

NEWS

From



United Reformed Churches
of Romsey and Braishfield

MARCH 2026

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Abbey United Reformed Church

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

or find us on social media

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Ministers: | Revd Mike Perrott MA 01794 512163 email: revd.mike13@gmail.com Day off: Monday |
| | Rev Dr Sarah Hall 02380 768004 email: sarah.hall.swhg@gmail.com Day off: Thursday |
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| Magazine Team | contact at: abbeyurcnews@gmail.com |
| Church Caretaker | Angela Wolfe 01794 517746 1 Abbey Water, Romsey |

Services

| | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| Sunday Family Worship | | 10.30am |
| Monthly Bible Study | first Sunday evening | 6.30pm |
| On Zoom (ID: 864 1780 6994 Password: learning) | | |
| Weekday Meetings – any updates will be on our worship sheet | | |
| Monday (2 nd) | BALM (Bereavement) Group | 10.30am |
| Tuesday (2 nd) | Chill Out Tuesday, The White Horse, Romsey | 7.30pm |
| Thursday | The Social Cup - refreshments and warm space. Open to all, in Abbey Hall Lounge | 10am - 11.30am |
| Wednesday (1 st 3 rd) | Church Table Tennis | 2.30pm |

For baptisms, weddings or funerals please contact Revd Mike

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Romsey or Braishfeild URC, nor the elders or production team.

A MESSAGE FROM REVD MIKE

March 2026

Dear friends in Christ

Well, the season of Lent has begun, which the church traditionally marks with 'ashes' services. Traditionally, on this day - following Shrove Tuesday when all 'luxury' foods such as sugar, eggs and butter were used-up (making pancakes!) and 'given-up for Lent' - palm crosses from the previous year's Palm Sunday were ceremonially burned at a solemn service, and the ashes smeared on the fore-heads of the people present to signify the beginning of a six-week period of fasting, self-examination, and repentance, and all this in preparation for celebrating the Resurrection of Christ Jesus at Easter.



Lent is a season of the Christian year observed by the Church as a time of fasting (returning to the 'basics' of life), examination (reflecting upon our individual and community life) and, having found areas of our life that need to change, to repent (literally, 'turn to' God and God's ways). It is a time for deepening and strengthening our Christian spirituality – our relationship with God.

Yet, as solemn and as much a 'discipline' and 'spiritual exercise' as Lent is intended to be, it is not a time of overt sorrow or display of being 'holier than thou!' Jesus said, *"When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others... When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who is in secret will reward you."* (Matt 6:16-17 ESV)

So, Lent is not so much a time of sorrow or an overt display of fasting and repentance. Rather it looks forward to a future joy and happiness, having achieved a closer, deeper relationship with God – God's 'reward' for our 'secret' striving for God in our Lenten spiritual exercises, preparing for new life in Christ.

One of my favourite authors is Walter Brueggemann (1933-2025). He was an American Christian writer and theologian who was an influential Old Testament scholar. He also wrote poetry and I encourage you to read a poem by him entitled 'Marked by ashes' which he intended to be read on Ash Wednesday – and every Wednesday of Lent, it can be found at <https://www.catholicdiscovery.nz/seed/a-poem-for-ash-wednesday>

In Christian love,

Revd Mike

PRAYER FOR LENT

St Augustine of Hippo, born in 354 at Tagaste (Algeria), was a theologian, writer, skilled preacher, and bishop. Although he experienced many hardships in his life, Saint Augustine set an example for men and women around the world to follow. His work is reflected in the lives of Catholics in the Augustinian tradition who continue to care for those in great need.

Here is a simple prayer he wrote many centuries ago which we can use during Lent.

*Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy.
Guard me, O Holy Spirit, that I myself may always be holy.
Amen*

Revd Mike

HOME COMMUNION



If you're not able to make it to church for any reason but would still like to receive Communion, we'd be more than happy to bring it to you at home.

Staying connected to our church family is important, and we want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to share in this special part of our worship, if you cannot join us in person. Please contact Carole by email at carole.cox@btinternet.com or call 01794 518184.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Material for April 2026 to be submitted by
5pm (latest) **on Thursday, 19 April 2026**
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.

CHURCH NEWS

Thank you to everyone who helped Carole with church and hall opening and closing when I was unwell. Also, thank you for the lovely flowers from the church that Jill and Barry bought round for me - great to see them. All the best.

Angela

CAN YOU HELP FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY?

The Mothering Sunday service is on Sunday, 15 March 2026. If anyone is able to provide a few posies ready to be given out to our congregation on the day, I would be very grateful.



The posies can be left in the church on Saturday, 14 March between 10.30am and 12.30pm or before the service on Sunday morning, when they will be handed to people as they leave church. Thank you.

Gwen S

CHILL OUT TUESDAY

We enjoyed a pleasant evening at The White Horse Hotel on Tuesday, 10 February as we laughed and chatted together over our drinks. We were joined by a young lady who had attended a couple of times last year and she found the change of venue more relaxing. The White Horse has a small selection of mocktails and it was good to enjoy something different while staying alcohol-free.



The next Chill Out Tuesday, for anyone who would like to join is, will be Tuesday, 10 March from 7.30pm onwards. You will find us in the bar at The White Horse Hotel, Romsey.

Wendy

CAKES AFTER MORNING WORSHIP

Val will be bringing cakes for sale after the service on the first Sunday of each month. She's happy to take orders. If there is something specific you would like, please let her know. Monies raised will go to church funds. Thank you so much, Val!



THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE...

On Sunday, 15 February, we gathered to celebrate the many expressions of love that bless our lives - through family, friends and partners. The service was led by Revd Mike, and we welcomed back Revd Terry Hinks and his wife, Elizabeth. We were especially pleased to be joined by several couples who were married in our church, as well as a couple who are now preparing for their own wedding day.

It was a lovely service, with the Revd Terry offering a thoughtful and inspiring reflection. The service included hymns, readings and music often used in wedding services. Kirsty played two beautifully chosen piano medleys, each filled with tunes that perfectly complemented the theme of the service. Below is a list of the music included – how many did you recognise?

First medley: Close To You - Bert Bacharach, I Can Give You the Starlight - Ivor Novello, Waltz of My Heart - Ivor Novello, Love and Marriage - Van Huesen (sung by Frank Sinatra), Love is the Sweetest Thing - Ray Noble, Can't Help Falling in Love – Weiss/Peretti/Creator (sung by Elvis) written for Blue Hawaii.

Second medley: Everything – Buble/Chang/Foster, How Long Will I Love You - Scott (sung by Ellie Goulding), A Thousand Years – Perri/Hodges (sung by Christina Perri) written for the Twilight Saga, Can You Feel the Love Tonight - Elton John written for The Lion King, Love Changes Everything - Lloyd Webber written for Aspects of Love.

After the service we shared refreshments and cake, whilst sharing photos and chatting about memories of weddings that had been held in our church. Some of those attending were kind enough to share photos of their special day, we hope you enjoy them!

Following the service, a meal was shared at the White Horse with Revd Terry and Elizabeth, so we could properly thank them for coming to visit us and catch up on their news.

Thank you to Revd Mike, Revd Terry, Kirsty and to all those involved in organising this very special service.

Our church is also aware that St Valentine's Day can be a difficult time, particularly for those who are alone or grieving the loss of a loved one. Over 60 small pocket hugs, pebbles painted with small hearts, were on our railings and shared with our community - remember you are in our prayers.



Photos shared with us by those attending the service, and those married at Abbey URC.

"Thank you so much for the lovely service today, we were made to feel very welcomed and loved"
 Louise and Shaun



"It was a lovely service, Revd Mike, and great to see Terry again... his sermon had a couple of very poignant facts in it. Kind regards" Eleanor and Jon

It's a long-running romance

RUNNING club members, Eleanor Wilde and Jon Vainplow, warmed up for their wedding with a 7.30am run on the morning of the service.

Halterworth Harriers, Eleanor and Jon were joined by 17 other club members on the pre-wedding jog around Romsey's landmarks on Saturday.

"The couple wore 'T-shirts emblazoned with the message: 'We are getting married'".

Dave Armes, one of the founding members of the club, was best man and most of the club joined the wedding celebrations at some point during the day.

"The couple were married at the United Reformed Church in Romsey at 11am and the bride and her father, Stewart Wilde, arrived at the church in a 1913 Ford Model T".

A reception was held afterwards at Anglefield Golf and Country Club. The bride wore a specially-designed dress in purple silk with a lace overlay.

The couple have chosen to do



Run for your wife... Jon and Eleanor and fellow Halterworth Harriers on their pre-wedding run



Just married...Jon and Eleanor



BALM

We were very pleased to welcome Rev Sarah Hall to our last meeting on 9 February, and we were blessed with a dry day. Eleven members met with Revd Sarah; we introduced ourselves in turn over refreshments and she provided helpful input. Thank you, Sarah, we appreciated you finding the time to visit us.

Prior to Revd Sarah's arrival, we discussed our annual meal and agreed we will be meeting at the Phoenix at midday on Monday, 9 March. Please note we will not be meeting in Abbey Lounge that day.

Christine T

MORNING PRAYERS

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 readings for March.



| | | | | |
|-------|----|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| March | 1 | Psalm 121 | John 3:1-17 | (Lent 2) |
| | 8 | Psalm 95 | John 4:5-42 | (Lent 3) |
| | 15 | Psalm 23 | John 9:1-41 | (Lent 4) |
| | 22 | Psalm 130 | John 11:1-45 | (Lent 5) |
| | 29 | Psalm 31:9-16 | Matthew 21:1-11 | (Palm Sunday) |

SUPPORT ABBEY URC ONLINE

As cash becomes a thing of the past, dropping a penny in the pot isn't always easy. You can still support Abbey URC - simply and securely - from the comfort of your home.

Through your bank or by BACS: you can select a regular direct debit from your bank account or make a one-off donation by card or digital wallet. Bank details: Abbey United Reformed Church Romsey, Sort Code 40-52-40, Account Number 00033457, Bank CAFS.

SumUp card machine: the machine is in Abbey URC; it works the same as a card machine in a shop – except you can choose the amount to donate. Please ask an elder, or the person on duty, if you are unsure how to use it.

QR code: scan this QR code on your phone to make a donation via SumUp to Abbey URC. Simply follow the instructions and add your payment details. Any donation under £30 automatically qualifies for Gift Aid, so there is no need to put in your personal details. Any card or digital wallet will work and simply add your email address for a receipt.



Thank you for supporting the work of our church and upkeep of our buildings.

EASTER BREAKFAST



We meet to celebrate Easter morning with our Easter breakfast in the Abbey Hall Lounge at **9am** on Sunday, 5 April, everyone is welcome. Cost £3 per head; please sign up on the list at the back of church by Sunday, 29 March to ensure we cater for everyone.

Please speak to Carole, Sylvia or Sarah if you have any food allergies or intolerances. We look forward to seeing you.

You are invited
to our



Mothering Sunday
celebration service

Sunday, 15 March 2026
10.30am-11.30am

at the church by the arch,
Abbey United
Reformed Church, Romsey



SPREADING THE WORD FAR AND WIDE

Can you help? Our new A6 fliers are at the back of the church advertising Balm, The Social Cup and Chill Out Tuesday. We would like to circulate these as widely as possible. Are you able to drop some to your local surgery, dentist, care homes, retirement flats or other community venue that you visit, and ask them to leave them in their communal areas or put them on the notice board? If you can add to the list at the back of church where you have delivered them that would be very helpful. Your help is greatly appreciated.



**Join us for a FREE
Easter Hunt
on Easter Saturday
between 2pm-4pm**

**Abbey United Reformed Church,
the church by the Arch, Romsey**

A PRIZE FOR EVERY CHILD

Everyone welcome – bring the family!

**Refreshments and
hot cross buns available**

MORE THAN MEETINGS....



I'm sure you think that an elder's life is full of meetings, challenges and stress - and yes, that's true at times! But it isn't the whole story.

For me, much of being an elder is about people. It's time spent chatting with members of the congregation, listening, and helping turn ideas from Church Meeting into reality. I also find myself thinking a lot about how we raise the profile of our church - through Facebook, our website, the magazine and our outreach - and how we connect with our local community, meet real needs, and make sure people feel seen, valued and genuinely welcome when they come through our doors.

Yes, there are meetings, and they are a necessity - they help us share opinions, explore options and make sure we're doing what our congregation wants and what's best for our church. But the real joy comes from seeing things happen: a repair finished that protects the building, new lighting that cuts the bills, or a great idea made possible by a successful grant. That quiet moment when you stop and think, *I helped make this possible*. Those moments really matter.

Being part of the Southern Fellowship has made eldership feel much less daunting. Sharing policies, ideas and experiences with other churches has been incredibly helpful - there's a real sense that you're not doing this on your own. It's also been genuinely lovely to get to know elders from other churches, learn from them, and realise that many of us are facing similar joys and challenges.



If you're thinking, "That sounds like a lot," I get it - I felt the same. We don't have all the answers, and that's okay. Eldership is really about caring, listening and working together. Some bits won't be for everyone, and we can work around the time you have available - that's why we're a team.

So why not consider joining us? Our move to the Southern Fellowship is changing how we do things and making it easier. Eldership is a genuinely rewarding way to serve both our church and our wider community. Whether you can offer a little or a lot, it all helps. We recognise that everyone has different gifts and time available, and we'll only ever ask you to do what feels manageable. We'd love you to join us — and if you fancy a chat, just ask.

Sarah B

AS WE JOURNEY TOWARDS EASTER

During the weeks of Lent as we journey towards Easter, we are invited to reflect more deeply on Jesus' path to Jerusalem, the cross, his death, and the joy of his resurrection. You will find full details of all services and events in this month's calendar.

You may wish to join one of the Lent Bible study sessions led by Revd Mike on Zoom. These offer a space to explore and discuss the Easter story as it unfolds, helping us to grow in faith and understanding.

Christian Aid Lent lunches will also be taking place across the town. These simple meals provide an opportunity for fellowship, as we share time with others and raise vital funds to help tackle poverty.

In the midst of Lent's quiet reflection, there is a special joy in church on 10 March as we gather for our Mothering Sunday service at 10.30am. On this day, we give thanks for the steadfast love shown by mothers and mother figures - a love that mirrors God's own unconditional love for each one of us.



Mothering Sunday in the UK began as a time when people were given leave from their work to return to their "mother church". It is still a good opportunity to reflect on our roots - to consider where we have come from and how our journey has shaped us as Christians.



Holy Week begins on 29 March with our Palm Sunday service, as we remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem and the joyful welcome he received from the crowds. During the service, palm crosses will be distributed. Our Easter cross will be in the front garden, so do come along and add a palm cross as we mark the beginning of this holy week; they will be available at the foot of the cross.

On Good Friday, the cross stands empty as a powerful and moving symbol. It reminds us that Jesus has already been taken down and laid in the tomb. The empty cross helps us remember that his suffering was real and that his death truly happened – and reminds us of the sacrifice that he made. But the empty cross also says something more. Even on the darkest day of the Church's year, it quietly points forward. Good Friday is full of sorrow, yet the empty cross carries a hint of hope - a reminder that this is not the end of the story. So, when we see the cross standing empty, we're invited to pause and to hold on to the promise that Easter morning is coming.

On Easter Sunday, our celebrations begin with Easter breakfast in the Abbey Hall at 9am - a lovely way to start this joyful day together. Please do add your name to the list at the back of church before the end of March if you would like to come along.



At 10.30am we gather in church for our Family Communion, as we rejoice in the good news of the risen Lord. Our Easter cross will be in the front garden, ready to be filled with flowers. If you're unable to join us in church, you are warmly invited to pop by at any time during the day and add a flower to the cross, sharing in the celebration in this simple but beautiful way.

We look forward to you joining us.

EASTER EGG RAFFLE

£1 PER TICKET

Tickets on sale after our morning services until Easter.

The raffle will be drawn before the Easter morning service.

All money raised towards church funds

Donations of Easter Eggs gratefully received March/early April.

CALENDAR

| March | | |
|--------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | 10.30am | Morning Worship, including Holy Communion, led by Revd Mike |
| 1 | 2pm | Christian Musicals Sing-along at Bitterne URC |
| 1 | 6.30pm | Lent Bible Study on Zoom |
| 4 | 2.30pm | Church Table Tennis in Abbey Hall |
| 5 | 10-11.30am | The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge, all welcome |
| 6 | 12-1.30pm | Lent lunch hosted by St Joseph's at Abbey Hall |
| 6 | 2pm | World Day of Prayer at Abbey URC |
| 7 | 10am-12.30pm | Church open for quiet reflection and prayer |
| 8 | 10.30am | Morning Worship led by Revd Mary Thomas |
| 8 | 6.30pm | Lent Bible Study on Zoom |
| 9 | 10.30am | BALM in Abbey Hall Lounge |
| 10 | 7.30pm | Chill Out Tuesday at White Horse Hotel |
| 12 | 10-11.30am | The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge, all welcome |
| 12 | 10am | Wessex Synod meeting online |
| 13 | 12-1.30pm | Lent lunch at Romsey Methodist Church |
| 14 | 10am-12.30pm | Church open for quiet reflection and prayer |
| 15 | 10.30am | Mothering Sunday Worship led by Mrs Andy Bevan |
| 15 | 6.30pm | Lent Bible Study on Zoom |
| 17 | 2.30pm | Hope Easter choir at Abbeyfield House SO51 8EW |
| 18 | 2.30pm | Church Table Tennis in Abbey Hall |
| 18 | 2.30pm | Hope Easter choir at Cedar Lawn, SO51 7US |
| 18 | 7.30pm | Worship Group on Zoom |
| 19 | 10-11.30am | The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge, all welcome |
| 19 | 7.30pm | Youth and Outreach Group on Zoom |
| 20 | 12-1.30pm | Lent lunch in Romsey Abbey Rooms |
| 21 | 10am-12.30pm | Church open for quiet reflection and prayer |
| 22 | 10.30am | Morning Worship led by Mike Wood |
| 22 | 10.30am | Bitterne 40 th Anniversary Reunion Service & lunch |
| 22 | 6.30pm | Lent Bible Study on Zoom |
| 24 | 2.30pm | Hope Easter choir at Woodley Grange, SO51 7NU |
| 24 | 7.30pm | Elders Meeting in Abbey Hall Lounge |
| 25 | 2.30pm | Hope Easter choir at Fryers House, SO51 5AD |

| | | |
|----|-------------------|--|
| 26 | 10-11.30am | The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge, all welcome |
| 26 | 11am | Hope Easter choir at Durban House, SO51 7JL |
| 28 | March to 12 April | Revd Mike on annual leave |
| 28 | 10am-12.30pm | Church open for quiet reflection and prayer |
| 29 | 10.30am | Palm Sunday Worship led by Pam Humphreys |
| 29 | 6.30pm | Lent Bible Study on Zoom |
| 30 | 11am | Hope Easter choir at Mottisfont Lodge, SO51 8AG |

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

If you are looking for a way to prepare yourself for the good news that Easter brings, why not join us for an opportunity to discuss the Lent gospel readings. We will be holding Lent Bible studies on Sunday evenings during March at 6.30pm on Zoom, (ID 864 1780 6994 PC learning). These will run to Sunday, 29 March (Palm Sunday). You do not even need to leave the comfort of your own home - bring your own beverage! All welcome!



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CHANGE BEGINS WITH YOU.

We all have our part to play.

Be the difference.

Start today.

Braishfield United Reformed Church

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--------------|
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| | The Reverend Doctor Sarah Hall e-mail: sarah.hall.swhg@gmail.com Day off: Thursdays | 02380 768004 |
| Secretary: | Shirley Smith | 01794 368447 |
| Treasurer: | Sharon Whitfield | 01794 328853 |
| Serving Elders: | Shirley Smith | 01794 368447 |
| | Allison Symes | 02380 262803 |
| | Sharon Whitfield | 01794 328853 |

March

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1 | 9.30 | Holy Communion led by Revd Mike Perrott |
| 8 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Sharon Whitfield |
| 15 | 10.00 | Mothering Sunday, Annual General Meeting and church meeting |
| 15 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Revd Dr Sarah Hall |
| 22 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Revd Wendy White |
| 29 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Peter White |

April

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 5 | 9.30 | Easter Sunday Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Sarah Hall |
| 12 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Nick Tustian |
| 19 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Daniel Symes |
| 26 | 10.00 | Family Worship led by Chris Noyce |

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

We were so sorry to hear of the recent passing of Hazel Davies and send our love and prayers to all of the family. Hazel's funeral took place on Saturday, 21 February at All Saints Parish Church at 10am.

Looking back to 25 January 2026, the church was delighted to welcome David Parker, representing the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance, to talk to us



as part of our worship. The Air Ambulance is our chosen charity for this year, and it was fascinating to find out more about their work.

The costs of what they do were enlightening too! They are currently raising funds for their Operation Airbase as they are moving to a building in Southampton Airport. Construction is currently underway on this but the reason they are moving from their original base in Thruxton, Andover, is to cut their flying time down as much as possible. It will be much easier for them to get to, say, the Isle of Wight from Southampton Airport than it is from Andover. Minutes matter in their work.

The airport generally will prove to be a more central location, and it will be easier to get to Southampton General and the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth from there too.

David Parker did leave one of their collecting jars at the church plus we will continue to have various fundraising events. All donations would be very welcome.

In church news, we are having our Annual General Meeting/church meeting during the service on Sunday, 15 March, which is also Mothering Sunday. Support for the service and the Annual General Meeting will be appreciated.

A jobs list for the various church roles will be at the back of the church by the time you receive this magazine. It would be lovely if we could get all of the jobs filled before we have our meeting.

Daniel Symes was invited back to lead the service at Salisbury URC on Sunday, 8 February. It was lovely to catch up with friends here. It was nice to welcome Joan Smith from Salisbury URC to take our service the following week too.

The Braishfield Elders will be having their meeting on Saturday, 7 March at 10.30am. Please pray for wisdom and the right decisions to be made (which is also an excellent prayer to be said for the AGM!).

We continue to keep in our thoughts and prayers those close to us who are ill or are awaiting appointments and/or test results.



It is lovely to see the lighter evenings though a bit less rain would also be welcome (!) but spring is finally on its way, and it is good to see the start of the daffodil season, something we'll be thinking about for Mothering Sunday.

Allison S



REVD MIKE'S PREACHING ROTA FOR MARCH

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1 | 9.30 | Braishfield URC |
| | 10.30 | Abbey URC |
| 8 | 10.30 | Isaac Watts URC |
| 15 | 10.30 | Avenue St Andrew's URC (AGM & Church Meeting) |
| 22 | 10.30 | Isaac Watts URC (HC) |
| 29 | | Revd Mike on annual leave |



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CHRISTIAN AID

Do you have an interest in our links with the wider church and how Christians work in the world. We are looking for one or two people to be our Christian Aid and Commitment for Life representatives. This will include being the church contact person for both Christian Aid and/or Commitment for Life, receiving information from the charities and offering occasional articles for the Magazine, as well as liaising with other local churches' Christian Aid representatives to arrange local fund raising events such as the Lent Lunches. The roles can be further developed as the postholder wishes. For more details, please speak to Andy Bevan on 07483 319618.



I WILL GIVE YOU REST



This year, the women of Nigeria invite us to join them on Friday 6 March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme, "I will give you rest."

Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties.

Over 120 countries will be participating in March. This day is a powerful demonstration of global solidarity. It begins in Samoa and moves across the world in a continuous wave of prayer, finishing 38 hours later in American Samoa. It truly is a worldwide day of prayer! Join us for the World Day of Prayer service at 2pm on Friday, 6 March at Abbey URC, followed by refreshments.

I will give you rest
When the storms are blowing
and the waves are rising
I will give you rest.

When the bills are rising
and your health is failing.
I will give you rest.

When the children are screaming
and the spouse is dreaming.
I will give you rest.

When the jobs are done
and all ideas are gone.
God says I will give you rest.

When wars are raging
and hearts are breaking.
God says I will give you rest.

When all earthly help has gone.
God simply says "Give them to me"
I, Jehovah Sabaoth, will give you REST.

by Pastor Margaret Forrester

FROM THE ROMSEY UKRAINIAN SUPPORT GROUP:

Sadly, the fourth anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine is approaching. We truly wish there were no need for such an event, but the war continues, and it's important that we come together to commemorate it.

We invite you to join us on the 28 February, details can be found below.

28 February 2026
Saturday

**COMMUNITY GATHERING - 4 YEARS SINCE
THE FULL SCALE INVASION OF UKRAINE**

All are welcome.

Ukrainian recollections - stories of day one
Reflection and prayers
Ukrainian songs
Readings

15:30 - War Memorial Park, Romsey

- Dedication and plaque unveiling by the Mayor of Romsey
- Silent procession to Romsey Abbey

16:00 - Service at Romsey Abbey

- "Service to Honour the People of Ukraine"
- Light refreshments will be served afterwards in the Abbey Church Rooms (tea, cakes, Ukrainian specialities)
- Find us on Facebook: Romsey Ukrainian Support Group

For more information, please email roljmat@gmail.com
or text/WhatsApp 07505 507825

Organised by Romsey Ukraine Support Group



LENT LUNCHES 2026

Join Churches Together in Romsey on Fridays through lent and help raise funds whilst enjoying lunch and fellowship. The Lent Lunches in 2026 are being held each Friday from 12noon to 1.30pm and all are very welcome to attend.

Our apologies that all details for the Lent lunches were not available for the February edition of our Magazine. We hosted the first lunch on 20 February, with remaining lunches being as follows:



Friday, 27 February Romsey Baptist Church raising funds for Christian Aid

Friday, 6 March St Joseph's, held in Abbey URC Hall raising funds for CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Friday, 13 March Romsey Methodist Church raising funds for Christian Aid

Friday, 20 March Romsey Abbey, held in the Abbey Rooms raising funds for Christian Aid.



FREE NHS HEALTH CHECKS

Free NHS health checks for people aged between 40-74 years old are available at Romsey Community Wellbeing Hub, 9 Love Lane Romsey SO51 8DE. The next date is 9.30am-5pm on Tuesday, 3 March. To book an appointment simply telephone 0800 2545 452, go online at <https://nhshchampshire.randox.com> or scan this QR code.



SALISBURY URC STUDY DAY

On Saturday, 17 April Salisbury URC are holding a Study Day in Salisbury entitled 'Women in the Bible'. There is no charge for the event, just bring yourselves and your lunch - and be prepared to enjoy a time of easy learning.

The Revd Dr Janet Tollington, a retired professor of the Old Testament, has led Bible Study at Salisbury URC on three previous occasions. She is easy to listen to and has always led a very interesting and informative day.

Please let Andy know if you would like to attend so our friends can make sure there is enough tea, coffee and cake. All are welcome – not just women.

HOPE EASTER CHOIR

If you would like to bring the hope of Easter to residents of some local homes, you are warmly invited to swell the numbers of the Hope Easter choir. They will be visiting residences in the area on the dates and times below. To join, simply arrive 15 minutes before the start time – song sheets provided.

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Abbeyfield House, SO51 8EW | 2.30pm | Tuesday, 17 March |
| Cedar Lawn, SO51 7US | 2.30pm | Wednesday, 18 March |
| Woodley Grange, SO51 7NU | 2.30pm | Tuesday, 24 March |
| Fryers House, SO51 5AD | 2.30pm | Wednesday, 25 March |
| Durban House, SO51 7JL | 11am | Thursday, 26 March |
| Mottisfont Lodge, SO51 8AG | 11am | Monday, 30 March |

CLOCKS MOVE FORWARD

Just a reminder, that clocks jump forward one hour on Sunday, 29 March. So, don't forget to change your clocks when you go to bed that Saturday night, otherwise you will miss our Palm Sunday service led by Pam Humphreys.



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MINISTERS' HOLIDAYS

Please note our Ministers will be away over the forthcoming Easter period. During their absence, please contact Andy Bevan for pastoral concerns and urgent church matters: tel. 07483 319618, email andybevan1@btinternet.com. We hope they have a lovely break.

Revd Mike will be away from 28 March to 2 April

Revd Sarah will be away from 6 to 12 April

ABBAY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

The Social Cup

Thursday mornings 10am – 11.30am
Abbey Hall Lounge, Romsey

A warm welcome – and a warm space
to sit and catch up with friends.

The Chatty
Cafe Scheme

Warm
Welcome
Spaces

Open to all

www.abbeyurc.org.uk
Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey

CANDLES FOR UKRAINE



Join the Romsey Ukraine Support Group on Sunday, 8 March 2026 from 11.30am-3.30pm to make trench candles, a much-needed source of heat and light for Ukraine. Full instructions for making candles given. Light refreshments provided, but please bring your own lunch. Held at Woodley Scout Hall, Braishfield Road, Romsey. Please bring clean, empty food tins and wax/candles. They would also welcome tinned or dried food, soap, toiletries or chocolates for the people in Ukraine.

LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA IN ROMSEY

Romsey Dementia Action Group (ROMDAG) is dedicated to supporting people living with dementia and their families in Romsey and the surrounding areas. We believe that a dementia diagnosis doesn't mean life stops - it simply calls for new ways to connect, create, and enjoy life.

Each week, ROMDAG offers a variety of activities designed to stimulate, engage, and uplift; music, singing, pub quiz and memory sessions spark conversation and laughter. These social gatherings provide peer-support and a safe, welcoming space for people to share experiences, make friends, and feel less isolated.

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, helping run sessions and offer companionship. We warmly welcome anyone affected by dementia, carers and family members. Refreshments are included and we only ask for a donation of £2.50 per session.

ROMDAG is more than just activities - it's a community. A place to feel supported, empowered, and connected. We encourage anyone interested to join us, volunteer or simply learn more.

Email romseydementiaactiongroup@gmail.com, call 07857 881913 or visit www.romdag.co.uk. Together, we can make each week meaningful, joyful, and full of connection.

WEEKLY Activities

ROMDAG
Romsey Dementia Action Group

FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS
11AM FOR 11.30 START UNTIL 1PM
LOCATION: DR PETER CENTRE, BADEN POWEL WAY, ROMSEY, SO51 8EA.

1st Tuesday
PUB QUIZ

2nd Tuesday
SINGING WITH FRIENDS

3rd Tuesday
GAMES & PUZZLES

4th Tuesday
REMINISCE WITH ROMDAG

SUGGESTED DONATION £2.50 PER PERSON
REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED

BRAISHFIELD GARAGE LTD.



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

Tel: 01794 518461 / 518555

www.braishfieldgarage.co.uk

MOT

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in Romsey and Southampton**

WANTED: PLASTIC BOTTLE TOPS

This spring, Romsey is turning everyday waste into something worth celebrating. Transition Town Romsey is teaming up with members of the Romsey Men's Shed and local community groups to create colourful mosaics made entirely from plastic bottle tops.

The finished artworks will be displayed around Romsey as part of this year's Romsey Festival, running from 4-19 July, bringing a splash of creativity - and sustainability - to the town.

To make it happen, the organisers are calling on the community for help. Plastic bottle tops of any shape, size, or colour are needed. Once collected, simply wash them and drop them off at one of the local collection points: Romsey Library, Golden Gecko, The Appletree Centre, Royal British Legion or the Community Pantry.

Every bottle top donated contributes to a shared piece of public art that reflects community effort and imagination. It's a simple action that can make a visible difference.

Thank you for supporting Romsey Festival. For more information, or to get involved, contact transitiontownromseyweebly@gmail.com



ROUND THE SOUTHERN FELLOWSHIP OF UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

Bitterne Park

Saturday 28 March, from 11am-2pm Easter Market, including refreshments and lunch.

Friday 8 May, 6.30pm Beetle Drive, including Bangers and Mash.

Bitterne

2026 sees the 40th anniversary of moving into their present premises and they are planning a series of special events to celebrate. Visit their website for more information <https://bitterneurc.org.uk/40-years-in-bitterne-precinct/>

Bitterne URC will be holding a Tenebrae service on Good Friday at 7.30pm. They are asking for names of people who would be willing to read during this service. If you would like to take part, please let Andy know as soon as possible, preferably by email to andybevan1@btinternet.com.



**LIFE HECTIC?
NO DOWN TIME?**

**JOIN US FOR
CHILL OUT TUESDAY**

**Find some “you” time and
meet some new people.**

**A welcome, safe space
for everyone.**



**at The White Horse,
Romsey**

**7.30pm
2nd Tuesday
of each month**

Contact: abbeyurc.chillout@gmail.com

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Romsey Amnesty Group will be hosting a thought-provoking exhibition, “Surviving Evin,” at Abbey United Reformed Church in Romsey. The exhibition will be launched at 7pm on Wednesday, 18 March by Anoosheh Ashoori, who was unjustly imprisoned in Evin Prison, Iran. You may know Anoosheh as the British-Iranian businessman who was released at the same time as Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

We hope Anoosheh will speak for around an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes, sharing his experiences before taking questions. Afterwards, there will be time to explore the exhibition itself and reflect more deeply on the stories it tells. The evening is expected to conclude at approximately 9pm. Entry is free, and everyone is warmly welcome. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available. The exhibition will remain in the church for about a week, there will be the opportunity to attend on Saturday morning if you are unable to attend the launch evening.

TRANSLATION OF A POSTER FOUND IN A CHURCH IN FRANCE

When you enter this church, it may be possible
that you hear “the call of God”.

However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile.
Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk
to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him.

If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving.

TWO LOCAL JAZZ CONCERTS

You may remember the saxophonist who played at the Abbey URC carol service a couple of years ago, Ben Carter; he was also raising funds to make his first album a little while ago. He is now mostly based in Birmingham; however, he has two gigs in this area with his jazz band, the Ben Carter Quartet. They are all graduates of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and will share the album that he made, ‘Pulsar’, live.

They are playing at the Meridian Lounge Bar in Hythe on 26 February from 7.30pm-10.30pm – this is a ticketed event. They will also be playing in a free event at Southampton Modern Jazz Club at Good Things Cafe on 1 March at 7pm – just turn up!



Anoosheh Ashoori
coming to Romsey

سخنرانی انوشه آشوری
در شهر رامزی از تجربه
خود در زندان اوین.



Anoosheh is an innocent man who spent nearly five years in Evin prison, Tehran before he was released in 2022, alongside Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe who featured in BBC's Prisoner 951 series.

Anoosheh will be giving a talk about his experiences at the United Reformed Church, Romsey SO51 8EL on Wednesday 18th March starting 7pm.

