

NEWS

From



United Reformed Churches

of



Romsey



Braishfield



DECEMBER 2023 / JANUARY 2024

Abbey United Reformed Church

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

Minister	Revd Mike Perrott MA e-mail: revd.mike13@gmail.com	01794 512163 Day off: Monday
Secretary	Andy Bevan e-mail: andybevan1@btinternet.com	07483 319618
Assistant Secretary	Carole Cox	01794 518184
Finance	Peter Walsh Reg Powell	01794 502109 01794 512238
Gift Aid	Carole Cox	01794 518184
Serving Elders	Sylvia Anderson-Lewis Andy Bevan Howard Coulson Val Lloyd	Sarah Beaman Wai Chan Carole Cox
Braishfield	Shirley Smith	Allison Symes
Magazine Team	contact at: abbeyurcnews@gmail.com	
Church Caretaker	Angela Wolfe 1 Abbey Water, Romsey	01794 517746

Services

Sunday Family Worship	10.30am
Midweek Communion 4 th Thursday in Abbey Hall Lounge	10.30am
Monthly Bible Study first Sunday evening On Zoom (ID: 864 1780 6994 Password: learning)	6.30pm

Weekday Meetings – any updates will be on our worship sheet

Monday (2 nd)	BALM (Bereavement) Group	10.30am
Tuesday	Refreshments and warm space. Open to all, in Abbey Hall Lounge.	9.00am- 10.30am
Wednesday (1 st 3 rd)	Church Table Tennis	2.30pm

For baptisms, weddings or funerals please contact the Minister

Christmas

AT ABBEY URC

SUNDAY, 3 DECEMBER AT 10.30AM

Morning Worship and Toy Service - bring new toys between 10am-12.30pm on Saturday, 2 December, or on the day, for collection by Southampton Social Services.

SUNDAY, 3 DECEMBER AT 4.30PM

Advent Carol service, the start of the Season that leads us in reflection and preparation as we head towards Christ's birth

SATURDAY, 23 DECEMBER AT 6.30PM

Carols by Candlelight - a special evening of carols and lessons. It is a special evening, made even more magical by the candlelight.

SUNDAY, 24 DECEMBER AT 3.00PM

All welcome to story time for under 8s, "Twas the Night after Christmas". Dress as characters from the Christmas story, if you wish.

SUNDAY, 24 DECEMBER AT 11.00PM

Social time with mince pies and a warm drink before the 11.30pm Midnight Communion service.

MONDAY, 25 DECEMBER AT 10.30AM

Join us to celebrate Christmas day, all welcome



A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

December 2023

Dear friends in Christ,

Several years ago, I shared with you about how I had been searching through the YouTube website for the well-known Advent carol *O come, O come, Emanuel*. There are so many versions of it, from traditional choir renditions to worship groups in churches with a more contemporary feel. I also investigated the origins of this beautiful antiphon that was traditionally sung in monasteries by monks during vespers (the evening prayer) on the days leading up to Christmas from 17 to 23 December. The original *O Emanuel* version of the carol is more than 1,200 years old but the version we sing is an 1861 adaptation by John Mason Neale, who translated it from the original Latin.

The carol is almost a plea, a calling of the people of God for the coming of the Messiah, Christ Jesus. Jesus is referred to in various ways, using images from the Old Testament including Emanuel (Isaiah 7:14); the 'root' of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1); Key of David (Isaiah 22:22) and literally in verse three 'East' in Latin, for the 'Dayspring' which refers to the sunrise over the eastern horizon (Malachi 4:2).

Now those of you who like word puzzles and solving mysteries might well know what an 'acrostic' is. It is a phrase or poem where a letter in each line spells out another word vertically. For example:

For God so **L**oved the world
That he gave his **o**nly begotten Son
That whoever belie**v**es in him will not die
But have **e**ternal life
(John 3:16)

Did you know that the Advent carol *O come, O come Emanuel* has a hidden message? In fact, it contains a reverse acrostic!

The first letter of the titles for Jesus would have been heavily decorated in the manuscripts the monks sung from in church, and it would have been clear to them that, if you take the first letter of the titles for Jesus from the verses of the carol in reverse you could see them shining out from the text (in the original Latin):

E manuel	=	'God with us' (verse 7)
R ex	=	King
O riens	=	East ('Day spring' - sunrise in the east)
C lavis	=	Key (of David)
R adix	=	Root (of Jesse)
A donai	=	Lord (of might)
S apientia	=	Wisdom (from on high) (verse 2)

Read together they spell out 'Ero Cras' which means literally, "I will be tomorrow". Isn't that amazing! It is as though, after the fervent calling for the coming of God with us "O come, o come ...", Jesus responds "I will be tomorrow"!

Advent is a time of patiently waiting for the coming of Emanuel, God with us, as foretold by prophets so long ago as the coming of the King, Lord, Root of Jesse, Dayspring of new dawn. How badly we need light in the darkness, especially with so much conflict and injustice making the lives of so many so unpredictable, so painful, so lonely.

How much more important it is this year, then, that we look for the coming of Jesus once again to bring peace, comfort and joy! Let us pray this Advent for a renewed sense of God's presence with us, in the whole world, as we anticipate the birth of Jesus, Emanuel, God with us once again this Christmas. You may like to explore different versions of *O come, O come, Emanuel* on YouTube, or on CDs as we call for Jesus to be born with us again. [Here](#) is a link to particular favourite of mine by Jim Moray.



Marie and I pray that you have a joyful Christmas and a fulfilled new year where our individual, family and church lives will be renewed and strengthened, in Jesus' name.

In Christian love, **Mike**

"That Little Teashop"




Est. 2004

48a The Hundred, Romsey

Breakfast, Light Bites, Cakes, Desserts, Coffee & Beverages

Plus the Famous Bottomless Teapot for £1pp





25 Church Street, Romsey
Tel: 01794 512194
shop@oasisromsey.co.uk
www.oasisromsey.co.uk

More than a bookshop.....

9.30am – 4.30pm Monday – Friday

9am – 4pm Saturday

**Third world crafts - CDs/DVDs and greetings cards
Fairtrade foods - Church resources - Scout & Guide uniform**

BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible study and discussion group will take place on the following dates at 6.30 pm on Zoom (ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning). All welcome!

10 December: Advent Bible study led by Derek H

17 December: Advent Bible study led by Revd Mike

7 January 2024: Bible study led by Revd Mike



Family Owned Funeral Directors

*Serving Romsey and district for
over 100 years and through three
generations of the Peace family*

Private Chapel of Rest
24 Hour Service

122 The Hundred, Romsey

Email: peace@ahcheater.co.uk

www.ahcheater.co.uk

Tel: 01794 518393

Personal attention from **Simon & Michael
Peace** and their experienced team

5 Rownhams Road, North Baddesley

Email: northbaddesley@ahcheater.co.uk

Tel: 02382358860

Personal attention from **Graham Lusty**



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

This year Abbey URC Carols by Candlelight service is being held slightly differently. This lovely service, with the church lit by candlelight and filled with music, anticipation and joyful praise, has moved from Sunday evening, to **Saturday evening, 23 December at 6.30pm.**



The draw for the Christmas hamper will be held just before our Carols by Candlelight – after the service you could be going home with a special Christmas hamper! Please see the article elsewhere for full details. We look forward to seeing everyone at this special service.

TABLE TENNIS

The final meetings this year for table tennis will be held on 29 November and 13 December (2nd Wednesday in December). Meetings for 2024 will resume as normal on Wednesday, 3 January and continue on the first and third Wednesday each month at 2.30pm.

Wishing you a joy filled Christmas.

Alan G

JOIN US AT ABBEY URC TO WELCOME IN CHRISTMAS DAY



Please join us on 24 December to welcome in Christmas Day. This year the church will be open from 11pm for people to gather together for a warm drink and a mince pie prior to midnight communion.

The service will start at 11.30pm. At this special service we share communion and there is the lighting of the Christmas candle at the centre of the Christmas wreath. We look forward to seeing you. All are welcome.

MORNING PRAYER



If you would like to take the opportunity to reflect upon God's word and to pray for the needs of the world and the Church in your own time during the week, here are the Psalm and Gospel readings for December and January:

December

3	Psalm 80:1-7 and 17-19	Mark 13:24-37
10	Psalm 85:1-2 and 8-13	Mark 1:1-8
17	Psalm 126	John 1:6 and 19-28
24	Psalm 89:1-4 and 19-26	Luke 1:26-38

January

7	Psalm 29	Mark 1:4-11
14	Psalm 139:1-6 and 13-18	John 1:43-51
21	Psalm 62:5-12	Mark 1:14-20
28	Psalm 111	Mark 1:21-28

SKITTLES EVENING

Over 30 of us met up at Wellow Golf Club on 4 November for what has become an annual event. The Golf Club make us very welcome.

The standard of play was higher than usual and there was keen competition in some quarters. Winners were Jeremy and Kathleen. The raffle raised £105 for church funds.



Thank you to all who supported the evening, donated prizes and helped with scoring and picking up skittles. It will soon be time to book for next year.

Carole C

PRAYER FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Many people find it difficult to find a spirit of celebration when there is so much devastation wrought by wars and conflicts around the world, so many innocent people suffering.

I was reminded though, as I saw the Christmas tree in the Romsey Town Square, and the lights being strung across the streets, how important light is – it brings hope and reassurance and, for us as Christian, light has deep spiritual significance too – Jesus came to bring LIGHT to the world.

So, may God, who was born in Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace whose Advent and birth we await, bring light, peace and justice to all peoples as we celebrate Christmas.

Revd Mike

The URC offers this prayer (among others – see [HERE](#)) for public or private use following the outbreak of hostilities in Israel and Palestine. They may be freely used; no permission is needed.

In these desperate times, Lord, give strength to those who work for peace: diplomats and governments calling for restraint, the Red Cross offering to visit all who are detained, faith leaders proclaiming Your commandments in a world at war and peace lovers praying for justice.

Bind up the broken hearted, give grace to those seeking to end the spiral of violence, grant wisdom to those seeking peaceful ways to resolve age old conflicts; and give us the prayers, words, and perseverance needed to make our discipleship, our efforts for peace and justice count.

Amen

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Material for February 2024 to be submitted
by **2pm** (latest) on Sunday, 21 January 2024

Please email to abbeyurcnews@gmail.com

Alternatively, you could call Carole C, pop it in her letter box,
or leave in the pigeon-hole at the back of the church. Thank you.

THURSDAY COMMUNION

Our monthly Thursday Communion now takes place at 10.30am on the fourth Thursday of the month. We join together for a 25-minute informal service during which we share communion, then we have a general chat. There will be no Thursday Communion in December, but we next meet on 25 January - with refreshments! All welcome!



JANE SCARTH HOUSE



The Outreach Group have chosen Jane Scarth House to be our charity theme for the first quarter of 2024. Jane Scarth House is a local charity that provides emotional and practical support to anyone whose life is affected by cancer. This can be the person living with cancer, or a family member, close friend, carer or partner.

Jane Scarth House opened in 1995 and was founded in memory of Romsey resident and mother of two, Jane Scarth, whose family to this day remain closely involved with the work of the charity.

Jane Scarth House has assisted thousands of people and their families affected by cancer and has no geographical boundaries.

Their services, provided in a non-medical setting, range from Befriending and Counselling, to Meditation and other Complementary Therapies such as aromatherapy massage, reflexology, scar massage, Indian head massage, reiki and simple lymphatic drainage massage. They also have a wide range of information available, which covers many aspects of cancer and its emotional effects.

The centre is located at 37a The Hundred, Romsey. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9am–4pm and no appointment is needed. If you would like to find out more about the services provided, or are interested in supporting their work, details can be found on their website www.janescarthhouse.co.uk or call the centre on: 01794 830374.

A display about their services and history can also be found on the noticeboard at the back of church.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS!



Terry and Elizabeth send good wishes for Christmas and 2024 to all their friends at Romsey and Braishfield.

Christmas greetings from the Trustees and staff of Oasis. Thank you so much for your continued support in so many ways, not least prayer and financially. We are always happy to expand our little team, so quiz Rev. Perrot if you feel you can contribute to the Board (as a current Trustee, he can answer your questions.)



If you are still to do your Christmas shopping, it is not too late! We will be open late Friday 8th December with the rest of the town and have several bargains and unusual Fairly Traded gifts, Christmas cards from Leprosy Mission, Tearfund, Compassion and Foodbanks to name a few. God bless you.

Angie

We count our blessings for all that we have recently celebrated in 2023. It is the season of family birthdays, and, of course our 54th wedding anniversary. We are blessed indeed, that we are close by here, to enjoy all the family celebrations.

We rejoiced in being included in some very special days, with Christopher, Ayo and their family, including two very recent performances by the children at the Octagon Theatre and at the Rixon Theatre. Both venues are outstanding theatres, for performers and audiences alike!

Our latest piece of news to fill our hearts with great joy ... our eldest grandson, Lewis, has just been placed first in his class, with an A grade, ranked first, in Accounting and Finance in his second Semester, 2023 - it must be in his DNA!!

As we approach the Season of Advent and the close of the year 2023, we would like to send our greetings and Christmas wishes to all our friends, we left behind, in Abbey URC and Braishfield churches. May all of you experience the true wonder of Christmas and we ask that you all look forward to 2024, with renewed joy and hope for peace, love and true harmony across our broken world.



With every blessing and fondest love

Margaret and Ian xx

TOY SERVICE - SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER

This year we will again be supporting Southampton Social Services on 3 December, by providing a collection-point for new toys for the children and young people in Southampton who will be experiencing a very difficult Christmas. Colin McPherson will join our service to receive these gifts. If you wish to donate, please bring your gift either to Abbey URC on Saturday, 2 December between 10am-12.30pm or bring it with you to our service on Sunday, 3 December at 10.30am.



For the 34th year running Southampton City Council is calling on kind-hearted members of the community, businesses, and charities to donate toys for children of all ages from 0-18 who are supported by Southampton children's services. With more families struggling amidst the cost-of-living crisis, the toy appeal will be extending its support to children and families supported by other council services.

Toys, or suitable gifts for older young people, should be new; all gifts will be gratefully received. Gifts should be left unwrapped to make it easy to match gift and recipient.

Your support, as always, will be greatly appreciated, especially on Christmas Day by the children and young people who receive their gifts. Thank you.

Bradbeers

DEPARTMENT STORE
ROMSEY
Tel. 01794 515555

Bradbeers

FURNITURE STORE
HEDGE END
Tel. 01489 772777

www.bradbeers.com

THANK YOU

Thank you for the flowers, they brightened my day. It was nice to know you were thinking of me.

Gill C

Our Church Sale on Saturday, 4 November was very successful. A big "Thank you" to all the stall holders, everyone who helped with refreshments and those who helped on the day – and everyone who donated to the stalls and gave money. The sum of £484 was raised for Church funds which was absolutely wonderful. Thank you everyone.

Gwen S

The poppies in our front garden and on the railings were beautiful again this year. Thank you to everyone who helped with the display. We are grateful to the Town Hall for again lending us the poppies, which were 'planted' in the garden.

Many people stopped to admire them, walk amongst them and take photos. Some comments from Facebook are below:

Lovely display!

My little granddaughter was amazed at the poppies yesterday, as she had thought they were real. Well done!

I walked past here yesterday and stopped to look. It's beautiful 🍷



Amber really appreciate the support shown to them. and for your generosity to the women they support. Our gifts will make all the difference at this time, which is joyous for many people, but extremely difficult for these women. Thank you, once again, for your amazing support.

IT'S A CRACKER.....



- Q:** What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?
A: Claustrophobia!



CAN YOU HELP WITH CHRISTMAS PREPARATION?

Can you help prepare our Church for Christmas? Please either drop in to one of the sessions below, or let Andy B know.

Saturday, 2 December: 9am working party to clean and prepare the church for Christmas

Saturday, 23 December: 9am assemble candle-holders and candles, 6.30pm stewards to look after the candles during the service plus 7.30pm help to dismantle candle holders

Saturday, 6 January: 9am working party - remove the Christmas items



LOOK AFTER THE PENNIES.....



In previous years, when we had Pilots and Pioneers' charities, people collected small coins and donated them. This used to accumulate into quite a substantial sum of money. Some people have given me coins this year which, in the absence of a specific charity and the needs of our own church, I plan to pass on to the finance team.

If you have been collecting coins and don't know what to do with them, then I am happy to take them. The usual cut off point is for all coins to be with me by the end of December. Thank you.

Carole

CHURCH MEETING NOVEMBER 2023

The church meeting was well attended. Revd Mike updated on the proposed Church cluster, confirming the number of churches will be 6. In the first few months of 2024, Revd Sarah and Revd Mike will work together to plan how the new cluster will work and changes will start to slowly roll-out across the cluster mid-2024. The Finance teams in each church will work together to plan how finances will be organised.

Andy B gave an update on Fabric works, particularly in relation to the work to the sanctuary, explaining the exterior roofing works to the church had been completed and were now water-tight. The interior works will start on 20 November and it is hoped the work will be complete and the scaffolding dismantled by the end of November. Work to the organ pipes will be undertaken in January and the new curtains will be hung once this work is undertaken. Works to be undertaken in 2024 will encompass items in 1 Abbey Water, Abbey Hall Lounge roof and work to the church tower.

Fundraising ideas: the congregation was asked to bring suggestions to the next church meeting. The present plans for 2024 are flower festival and organ recital, other ideas are being discussed.

Thank you to everyone who stayed after church to attend. The engagement of our congregation, and voting of our members, is central to the decision making of our church.



IT'S A CRACKER.....

- Q:** What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?
A: Tinselitis!



MINISTER'S ANNUAL LEAVE

Please note our Minister is on annual leave from 4-10 December. For church matters, including pastoral concerns, during this period please contact:

Braishfield: Shirley Smith phone 01794 368447

Romsey: Andy Bevan (Mrs) email andybevan1@btinternet.com or phone 07483 319618

CALENDAR

November		
26	10.30am	Commitment for Life Service led by Revd Mike, including Amber joining us to collect donations
28	9am	Coffee morning in Abbey Hall Lounge
29	2.30pm	Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
December		
1	2pm	Arrive 1.45pm, Hope Choir carol singing at Durban House
2	9am	Working Party around the church premises
2	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection
2	3pm	Arrive 2.45pm, Hope Choir carol singing at Cedar Lawn Care Home
3	10.30am	Advent Sunday Toy Service including Holy Communion led by Revd Mike
3	4.30pm	Advent Carol Service to include blessing the knitted angels for hanging on the church railings
4-10		Minister on Annual Leave
4	10.30am	BALM in Abbey Hall Lounge – <i>please note: 1 week earlier than normal</i>
5	9am	Coffee morning in Abbey Hall Lounge
5	10.30am	Arrive 10.15am for Hope Choir carol singing at Friars Court
5	6pm	Rock Choir Concert
6	11.30am	Arrive 11.15am for Hope Choir carol singing at Mottisfont Lodge
7	2.30pm	Arrive 2.15pm for Hope Choir carol singing at Woodley Grange
8	10.30am	Arrive 10.15am for Hope Choir carol singing at Wakeford Court
8	1.30pm	Arrive 1.15pm for Hope Choir carol singing at Marie Louise House
9	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection
9	10am-12.30pm	Mince pies and refreshments in the Abbey Hall Lounge with the Beaman family, including raffle, in aid of church funds. All welcome!
10	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Chris Roles
10	2.30pm	Romsey Ladies Choir Concert
10	6.30pm	Advent Bible Study on Zoom led by Revd Mike

12	9am	Coffee morning in Abbey Hall Lounge
12	10.30am	Arrive 10.15am for Hope Choir carol singing at Abbeyfield House
12	12noon	Rum's Eg Christmas Concert
13	2.30pm	Table Tennis in Abbey Hall - final meeting for 2023
16	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection
17	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Andy Bevan
17	6.30pm	Advent Bible Study on Zoom led by Derek Hiscocks
19	9am	Coffee morning in Abbey Hall Lounge
23	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection
23	6.30pm	Candlelight Service led by Revd Mike, <i>please note this is SATURDAY evening.</i>
24	10.30am	Christmas Eve Morning Worship led by Revd Mike
24	3pm	Join us for 'Twas the night after Christmas, storytime for under 8s
24	11.30pm	Christmas midnight communion, come along for mince pies and social time from 11pm
25	10.30am	Christmas Day service
30	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection
31	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd Mike
January 2024		
9	7.30pm	Youth Forum by Zoom
10	7.30pm	Outreach Group by Zoom
14	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd Mike
16	7.30pm	Elders Meeting in Abbey Hall Lounge
17	2.30pm	Church Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
17	7.30pm	Worship Group by Zoom
18 - 25		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
19	7pm	Romsey Chamber Music concert
21	10.30am	Morning worship led by Andy Bevan
21	7pm	Romsey Chamber Music concert
24	2pm	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Bible Study in Abbey Hall Lounge led by Derek Hiscocks
25	10.30am	Mid-week Communion in Abbey Hall Lounge led by Revd Mike
28	10.30am	Morning worship led by Revd Mike
31	7.30pm	Churches Together in Romsey AGM

Braishfield United Reformed Church

Minister: Reverend Mike Perrott, MA 01794 512163
e-mail: revd.mike13@gmail.com
Day off: Mondays

Secretary: Shirley Smith 01794 368447


Treasurer: Sharon Whitfield 01794 521937

Serving Elders: Shirley Smith 01794 368447
Allison Symes 02380 262803



December

3	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by the Minister
10	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Peter White. Please bring back your jars of coins for this service. The money raised is for Mercy Ships. Thank you.
17		No service at 10.00 am - there has been a change of plan. See below instead!
17	3.00 pm	Carols by Candlelight led by the Minister, refreshments to follow - all welcome. Please note the time. We are trialling an afternoon event for this and hope folk from Romsey URC, All Saints Parish Church, as well as from the village, will join us.



24		Christmas Eve – NO SERVICE
25	9.30 am	Christmas Day – Short Service led by the Minister
31	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Sharon Whitfield

January 2024

7	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by the Minister
14	10.00 am	Family Worship led by the Revd Wendy White
21	10.00 am	Family Worship led by the Minister. A cheque for the money raised by the church will be presented to Mercy Ships during this service and there will be a short talk about their work.
28	10.00 am	Family Worship led by Derek Hiscocks

February 2024

4	9.30 am	Holy Communion led by the Minister
11	10.00 am	Family Worship
18	10.00 am	Family Worship led by the Minister
25	10.00 am	Family Worship

Please note that the third Sunday of the month is the time to bring in tinned goods etc for the food bank collection.

News from Braishfield

The church sends its sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Margery Randall. She is greatly missed by us all.

To all who have lost loved ones, we send our love. Know you are in our thoughts and prayers. It has been a difficult year.

Thank you to all who came to the All Souls' Service on 19 November. As ever, it was a deeply moving service led by the Minister. Candles were lit in remembrance.

Remembrance Sunday

Many thanks to David Webster for laying the wreath on behalf of our church at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, 12 November. Thank you also to Sharon Whitfield for reading on the church's behalf too.



Toy Service – Thank You!



Thank you to all who are bringing in toys for the Toy Service on 26 November. We welcome Colin Macpherson from Southampton Social Services to this service. He will speak about why the Toy Service is a help to so many. It will be lovely to welcome him, and he will take the toys we collect back with him. These will be distributed to those in greatest need in due course.

Carols by Candlelight

Many of you will know we usually have a carol singing event (accompanied by dodgy cracker jokes from the Minister) on the Tuesday evening close to Christmas. Braishfield URC is doing things differently this year. The Carols by Candlelight will be on Sunday 17 December at 3 pm and will be led by the Minister. I, for one, am looking forward to discovering the Christmas cracker jokes for this year.



There will be refreshments after this. The idea is to “trial” if an afternoon event works better than the old evening one. Please support us. We would love to see as many as possible.

In the run-up to this event, Margaret Batchelor and Joan Glister will be running a raffle for a prize hamper. Please bring in contributions to the hamper – one per person please as that will soon fill up the hamper nicely. Thanks in advance! Money raised from the raffle tickets will go to our charity, Mercy Ships.

The draw for the hamper will be made at the carols event so if you buy tickets (and naturally you will buy lots!), it gives you another reason to be at our church on 17 December!

Last, but not least, be in good voice! We enjoy a good sing and would love to hear your voices join ours. I am sure the refreshments will be appreciated after the singing!



Christmas Services - Reminder

Just to remind people, there will be no service on Christmas Eve which falls on a Sunday. There will be the usual short service on Christmas Day itself at 9.30 am, which will be led by the Minister.

Allison Symes



CHRISTMAS HAMPER DRAW



There will be a Christmas hamper draw this year, with money raised going to Church funds. Tickets will be £1 per strip and sold through December, please talk to Sarah B if you want to take part but can't make it to church. The prize hamper is being donated by the Beaman family. The draw for the Christmas hamper will be held just before

our Carols by Candlelight on Saturday, 23 December at 6.30pm – make sure to get your tickets before then!

'Twas the Night after Christmas

Story time for under 8s
All welcome.

Join us at
Abbey URC on Sunday,
24 December at 3pm



Come dressed as a character from the
Christmas story, if you wish.

CHRISTMAS CARDS 2023

Amnesty International cards: in Church for signing on Sunday, 3 December and Sunday, 10 December

Single cards for the whole fellowship: the board will be in Church from Saturday, 2y December if you wish to place one Christmas card to send greetings to the whole church. There will be envelopes available to make a donation towards 'Keep Hope Alive' Olive tree purchases.

To individual friends: the Christmas post box will be in the vestibule from 2-16 December. It is available to post cards to friends within the fellowship. Please only post cards for those you know will be coming to church. Collection from Church on Sunday, 17 December 2024.



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

**FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA
AND THEIR CARERS**

11AM FOR 11:30AM START - 1PM

SUGGESTED DONATION £2.50 PER PERSON : REFRESMENTS INCLUDED

**1ST
TUESDAY**

**PUB QUIZ @ THE NIGHTINGALE PUB,
LATIMER STREET, ROMSEY**

**2ND
TUESDAY**

**SINGING GROUP @ DR PETER CENTRE,
OFF ALMA ROAD, ROMSEY**

**3RD
TUESDAY**

**GAMES & PUZZLES @ CROSFIELD HALL
ANNEXE, BROADWATER ROAD, ROMSEY**

**4TH
TUESDAY**

**REMEMBRANCE ACTIVITY @ DR PETER
CENTRE, OFF ALMA ROAD, ROMSEY**

CONTACT US VIA:

TEXT/WHATSAPP 07857 881913 ROMSEYDEMENTIAACTIONGROUP@GMAIL.COM :

WWW.ROMDAG.CO.UK

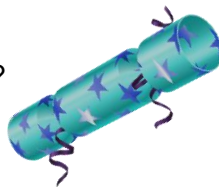
FB@ROMDAG : X@ROMSEY_DAG

IT'S A CRACKER.....



Q: What kind of pants do clouds wear?

A: Thunderwear!



FESTIVE COFFEE MORNING

Come and join Sarah, Richard and Kathleen for a cuppa and a mince pie (or two!) on Saturday, 9 December in Abbey Hall Lounge. We'll be providing refreshments from 10am to 12.30pm and we'd love to see you. There will be a raffle and all donations raised during the morning will go towards Church funds. We look forward to you joining us for a festive get-together!



It would be lovely to continue to hold a coffee event on a Saturday in Abbey Hall Lounge through the year for members of the congregation and friends, with donations going to church funds.

If you would be interested in hosting, please contact Angela Wolfe for availability to suit you. Once booked, please let Sarah Beaman know and she will publicise for you and co-ordinate.

Time with our church fellowship, and other friends, is so important. This gives us an opportunity to catch up with friends who are unable to come on a Sunday morning. We look forward to enjoying each other's company.

BALM

Our last meeting of the year will be a week earlier than usual on 4 December at 10.30am in Abbey Hall Lounge. It will be a Christmas party, with everyone bringing suitably festive nibbles. There will be crackers and the odd quiz, if it can be fitted in between all the chat! We prefer a do it yourself at this time of the year when everywhere is busy!



On behalf of myself and our Balm members I wish everyone a happy Christmas

Christine T

HOPE CHRISTMAS CHOIR

Arrangements have been made for carol singing at various community homes in the run up to Christmas. They would welcome singers at any of the following locations. If you are able to help swell the numbers and bring festive joy to residents of the homes, please let Andy know as soon as possible. You are asked to arrive at least 15 minutes before the time stated below.

Durban House on 1 December 2023 at 2pm
Cedar Lawn on 2 December 2023 at 3pm
Friars Court on 5 December 2023 at 10.30am
Mottisfont Lodge on 6 December 2023 at 1.30am
Woodley Grange on 7 December 2023 at 2.30pm
Wakeford Court on 8 December 2023 at 10.30am
Marie Louise House Nursing Home on 8 December 2023 at 1.30pm
Abbeyfield House on 12 December 2023 at 10.30am



Looking to widen your reach?

Our magazine is seen by 250+ people each month

Annual advertising cost per year, in A5 full colour magazine.
10 editions per year reaching 200+ people each month.

1/8 page - square £50
1/3 page rectangle £70
1/2 page A6 rectangle £85
Full A5 page advert £150

For editorial or advertisements please contact
abbeyurcnews@gmail.com

This month's magazine can be found at www.abbeyurc.org.uk
Copies of older magazines can be found at issuu.com

STORY STORY STORY!

Wessex Synod Youth Exec

Recently the WSYE held an open meeting for 14–25 year-olds to come and discuss, learn and think about God's story, other people's story, and most importantly our own story. This was focused on how you came to faith, your relationship with God, and how that may appear differently for everyone.

Our weekend was held at the amazing Cambridge university and the lecturers there supported many of our conversations allowing us to really learn and explore as a group. As well as this we had a guided tour around the campus, learnt all about the sisters who set up the theological college (where we were staying), and had worship in the on-site chapel which had beautiful stained-glass windows featuring the Old Testament one side of the aisle and the New the other.

There was an opportunity to head into Cambridge town one day as part of the Dinky Doors tour, it was a very wet day but we all had fun looking for tiny little doors and scenes around Cambridge. The people who set it up began it as a way to make people smile, as it says on their website it "is the antidote to the seemingly endless terrible news that we're inundated with on a daily basis. Delivering wonder as you wander, we firmly



believe that dinky things, discovered unexpectedly, can deliver dollops of delight that can defend against the daily onslaught of miserable miserableness". They hope this will also improve peoples' mental health; the details in the doors are just amazing!

The weekend went really well and I had a fabulous time, especially for the formal night we held where everyone got dressed up and we had a lovely dinner. Looking forward to planning whatever comes next!

Kathleen x



WORK MORNINGS AT CHURCH

DIY and other odd jobs around the church. Everyone welcome.

Saturday, 2 December from 9am–12 noon

Contact Geoff Prestage for full work detail information

RAISING THE ROOF

As Abbey URC faces the costs of repairing the roof in the sanctuary, and other urgent works highlighted in the quinquennial report, there may be members of the congregation with great ideas on how to raise funds to help cover this unforeseen outlay.

If you have an idea on how to raise funds, or are willing to run a fundraising event to help with the cost of the urgent repairs of our church, please let us know by speaking to Revd Mike or an elder about your idea.

In December there will be a Christmas hamper draw – tickets on sale each Sunday through December. Draw to take place on Saturday, 23 December before the 6.30pm service.



Routine foot care

Nail cutting and reduction of thickened nails

Removal of corns and callus

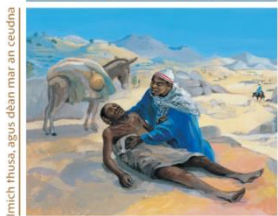
**Treatment and advice for: athlete's foot,
verruca's and fungal infections**

**For appointments call: 07908751514 or
email on: enquiries@laurensfootcare.co.uk**

**Lauren – DipCFHP, MPS Prac
Mobile Foot Health Practitioner**

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Go and do likewise



Imich thusa, agus déan mar an ceudna

Dos, a gwia dithau yr un modd

Imigh leat, agus déan féin mar an gcéanna

The text for the week is taken from the story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:27 with the title “Who is my Neighbour”. Our united service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held in Romsey Abbey at 6.30pm on Sunday, 21 January 2024. The guest speaker has still to be confirmed at the time of going to print. All are welcome.

We are delighted that this year there will also be two or three Bible Studies during the week on materials prepared by the churches of Burkina Faso. Through this material they have invited us to join with them in a process of self-reflection as they consider what it means to love our neighbour in the midst of a security crisis, very relevant for us all at this time, especially as Burkino Faso military have recently ousted their elected President and the country is one of the growing African states under military dictatorship.

Our church will host an afternoon Bible Study on Wednesday 24 January at 2pm in Abbey Hall Lounge led by Derek Hiscocks. Arrangements for other Studies have still to be confirmed. Please check the weekly service sheet in the New Year for more details as these are confirmed.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ROMSEY GROUP

Every year, Amnesty run ‘Write for Rights’; this is a campaign where we encourage you to write messages of support to people around the world who have suffered injustice, and to show you how to support their campaigns for justice.

The Romsey ‘Write for Rights’ evening takes place in Abbey Hall Lounge on Monday, 11 December at 7.30pm, the Monday closest to Human Rights Day on 10 December. We’re writing cards with messages of hope to political prisoners and repressed groups around the world. You are invited to join them for their annual signing of cards and messages of support to imprisoned or oppressed individuals and groups.



There will also be cards available to sign at the back of the church on the 3 and 10 December. These are also going to be sent to intimidated or oppressed individuals, and their details will be with the cards. Thank you for your support.

John H

URC UPDATES

Some good news: this year, 19 new ministers were welcomed at Church House at the New Minister's Conference. Of those, 12 have just entered their Education for Ministry Phase 2 and were ordained or commissioned since June 2023, and 7 ministers who have come to serve the URC, in the past year, on Certificates of Eligibility or Limited Service. Welcome!

ROMDAG SERVICE TO REMEMBER

Romsey Dementia Action Group (ROMDAG) would like to thank Abbey URC for hosting our Service to Remember in November. Along with Test Valley Mayor Cllr Phil Lashbrook, Mrs Linda Lashbrook and Deputy Romsey Town Mayor John Parker, we heard stories of favourite things from childhood - toys, button tins and school milk bottles. One gentleman even wanted to "sing the roof down" but thankfully we persuaded him against that....



We enjoyed singing some traditional hymns, then Rev Mike finished with the exhortation and prayers of remembrance. It was all finished off with refreshments and chatting about further memories.

Our thanks go to Kirsty for the music and beautiful singing, and for the church supporting this annual event.

**BRAISHFIELD
GARAGE LTD.**



Unit 4B Frobisher Industrial Centre, Budds Lane, Romsey SO51 0EZ

Tel: 01794 518461 / 518555

www.braishfieldgarage.co.uk

MOT

REPAIRS

SERVICING

**Complete vehicle inspection services
in Romsey and Southampton**




ROMSEY LADIES CHOIR

Christmas Concert

With guests

Sunnenday Singers



10 December 2023
at 2.30pm

Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey



Admission £5 per person,
Children free



In aid of Romsey Opengate Stroke Club

INVITATION TO THE INDUCTION OF THE NEW MODERATOR OF THE WESSEX SYNOD

An Invitation has been received to the induction of the new Moderator of the Wessex Synod, the Revd Dr Michael Hopkins at 3pm on Saturday, 23 March 2024. The induction is being held at London Street United Reformed Church, Basingstoke; all are invited.

If you would like to attend, please let Andy know as soon as possible so that transport arrangements can be made.

A SYNOD CHOIR FOR REVD MICHAEL HOPKINS'S INDUCTION?

The Synod is trying to gather a choir of people from around the Synod to sing at Michael's induction. There will not be auditions, and you don't need to sing in a choir. There will be one rehearsal at Basingstoke on the morning of the induction, and there may be a brief rehearsal or two via zoom if that is deemed helpful.



If you would like to offer to join the choir, please contact the Revd Michael Hodgson by email on michaelgwenidog@gmail.com with your name, phone number, email address, which part you sing, and a brief note of any relevant experience.

Please let Michael Hodgson have your name as soon as possible, and no later than Monday 4 December.

RECYCLING TIP FOR THE SPRING: FREE GARDENING AID



I have a large collection of CDs left from the autumn sale, and will be disposing of them if they do not find a home. I have been reliably advised that these make great bird-scarers when hung on sticks in the vegetable patch. If anyone wishes to have some CDs to try out this gardening trick, please see me – I have plenty to spare.

Andy

Looking for a venue?



Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey, is a popular venue for concerts, with wonderful acoustics and a beautiful setting; there is a small kitchen for serving refreshments. Please contact the Church Letting Secretary on 07787 630297 or email abbeyurccal@gmail.com

Abbey Hall offers a spacious hall which can be used for many activities from groups to events, badminton to meetings.

Abbey Hall lounge is a comfortable setting for get-togethers, meetings, coffee afternoons, etc. There is a loop system and audio-visual facilities.

Abbey Hall also has a fully fitted kitchen, with a hygiene rating of 5 to hire with the hall or lounge. Please contact the Hall Letting Secretary on 01794 517746 or 07593 534314 or email hailtherain22@gmail.com

BEGGARS FAIR 2024 **13 JULY 2024 - 30TH ANNIVERSARY**

The Beggars Fair Committee are starting to think about next year as it will be their 30th anniversary - and they want to make it a special one!

They are looking for some extra people as some long-term members are ready to hand over the following skill sets:

1. Volunteers on the day
2. Accounts
3. Web designer and social media
4. Marketing skills

If you, or you know anyone who might be interested in these please ask them to contact me at chair@beggarsfair.org.uk. Thank you

David Vane
Chair - Beggars Fair 2024

ABBAY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



JOIN US FOR OUR CAROLS
BY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

ABBAY URC



6.30PM



**SATURDAY,
23 DECEMBER 2023**

A special evening of carols
and lessons, made even more
magical by the candlelight.

