



**DOWNING PLACE  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
CAMBRIDGE**

# **PLACE MATTERS**



**ISSUE 79  
MARCH 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*



*February snowdrops at Churchill College - taken by Judy*

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

It is, of necessity, the chosen lot of the editor of a monthly magazine always to be 'looking ahead', so that all the contributions are "safely gathered in" in good time. The assembly of all the text and images into a coherent publication is like fitting together the pieces of a jigsaw. I'm grateful to Jess for her monthly solutions of those puzzles: I've only done it once myself, and even that was one too many!



*King's College, Cambridge*

*- RB Photo on Flickr*

As I write, it's 16<sup>th</sup> February, with pancake day tomorrow, and preparation for Lent. Then Ash Wednesday. My very first visit to Cambridge, as a 16-year-old cyclist, was, quite by chance, on an Ash Wednesday. As a member of my east London parish church choir, I'd heard that there was a rather good choir at King's College. So, having checked in at the YHA in Tenison Road, I made my way to King's for evensong – and for my first, and

most magical, encounter with the Allegri *Miserere*. I've tried to relive that experience every Ash Wednesday since moving to Cambridge over 40 years ago. I'm sure that the queue outside the chapel was considerably shorter when I was 16 ...

I want to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to the Downing Place members, lay and ordained, who agreed to my request to join the *Place Matters* 'in vacancy substitutes' team – writing a letter to readers, as Nigel Uden did so faithfully before his retirement. It's tempting to list all of them, beginning with Elizabeth Caswell last September. As you'll see, it's Chris Baker this month, asking "What's in a name?"

One of the joyful privileges of editing the Downing Place URC magazine is recourse to church members and friends with knowledge and expertise of many kinds, and I'm grateful when they take up my invitations to tell us about, to explain, something of current local, national or international interest. Now, listening recently to the 10 past 8 Sunday service on Radio 4, I learned that this year we celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> centenary of the publication of William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, and that it was not well received by 'the church' at that time ... Tyndale wrote, "If God spare my life, 'ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know the scripture". I grew up with the King James Version of the Bible, heavily infused with Tyndale's plain, yet at

times so poetic, use of English. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was *with* God, and the Word *was* God”. [Editor’s emphases!]

I contacted Robert Pope to ask whether he might write something about William Tyndale: his life, his achievements, and his lasting influence on the English language, for the March issue. Robert kindly agreed – so read on, dear reader.

*Tim Rowland*, Editor, Downing Place URC *Place Matters*

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## LETTER FROM A MINISTER: What’s in a Name?

Dear Friends

What’s in a name? What IS a name? Traditionally a name lets us distinguish one person from another. Well, that’s fine unless you happen to have a name as common as mine. The local bookshop in Ely has at least five customers called ‘Chris Baker’ on their mailing list and so, if they need to find me in their system, I usually need to give them some extra means of identity. Actually, what got me thinking on these lines was a notice in the latest issue of Reform Magazine about a day long symposium to debate what lies behind reports of revival of Christianity in the UK. It is to be held at Westminster College on 21st March, and I noticed that one of the speakers is to be the theologian, Prof Chris Baker. Hey folks, it’s not me! I don’t fly in those circles, but I rejoice in the belief that he and I have much in common with each other and with you. We are, by the grace of God, members of the Church, members of the Kingdom and as such we share a name - Christians.

Back in 1967, the Congregational Church in England and Wales issued a declaration of Faith. It is a lengthy document but right near the start there is a sentence which I treasure.

*We maintain our Church life in dissent from the Church of England, and we have the specific name, Congregationalist, in addition to that of Christian; but this is of secondary importance, and we would be glad if we could be **Christian without further label.** (my emphasis)*

And we can. A few months ago I arrived home from church to find a parcel at the back gate. It had the correct address, but I wasn’t the addressee. I discovered the parcel was meant for a near neighbour, so she was contacted. A little later she came to collect the parcel and as she turned to walk away, I read on her t-shirt across her back, *By the grace of God I am what I am. (1 Corinthians 15. 10)* You will not be surprised to hear that we got talking and she suddenly asked ‘So,

are you a Christian too?' I mumbled something about being a retired minister but yes, I AM A CHRISTIAN TOO.

Again, if I may draw on Reform Magazine, in the article 'Generation Church' Lindsey Brown writes:

*We have seen in young people a new interest and confidence in faith, and willingness to articulate it. Musicians, sports people, writers and actors have all spoken publicly about their faith, and have not been ridiculed or torn down as they might have been twenty years ago. As a guest of Youth Executive last year, it was a wake-up call to me to see almost every hand go up when I asked who felt comfortable talking about Jesus to friends. It was confirmation that my generation is lagging behind, and young Christians are often in a very different place, ready to be open about who they are and what they believe.*

Isn't that exciting? Young people comfortable and willing to talk about Jesus and what they believe.

In our Discussion Groups this Lent we are making little excursions into what we believe. We read in Numbers 6.24-27 how God gave to Moses the words of a blessing Aaron and his sons were to use. 'They are to invoke my name on the Israelites, and I shall bless them'. In those days it was thought of as a means of conveying power to the people. I sometimes wonder what we make of the blessing at the end of our services today. Does it have any meaning? Does it convey any influence or power? Or is it just a neat way of bringing a service to its conclusion? Perhaps we could fit that into our discussions one week.

Writing to the Philippians, Paul describes the joys and challenges of life in Christ - the joys and challenges of being a Christian. Then, in the second chapter we find a passage which is probably a very early hymn which Paul shares with us. It describes the humility of Christ, his obedience, and his suffering, and then it declares that 'God raised Jesus to the heights and bestowed on him the **name above all** names that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow - in heaven, on earth, and in the depths - and every tongue acclaim "Jesus Christ is Lord" to the glory of God the father'. It is a glorious vision: when or how it will come about, we cannot know. William Fullerton picks up that uncertainty in his hymn (Rejoice and Sing 265). But amid all the uncertainties each verse of the hymn declares 'But this I know ... the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here'.

This is our joy, our confidence, our faith and so with humility we are glad to claim the name of Christian. So be it.

*Chris Baker*

## REMEMBERING WILLIAM TYNDALE



This year, the five hundredth anniversary of the first publication of William Tyndale's New Testament in English will be celebrated. He undertook the work under the conviction not only that scripture contains the Word of God, but that it was necessary to read, or listen to, the Word in order that someone might be saved. He dedicated his life to the project, but it remained unfinished at his death.

We know very little about Tyndale's early years. He was born around 1494 in Melksham Court, Stinchcombe, near Dursley, Gloucestershire. He studied in Oxford from 1506, at Magdalen Hall (later Hertford College). Typical of the time, he studied Classics. He learnt Greek and taught himself Hebrew, eventually mastering eight languages. He graduated BA in 1512 and MA in 1515, and thereafter he was permitted to study the Bible (he later ridiculed the idea that 'secular' education was needed before scripture could be understood). By 1517 he was in Cambridge, and stayed until 1521 when he returned to Gloucestershire as chaplain to the family of Sir John Walsh at Little Sodbury Manor.

Though considered a good preacher, he soon fell foul of the church hierarchy, who seemed less interested in disseminating bibles than in maintaining their own authority. A charge of heretical teaching, tried by the Chancellor of Worcestershire, was eventually dropped, but to establishment figures Tyndale remained a fanatic. They opposed not his zeal for the Bible but his apparent indifference (even hostility) to certain church teachings, especially episcopal authority. In 1523 he went to London, expecting a warmer reception, but he found only disappointment. He left for the continent and never returned, though he pined for home ever after.

In 1526, Tyndale's translation of the New Testament was published; a revised version appeared in 1534 along with a translation of the first five books of the Old Testament. Tyndale's sentences were crisp and compact, redolent with ordinary speech rather than the language of the scholars. It was a Testament for the people. His translations entered common parlance and helped develop the modern English language. Among such phrases Melvyn Bragg counts: 'the last shall be first and the first shall be last', 'the heat of the day', 'for many are called but few are chosen', 'o ye of little faith', 'a prophet is not without honour', 'Am I my brother's keeper', 'the fat of the land', even 'let there be light'. Their familiarity obscures Tyndale's genius; he did not just use these phrases - he coined them. Estimates put around 83% of the New Testament and 76% of the

Pentateuch of the 1611 King James Bible as directly dependent on Tyndale's translations.

For more than a decade, Tyndale lived in the Netherlands, hiding from the Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Emperor and the English King. Though declared a heretic by Cardinal Wolsey in January 1529, it remains ambiguous as to whether his work translating the Bible was the sole cause of danger to him. John Wycliffe's translation of the Vulgate into Middle English [*see note 1*] already existed, though it lacked Tyndale's common touch, and had brought the charge of heresy on the translators. Miles Coverdale – a former assistant to Tyndale – published an English Bible in 1535 without threat to his life, while the so-called Matthew Bible appeared in 1537. Later that year, Thomas Cromwell ordered all churches to buy a copy of the Bible in English and the Great Bible was licensed by the King in 1539 [*note 2*]. However, Henry VIII remained unconvinced. An Act of 1543 prohibited 'women, artificers, apprentices, husbandmen, labourers' and others from reading the Bible because they could not be trusted to understand it. Nevertheless, Tyndale was in danger, primarily because of his opposition to the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon and his criticism of episcopacy in the Church.

Together, these actions sealed his fate. Betrayed by the dissolute Henry Phillips, Tyndale was imprisoned for sixteen months in the Vilvoorde Castle near Brussels. In August 1536 he was formally and publicly defrocked. On 6 October, much weakened by his years in exile, his time in hiding and his incarceration, he was taken to the town square, strangled and his body burned. His final words were reputed to be 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes!'

Tyndale was a humble and studious man of perhaps unexpected courage. His influence on the English language, though not always acknowledged, was significant. But this was an unintended consequence of the deep motivation of his heart that the people of England should gain saving knowledge of the gospel by having the scriptures in their own language, written in a familiar and intelligible style. It is right that we honour his life and legacy.

Some detail taken from Melvyn Bragg, *William Tyndale: A Very Brief History* (London: SPCK, 2017).

### *Robert Pope*

1. The Vulgate was a Latin translation of the Bible, largely the work of Jerome in the fourth century, so called because of its 'common use'. What is called 'Middle English' existed roughly in the period between 1066 and the late fifteenth century when early English dialects (what is now called 'Old English') were modified as a result of the Norman invasion. Today, Chaucer is perhaps the best-known writer of Middle English.

From around the end of the fifteenth century, ‘Early Modern English’ developed. Tyndale contributed to this development, as did Shakespeare.

2. Coverdale’s Bible was largely a translation of the Vulgate. The Matthew Bible (produced by John Rogers under the pseudonym Thomas Matthew) comprised Tyndale’s translation. The Great Bible was produced by Coverdale but it used Tyndale’s work alongside the Vulgate and German translations including that of Luther.

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## DOWNING PLACE URC: PRACTISING STEWARDSHIP



Ever since the formation of Downing Place in 2018, we have often spoken about growth: growth in our own personal discipleship, growth in numbers, growth in our financial resources and growth in the scope and extent of our service to others. But never before have we brought all that together in one campaign. Now, the Elders believe, is the time, the time

for what we are calling a “stewardship campaign”.

To that end the Elders established a Stewardship Campaign Planning group comprising: Alan Rickard, Margaret Thompson, Alison Binney, David Tatem, Stephen Thompson, and myself as convenor. Here is a flavour of what we intend to do.

At the heart of stewardship is a way of recognising that all we have comes from God – our time, our abilities, our possessions, our money and indeed our very lives. “the earth is the Lord’s and everything in” says the Psalmist. But we won’t just be exhorting you all to give more of each of these without good reason. That reason is so that we can fulfil our vision as a church.

We have been blessed with our beautiful, visible, accessible, versatile, welcoming and inclusive building, right in the midst of the city. The Church’s investment in music and audiovisual technology has helped to draw people in, as well as extending worship to those unable to join in person. The life and mission of the Church, of course, extend far beyond Sunday worship, for example through a committed network of pastoral care, and through weekday activities that support vulnerable people. Our Church has become a place of refuge and sanctuary to those fleeing war, as well as those rebuilding their lives after addiction or loss. In all of this, we recognise that everything that we have comes from God. We are called, then, to live generously as followers of Christ, as a

people of compassion, justice and hope. This is why we are launching this campaign.

When I say “launch” don’t expect the fanfare of a launch date. Indeed, those of us fortunate enough to have been at Downing Place on 25th January and heard Janet Tollington speak powerfully about the financial aspects of stewardship, and Augur Pearce speak from personal experience about the importance of volunteering, might conclude that the campaign is already well underway.

[*Editor* – readers can (re-)visit Janet’s sermon by following the 25th January link at [Sermons - Downing Place URC](#) ]

The campaign will invite each of us to reflect prayerfully on how we share in the life and mission of our church. That does include how we give financially, but it also embraces the ways we offer our time in service, use our gifts for the good of others, and support one another in love. Stewardship is not about meeting a target or placing burdens on consciences; rather, it is about discipleship — living generously as followers of Christ.

That said, we will start with a focus on financial giving, moving on later in the year to a focus on service and volunteering. We have decided on this approach for two practical reasons. Firstly, despite successful efforts by the Elders and the finance committee to reduce our annual financial deficit by cutting our expenditure, we are still not yet at financial break even. The quicker we deal with this, the more confident we can become that we can realise our vision. Secondly, each of us has a limited amount of time to devote to this campaign and by spreading it across the year will make that manageable.

In the coming weeks, Downing Place URC members and friends will receive a letter explaining much more. Watch this space.

*Stephen Thornton* February 2026

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## **BARON WALLACE OF TANKERNESS (1954 - 2026)**

Jim Wallace died in hospital in Edinburgh on Thursday 29th January 2026, at the age of 71. He was born on 12th August 1954, in Annan, Dumfriesshire, growing up with an interest in both religion and politics. His father was an accountant and elder in the Church of Scotland. He studied economics and law at Cambridge and became an advocate at the Scottish Bar after a degree in law at Edinburgh. He served as Moderator of the Church of Scotland from 2021 to 2022.

From 1983 he was MP for Orkney and Shetland for 18 years, succeeding Jo Grimond. He became leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats at Westminster in

1992. He went on to lead the Scottish Lib Dems in the first Holyrood elections in 1999 as MSP for the Orkney constituency. He was best known as Holyrood's first Deputy First Minister after devolution, from 1999 to 2005, stepping in on three occasions as acting First Minister. He became a life peer in 2007 and went on to serve as Advocate General for Scotland for the UK government from 2010 to 2015.

Lord Wallace was an undergraduate at Downing College in the 1970s, and worshipped at St Columba's Church. He made his profession of faith during those years, nourished by the ministry of the Revd Ronald Speirs, and the warm embrace of the congregation. During his moderatorial year, shortly after we returned to the renewed premises, we were pleased and privileged to welcome him to Downing Place Church, with Lady Rosie Wallace, his wife.



Some older members of our church will remember Louie Wallace, Jim's aunt by marriage. David Thomas was her elder. She was a regular worshipper at St Columba's for many years while living at Guest Road and later at Alliance Court.

Jim Wallace's funeral was held on Tuesday 10th February in St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney. It can be viewed on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tX9hgzNYz8>

*Alan Rickard*

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## AN INSIGHT INTO OUR RECENT JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS



Can you make a connection between Micah 6.8 and sausage dogs?

On the first Sunday in February we thought about all the things new to us in January. M can crawl, A can say more words, G has started yoga, Si has won a game of rugby, J and T have been to France and Sa has been riding a new bike. Others have been doing 'normal stuff'. We had some Christmas crackers left over from prayers before Christmas.

Inside were sausage dogs. They could go fast or slowly. We were able to race them. We could plan how they could go. It was very noisy! The older group went

to the Hub to think more quietly. The littlest ones played with toys. Everyone else thought about living in February. What did Micah say about how God hoped we would live? We had some ideas about that. Half term was coming soon. Some were going to Northumberland, or skiing or having visitors. We would all try to live in God's way.

On Sunday 22 February, Junior Church read the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We discussed how the serpent had deceived Eve with a half truth and played a game of identifying a half truth and 2 truths from 3 statements. Together, the children then created a picture in which you can probably spot Adam and Eve, their fig leaves, a fruit tree and the serpent.

*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.*

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## 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.

**25 February 2026**, 10am – Diss United Reformed Church, Norfolk, IP22 4AD

**16 March 2026**, 6:30pm – St Ives Free Church, Cambridgeshire, PE27 5AL

**21 March 2026**, 10am – Castle Hill United Reformed Church, Suffolk, IP1 6QF

**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](mailto:Emma.Pierce@urc.org.uk)

The following modules are currently available:

Tuesday 3 March 7.00pm – Elders as Trustees

Thursday 5 March 1.00pm – DDC Verifiers training and safer recruitment

Monday 23 March 1.00pm – Substance Abuse

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](mailto:Helen.bell37@gmail.com)

*Lorraine Thornton, Deputy* [lorrainethornton@aol.com](mailto:lorrainethornton@aol.com)

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## ‘POWER STATION’ - FILM & Q&A

6:30pm-9:30pm on Monday 23 March

Department of Engineering, Trumpington Street, CB2 1PZ

Pre-screening community meal, 6:30pm-7:15pm.

Film & Q&A, 7:15pm- 9:30pm

Dan Edelstyn and Hilary Powell’s masterpiece ‘Power Station’ film documentary about their neighbourhood solar project provides tips on how to bring solar to your own neighbourhood. A vibrant community-led initiative is transforming a Walthamstow street, bringing the power of solar PV to everyone—from social housing residents and owner-occupiers to the local primary school. Born from inspiring lockdown solidarity and fuelled by creative, 'madcap' fundraising schemes, proving that sustainable energy can be a colourful, communal celebration. This is a powerful social documentary of life in our times, charting the emotional ups and downs of herding cats and dealing with financial woes, with echoes of Ealing Comedy. The Q&A panel will include local MP Katie Thornborough and Tom Cox of Decent Energy. Join us for a light meal before the screening and a chance to meet Cambridgeshire community groups for more information on how you can engage in a solar project in your neighbourhood.

Cambridge Retrofit Hub & Centre for Climate Repair, Cambridge  
Zero, Transition Cambridge Energy Group & Cambridge Carbon Footprint.

## DOWNING PLACE URC MONTHLY SPECIAL CAUSE FOR MARCH 2026



Charities complement what the NHS can provide. Dementia UK is a specialist dementia nursing charity. Its specialist nurses, called Admiral Nurses, provide life-changing advice and support, tailored to individuals, their carers and their families, giving them reassurance, understanding and a listening ear, so that no-one has to face dementia alone.

*Robert Smith writes:* I have personal experience of being a carer. My late wife Eleanor was first diagnosed in 2015 with Mild Cognitive Impairment. The consultant said that we shouldn't worry because only about 10% of people with MCI go on to develop dementia. Sadly, Eleanor was one of the 10%. Progress was slow at first, and it was three or four years before her symptoms became enough to interfere significantly with daily life. I didn't think at the time about involving a dementia charity, but I now realise that it would have been very helpful to do so. However, I chose to care for her at home, with lots of support from our daughters, and later on with carers coming in several times a week to give me a break. As her symptoms progressed, caring for her took up more and more of my time and energy, and in the end, I felt so exhausted that we put her into an excellent local care home towards the end of January 2022. She settled well and the staff liked her – she was always friendly and smiling. I visited two or three times a week, but sadly she had already lost the ability to communicate. I grew to admire the way she would say something, all in grammatical English, but with the key word in the sentence a nonsense word! This all changed at the end of May, when she stopped talking, had two short visits to hospital and died in the morning of Sunday 26th June 2022. This was my experience, but everyone with dementia is different – some never talk, others talk sense through it all, some, like Eleanor, are friendly and smiling, others get angry and aggressive.

### WAYS OF GIVING TO OUR SPECIAL CAUSE

- Monthly Retiring Collection on Sunday 15 March (cash, cheque or card)
- Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts (cash or card)
- Direct to the church bank account (reference SPECIAL CAUSE)
- Via our [website](#) - the 'Donate' button is on the homepage, just below the 'Welcome' section. Select Special Donations as the fund
- Directly to [Dementia UK](#) via their website

# NIGERIA



*I will give you rest, come*

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



Friday 6th March, 10.30am

St Bene't's Church,

Cambridge, CB2 3PT

*A service for everyone!*

Refreshments will be available afterwards

# Come & Sing

## MATTHEW COLERIDGE

# REQUIEM

*directed by the composer*

*"A modern choral classic"*

CLASSIC *f*M

*"A great force for good in the choral world"*

Alexander Armstrong

*"Reaches into the soul and lifts it skyward"*

BBC MUSIC  
MAGAZINE



7th Mar **Downing Place URC** [www.matthewcoleridge.com/cambridge](http://www.matthewcoleridge.com/cambridge)

## A performance of

# MATTHEW COLERIDGE

# REQUIEM

*directed by the composer,  
as part of the Come & Sing event,  
with music also from the Alarka Trio*

**4.15 - 5.45pm**

[www.matthewcoleridge.com/cambridge](http://www.matthewcoleridge.com/cambridge)

Matthew Coleridge's **Requiem** is a modern choral classic, and the composer himself will lead this special day of singing, in aid of **Birmingham Children's Hospital**.

After an uplifting and inspiring day of rehearsals, we'll give a concert performance of this stunning music, accompanied by organ and solo cello.

For more information, to take part or for tickets for the performance, please go to [www.matthewcoleridge.com](http://www.matthewcoleridge.com)

# LUNCHTIME CONCERT

SUNDAY 15 MARCH, 12.45 - 1.15PM

*"The Sorcerer's  
Apprentice"  
with 'live' video  
and poetry.*



Ian de Massini - Organ  
Jennifer Bastable - Narrator

Free of charge with a retiring collection



KNIT ONE  
GIVE ONE



## AN EASTER SALE OF KNITTED ITEMS & BRIC-A-BRAC

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March,  
10.30am - 2.30pm

The Hub, Downing Place URC

*Raising funds for the  
Sallymay International Prep School, Sierra Leone  
& East Anglia Children's Hospice*





Cambridge  
Action Group

# Spring Supper and Presentation

**'He has no voice but ours'**



**Friday 27 March 2026,  
6.30pm for supper,  
7.45pm talk**

Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan  
Way, Cambridge CB1 8QN  
parking available

Supper cost £10.00 (cash on the door)  
homemade soups, bread, cheese and a  
homemade dessert

Please email [penny.f.flynn@gmail.com](mailto:penny.f.flynn@gmail.com) to  
reserve a supper place or for the live-stream  
link.

***'How I use drama and monologue in a faith  
context'***

**Speaker: Jane Bower**

Jane Bower is a long-term member of the United Reformed Church, and an elder of Downing Place Church, Cambridge. Her love of the arts led her from general primary teaching to become a specialist practitioner with 4-11 year olds.

For many years, Jane worked freelance as Arts Adviser in schools and other settings. A professional actress since 1999, Jane devises, writes and performs her own solo shows about remarkable individuals of the past.

As a teacher, Jane found that in many ways she needed to be a monologue artist, and is equally fascinated in how Jesus used spaces, speech, imagination, description and evocation in his teaching. Ministers began asking Jane to provide monologues for church services, usually about particular Bible characters or incidents.

She then began to explore other people of the Bible in her own writing. Who were they? What did they say? What did they feel?

We look forward to finding out ....

## MARCH DIARY

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	01-Mar-26	Choir Rehearsal	10.00am	Main Church
Sun	01-Mar-26	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion, led by The Rev. Elizabeth Caswell	11:00am	Main Church
Mon	02-Mar-26	Officers' Meeting	10:15am	Room 3
Mon	02-Mar-26	World Church & Public Issues Group	7.30pm	Online
Tues	03-Mar-26	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2.30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	04-Mar-26	Lunchtime Concert - Armando Sabbarese (piano)	1:00pm	Church
Wed	04-Mar-26	Property Management Group	7:00pm	Online
Thu	05-Mar-26	Midweek Worship led by Penny Flynn	11:00am	Main Church
Thu	05-Mar-26	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	05-Mar-26	Lent House Group	2pm	Rooms 1&2
Thu	05-Mar-26	Lent House Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Sat	07-Mar-26	Come and Sing - Matthew Coleridge Requiem	9:30am	Main Church
Sat	07-Mar-26	Come and Sing Performance	4:15pm	Main Church
Sun	08-Mar-26	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Main Church
Sun	08-Mar-26	Sunday Worship for All Ages, led by Mr Richard Lewney	11:00am	Main Church
Sun	08-Mar-26	Church Lunch	12.30pm	Gibson Hall
Tue	10-Mar-26	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2.30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Tue	10-Mar-26	Worship, Discipleship & Spirituality Group Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	11-Mar-26	Lunchtime Concert - Harriet Flather (clarinet) & Jennifer Walsh (piano)	1:00pm	Main Church

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Wed	11-Mar-26	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Main Church dais
Thu	12-Mar-26	Prayer Meeting	10:15am	Chapel
Thu	12-Mar-26	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Reverend Professor David Thompson	11:00am	Main Church
Thu	12-Mar-26	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	12-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	2:00pm	Rooms 1&2
Thu	12-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	7:30pm	Zoom
Sat	14-Mar-26	Synod	All Day	Christ Church, Braintree
Sat	14-Mar-26	Online Prayer Vigil	12:00pm	Zoom
Sun	15-Mar-26	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Main Church
Sun	15-Mar-26	Sunday Worship, led by The Rev. Richard Church	11:00am	Main Church
Sun	15-Mar-26	Retiring Collection for Monthly Special Cause	12:00pm	Main Church
Sun	15-Mar-26	Ian de Massini - organ recital (The Sorcerer's Apprentice)	12:45pm	Main Church
Sun	15-Mar-26	Open Table service	6:00pm	Main Church
Mon	16-Mar-26	Finance Group	7:00pm	Room 3
Tue	17-Mar-26	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2.30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	18-Mar-26	Knit One Give One Easter Table Top Sale	10:30am	The Hub
Wed	18-Mar-26	Lunchtime Concert - Veronica Henderson (cello) & Kristin Samadi (piano)	1:00pm	Main Church
Thu	19-Mar-26	Knit One Give One Easter Table Top Sale	10:30am	The Hub
Thu	19-Mar-26	Midweek Worship Led by Dr Alan Rickard	11:00am	Main Church
Thu	19-Mar-26	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Thu	19-Mar-26	Gibson Lunch	12:30pm	Gibson Hall
Thu	19-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	2:00pm	Rooms 1&2
Thu	19-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	7:30pm	Zoom
Sun	22-Mar-26	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Main Church
Sun	22-Mar-26	Sunday Worship, led by The Rev. Dr David Cornick	11.00am	Main Church
Sun	22-Mar-26	Church Meeting	12:30pm	Main Church
Sun	22-Mar-26	Solidarity Hub	6:00pm	The Hub
Mon	23-Mar-26	Officers' Meeting	10:15am	Room 3
Tue	24-Mar-26	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	25-Mar-26	Lunchtime Concert - Galina Umanskaya (piano)	1:00pm	Main Church
Thu	26-Mar-26	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Reverend David Tatem	11:00am	Main Church
Thu	26-Mar-26	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Thu	26-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	2:00pm	Rooms 1&2
Thu	26-Mar-26	Lent House Groups	7:30pm	Zoom
Sun	29-Mar-26	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Main Church
Sun	29-Mar-26	Palm Sunday Worship, led by The Rev. Professor David Thompson	11:00am	Main Church
Tue	31-Mar-26	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship - Easter Service	2:30pm	St Athanasios' Church
Wed	1-April-26	Lunchtime Concert - Nigel Blomiley (cello)	1:00pm	Main Church
Thu	2-April-26	Midweek Worship on Maundy Thursday with the Reverend Elizabeth Caswell	11:00am	Main Church
Sun	5-April-26	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Main Church
Sun	5-April-26	Easter Sunday Worship with Holy Communion, led by The Rev. Deborah McVey	11:00am	Main Church

# MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE IN MARCH



## **1 March**

David Cornick – Bassingbourn URC

Penny Flynn – Melbourn URC

## **8 March**

Chris Baker – St Ives URC

Janet Tollington – Buntingford URC

## **15 March**

Penny Flynn – Thaxted URC

Janet Tollington – St Neot's URC

## **22 March**

David Thompson – St Luke's Church

Chris Baker – Christchurch, Newmarket

David Tatem – Melbourn URC

Elizabeth Caswell – Fulbourn URC

Janet Tollington – Stetchworth & Cheveley URC

## **29 March**

Penny Flynn – Fulbourn URC

Janet Tollington – St Andrew's, Peterborough

# LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

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.

## 1 March

*(Lent 2)*

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 121

Romans 4:1-5,13-17

John 3:1-17

## 22 March

*(Lent 5)*

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalms 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

## 8 March

*(Lent 3)*

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalms 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

## 29 March

*(Palm Sunday)*

Matthew 21:1-11

Psalms 118:1-2,19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14 –27:66

## 15 March

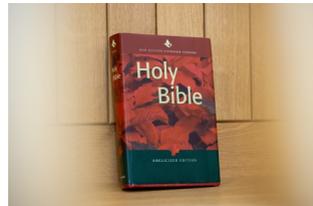
*(Lent 4)*

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41



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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](mailto:jess@downingplaceurc.org)

Please send items to be included in the March edition  
no later than **Wednesday 18th March 2026**