school. The post grew over the years, and I gave up the part-time lectureship in Biology at CCAT (Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology) that I had started in 1978. While attending Barton Baptist Chapel we became friendly with a local farmer, who had bought a pony for his daughter. She wasn't riding it very much so I offered to exercise it for them, as I had ridden while at college. This led to our boys becoming involved, and we eventually bought two ponies of our own. We then decided we would rather have stables of our own, and in 1987 we moved to a very basic bungalow in Caldecote which had 2 acres. This was just before property prices started to soar, and because we sold a small piece of land along with our next-door neighbour, we were able to rebuild the bungalow much sooner than we had expected. Our sons joined the Pony Club and were soon competing in the tetrathlon team, where they had a lot of success at National level. Robert decided he wanted a career with horses so went off into racing where he became a successful jump jockey, particularly in America where he is now based. Peter went off to Nottingham University to study Plant Life science, and eventually became a Climbing Arborist which has been very helpful for maintaining our land.

After seven years at the small rural primary school, Malcolm was appointed to the Headship of a large city school in Cambridge, where he worked for 14 years before training to become one of the first OFSTED inspectors. The training took 6 months and each inspection lasted 4 days with a full team, so quite different to the present system.



*The Massey Family in 2019*



When our sons left home we were left with two very capable horses, so we decided it was time for us to ride more. We joined training sessions, and Malcolm enjoyed participating in Cross Country competitions while I was a 'Happy Hacker' and preferred endurance competitions. Because we were so fit we decided to take our first riding holiday - a trail ride in Utah, which visited Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park and went to the edge of the Grand Canyon. We were hooked! Since then we have ridden in Botswana, France, Bulgaria, Morocco, Spain and the Azores, where unfortunately the horse I was riding fell, causing me to break my collar bone.



*Riding in Utah*

Like many people, over the last few years we have had a variety of health problems which have sadly resulted in limiting our travel opportunities, especially as both sons live abroad, Robert in America and Peter in Norway, but we have very happy memories of the lovely places we have been to and the wonderful people we have met along the way.



*Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary*

## OUR RECENT JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS WITH THE YOUNGER GROUP

In this article we would like to share with you an impression of the activities we have been doing together with our younger children since the previous edition of *Place Matters*.

During the last session in November, we reflected on the parable of the sheep and goats. We spoke about the differences between sheep and goats and then listened to the Bible passage where Jesus explained that the sheep stand for people who help others, whoever they are and even without realizing it really, and that this is the same as helping Jesus himself. The goats stand for people who are more focussed on themselves and don't help others. Whilst the younger children started crafting different types of sheep, the older children crafted a goat and a sheep and added actions from the parable to each of the animals.

The first Sunday in December, we focussed on Advent with four words as prompts: Hope, Waiting, True Meaning and Preparing. In fact Sioned, in her spoken piece before lighting the first candle in church, had actually mentioned at least two of these words already. At the beginning we all sat round in a circle and spent some time talking about what was special about this Sunday, lighting the candle, the season, expectations, responses, preparedness etc. It transpires that of the nine people in the room, about five had birthdays in December (a side issue arising from 'presents'). The 'preparedness' theme got onto decorations and we then did a craft activity with the children making decorations of their choice, chains, snowflakes, holly pictures.

On Sunday 10th December, the Junior Church learnt about John the Baptist and how he was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus. We learnt that he lived in the desert, wore a coat of camel hair, had a belt, and ate wild honey. The children had lots of fun dressing up in a similar style to John the Baptist. We learnt that he baptised people, telling them that when they said sorry for things they had done, that God would forgive them. Remembering that his words and actions help us see the whole picture of Jesus, we went on to play a game of piecing together a jigsaw puzzle of John the Baptist – where the pieces of the puzzle were hidden all around the room. All the children worked together really well to complete the puzzle. Just like John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus, we prepare ourselves for Christmas during Advent. Having made a list of all the things that we tend to do before Christmas (write Christmas cards, practice our lines for the school Nativity, visit friends and family – some even help their parents clean and tidy the house!), we realised that many of us really enjoyed decorating Christmas trees at home. So we had to have a go at making Christmas decorations –

involving lots of sticking and painting.

The Sunday before Christmas, we enjoyed watching the Christmas story as shown in *The Beginners Bible* on the screen. We saw how Joseph and Mary walked to Bethlehem for a long time, and finally arrived, but it was so busy that there was only a place to sleep in a stable. We saw how the angels appeared to the shepherds, telling them about the birth of Jesus, which made them go to the stable to find Jesus. We watched how the three magi noticed a special star and went to the palace to find the new-born king. We saw how the king reacted to the news of a new-born king, and were glad that the magi found baby Jesus in Bethlehem and could offer their gifts. We then had a go at making our own special star by folding pieces of thin paper.



On the Sunday after Christmas our families were all away visiting friends and family or had the Downing Place cold.

On the first Sunday in January we shared Epiphany 'gifts' with Nigel. We told each other about our Christmas experiences. Unwrapping presents is a favourite! Wrapping them is fun too. We then heard how baby Jesus had been brought by his parents to the Temple in Jerusalem. We sang the Rocking Carol. Simeon and Anna had recognised that Jesus was special and had thanked and praised God. The congregation had been given little calendars to help remind them that Jesus is with them every day. We decorated our calendars. It was Xavier's birthday the next day!



On Sunday 14th January we had a happy morning in Junior Church, welcoming back Ailsa to play the keyboard for us as we sang a few of our familiar songs. Eight of our younger children joined together to explore the story from 1 Samuel 3 v1-10, telling of the Lord's call to the young Samuel, during the night. We talked about the importance of our names and played a guessing game as we tried to identify who was calling our name when we could only hear their voice. We split into two groups to discuss how and when God might call people today, recognising that we had to be ready to listen at all times, not just during prayer. The children



then enjoyed making simple visual aids reminding us of Samuel's response to God when he said "Speak Lord! Your servant is listening."

*Elza de Bruin, Lorraine Thornton and Daphne Thomas, with thanks to all the leaders and helpers for their contributions.*



Downing Place is organising the Cambridge service for the  
**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER AT ST PAUL'S HILLS ROAD  
AT 10.30AM ON FRIDAY 1ST MARCH.**

There are several bus routes from the city centre which go past St Paul's and this church has been chosen as it has a deep commitment to Palestine through the work of the Amos Trust.

Please put the date in your diaries and give your utmost support to this as it is the Women of Palestine who have written the liturgy.

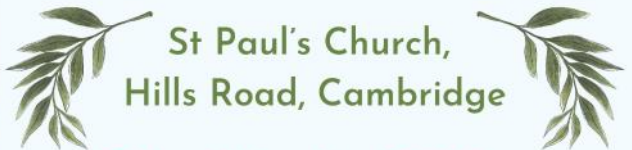
The service will be followed by Palestinian sweet and savoury delights and tea and coffee and an opportunity to gift aid a donation to the work of the World Day of Prayer.

A small ecumenical group has been meeting to plan this service. If you are interested in helping in any way please contact Deborah McVey on C.410332 or [deborahmcv@aol.com](mailto:deborahmcv@aol.com)



## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024

*'I beg you, bear with one another in love.'*



St Paul's Church,  
Hills Road, Cambridge

Friday 1 March at 10.30am

All are welcome!

Service written by the Women of Palestine  
Refreshments available afterwards

[www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk)

## SYNOD DAY AT DOWNING PLACE URC: MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> 2024

*The Downing Place Church Secretary writes:*

You may have seen the notice in the December/January Place Matters about the Synod Day next month, on March 9th

The United Reformed Church is organised into thirteen geographical areas - the national Synods of Scotland and Wales, together with eleven regional Synods across England. Each Synod provides oversight of about 100 local churches and is led by a team including the Synod Moderator. Downing Place Church is part of the Eastern Synod, with Moderator the Revd. Lythan Nevard, and Clerk, the Revd. Dave Coaker. Another member of that team is the Revd. Jo Clare-Young, the Synod's Mission and Training Officer. Twice a year, for the conduct of business, for sharing of information and for worship, representatives of all the churches meet together, alongside that Synod team - staff and volunteers. Downing Place Church is hosting that meeting on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March this year.

There will be many people arriving from all over the Eastern Synod and we do need your help, please.

We need:

- Welcomers on the door from 9.30am until around 10.45am.
- People in the Hub at the same time to direct folk around the building.
- People to serve refreshments in the Hub from 9.30am until 10.30am, and at the end of the meeting from about 4.00pm
- People to join Liz Barrow in the kitchen, to help prepare and serve soup at lunchtime.
- Faith Paulding needs a helper in Elaine's office for half an hour at lunchtime to issue expenses.
- Contributions of cake for the end of the day.
- Help to clear up at the end of the day, from about 4.30pm.
- Such other things as occur to us!

If you can offer a couple of hours or more, this would be appreciated. The more people helping, the better the welcome will be.

There will be a list in the office to sign up for your availability from Sunday 11th February, but you could also let me know if and when you're available, so that I can keep a tally of where the gaps are.

Thank you,

*Pippa Jones*

## DOWNING PLACE URC ELDERS' 'AWAY DAY' AT FULBOURN URC

*In the previous issue of Place Matters, Pippa Jones reported that the Downing Place Elders had met at Fulbourn URC on November 18<sup>th</sup>, to consider the theme of 'Discipleship'. Sheila Porrer has now sent us the following account of that day.*

### **Focus on Discipleship**

Twelve Elders met with Nigel in November to explore the idea of discipleship. We were welcomed into the graceful Church at Fulbourn to enjoy coffee and biscuits before our opening session.

For our **opening devotions** Jane used material from two recent online URC Daily Devotions on the ways Jesus had called the first disciples.

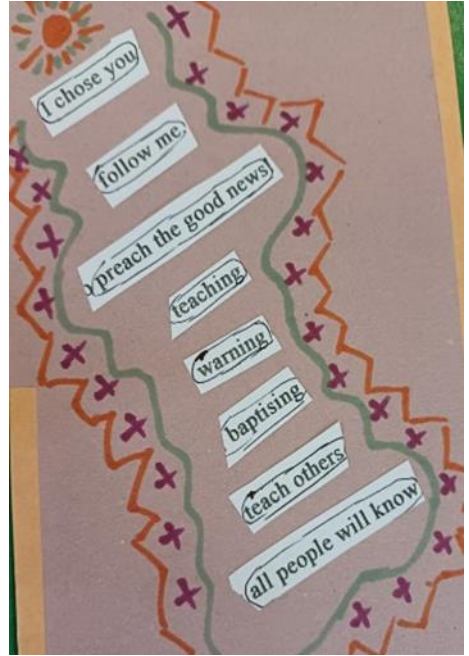
Pippa introduced a **prayer of St. Teresa of Avila**:

*Christ has no body but **yours**,  
No hands, no feet on earth but **yours**,  
**Yours** are the eyes with which He looks  
Compassion on this world,  
**Yours** are the feet with which He walks to do good,  
**Yours** are the hands, with which He blesses all the world,  
**Yours** are the hands, **yours** are the feet,  
**Yours** are the eyes, **you** are His body.  
Christ has no body now but **yours**,  
No hands, no feet on earth but **yours**,  
**Yours** are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but **yours**.*

Alison led a session of **Blackout/Cut-out poetry**. We sat in a circle around a table loaded with pens, markers, scissors, glue, sheets of paper, and washi tape. The session began with a brief exploration of some examples of blackout poetry, otherwise known as 'erasure poetry' or 'cut-out poetry'. For those with a fear of the blank page, anxiety around not knowing where to start was allayed by the fact that blackout poetry begins with a full page of text. The creative task is to strip some of the text away so as to put the spotlight on particular words and phrases, which, when placed in new relationships with one another, form poetry.

Each of us was given a sheet of paper with seven short New Testament passages about discipleship. We were invited to read the passages, paying attention to which words and phrases particularly spoke to us that morning. Our challenge was then to create our own poems using words and phrases from the text, either

by blacking out the rest of the text, or by cutting out the words and phrases we had chosen, which could then be placed on a new page in any order, in any position, to reflect how the texts spoke to us about discipleship.



The result was a series of completely different creations, some decorative, some plain, some with just a few words, some with many, some organised and some haphazard, but all with a message – the words ‘love’, ‘grace’, ‘fruit’ were among the most frequent. We placed these poems on the central table to provide a focal point for the rest of the day, and the poems also sparked conversations amongst the group over the break. It was fascinating to see how we had all started with the same page of text, but each of us had created something different from it.

After a short break for coffee, etc. Jane invited us to consider ourselves as a **Human Library**. A dozen books on the table, from street plans to novels, children’s classics to history. We were asked to choose a book which attracted us and try to work out why – was it the cover, the title, the nostalgia, the familiarity or the novelty? Or something else? Did this throw light on the sort of book we might imagine ourselves to be? We discussed this in pairs.

Jane said that it takes many books of all genres and times to make a library, just as it takes many parts to make a body. She introduced the idea of our eldership, our congregation and our visitors being a Human Library. This all served to emphasise that as a group we all had different strengths and skills to go on to our ‘Elders’ shelf’.

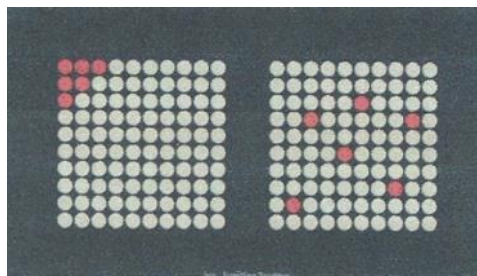
The books stayed on the table for us to look at and remind ourselves what we, or others, found attractive about them.



For lunch we shared food we had brought. A generous mixture of home-cooked and bought food appeared, with enough for everyone and plenty over to use for ourselves or those we knew would be grateful.

To begin the afternoon session, Nigel read an **inspirational story** with an example of discipleship in South Africa. Pippa read Teresa of Avila's prayer again, but this time 'yours', 'you' had become 'mine' and 'I'. She spoke about **'this time tomorrow'** or 'TTT' – we were asked to think about what we would be doing "this time tomorrow", or rather on Monday, who we would be seeing, where we would find ourselves, and identify any opportunity for being a disciple.

Alison then introduced the idea of **'frontlines'** – everyone has a series of frontlines, spheres where we are active in our daily lives Monday to Saturday, each sphere putting us with different people. On a Sunday we are clustered together in Church, in the week we are spread out through the community where we may be able to be disciples.





We are not asked to evangelise in any strident way – Alison suggested we consider ‘one degree’ shifts. One degree is a tiny fraction of a full 360 degree rotation, but it could be a significant beginning. Alison gave one example – in sending a message of sympathy to a friend whose mother was unwell, instead of a smile or thumbs up emoji, she began to send praying hands, and this introduced the idea of support through prayer. A tiny change of emoji had opened up a fruitful dialogue.

As a follow-up, we all filled in a sheet with a note of our own frontlines and those of our Elders’ groups, said what we thought God might be doing in those places, and how a one degree shift might work there.

An unstructured but fruitful **discussion** followed when we shared our experience of being an Elder, tips and ideas which had worked for us, the difficult situations we might have to face.

As the afternoon moved towards evening we spent a quarter of an hour sitting quietly on our own, reflecting on what we had experienced, how our thoughts about discipleship had matured, perhaps fixing our thoughts on what we could see inside or outside the Church. Then to the background of Gerald Finzi’s *Eclogue* we shared our thoughts in a ‘word drop’.

This moment of quietness led naturally into a **celebration of communion** led by David Tatem. We remembered that we were in a long tradition of remembering and discussion, stretching back to the first disciples. We had brought our cups to receive the wine, and we exchanged our own cup with our neighbour’s, as an expression of the sharing of peace and reinforcing our sense of community. We said Teresa of Avila’s prayer together, but this final time the ‘yours’ and ‘you’, ‘mine’ and ‘I’ had become ‘ours’ and ‘we’.

### **What had we taken away from our away day?**

A **stronger fellowship** within our Eldership, brought out in a way which is impossible within the busy Agenda of the Elders’ meeting.

An enhanced sense of **what it means to be an Elder** and how discipleship fits in to our Eldership.

A deeper understanding of **discipleship in our Church and our world** and how we might try to achieve it.

*Sheila Porrer*  
*December 2023*

## FROM OUR ECUMENICAL CORRESPONDENT

### I : The Church of England

*Following the 'trailer' in the previous issue of Place Matters (p.11), we now have the first episode of Augur Pearce's series on the diversity of Christian groups and practices in the UK, and in Cambridge.*

Many of us know Great St Mary's, Cambridge's largest place of worship, linking town and gown between Market Hill and Senate House Lawn on a site used for worship since Æthelred II's reign. It's not amongst the churches I visit regularly: I know it chiefly from Remembrance Sunday and University Sermons, since it hosts military and civic occasions as well as being the University's first corporate home. But it is also a parish church, albeit a splendid one, with a varied ministry to different groups, and a good place to find choral evensong in University vacations. The last time I was there I was representing Downing Place, offering good wishes at the Institution of its current Vicar.



Beginning this quarterly 'column' on Christian diversity, Great St Mary's – 'GSM' - illustrates many aspects that distinguish the Church of England, beside fundamentals common to wider Christianity. Though those fundamentals became clear in the 1st century AD, the Church of England goes further. It displays the episcopal character of the 2nd century, the territorial assumptions of the 4th, and retains much from the mediaeval West, though modified at its 16th century Reformation. Between the 17th and 19th centuries it established an overseas presence: the attempt to maintain a relationship with churches springing from that history affects how it develops today.

The Church of England is comparatively varied: encountering a new parish church, one is never certain what to expect. Contrasting reactions to the Enlightenment produced its wide spectrum of worship and preaching styles, from the 'bells and smells' of Anglo-Catholicism (for comment in a later episode) to those large modern congregations where the idiom of worship is contemporary and imaginative and stress is laid on obedience to a literal Biblical message, personal salvation through faith and mission to the unbeliever. GSM

stands slightly ‘high’ of the mid-point of this spectrum.

The Vicar’s Institution I attended was conducted by the acting Bishop of Ely, a reminder that parishes and congregations are ‘set under authority’. By the late 1st century, Christianity’s government and united witness were becoming important issues. In many of the local churches guided by elders, a single elder was emerging as the leader. During the 2nd century these ‘bishops’ became the norm and formed a network around the Mediterranean. Their oversight of the Christian community, with ‘orders’ of priests and deacons admitted by them and certain functions reserved to each order, became a European commonplace from which the Church of England never departed.

At the crucial moment of the 16th century, England’s monarchs were able to secure a bench of sympathetic bishops, whilst the Continent’s Reformers and reforming princes, finding bishops an obstacle to their programme and questioning their bolder claims, considered it easier to dispense with them altogether. Those claims were invoked in England by the 19th century Oxford Movement, and the 20th century saw a major renaissance of episcopal authority. Many decisions in today’s General Synod require the bishops’ agreement, and parish clergy are subject to deployment and direction as never before.

In calling the Church of England ‘territorial’ I think of how a persecuted minority creed became the Roman Empire’s official religion, and the mindset to which that gave rise. An edict of 379 required all the Emperors’ subjects to profess Christianity according to the Nicene Creed or risk penalties. From this stemmed the belief that an entire political unit could be considered Christian. At that date, the Roman provinces of Britain were still extant. The faith had come here along the Empire’s legionary and trade routes; and though paganism would soon dominate the early English kingdoms, Rome itself preserved that notion of a Christian territory. Thus when a mission from there arrived, two hundred years on, to re-convert the English, it brought that understanding with it. The 7th century saw one Anglo-Saxon ruler after another accept the faith and modify his kingdom’s laws, and the seeds of the concept of a ‘Christian England’ were sown.

Two leading scholars of England’s Reformation era, Cranmer and Hooker, saw such ‘conversion’ as fusing Christian and political communities into one. In that spirit the law of the land regulates the Church of England’s life, and its reach is not limited to a finite ‘membership’. Its senior clergy in parliament – and the rights we all share in parish churches – testify to a national character unique amongst England’s religious groups. This makes it, in a way, extremely inclusive: universal rights have remained, though the more contentious universal duties (paying tithes, subjection to archdeacons’ discipline, proving wills in church

courts) have largely gone. People of all faiths and none can – and do – listen to GSM's superb choir.

The very name 'Church of England', and its presence in mediaeval buildings such as GSM, witness to the notion (though you won't hear it from Church of England worshippers today) that this was – both before the Reformation and after – England's *only* church. That made it only natural that Cambridge University's founders should set up shop where they did, and that major events of community significance still happen there. That is why the worship of every college chapel built before 1850 is, by default, Church of England.

But, worshipping in GSM, those with eyes to see perceive the longer tracks of Christian history. Reciting the ancient Creeds, one remembers how councils of early and mediaeval bishops – and Rome's bishop in particular – sought to define more precisely the beliefs and rules of Christianity. The pendulum swing of those times is recalled by the plaque on the south of GSM's chancel floor over the re-interred ashes of Martin Bucer, the Strassburg Reformer whose remains had been exhumed during the religious reaction under Mary I and burned as those of a heretic.

Many Church of England churches value the 'beauty of holiness'. Much of the ornamentation earlier worshippers gave their churches survives at GSM. Though some colourful popular devotions were jettisoned in the 16th century's cross-currents, much was retained. Though monks disappeared, Cranmer's Prayer Book drew freely on their daily offices, and cathedral choirs preserved their musical tradition, which later spread back into parish life. Though the 1551 order for the Lord's Supper showed agreement with Switzerland's Reformed churches, generally England experienced a milder change more reminiscent of Lutheranism. Infants were still regularly baptised; and though doctrinal Articles for the clergy owed much to Continental Reformers and a simplified calendar of feasts and fasts accompanied an English liturgy, official worship kept some modest ritual.

Recent centuries saw this enhanced in many parishes, though not without argument: the 'faint-hearted candles' admired in Tim Rowland's *Place Matters* poem (November, p.23) would once have sparked bitter litigation. Though GSM's worshippers still kneel, clergy still robe, and readings are still drawn from the Apocrypha, care was taken to explain what these did and did not signify. Dissenters, of course, felt too much ritual had survived; others, from the 19th century, sought to restore more. But those are other stories!

*Angur Pearce*

## SMALL RITUALS

*Jane Bower writes:*

I am always interested to hear of people's particular rituals – those small annual actions or observances which have grown from some event in the past, or have always been in the family. Some of these should rightly remain unique and unshared. Others could be of help or interest to a wider range of people.

Some years ago, I started feeling that the idea of 'giving something up' for Lent was not really how I wanted to observe it. I preferred the idea of a positive action rather than a negative one. I liked the idea of a 'Lenten discipline' - bothering to do something I might not normally bother to do. Perhaps this in itself is a form of 'giving up' something – giving up time, or setting some aside purposely, to focus my mind.

Two of the pieces of music which have most marked and influenced my life are J.S.Bach's St. John and St. Matthew Passions. I own recordings of both and treasure them – but realised that I rarely play them. They are very long; they are disturbing and nostalgic – and in parts so painfully beautiful that they are sometimes easier to avoid than face.

I decided to add up the individual sections of both and divide them by the forty days of Lent. Depending on which version you use, there are around 120 tracks in total, which is three tracks per day.

And so my Lent ritual evolved. I always sit in the same chair, light a candle, and begin with the St. John, moving to the St. Matthew after the St. John tracks have all been played. As I listen to each day's three tracks, I follow the words, given in the accompanying booklet, in German, Latin, French and English. There it is – the staggering, stunning story, told to reach people of past and present, near and far.

I shall be starting this year on Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, the first day of Lent. The tracks will take me to March 28<sup>th</sup>.

I began a new ritual in Advent 2023, having seen an idea posted on the Downing Place Facebook page, where it was pointed out that there are 24 days on an Advent calendar, and 24 chapters in Luke's gospel. I lit my candle and read one chapter per day from December 1<sup>st</sup>, fascinated to find how a) it gave a sustained, overall picture of Christ's life and ministry, and b) how many passages we almost never hear or come across in church services.

When discussing these idea with Tim and Judy Rowland prior to writing this article, our talk led to 'What do you think about/focus on while communion is

being served – a) to you, b) to others?’ and ‘What words do you like said to you when you are served?’

Small rituals – but they can have a big impact. If you have any thoughts you would like to share on this topic, we’d love to hear them.

*Editor.* Yes, we would! If you’re willing to share some practice, some ritual, some ‘habit’ that has enabled you mark, or observe, some season of the Christian year, or some particular life-episode, please get in touch with Jane or Tim. We might be able to compile something for a future *Place Matters* issue – anonymous, if you wish.



## ASH WEDNESDAY

14<sup>th</sup> February 2024

7.30pm

**Holy Communion  
with  
Imposition of Ashes**

*Cambridge Voices*  
sing

*Mass for Double Choir* by Mendelssohn  
and *Miserere* by Gesualdo

Preacher  
The Revd Nigel Uden

## TIME FOR GOD – MESSAGES FROM FRIENDS

Time for God is an international volunteering charity, working in partnership with Churches and Christian organisations for all traditions across the world <https://www.timeforgod.org/> Before the union of Emmanuel URC and St Columba's URC, to become Downing Place United Reformed Church, Time for God (TFG) volunteers played a large role in the life of Emmanuel URC. Each September from 2000 to 2018, a volunteer was welcomed to live and work in the community for twelve months. Lives were changed and faith enriched – both for volunteers and congregation. Last September we welcomed our first TFG volunteer, Jona, to Downing Place URC.

### Time for God News

On Christmas Eve, greetings were sent from Downing Place to former Time for God workers. They were alerted to being able to see and hear Maureen Kendall online, reading the lessons in the final Advent service. Many of them have fond memories of Christmas in Cambridge. Some have responded with up-to-date news. Here's what they are doing now.

Michael is now back at Uni in Oldenburg. He has joined the university Jazz choir. He has had a political education trip to Berlin and continues to meet some of the group.

Sarah has started working in a grammar school in Mannheim. She wishes us a year of joy, health and peace.

Melody, in South Korea, is teaching adults working with people with learning difficulties. Her two boys are growing fast.

Barbara has completed her finals and is qualified as a pharmacist. She is celebrating by touring East Asia for three months.

Carina had a happy family Christmas in Buxtehude. She has exams at the end of February at Uni in Rostock. After her finals this summer she hopes to do a masters in teaching people with special needs. Carina plans to visit Cambridge at the end of March.

Clémence has a flat near Paris, and has started a group for 16-20yr olds at her church <https://templeusaintesprit.fr/>

*With thanks to Rosemary Johnston*

## LENT & HOLY WEEK AT DOWNING PLACE

### ASH WEDNESDAY

14<sup>th</sup> February 2024

7.30pm

Holy Communion  
with the Imposition of Ashes

Cambridge Voices sing  
*Miserere* by Gesualdo  
and Mass for Double Choir by Mendelssohn

### HOLY WEEK

starting 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024

For the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday of Holy Week.  
we will again offer recorded services on the Downing Place Church YouTube  
channel.

They will be available for the previous evening,  
and can be accessed at any time to suit the viewers own timetable.

To mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its composition  
and the premier in St Nicholas' Church, Leipzig,  
in April 1724

these services will be inspired by the chorales in  
the St John Passion, BWV 245  
of Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750.

Other Holy Week Services will include

Palm Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March

11.00am Reading of the Passion Narrative

Maundy Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

11.00am Holy Communion

7.30pm Holy Communion with Tenebrae at Fulbourn URC

Good Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March

10.15am Free Churches' United Service at Downing Place Church  
Preacher: The Revd Rose Westwood of Wesley Methodist  
Church

11.30am Ecumenical Act of Witness in the Market Square

2.00pm At the Foot of the Cross – Fulbourn URC



Holy Saturday 30th March

4pm

*Cambridge Voices* present Music for Holy Week

Easter Day, 31<sup>st</sup> March

11.00am

Holy Communion



## HOUSE GROUPS/BIBLE STUDY GROUPS FOR LENT

Starting in the week beginning Monday 19th February, groups will follow chapters 15-19 of Mark's Gospel

There will be a Monday afternoon group at the home of Elizabeth Whitehorn from 2.00-3.30pm

And there will be an evening group, most likely on Tuesday evenings, on Zoom from 7.30-9.00pm

Five meetings, finishing in the week before Holy Week.

Further details on the weekly noticesheets.



## LECTIO DIVINA



Another opportunity to join in the online **Zoom Lectio Divina throughout Lent 2024.**

These will be held **every Friday from the 16th February until the 22nd March.**

So, 16th and 23rd February, then 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd March. These will be at the usual time of **8.30 to 9.30am.**

The fourfold process of reading, listening and responding to the scripture passage is followed by a resting phase, each phase has about five minutes of muted stillness between. This takes about 40 minutes after which one can leave. Most stay for the remaining 20 minutes which is filled with sharing and reflecting together on what God has given us during the time together. It is a very safe and creative process and certainly feels to be a wonderful way of building up the body of Christ. If you would like to try even just one Friday please make contact with Deborah McVey C.410332 or [deborahmcy@aol.com](mailto:deborahmcy@aol.com). William will send the Zoom link out the day before.



## NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN AID

Thanks again to the Downing Place people who came to sing carols in the Grafton Centre last December, and raise the grand total of **£375** for Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal to open up opportunities for young women in Bangladesh.

Now we look ahead to Lent, and Christian Aid is joining with other charities and Churches in two initiatives, on climate justice and poverty,

Christian Aid has joined with Arocha, Cafod, Christian Climate Action, Green Christian, JPIT, Operation Noah, the Salvation Army, and Tearfund, to set up a **day and night vigil for Climate Justice** outside Parliament in Westminster, for ten days starting on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. The Christian Aid website will give you the details on how to sign up to take part, or how to support the vigil in prayer from home.

There is also a **Lent course on poverty**, run together with the Baptist Union, the Methodist Church, the URC, Church Action on Poverty, the Trussell Trust and others. The six sessions can be downloaded from the website.

Meanwhile – supporters of Christian Aid are invited to register for the on-line **Changemakers Conference** on Saturday March 2<sup>nd</sup>, to learn about the plans for May's Christian Aid Week.

More details about all of these on the Christian Aid website.

[www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

You might like to note that this year's Cambridge Christian Aid service is to be held at St Mary's, Great Shelford, on the evening of Sunday May 12<sup>th</sup>, to mark the beginning of Christian Aid Week. All welcome.

Any more information from Sheila Porrer.

## CHRISTMAS DAY COLLECTION

Our Christmas Day collection for Christian Aid raised **£357.31**

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE FARADAY INSTITUTE

The Faraday Institute, on Huntingdon Road, has sent us notice of the following events..

For those with **children**, we'll be participating in the **Cambridge Festival** – come to Celebrating Science: Exploring the Wonders of the Universe, a drop in session on 16<sup>th</sup> March. See <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/event/celebrating-science-exploring-the-wonders-of-the-universe/> for more information.

Children age 7-11 are especially welcome to Big World, Big Questions: Is there space for faith in a scientific world? where they can investigate questions such as Does science disprove God? Can the Bible be true if it doesn't mention dinosaurs? Could robots or aliens be religious? What really makes me 'me'? See <https://faraday.institute/cambridgefestivalKS2> to find out more and register.

For **church leaders**, our **course** 'Artificial Intelligence, Genuine Care' continues to explore how Christians can engage with technology in a godly way. See <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/event/artificial-intelligence-genuine-care/>

Our **public lecture** this term is titled 'Bioethics: Are Biologists Opening Pandora's Box?' and will be given by Prof. Keith Fox. It will be held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 6pm – free entry, all welcome; see [faraday.institute/publiclecture](https://faraday.institute/publiclecture) for details.

Some church members may want to dig deeper at our **summer course** – this year we'll be looking at 'The Art and Science of Human Health and Spirituality'. What does it mean to be human in an age of technology? Are we slaves to our genes? How does artificial intelligence affect healthcare? Can art help with healing? Explore these questions and many others 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July; see <https://faraday.institute/summercourse2024> to explore further.

Our **Research Seminar** series will restart on 30<sup>th</sup> January, with a range of topics to intrigue and consider:

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 30 <sup>th</sup> January  | Dr Jon Thompson [Cambridge House, Virginia, USA]<br>'Personal Identity and Resurrection: Early Modern Philosophical Perspectives' – ONLINE ONLY |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> February | Prof. Martin Barlow [University of British Columbia, Canada]<br>'Kepler, Galileo and Aliens' - hybrid   |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> February | Dr Pete Jordan [University of Oxford]<br>'Rescuing Religion from Obsolescence? John Templeton on Science and Religion' - hybrid                 |

12<sup>th</sup> March

Dr Nathan Bossoh [University of Southampton]  
'Science, Religion and the Material Turn: Exploring New  
Global Potentials through Colonial Museum African  
collections' - hybrid

All these will be held at **1pm in Westminster College, Madingley Road**,  
Cambridge (except the first) as well as being broadcast online via Zoom. All are  
welcome. Register at <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/events/seminars/>



### A request for help from

## CAMBRIDGE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT CAMPAIGN

We are currently dealing with lots of requests for help with furnishing houses. These requests are coming both from families being moved out of asylum hotels having been granted refugee status and from Ukrainian families moving on from their hosting accommodation into independent living.

We are in need of large items such as washing machines, sofas, wardrobes, tables, and smaller items such as microwaves, chairs, desks, vacuum cleaners, kitchen equipment, bed linen. If you, or someone you know, is moving or having a New Year 'refresh' and have these sort of items that you'd like to donate, please get in touch with our donations team at:

[donations@cambridgerefugees.org](mailto:donations@cambridgerefugees.org). We are happy to arrange collection . Thank you!



### A joint campaign workshop from

## CITY OF SANCTUARY UK

We're hosting a [Understanding Climate & Migrant Justice Workshop](#) on Feb 8th 18:30-20:00. Please register your free place now.

This workshop will be looking at how the migrant justice and climate justice movements can come together to fight injustice, to support each other and build power together.

This unmissable workshop will be led by Migrants Organise, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Climate Justice Coalition, War on Want, No Borders in Climate Justice and Tipping Point, with input from other groups working at the intersection of climate and migrant justice.

## DOWNING PLACE URC SPECIAL CAUSE FOR FEBRUARY 2024



**Rowan** is a charity based in Humberstone Road, Chesterton. It offers a ‘safe, creative and enriching environment, where the Arts are used as a tool to bring people together and tackle social exclusion’. Rowan provides an arts centre and also a forest school, Rowan Rangers, for adults with learning disabilities. Also aiming to increase independence and deliver much-needed respite to families and carers, they offer half or full day workshops where student artists develop their skills, not only in creative areas, but also in social awareness, communication, confidence and self-expression. Whether they are looking to work on their own projects or on the commissions that Rowan receive, the students have many activities to choose from: woodwork, ceramics, textiles, print, mixed media, drama and music. They can also explore the natural world in the forest school, which is set in five acres of woodland in Histon.

Alex Clare-Young, our Pioneer Minister who works out of Downing Place URC, has been collaborating with Rowan since near to the beginning of their role. In 2022, members of both the church and Solidarity Hub painted canvases for Rowan's charity exhibition. This relationship continues to develop, and Solidarity Hub are looking forward to having a ‘skills swap’ with Rowan in 2024. Alex says, “As an autistic adult, being in an environment where other adults across a range of neurodiversity are skilfully supported in expressing their creativity through diverse mediums including woodwork, clay, and needlework is an absolutely joy”.

Those leading the community at Rowan believe that ‘people living with a disability should have the same choice, quality of life, opportunities and aspirations as others’. As a Church that prioritises inclusion, wellbeing, and sustainability we have been keen to recognise the many common threads in our vision and that of Rowan, and the fact that they are our Special Cause for February 2024 gives us an opportunity to show our support.

There will be a retiring collection on Sunday 18th February with an opportunity to donate using a card, and donations can also be made throughout the month (in Gift Aid Envelopes where possible).

[Rowan - Creating art, Improving lives \(rowanhumberstone.org.uk\)](http://rowanhumberstone.org.uk)



## PREVIOUS SPECIAL CAUSES AND OTHER DONATIONS



October 2023 - Commitment for Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Our annual donation to *Commitment for Life* totalled £10,239.04.

Regular donations	£2,262.78
Donations made during October	£4,482.42
Retiring Collection	£970.62
Lunchtime Concerts	£1,071.23
Gift Aid claimed	£1,451.99

If you'd like to spread the cost and make your contributions throughout the year, it's easy to do this - just [click here](#) and choose 'Commitment for Life' from the 'Fund' dropdown.



November 2023 - Centre 33

We sent £2,156.29 to *Centre 33*.

Retiring Collection	£617.01
Lunchtime Concerts	£1,181.78
Gift Aid	£7.50
Contribution from York Street Fund	£350

Centre 33 wrote:

**Thank you so much for supporting Centre 33 with your recent donation of £2156.29**

It's not an easy time to be a young person and many are struggling.

Your donation will help more young people to be listened to, to access practical support and to feel safe. It's invaluable to them. As one person told us, "Centre 33 gave me the confidence to find my way".

Thank you for your amazing support, enabling us to be there for children and young adults when they need it most.



December 2023 - Through the Roof

We sent £2,104.88 to *Through the Roof*:

Lunchtime Concerts	£1047.57
Retiring Collection & Other Donations	£691.06
Gift Aid	£16.25
Contribution from York Street Fund	£350

Tim Wood, Chief Executive wrote:

Thank you so much for your very kind and generous gift of £2,104.88 on behalf of Downing Place URC towards the mission and ministry of Through the Roof, from your collections in December. Please.....pass on our grateful thanks to all the fellowship of Downing Place URC. Your support is very significant and a great blessing to us, as a small charity. Thanks to your gift we can continue transforming lives through Jesus.



### DOWNING PLACE CHRISTMAS FAIR

The Christmas Fair raised a total of £1202.71 which was divided between the *Samaritans* and *It Takes a City* (which cares for local homeless people)

Lis Silver of *It Takes a City* wrote:

Just wanted to say an enormous thank you on behalf of everyone at *It takes a City* for the church’s generosity in sharing the proceeds of the Christmas Fair – the £602.35 you have given us will make an enormous difference to the people we are currently supporting in our emergency winter accommodation.

Sarah May of the *Samaritans* wrote

Your fundraising has the power to answer **120** potentially life-saving calls. Every penny you’ve raised will help us be there, round the clock, every single day of the year for anyone who needs us. We simply couldn’t do it without you. Thank you.



*And finally, Amy Corcoran of the Peace Pledge Union (which supplies our white poppies) wrote*

I just wanted to quickly email you to thank you for your kind and generous donation to the PPU. We are almost entirely reliant on donations to do the work that we do, and are very grateful for the support of people like you. Thank you once again, your donation is very much appreciated.

**SAMARITANS**

# Thank you

**Downing Place URC**

**For fundraising and  
supporting Samaritans**

By raising

**£ 600.36**

**#TeamSamaritans**

A registered charity





# Come & Sing (or listen) for Ukraine!

DURUFLÉ'S REQUIEM & SILVESTROV'S PRAYER FOR UKRAINE  
& MUSIC FROM THE UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
PETER BRITTON, CONDUCTOR, & IAN DE MASSINI, ORGANIST

ON SUNDAY 25TH FEBRUARY  
AT DOWNING PLACE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



All proceeds to  
**C4U**

1pm: Sign in & distribution of music

1:30pm: Rehearsal

3:30pm: Doors open to the public  
(free admission, retiring collection)

4 - 5pm: performance

Sign-up to take part  
[tinyurl.com/singforukraine2024](https://tinyurl.com/singforukraine2024)

Voluntary  
participation  
fee of £10



## FEBRUARY DIARY

	Date	Name	Time	Location
<i>Thu</i>	<i>01-Feb-24</i>	<i>LGBT History Month Begins</i>		
Thu	01-Feb-24	Midweek Worship led by Dr Janet Bottoms	11:00am	Church
Thu	01-Feb-24	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Sat	03-Feb-24	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	04-Feb-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	04-Feb-24	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	04-Feb-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	04-Feb-24	Open Table/Solidarity Social	7:30pm	The Hub
Mon	05-Feb-24	Officers' Meeting	10:15am	Minister's Room
Tue	06-Feb-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship: Bring & Buy Sale	2:30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	07-Feb-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - The Granta Trio	1:00pm	Church
Thu	08-Feb-24	Prayer Meeting	10:15am	St Columba's Chapel
Thu	08-Feb-24	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Thu	08-Feb-24	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	08-Feb-24	Transition Cambridge	7:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Fri	09-Feb-24	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sat	10-Feb-24	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	11-Feb-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	11-Feb-24	Sunday Worship led by the Revd John Proctor	11:00am	Church
Sun	11-Feb-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	Hub
Sun	11-Feb-24	Solidarity Social Action Group	7:30pm	Hub
Mon	12-Feb-24	DEADLINE for signing up for the Gibson Lunch		
Tue	13-Feb-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship join Fulbourn URC for 'The Word Together'	2:30pm	Fulbourn URC
Wed	14-Feb-24	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>		
Wed	14-Feb-24	DEADLINE for submitting articles for Place Matters		
Wed	14-Feb-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Stephen Armstrong & Friends	1:00pm	Church
Wed	14-Feb-24	Solidarity Social Action Drop-In with Acorn, the Community Union	7.00pm	The Hub
Wed	14-Feb-24	Ash Wednesday Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	7.30pm	Church
Thu	15-Feb-24	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Thu	15-Feb-24	Gibson Lunch	12.30pm	Gibson Hall
Thu	15-Feb-24	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	Hub
Thu	15-Feb-24	Midweek Worship led by the Revd Dr Alex Clare-Young	6:00pm	St Columba's Chapel
Sat	17-Feb-24	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00pm	Emmanuel Room

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	18-Feb-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	18-Feb-24	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	18-Feb-24	<i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i> by Modest Mussorgsky Arranged for solo organ and performed by Ian de Massini	12:00pm	Church
Sun	18-Feb-24	Solidarity Social Drop In	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	18-Feb-24	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Church and Hub
Tue	20-Feb-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	21-Feb-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Peihan Francesca He (violin)	1:00pm	Church
Thu	22-Feb-24	Midweek Worship with Communion led by the Revd Dr Janet Tollington	1:00pm	Church
Thu	22-Feb-24	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	23-Feb-24	Meditation Group	5:30pm	St Columba's Chapel
Sat	24-Feb-24	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sat	24-Feb-24	Solidarity Hub Forest Gathering -	4:00pm	Trumpington Meadows
Sun	25-Feb-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	25-Feb-24	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Dr Peter McEnhill	11:00am	Church
Sun	25-Feb-24	Come & Sing for Ukraine - Duruflé's <i>Requiem</i> & Silvestrov's <i>Prayer for Ukraine</i>	1:00pm	Church
Sun	25-Feb-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	25-Feb-24	Solidarity Scripture	7:30pm	The Hub
Tue	27-Feb-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	28-Feb-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Yoko Sakakura (piano)	1:00pm	Church
Wed	28-Feb-24	Solidarity Social Action Drop-In with Acorn, the Community Union	7.00pm	The Hub
Thu	29-Feb-24	Midweek Worship led by Dr Augur Pearce	11:00am	Church
Thu	29-Feb-24	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	Hub
Sat	02-Mar-24	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	03-Mar-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	03-Mar-24	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	03-Mar-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	Hub
Sun	03-Mar-24	Open Table/Solidarity Social	7:30pm	Hub

## LUNCHTIME CONCERTS - WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary. Refreshments available before and after the concert. Come and bring friends!

- 7 February            The Granta Trio
- 14 February         Stephen Armstrong & Friends
- 21 February         Peihan Francesca He (violin)
- 28 February         Yoko Sakakura (piano)

<https://downingplaceurc.org/lunchtime-concerts/>

## MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

4 February	David Cornick	Bassingbourn
11 February	Liz Caswell	Stetchworth & Cheveley
	Deborah McVey	Trinity, Burwell
	Janet Tollington	Abbey Lane, Saffron Walden
	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn
15 February	Liz Caswell	St James, Lode (midweek communion)
18 February	Chris Baker	Melbourn
	Liz Caswell	Fulbourn
	Penny Flynn	Bishop's Stortford
	Janet Tollington	St Neots
25 February	Chris Baker	Wicken Methodist
	Jo Clare-Young	Grays
	Deborah McVey	St Luke's LEP, Cambridge
	John Proctor	High Cross URC, Tottenham
	Janet Tollington	Melbourn



## LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

These are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary, as in ROOTS, the material used by our Children's Ministry team. They may be altered if that is the preacher's wish.

### *4 February (Epiphany 5)*

Isaiah 40:21-31

Psalms 147:1-11,20c

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

### *11 February (Transfiguration)*

2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalms 50:1-6

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Mark 9:2-9

### *18 February (Lent 1)*

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalms 25:1-10

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

### *25 February (Lent 2)*

Genesis 17:1-7;15-16

Psalms 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

### *3 March (Lent 3)*

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalms 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22





*Photograph by Jess Uden*

MAGAZINE EDITOR:                      Tim Rowland

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

Please send items to both Tim Rowland and Ann Auger  
([ann@downingplaceurc.org](mailto:ann@downingplaceurc.org))

WEB EDITOR:                              Jess Uden

Please send all items to be included in the March edition to both Tim and Ann by the cut off date of **Wednesday 14 February**.

The March edition will be available from **Sunday 25 February**.