



**DOWNING PLACE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
CAMBRIDGE**



**ISSUE 80
APRIL 2026**

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*Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of
the Elders and Members of Downing Place United Reformed Church*



Dichroic glass cross in the Downing Place yard, March 2026

- taken by Jess Uden

LETTER FROM A MEMBER – ALISON BINNEY

Editor: with Downing Place URC now 'in vacancy', I am grateful to those church members, lay and ordained, who agreed to my request that they write something for readers in Place Matters, much as our Minister had until his recent retirement. This month it's Alison.

Dear Friends,

Last autumn, three friends and I walked the Peak Wesley Way, covering 45 miles from Matlock to Edale, staying overnight at five different Methodist chapels. It's a fairly new trail, first created in 2024 with the intention of linking together Methodist chapels in the Peak District, with a shared vision of hospitality and witness.



First night at Youlgrave Methodist Church.

Each chapel provided sleeping, cooking and washing facilities: we would arrive to find that camp beds had been set up for us, equipped with blankets and pillows (we carried our own sleeping bags). Some churches just had a microwave; others had well-equipped kitchens. In most of the churches we were greeted by one of the local Methodists; others left supplies of fruit and biscuits. We never quite knew what we were going to find at the end of each day's walk, but that was all part of the adventure. Sometimes we slept in the sanctuary, and sometimes in a hall or side room. We spent the coldest but most atmospheric night right by the communion rail in Youlgrave Church, with the wind howling around both outside and inside.

The non-conformist Christian traditions don't have a strong historical association with pilgrimage. However, Methodism is a movement that has its roots in itinerancy, and it therefore seemed appropriate to be following in the footsteps of preachers who would have walked miles over hills and dales in all weathers to share the gospel of Christ. John Wesley is said to have covered enough miles on his horse to have been able to circumnavigate the earth ten times.

The idea of pilgrimage is also undergoing something of a revival at present, and not just for people of faith. The Peak Wesley Way organisers provided us with a guidebook which included not only directions and information about places of interest, but also reflective questions to consider along the way. It was interesting to see that my three fellow-pilgrims, none of whom were Christians, were just as



Pilgrims at the top of Win Hill (left to

engaged with these questions as I was, and they provided excellent talking points at different stages of our journey together.

As someone who was brought up a Methodist, the granddaughter of a Methodist Minister, one of the most fascinating and also poignant things was to see churches in such a range of phases. Of the five churches we slept in, Hathersage Methodist Church seemed to be the most flourishing, in terms of both membership and weekday activities. There were plenty

of signs of children's ministry in the chapel, for example, and the building is open to the public every day, welcoming a stream of visitors, partly drawn in by its thriving second-hand bookshop.

In contrast, the beautiful chapel at Great Longstone, where we spent our second night, is no longer used for worship. The Methodist who greeted us there could point to herself in a Sunday School photo from the 1950s, but now worships in the parish church, alongside the handful of other remaining Methodists in the village. The size and décor of a couple of the other chapels reminded me strongly of the church where I was baptised, but the cupboards in their vast kitchens were full of huge piles of 1970s crockery that looked as if they hadn't been used for years.

It's easy to conclude that a church's location is the deciding factor in terms of its growth or decline, and some of the villages where we stayed are small and isolated. However, our walk ended in Edale, the most remote location of our whole pilgrimage. Although we didn't stay overnight in Edale Chapel, we were so glad we made the short detour to Barber Booth to see it. It was the humblest of all the Methodist churches we had seen on our walk, and the furthest from any town or city. But we were greeted enthusiastically by one of the local Methodists who has been involved in a recent revival project there. As well as some redevelopment work on the fabric of the building, this has involved some



A wall-hanging in Edale Chapel.

visionary thinking about how to use the space, not only on Sundays, but throughout the week. We heard about the creation of a co-working space for artists as well as people working from home, for example, and also about a project which provides the opportunity for asylum-seeking women from Manchester to tend the chapel garden.

As we prepare to celebrate Easter together, at a time of renewed focus on our mission as a church, it is good for us all to take time to reflect on our pilgrimage together, and to notice the signs of resurrection and renewal around us.

- What story of resurrection and renewal does our church building tell?
- How do our weekly activities help to share the good news of Christ?
- How can we work with other churches and organisations in creative and innovative ways?
- How might we tell the story of our shared pilgrimage, in a way that invites others to join us on that journey?

With all good wishes for a joyful Easter,

Alison Binney

Editor: since sending me her letter, Alison has reminded me that – in the same spirit of pilgrimage - Dame Sarah Mullally, incoming Archbishop of Canterbury, walked the 87-mile pilgrim's Becket Way from St Paul's Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral before the service of installation on 25 March. Along the route, her group joined in worship at churches, cathedrals and abbeys, met with other pilgrims and visited schools.



The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Reverend Sarah Mullally



THE DAY OF RESURECTION

St. John of Damascus

1 The day of resurrection!
Earth, tell it out abroad;
the passover of gladness,
the passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
from earth unto the sky,
our Christ hath brought us over,
with hymns of victory.

2 Our hearts be pure from evil,
that we may see aright
the Lord in rays eternal
of resurrection light;
and listening to his accents,
may hear, so calm and plain,
his own "All hail!" and, hearing,
may raise the victor strain.

3 Now let the heavens be joyfull!
Let earth the song begin!
Let the round world keep triumph,
and all that is therein!
Let all things seen and unseen
their notes in gladness blend,
for Christ the Lord hath risen,
our joy that hath no end.

SALLY WILLIAMS – A PROFILE



I was born in Nottingham and WW2 broke out just before I was two years old. My father immediately joined the Royal Navy as an engineer and for the first year my mother and I followed him from dockyard to dockyard. Then he joined a ship, becoming part of the North Atlantic convoys, and my mother and I went to live with her parents in a village by the River Severn in Gloucestershire. Before WW1 my grandfather had built a factory for Cadburys, alongside the Birmingham-Sharpness canal, ideal for transporting the crumb (first stage in the transformation of milk into chocolate) to the factory at Bournville. Grandfather had been a Methodist but there was no chapel, so he had joined the Congregational one. It was a strong presence with two chapels in adjoining villages, plus a school in one of them (along with a C of E one), the head of which had trained at Homerton College before WW1. Eighteen months later my father's ship was blown up, and after recovering he was declared unfit for sea-going duties and shipped out to the naval dockyard in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he remained until mid-1946.

My parents did not go to church but both sets of grandparents and most of the aunts, uncles and cousins did, so my parents sent me to Sunday school, and I valued the booklets of daily bible readings.

We had returned to live in Nottingham, where I joined the Brownies and then the Guides attached to the local C of E. I was fortunate to pass the 11+ exam, but my father found it hard to adjust to civilian life, and after four schools (Nottingham, Chesterfield, the Cotswolds and Solihull) in as many years, my grandfather stepped in and offered my mother and myself a home. Retired and widowed, he had moved to the next village and was Church and District Secretary. Throughout these moves I had been fortunate to keep up with the Guides and so gained good experience of the Methodist and C of E values and customs. The regular entertaining of Lay Preachers proved life-changing when one, Head of Sixth form in a boys Grammar School, suggested that I should go to University.

Nottingham offered me a place to read Economics, with several subsidiaries and the choice of specialising in the third year. So I became their first B.A. (Law) graduate. Joining the Presby-Cong soc which met weekly at Castlegate

Congregational Church, I made many lifelong friends and was fortunate to go to several conferences. In the third year I became their Social Secretary. Law was not a good career choice for a girl (there was only one other in my year) and without the £500 needed to buy 'solicitors' articles' (for the Qualifying Work Experience) I decided to stay in Nottingham where many friends were doing postgraduate courses. I knew I wanted to work with people, and to do something of service. The local education authority were looking for a female graduate to work in their vocational guidance service who was prepared to work for the professional qualification via on the job training, block release and part-time study. Three years later I had a Diploma in Vocational Guidance (Dip.Voc.Guid).

Six months after graduating, one of my Presby-Cong Soc friends, thinking we might have something in common, introduced me to a newly arrived Lecturer in the Law Department. David was from Carmarthen, with Welsh speaking parents. His father had been Headmaster of the boys' Grammar School, and the family went to a Welsh-speaking chapel where his father had been a deacon. After National Service, David had read History (taught by Mary Joslin's husband amongst others) and Law, before qualifying as a Barrister and then going to the USA on a Harkness Fellowship. Nine months after that introduction, we were married at Castlegate Congregational church (then in vacancy) by a Church of Scotland minister. Two years later we were appointed as "moral tutors" in one of the University women's Halls of Residence, living in a house in the grounds, being responsible for a group of students, and I had wider responsibilities in the Hall itself.

Then in 1963 David was appointed to a University lectureship and Fellowship at Keble College, Oxford. We attended Summertown Congregational church, and Rhiannon and Rhys were both baptised there. Stephen and Janet Mayor were members at the same time.

In 1967 our links with Australia began with a sabbatical in Adelaide. However, life took an unexpected turn when three weeks before flying out David was offered a fellowship at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. We went to Adelaide and had a great time, returning to a term when David lived in college and tried to buy a house in Cambridge, returning at weekends via the (just about to be axed) train, while I tried to sell our house in Oxford. We moved in January 1968 and Sian was born eight weeks later.

Our Summertown minister had recommended Emmanuel Church and we immediately felt at home. Dick Hall was the minister then. Sian was baptised and all three children enjoyed Junior Church, the activities and the garden parties

at Homerton and then Westminster Colleges. In 1971 Maureen Kendall suggested I help in Junior Church, and so began ten plus years, beginning with the creche and gradually moving up to the teenagers. At this time I became a volunteer with the Brownie Guide committee and a badge tester for an amazing number of skills! Also I joined the University Newcomers Group, helping new arrivals, on sabbatical or coming to a new job, to find friends and settle into Cambridge life. I felt it really was time to become a Church member, rather than an attender, and after instruction this happened in 1974 after which we went to Canberra for six months. In 1976 the chance arose for a one year job, school hours only, with the Cambridgeshire Careers Service. After various positions I finally left in 1992 having become head of the team working in Sixth forms and colleges in the south of the county. Meanwhile David had become Senior Tutor, and much involved in the University. He became President of Wolfson College in 1980, and was elected Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1989.



*David Williams, with
HRH Prince Philip*

When David Thompson was nominated as Moderator of the URC, my husband was delighted to reassure him that there would be no problem with accepting the role and any related demands on his time. With two University services a term at Great St. Mary's plus a few others, we were rather busy. The appointment as Vice-Chancellor, initially for two years, was then extended, and finally ended in 1996. During this time we met and entertained a fantastic number of interesting people. The Chancellor, HRH Prince Philip (plus equerry, valet and detective) came to stay thirteen times and we also entertained Prince Charles and Princess Anne. Overseas visitors included Pierre Trudeau (Canada), Mary Robinson (Ireland) and Shankar Sharma (India).

The University Newcomers Group elected me President in 1990 and over the next twelve years it changed from a termtime weekly coffee morning and introductory service to a year round coffee morning and some weekly groups. Originally solely volunteers, it is now funded by the university with volunteer-led groups meeting every morning, many throughout the year.

In 1999 Chris Wright suggested I allow my name to go forward for the Eldership, and so in 2000 I became an Elder, and Secretary to the monthly Church Meetings. It was a very interesting time during which we grew closer to St. Columba's. For three years, due to illness and the process of calling a Minister, we were without our own. The Baptist Union unwittingly helped the coming together of Emmanuel and St. Columba's when they discovered that, unknown to them, Coton Baptist Chapel had been abandoned. The original mid-19th century deeds, listed the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of three other Chapels responsible in the event of the Chapel closing. Now someone wished to buy the property, and the original nominees had become St. Andrews Baptist, St. Columba's and Emmanuel churches. A site visit found an abandoned and overgrown site, gas lamps and a long-drop toilet. The last few members having locked up the building and walked away, ten or more years earlier. After numerous meetings and suggestions it was eventually sold, and the money given to help the new church at Cambourne.

David died in 2009, after a short illness. He had always backed my Church membership and encouraged the children and myself in our activities. After his death I was very grateful for the support, love and friendship from the Emmanuel congregation.

This was also the time when Homerton became a full college of the University, and my appointment as one of the URCs Trustees came to an end. It had been a very exciting, at times nail-biting but ultimately rewarding experience.

With more time available I became one of Emmanuel's representatives on the Two into One project, became part of the After Eights, and joined several of the rotas that were so essential to the life of the Church. Over the years it was a joy getting to know the Time for God young people, staff in the café and people coming to groups such as the Knit One Give One.

After time overseas, all my children are now in the UK, with two living in Cambridge (teacher and lawyer) with the third in Bristol working as the Chief Risk Officer for a values-led Netherlands bank.

I still do some pastoral visiting: it is good to see Downing Place developing as it is.



*David with Sally
and family, upon receiving his
knighthood*

PASTORAL NEWS



We send greeting and congratulations to three Downing Place members who recently celebrated their 90th birthdays.

Now – in alphabetical order ...

Jim Bradbury

Jim was formerly a teacher of children with learning difficulties. Freda was also a teacher and they met and married fairly late in life, but not too late to bring us our beloved John! They went on to run a hotel in Grange-over-Sands, where their hospitality, and Jim's superb breakfasts, were renowned. Jim is a great fan of Stanley Holloway, and his comic monologues. Many of us recall how Jim regaled us with 'Albert and the Lion' at church entertainments – he can still do so today. He can also read aloud fluently, without the use of glasses!

Ted Dennison

Ted has been a member with us, at Emmanuel and then at Downing Place, for some fifty years. He has served three terms as an elder, and brought fine pastoral gifts to that role - interest in people, warmth, understanding, sensitivity and practical good sense. Ted spent a decade as a missionary in Zambia in the 1960s and 1970s, and has been lastingly influenced by that service - in his openness to people of other cultures and backgrounds, in his awareness of the suffering of many countries in the world, in his concern that nations and churches should help each other. He and Margaret are a really good team. They find strength in one another and are generous in their dealing with others. Long may they continue to enrich our church life.

Diane Saxon

Diane was a Londoner who had originally trained as a dentist, but later retrained as a Scientific Librarian, moving to Cambridge in 1990 to work for the British Antarctic Survey. Diane had many interests, being a composer of poems, an excellent cook and a devoted supporter of, and fundraiser for, the RNL. Joining Emmanuel in 1995, she sang in the choir, became an Elder, then Administrative Secretary. With dementia diagnosed in 2014, she was moved to Woodlands Care Home in 2018, for her own safety.

And, with sadness, we report that Iris Davies died at home, Pinecrest, as we gathered for worship at Downing Place on Sunday March 22nd. She was 93. Iris and Des, who died in May 2018, were regular and faithful members of Emmanuel URC since the 1970s and beloved of many. Please hold daughters Kathryn and Anne in your prayers at this time: they live in Scotland and Switzerland, but were staying with Iris for a few days. They know she is now at peace.

A Service of Thanksgiving for Iris is to be at the Parish Church in Hildersham on Tuesday 5th May at 11 o'clock. Iris and Des had a good relationship with their local church, and it is where Des was buried in May 2018. Revd Iain McColl and Revd Deborah McVey will lead this service.



Parish Church of Holy Trinity, Hildersham

BRITISH LEGION GOLD AWARD



During his time as minister of Fulbourn United Reformed Church, alongside his wider ministry in Cambridge from 2010 onwards, Nigel also served the Legion as Branch Chaplain.

On Saturday 24 January, the Reverend Nigel Uden was presented with a Gold Award from the Royal British Legion (RBL), one of the organisation's highest honours. The award was presented by the County Lieutenant, Julie Spencer, at Sawston Village College during the Royal British Legion Cambridgeshire County Conference. It followed a nomination from the Fulbourn and Teversham branch in recognition of Nigel's exceptional service, leadership and enduring dedication to others.

Peter Digby, Chairman of Cambridgeshire RBL, read a citation during the ceremony, where he paid tribute to Nigel's "distinguished and selfless service to both the Branch and the wider community." He made particular mention of his unwavering pastoral and welfare support for members and their families, including the dependants of past Presidents, Chairs and long-serving members, whom he has accompanied with care through times of hardship and loss. Nigel was also commended for building strong links within the community, drawing people together, strengthening membership and deepening engagement.



*Nigel with Julie Spencer,
County Lieutenant*

The badge itself (seen at the top of the page) is made of solid silver with a high-quality gold-plated finish, designed for both durability and distinction. Although not hallmarked due to its weight, it remains a significant symbol of honour. When the award was first created it was made from 9ct gold. The RBL refers to it as a Gold Badge, reflecting its status as a prestigious award for meritorious service, granted only by the Royal British Legion's National Chair.

AN INSIGHT INTO OUR RECENT JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS



At the beginning of the month, our session saw us continue the theme of ‘questions’ which had been talked about during Sharing Together. We talked about why we ask questions – to learn new things, find out information, get to know someone, understand things that puzzle us. We took turns to roll a large die covered in ‘question words’, thought of a question beginning with the word thrown

on the die and then chose someone in the circle to answer it. Usually the answers given were easy to understand but then we agreed that sometimes answers to questions are not always straightforward. This brought us on to our Bible reading from John 3:1-17 when Nicodemus visited Jesus at night to ask him questions about God. The answers were often difficult to understand but one truth became clear, that Jesus came to the world to show how much God loves his people. The children concluded the session by thinking of questions they might want to ask about God or church as they decorated stars to remind them of Nicodemus and Jesus talking in the dark.

On another blustery Sunday morning, when we went into our room we noticed that there was a wall full of pictures. We thought about what could we see and what we liked to see. We thanked God for good things we see and reminded ourselves that God’s love is for everyone. Our story, of Jesus healing the man who could not see, helped us to see Jesus, the Light of the World. Afterwards we made cards with flowers on to share with those around us.



Elza de Bruin, Lorraine Thornton and Jess Uden, with thanks to all the leaders and helpers for their contributions to the work of Junior Church.

THE CHERRY HINTON ROAD TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Since the last report for Place Matters in November the CHR Tuesday Fellowship has continued to meet weekly apart from over Christmas and the New Year. Most of the meetings have been held at St Athanasios Hall although we have been able to meet at different locations. We have been to Horningsea where we had our Christmas dinner and to Coton Garden Centre in February. In December as well we had a lovely Christmas Party at Pamela Cressey's house by her very kind hospitality and where we were fortunate to have Helen Bell as our guest so that she could meet our members. There was one occasion when we were unable to access St Athanasios Hall, but fortunately George Pippas came to let us in. On another occasion the heating failed, but as we were going to Horningsea for our Christmas dinner, we were not too much affected.



Christmas Party at Pamela Cressey's house

We were so pleased that Wendy agreed to facilitate the “Word Together” every month after Nigel retired. We have reflected on the Christmas story and have looked at the origins of the hymn “Amazing Grace “. It was so interesting to learn that John Newton, a slave captain was converted to Christianity after a storm and became an Anglican clergyman and abolitionist. In December we looked at the Nativity in a historical perspective and in January and February we have been looking at the Passion story as a way of reminding us of the events which led to Jesus' arrest, trial and suffering and execution by crucifixion. In addition we have had a very thought provoking talk by Paul Nevett on the Joy of reading the Bible.

We have also had some very enjoyable Members Own sessions. Members have made wonderful contributions with poems, prayers and recollections on winter as well as participating in a crafts session which involved making cards with daffodil motifs and constructing small baskets and painting daffodils in a still life. We were delighted by the Capriol Dancers in early February when they not

only entertained us with their medieval dancing, but demonstrated and explained their medieval costumes. Finally we had a brilliant musical quiz arranged by Carole Scullion,

We have been able to make a number of donations during this period. In November we were able to participate in the Shoe Box Appeal for the charity “Link to Hope”. We raised £35 to help with the charity’s travel costs as well as collecting scarves, hats and toiletries and other items for older people and sweets, pencil cases, colouring books and toiletries for families in Eastern Europe. We also raised £71 in November for the British Red Cross for humanitarian aid for families and children in Gaza and an additional £17.50 for children in Gaza in December. We also sent £100 to the Bible Society.

On January 13th 2026, we had our Annual General Meeting which we combined with a Bring and Buy sale. Although we continue to meet regularly, we are aware that some of our members are unable to attend because of mobility and health issues. Two of our members are in Care homes and two couples are housebound. We keep in touch with them by delivering our monthly newsletter and visiting them when we can. However we are pleased to continue to welcome Jonathan Davies and Paula who comes occasionally with Laura Pascondea when she is in Cambridge working as a carer.

Finally we are so grateful that despite the escalating conflicts both in Ukraine and the Middle East we can continue to meet together in safety and security. We pray that peace will prevail in all areas of conflict in the world.

Penny Milsom

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Almighty God,

Your Son came to be the Saviour of the world and the Prince of peace.

Give us grace to follow in His ways and to fulfil our calling as peacemakers in His name. May His Holy Spirit so move in the hearts of all people and among the nations of the world, that barriers of fear, suspicion, and hatred which separate us may crumble and fall, and the peoples of the world be united in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Church of Scotland

DOWNING PLACE URC SPECIAL CAUSE FOR APRIL 2026



Motivation is an international development charity and social enterprise, providing wheelchairs that meet users' needs in the environment they live in. Ted and Margaret Denison supported its activities

for three decades. The work of Motivation is now entirely led and delivered by Motivation Africa and Motivation India.

From their website [Motivation Africa – MOTIVATION](#)

“We believe mobility is the first step toward dignity and opportunity. That’s why at the heart of our work is user-centred wheelchair service provision, rooted in the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) eight-step guidelines. We don’t just distribute wheelchairs; we ensure they’re custom-fitted, terrain-appropriate, and part of a broader support ecosystem.

But our work doesn’t stop at mobility. We build the confidence, skills and community connections that enable disabled people to live full, independent lives, through peer training, sports inclusion, healthy living education, and caregiver support”.



We believe mobility is a right, not a privilege.
Motivation is an international development charity and social enterprise with a proud, thirty-year history of wheelchair provision.

New chairs are designed for local conditions and with available materials in mind. Users will be enabled to be active members of their communities and will receive support for their mental and emotional well-being.

WAYS OF GIVING TO OUR SPECIAL CAUSE

- Our monthly retiring collection on Sunday 19 April (cash, cheque or card)
- Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts (cash or card)
- Direct to the church bank account (reference SPECIAL CAUSE)
- Via our website [Downing Place URC](#) - the ‘**Donate**’ button is on the homepage, just below the ‘Welcome’ section. Select Special Donations as the fund
- Directly to [Motivation Africa – MOTIVATION](#) via their website

HOLY WEEK AT DOWNING PLACE URC



We are very grateful to the Reverend Elizabeth Caswell for recording reflections for us to watch through Holy Week. Thanks must also go to David Flynn for producing the videos, and Penny Flynn, Hazel Sanderson and David Whitmore for providing the music. There are videos for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and Elizabeth encourages us to attend in-person services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, if we are able. Each video will go live at 6am on the morning of the day it is for. On each day, you can either click on the relevant blue, underlined wording below, to go to the video, or go to our YouTube channel [Downing Place United Reformed Church](#) where you will find the video on the homepage.

Also included below are the in-person services happening in and around Downing Place Church this week

Monday 30 March

[Monday - Reflections for Holy Week 2026](#)

Tuesday 31 March

[Tuesday - Reflections for Holy Week 2026](#)

Wednesday 1 April

[Wednesday - Reflections for Holy Week 2026](#)

Thursday 2 April

- Midweek Worship with Holy Communion
led by the Reverend Elizabeth Caswell, 11am at Downing Place URC (in person)

- Tenebrae at Fulbourn United Reformed Church,
led by the Reverend Deborah McVey, 7.30pm (in person)
Fulbourn URC, 8 Home Close, Fulbourn, CB21 5BS

Friday 3 April

- An ecumenical service for Good Friday, 10am at Wesley Methodist Church, Christ's - Pieces, Cambridge, CB1 1LG (in person)
- Act of Witness, 11.30am on Market Hill, near the Guildhall (in person)

Saturday 4 April

[Saturday - Reflections for Holy Week 2026](#)

Sunday 5 April

Easter Sunday worship with Holy Communion,
led by the Reverend Deborah McVey, 11am at Downing Place URC,
(in person and online)

[Easter Sunday Worship](#)



For God so loved the world that
he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish
but may have eternal life.

John 3:16

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING COURSES



Intermediate Safeguarding Training for Spring 2026

Intermediate Safeguarding Training dates are being offered by the Synod over the next few months for those needing their 3 yearly update, or for those new to volunteer posts in the church for which training is required. Anyone can attend any date; it does not have to be the one nearest to where you live. Lorraine will contact individually all those needing training in the immediate future. Please let Helen or Lorraine know if you plan to attend and we will book you a place.

11 April 2026, 10am – Halstead United Reformed Church, Essex, CO9 1HJ

In addition, we are trying to arrange for an in-person course to be held at Downing Place in the second half of the year. Zoom courses may also be available later.

UK Wide Safeguarding Training 2026

There are also short safeguarding courses on a variety of more specific issues which people may be interested in. These last 2 hours via Zoom, and are available to anyone regardless of role or Synod. This is UK wide Safeguarding training delivered by the URC and can be booked by contacting Emma.Pierce@urc.org.uk

The following modules are currently available:

Tuesday 21 April 1.00pm – Online Safety

Thursday 14 May 1.00pm – Safeguarding for ministers supporting survivors

Tuesday 19 May 6.30pm – Spiritual Abuse

Thursday 28 May 1.00pm – Adult Safeguarding

Helen Bell, Safeguarding Co-ordinator Helen.bell37@gmail.com

Lorraine Thornton, Deputy lorrynethornton@aol.com

The Ukrainian Cultural Association in the UK presents

A Commemorative Charity Concert

Dedicated to the 40th Anniversary of the Chernobyl

In aid of the Lviv Children's hospital, Ukraine



Wednesday 29th April 2026 at 6PM

United Reformed Church
4 Downing Place, **Cambridge**, CB2 3EL

Featuring Ukrainian and Classical music

With **Orpheus Leander - Violin**, **Veronika Barylo - Soprano**
Alla Sirenko - Pianist, Composer, producer of the event

Tickets: £19, Children under 13 Free



Cash at the door or scan QR code
Charity souvenirs will be available with cash donations

www.ucauk.com

APRIL DIARY

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|-----------|---|---------|-------------------------|
| Wed | 01-Apr-26 | Lunchtime Concert - Nigel Blomiley (cello) and Richard Shaw (piano) | 1.00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 01-Apr-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 02-Apr-26 | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday, with the Reverend Elizabeth Caswell | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Thu | 02-Apr-26 | Knit One Give One | 1:30pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 02-Apr-26 | Tenebrae at Fulbourn URC, led by the Reverend Deborah McVey | 7.30pm | Fulbourn URC |
| Fri | 03-Apr-26 | Downing Place URC Building Closed | All Day | -- |
| Fri | 03-Apr-26 | Free Churches United Service on Good Friday | 10:00am | Wesley Methodist Church |
| Fri | 03-Apr-26 | Act of Witness | 11:30am | Market Hill Cambridge |
| Sat | 04-Apr-26 | Easter Flower Arranging | 2:30pm | Main Church |
| Sat | 04-Apr-26 | Cambridge Voices concert on Holy Saturday | 4.30pm | Main Church |
| Sun | 05-Apr-26 | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 05-Apr-26 | Easter Sunday Worship with Holy Communion, led by The Reverend Deborah McVey | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Mon | 06-Apr-26 | Downing Place URC Building Closed | All Day | -- |
| Tue | 07-Apr-26 | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 2.30pm | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 08-Apr-26 | Lunchtime Concert - Tony Bridgewater (piano) | 1:00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 08-Apr-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 09-Apr-26 | Prayer Meeting | 10.15am | St Columba's Chapel |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|-----------|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| Thu | 09-Apr-26 | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Reverend Professor David Thompson | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Thu | 09-Apr-26 | Knit One Give One | 1:30pm | The Hub |
| Sun | 12-Apr-26 | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 12-Apr-26 | Sunday Worship, led by Dr Janet Bottoms | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Tue | 14-Apr-26 | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 2.30pm | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 15-Apr-26 | Lunchtime Concert - Ammenti Trio | 1:00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 15-Apr-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 16-Apr-26 | Midweek Worship led by Jane Bower | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Thu | 16-Apr-26 | Gibson Lunch | 12:30pm | Gibson Hall |
| Thu | 16-Apr-26 | Knit One Give One | 1:30pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 16-Apr-26 | Elders Meeting | 7:30pm | The Thornton's Home |
| Sun | 19-Apr-26 | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 19-Apr-26 | Sunday Worship, led by The Revd. John Proctor | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 19-Apr-26 | Retiring Collection for Monthly Cause | 12:00pm | Main Church |
| Sun | 19-Apr-26 | Open Table Service | 6pm for 6.30pm | Main Church |
| Tue | 21-Apr-26 | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 2.30pm | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 22-Apr-26 | Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini (organ) | 1:00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 22-Apr-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |
| Thu | 23-Apr-26 | Midweek Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Reverend David Tatem | 11:00am | Main Church |

| | Date | Name | Time | Location |
|-----|-----------|--|---------|-----------------------|
| Thu | 23-Apr-26 | Knit One Give One | 1:30pm | The Hub |
| Sat | 25-Apr-26 | Volunteer Fair - Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 26-Apr-26 | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 26-Apr-26 | Sunday Worship, led by The Revd. Rose Westwood | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 26-Apr-26 | Solidarity Hub | 6:00pm | The Hub |
| Mon | 27-Apr-26 | Finance Group | 7:00pm | Zoom |
| Tue | 28-Apr-26 | University of Cambridge Ester Full Term begins | All Day | -- |
| Tue | 28-Apr-26 | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 2:30pm | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 29-Apr-26 | Lunchtime Concert - James Williams (piano) | 1:00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 29-Apr-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |
| Wed | 29-Apr-26 | Camnbridge 4 Ukraine Concert— Alla Sirenko | 6:00pm | Main Church |
| Thu | 30-Apr-26 | Midweek Worship led by Dr Alan Rickard | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Thu | 30-Apr-26 | Knit One Give One | 1:30pm | The Hub |
| Fri | 01-May-26 | Officers' Meeting | 10:15am | Room 3 |
| Sun | 03-May-26 | Choir Rehearsal | 10:00am | Main Church |
| Sun | 03-May-26 | Sunday Worship with Holy Communion, led by The Revd. Chris Baker | 11:00am | Main Church |
| Mon | 04-May-26 | Downing Place URC Building Closed | All Day | -- |
| Tue | 05-May-26 | Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship | 2:30pm | St Athanasios' Church |
| Wed | 06-May-26 | Lunchtime Concert - Joanna Lam (piano) | 1:00pm | Main Church |
| Wed | 06-May-26 | Concrete Rose Care Leavers Hub | 4:00pm | The Hub |

MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE IN APRIL



*Fulbourn United Reformed Church
- taken by Jess Uden*

5 April

Janet Tollington – Bassingbourn URC
Chris Baker – Melbourn URC
Elizabeth Caswell – Sawston URC

12 April

Janet Tollington – Abbey Lane URC, Saffron Walden
Elizabeth Caswell – Stetchworth and Cheveley URC

19 April

Janet Tollington – Salisbury URC
David Thompson – Fulbourn URC

26 April

Janet Tollington – Lion Walk URC, Colchester
David Thompson – St Luke's Church
Chris Baker – Fenstanton URC
Elizabeth Caswell – Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds
David Cornick – Melbourn URC
Penny Flynn – Bassingbourn URC

LECTIONARY FOR APRIL

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.



Image from Canva Pro: JTGrafix

5 April

(Easter Day)

Acts 10:34-43 or
Jeremiah 31:1-6
Psalm 118:1-2,14-24
Colossians 3:1-4 or
Acts 10:34-43
John 20:1-18 or
Matthew 28:1-10

12 April

(Easter 2)

Acts 2:14a,22-32
Psalm 16
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

19 April

(Easter 3)

Acts 2:14a,36-41
Psalm 116:1-4,12-19
1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

26 April

(Easter 4)

Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10



Squill flowers taken by Jess Uden

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ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

Please send items to the Editor and Jess Uden

- preferably by email (see above)

WEB EDITOR: Jess Uden jess@downingplaceurc.org

Please send items to be included in the May edition
no later than **Friday 17th April 2026**