

NEWS

From



United Reformed Churches
of Romsey and Braishfield

SEPTEMBER 2026

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

Abbey United Reformed Church

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

or find us on social media

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Services

Sunday Family Worship		10.30am
Monthly Bible Study	first Sunday evening On Zoom (ID: 864 1780 6994 Password: learning)	6.30pm
Weekday Meetings – any changes can be found on our website or on our weekly service sheet		
Monday (2 nd)	BALM (Bereavement) Group	10.30am
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 Braishfield URC, nor the elders nor production team.

As Revd Mike was on leave during the later part of August, and Revd Sarah on sabbatical, we share below a thought for September.

What a summer we have had, days of blue skies and high temperatures, and we're not used to it. For we British it has almost been a conversation stopper as each day has been the same - and we do like to talk about the weather.

The lack of water has become a concern for all of us and we recall Jesus' words in John 4:14, where he tells the Samaritan woman at the well "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life". This brought to mind hymns where water is mentioned, for example Psalm 23:

*The Lord's my shepherd; I'll not want:
He makes me down to lie in pastures green;
he leadeth me the quiet waters by.*

Or, a baptismal hymn from the Scottish hymnary:

*By cool Siloam's shady rill
how sweet the lily grows!
How sweet the breath beneath the hill
of Sharon's dewy rose!*

As we head to harvest, a favourite hymn below is also very appropriate:

*We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand.
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.*

You will know many more, but finally reflect on the words of hymn 689 in Rejoice and Sing, based on Psalm 42.

- 1. As pants the hart for cooling streams,
When heated in the chase,
So longs my soul, O God, for Thee,
And Thy refreshing grace.*
- 2. For Thee, my God, the living God,
My thirsty soul doth pine;
O when shall I behold Thy face,
Thou Majesty divine?*

A VISIT BY THE RINGWOOD SOCIETY

On Wednesday 28 July, members of Romsey and District Society hosted 17 members of the Ringwood Society, on the theme of 'Romsey, present, past and future' and included Abbey URC on their tour. It was a hot morning and they were glad to come and sit in the cool of our church. Thérèse gave them a short introduction to the history of the church building and also Abbey Manse and Hall. Carole talked about the layout of the church and its current use. The visitors were very interested and asked lots of questions.

The organiser said "Thank you both so much for your warm welcome. Your information was perfect and, despite the exceptionally high temperatures, we all had a lovely time. I am so pleased that we could include the URC in the tour as it is an exceptional example, and to hear about the work of the Church within our community set the Romsey Scene."

CHURCH NEWS

Congratulations to Kieron and Emma on their recent marriage at our church, wishing them every happiness together.



Thank you again for the roses which Gwen brought for our birthdays. They were beautiful and cheered us up. Many thanks,

John and Ruby Heron



It was lovely to catch up with everyone at our coffee morning on 4 July. Thank you to everyone who baked cakes and those who supported us with donations and Gill, who did a very good job selling raffle tickets. The morning raised £151.70 for church funds.

Sarah, Richard and Kathleen

We were very grateful and touched by the kind words sent to us in the cards received at the Thanks Service on 5 July. They were greatly appreciated.

Andy and Graham

It has been a very busy June and July for serving refreshments! I would like to thank everyone who helped and made cakes at special events including the June tea party, Romsey Beggars Fair, the Ladies Choir concert and for Daphne's funeral tea. A big thank you to you all - I do appreciate all your help.



Gwen S

Thank you very much for a lovely send off at the Sunday service on 5 July. The last thirty years have been very busy and I enjoyed being part of the day-to-day goings on within the Church and the Hall. All the Weddings and Funerals were so special and different.

I have met some really lovely people within the Church and Hall users - the Aladdin's Cave Barnardo's group every Wednesday, the WI group every Friday, the church badminton group with Alice and Andy Jack - they really loved my Labrador Sacha, the work party with Geoff Prestage and his band of helpers, and so many more.

I will miss going into the church every day - the light coming through the upper windows was wonderful and gave me a feeling of peace much needed in these past few years. My two Andrews also felt secure and happy being part of the community. They also helped me in so many ways.

Thank you for the lovely cards, flowers and gift - so generous and a special thank you to Carole who has been there for me over the last few years and especially during the last few months. I hope to see you all out and about in Romsey.



Love from Angela W

Thank you for all your kind wishes on our recent bereavement, it is a very difficult time for our family and your love and care are much appreciated. Ruth bringing a bunch of sunflowers brightened our day.

The Beamans

THE RUTH FELLOWSHIP

The Ruth Fellowship is a group of people from Abbey URC and St Joseph's who meet together once a month on a Tuesday at St Joseph's Parish Room, opposite 1 Abbey Water, to talk about the similarities and differences between our beliefs.

We are a friendly group of people getting to know each other and the traditions of each other's religion, with fine refreshments provided too! We will meet on 15 September, 13 October and 17 November at 2.30pm. Please do feel free to join us!

REVD MIKE'S PREACHING ROTA

September	6	9.30 Braishfield URC
		10.30 Abbey URC
	13	10.30 Avenue St Andrews
	20	10.30 Bitterne URC
	27	10.30 Bitterne Park URC

PRAYER FOR SEPTEMBER

Prayer offered by Daphne Purver at a Winter/Spring 2010 Women's Guild meeting, (hand-written by Daphne, but not known if she composed it). This was found as a bookmark in a book loaned to Daphne.

To God our Father, praises we bring,
Give Him the glory for everything,
Show Him our love by the praise that we bring
Made in His image, God to adore.
Life everlasting joys every more.

Then Satan entered into our heart
Filled us with sin and made God to depart.
Great was God's sorrow, great was our loss
Till in love He sent His Son to die on the cross.

Jesus, God's only Son laid His glory by
Came down to earth to suffer and die.
For us afflicted, for us despised,
For us rejected and crucified.

We were not worthy, life to receive,
Yet by His death came life for all who believe.
Then God in mercy, knowing us well,
Sent His Holy Spirit with us to dwell.
To comfort, help and guide through all of our days
How can we ever cease our great God to praise.

Praise to the Father, praise to the Son,
Praise to the Spirit, three gifts in one.
What shall we render for such love outpoured,
Fully surrender our lives to our Lord.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Material for October 2026 to be submitted by
5pm (latest) **on Thursday, 24 September 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.

LOOKING FORWARD

In September 2026 Abbey URC will be considering the direction and mission of our church, as we move towards Revd Mike's retirement in April 2027. The Southern Fellowship will be putting together the Pastorate Profile, which is the information provided to those interested in being our new minister, and advertising the vacancy within our group.

The elders invite the congregation to attend one of the meetings, detailed below, to provide input to the Pastorate Profile, specifically in answering the question "in which 3 areas do you hope to receive support from a minister of the Word and Sacraments?". These meetings will be held at 2pm-4pm Tuesday, 1 September and 10am-12noon Saturday, 5 September in Abbey Hall Lounge. It would be lovely to have as many members of our congregation as possible attend one of these meetings, to ensure we have your input into this important document. Refreshments will be provided.

Change provides a good opportunity for our church to review our mission and our activities, ensuring we are being led by God to undertake his work within our church and our local community.

It has been suggested that members of the congregation could pray once a week, each in their own space, at a specific time and day, for guidance. Using the prayer below, let us join in prayer each Wednesday evening at 7pm, asking for direction as we look to our future.

God of wisdom,
show us your direction and guide us
as we prepare our Pastorate Profile.
Help us to listen for your voice,
to trust where you are leading us
and to follow the path you set before us.
May all that we do reflect your will,
and the future you have planned for us.
Amen.



BIBLE STUDY

Our monthly Zoom Sunday evening Bible study will take place on Sunday, 6 September at 6.30 pm (ID 864 1780 6994, PC learning) when we will look more deeply at the readings set for that Sunday (please see 'morning prayer' readings). Everyone is very welcome to attend!

ABBEY 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.





Open to all

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





DRAWING MUSIC

On Saturday, 4 July, for 4 hours the Church was filled with music and art making to start the Romsey Festival off with a bang.

We had a wonderful programme of musical experiences to inspire our drawings from local musicians and others. These included flautist Sue Gibbons, pianists Chris and Marion Maxey and choral music from t Romsey Voices. We also experienced recorded birdsong and percussion created by visitors to the church.

The railings were covered with paper and hanging pens with prompts for people to respond to in regards to drawing and music.

It was wonderful to have such a unique creative experience in the church where I am so lucky to have my studio and share this beautiful space with others. The youngest visitor who joined in was 18 months old, the oldest was 80. People left some wonderful feedback including:

“Really special, thank you.” “Beautiful, for all ages.” “Very centering.”

One gentleman thanked me for the event and shared a poem he wrote inspired by the experience which really encapsulated the experience:

*“Beneath the things of busyness, there are thoughts and dreams,
Beneath the thoughts and dreams, there are movements of the heart,
Beneath the movements of the heart, there is prayer,
Beneath the prayer, there is song and longing,
Beneath the song and longing there are tears and there is hope.”*



Thank you to Test Valley Borough Council for their support.

Elizabeth Hammond, Artist and Educator



A TIME OF CHANGE

Firstly, thank you for your kind words and good wishes as I take on the role of Church Secretary. Your encouragement is greatly appreciated. As with any change, there will be a period of adjustment, and I'm looking forward to working with everyone as we move forward together.

To help share the workload, we're looking for volunteers for a few small but important roles. Every little bit helps!

Typing support – a small amount of typing once a week on a Wednesday, all wording will be provided. It will be proofed by others before sending out. (Microsoft Word knowledge essential).

Church Meeting Secretary – taking minutes at our quarterly Church Meetings.

Concert Steward Rota Co-ordinator – to share the upcoming concerts with the stewards, and confirm when they would be happy to help.

Concert Stewards – to act as an ambassador for our church and to welcome visitors at our popular concerts and enjoy the entertainment free of charge. You can help as often or infrequently as you wish.

Saturday Morning Stewards – Howard is taking over the rota and would welcome new volunteers to join the team opening the church from 10.00am–12.30pm on Saturday mornings. Your help would be needed approximately once every six weeks.

Printing the weekly Order of Service – about once a month. The service sheet is emailed on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning and can be printed either at home or in the church office.

Join a Church Group - we are always keen to welcome new members to our church groups, which include Finance, Fabric, Worship, Pastoral and Outreach. You don't need to be an expert - just willing to share your ideas, skills and enthusiasm. These groups play a vital role in helping to guide the life of our church. They also organise many of the activities and events we enjoy throughout the year.

If you feel you could help with any of these roles, or would simply like to find out more or offer your support in another way, I would be happy to chat to you. Or, if you have any suggestions, changes or fresh ideas that could benefit our church community, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Your thoughts and contributions are always welcome. Thank you for your support.

Sarah B

HARVEST FESTIVAL FOLLOWED BY BRING AND SHARE LUNCH SUNDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2026



This year's Harvest Festival service will be held on 20 September, and we are delighted to welcome Andy Bevan back to lead our service.

As part of our Harvest celebrations, we invite you to bring fresh or tinned produce, which will be donated to Romsey

Community Pantry to support their work in our local community.

We look forward to celebrating Harvest together and sharing what we can with others in Romsey. Our service will be followed by a church meeting, which everyone in our congregation is invited to attend.

Following our Harvest Service and Church Meeting, come and join us for a Bring and Share Harvest Lunch in the Abbey Hall from 12.30pm. It's a lovely opportunity to enjoy good food and good company as we celebrate the harvest together. Tea and coffee will be provided – just bring along something sweet or savoury to share on the lunch table.

Everyone is very welcome, and we hope you'll join us. There will be a list at the back of church for you to add your name, if you are attending, so we know how many tables to put up. Thank you!

DO YOU LOVE CRAFTING?

Can you (or a friend!) knit, crochet or craft some angels by the end of November? Do you know a craft group who would like to get involved? Last year we had a real host of angels to share – thanks to our crafting community.



If you would like to help, but would like some company – why not pop into a Thursday coffee morning in the Abbey Hall and bring your knitting, crochet, etc with you? People in Romsey have started crafting – but the more the merrier! Any type of angel is welcome – let your imagination run wild.

In November we collect your crafted angels at church, bless them and then send them out into the local community for people to find in early December. Finding these angels is a small piece of magic for all who find them. Thank you!

RUM'S EG CONCERT

A wonderful lunchtime concert from Rums Eg with a lovely atmosphere.



The audience joined in for three classical pieces, including the Hallelujah Chorus. Thank you to everyone who came along and gave so generously in support of Prescription Art and the Mayor's Charity Fund. A great community event!

Romsey Mayor, Cllr Colin Burgess, said "Thank you for a truly friendly welcome and for such an enjoyable concert... thanks so much for donating to the Mayor's Charity fund. Such generosity; wow!"



CHURCH DIRECTORY

Our church directory has recently been updated and is now at the back of the church for everyone to check. The directory will be available at the back of the church for the next few Sundays.

Please take a moment to look at your own entry and, if you can, check any others you know well. If anything needs changing, please make the necessary amendments. If an entry is correct, simply put a tick alongside the name. If you have any changes to your details, but are unable to get to church, please let Carole know and she will be happy to update it for you. Thank you for your help!

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AFTERNOON TEA

After having to change the date, we were delighted to finally enjoy our Afternoon Tea on Sunday, 28 June with the sun shining outside and plenty of sunshine and friendship inside the church hall!

It was lovely to welcome some church friends who don't always manage to get to church regularly. The afternoon gave everyone a chance to catch up with old friends, enjoy some good company and spend time together. We were also very pleased to welcome Revd Dr Sarah Hall, who welcomed everyone and said grace for us - thank you, Revd Sarah.

We tucked into a delicious tea with plenty of homemade treats to enjoy, including a selection of sandwiches, chocolate cake, apple cake and rock cakes - something for everyone! The afternoon finished with some wonderful musical entertainment from Bob from Bloom N Rackett, which everyone enjoyed.

A huge thank you to Andy for all her help with printing the invitations, and to all our wonderful helpers who gave their time and helped make the afternoon such a lovely and successful occasion. It was a really enjoyable afternoon!

Jeannine and Roy



JOIN US FOR A SOCIAL SKITTLES EVENING



We're looking forward to another fun and sociable evening at the skittle alley at Wellow Golf Club on Saturday, 17 October.

It's always a lovely opportunity to get together, enjoy some friendly competition and have a good chat - and you certainly don't need to be a skittles expert to join in!

Menu choices and further details will be available at the back of the church from mid-September.

So, put the date in your diary and invite your friends and family too – everyone is very welcome! We'd love to see you there.

If you don't fancy playing skittles, come along for a fun evening with other members of our church family. For more information contact Carole.

A promotional poster for 'Demfest' by Romdag. The background is yellow with colorful triangular bunting at the top and pink fireworks at the bottom. The text is in various fonts and colors, including blue, black, and white. A 'FREE EVENT' banner is in the top right corner.

ROMDAG
Romsey Dementia Action Group

FREE EVENT

Demfest

**A DAY OF INSPIRATION, INNOVATION
AND EDUCATION ON DEMENTIA**

13th September 2026
10AM - 4PM

**LIVE MUSIC | INFORMATION | ACTIVITIES
CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT
SORRY NO DOGS ALLOWED**

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Romsey, SO51 0QA

HERITAGE OPEN DAY IN ABBEY URC

Ordinary lives, extraordinary legacy



What do a baker, a draper, a doctor, a stonemason, a choir member and a wartime volunteer have in common? They all feature in a new, free exhibition coming to Romsey in September, telling the stories of some of the people who helped shape the United Reformed Church in Romsey and its community over more than 350 years.

The exhibition includes stories of local families, craftsmen, tradespeople and professionals across the generations, alongside many different aspects of church life. It touches

on how church members and the wider community helped to fund and build the present church, and how they responded when their community was faced with the challenges of two world wars.

A slideshow featuring photographs of the church and its buildings will also be running on the Friday and Saturday of the exhibition.

Prepared as part of Heritage Open Days 2026, the exhibition will be held at Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey - the church by the Arch - adjacent to the Market Place.

Friday, 11 September: 10am-4pm
Saturday, 12 September: 10am-4pm
Sunday, 13 September: 1pm-4pm



The exhibition has been developed with valuable support and contributions from individuals, Romsey Local History Society and King John's House and Museum, whose photographs, research, information and historic artefacts have helped bring these stories to life.

A date for your diary! Come along and discover the ordinary lives behind an extraordinary legacy.

Thérèse

CALENDAR

September		
2	2.30pm	Church Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
3	10-11.30am	The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge
5	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection and prayer
6	10.30am	Morning Worship including Holy Communion led by Revd Mike
6	6.30pm	Bible Study on Zoom; ID 864 1780 6994 PW learning
10	10-11.30am	The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge
11	10am-4pm	Church open for Heritage Day Exhibition
12	10am-4pm	Church open for Heritage Day Exhibition and Ride and Stride
13	10.30 am	Morning Worship - Battle of Britain Sunday led by Revd James Pitkin, Chaplain of Romsey branch of the Royal Air Force Association
13	1pm - 4pm	Church open for Heritage Day Exhibition
14	10.30am	BALM in Abbey Hall Lounge
15	2.30pm	The Ruth Fellowship in St Joseph's Parish Room
16	2.30pm	Church Table Tennis in Abbey Hall
16	7.30pm	Worship Group on Zoom; ID 851 4528 3637 PW business
17	10-11.30am	The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge
17	7.30pm	Outreach and Youth Group on Zoom; ID 851 4528 3637 PW business
19	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection and prayer
20	10.30am	Harvest Festival led by Andy Bevan, followed by Church Meeting. Then bring-and-share harvest lunch in Abbey Hall at 12.30pm
22	7.30pm	Elders Meeting in Abbey Hall Lounge
24	10-11.30am	The Social Cup in Abbey Hall Lounge
26	10am-12.30pm	Church open for quiet reflection and prayer
26	7.30pm	Saxophony Concert at Bitterne URC
27	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Revd Wendy White. We will celebrate the baptism of Autumn Perkins and Pearl Osbourne and we look forward to their friends and families joining us.

Braishfield United Reformed Church

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September

6	9.30	Holy Communion led by Revd Mike Perrott
13	10.00	Family Worship led by Pat Oliver
20	10.00	Family Worship led by Chris Noyce
27	10.00	Harvest Festival led by Sharon Whitfield

October

4	9.30	Holy Communion led by Revd Dr Sarah Hall
11	10.00	Family Worship led by Pam Humphries
18	10.00	Short Family Worship led by Daniel Symes, followed by Church Meeting
25	10.00	Family Worship led by Revd Wendy White

November

1	9.30	Holy Communion led by Revd Bernie Collins
8		No service at Braishfield URC
8	10.50	Remembrance Sunday Meet at the Village War Memorial for 10.50am. There will be the Two Minutes Silence at 11am and the names of the dead will be read out.

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

I hope you've all managed to cope with the heatwave. I won't be sorry when it cools down and know I'm not alone on that. My dog will agree for one thing! But, weather aside, September is the season of "mists and mellow fruitfulness" and thoughts turn to harvest time.

Talking of which, Braishfield is holding its Harvest Service on Sunday, 27 September. Sharon Whitfield will be leading the worship, do join us if you can. The church will be open on Saturday, 26 September from 10am for people to bring in food donations. Canned and packet food will go to the Food Bank, but you are also welcome to bring these items in on the Sunday itself. It always looks lovely to have things "added" to the donations already brought in.

In October, we will have our church meeting after a short service led by Daniel Symes on the 18 October. The Braishfield Elders will meet a little before that, though a date hasn't yet been set for this. All are welcome at the service and the church meeting. It is your chance to have a say in how the church is run.

Don't forget we are still supporting the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance as our charity for this year. Do let Shirley know of ideas or events you would like to hold in support of this great cause.

Also, please continue to fill in your Jars of Coins as this is a simple and highly effective way of raising money for our charity project. (It is also a great way of getting rid of those fiddly 5ps and the like, though notes are also welcome, naturally!)

Looking ahead a little, Braishfield will unite with All Saints Parish Church for the village Remembrance Sunday events in November. More to come on that in the next magazine but it is a reminder of how quickly the year goes by, isn't it?



The Flower Festival in July was wonderful and the church looked splendid. A huge thank you to Maggie Batchelor for her organisation of this. This event, Harvest Festival, and Christmas are, I think, where the church looks at its absolute best.

Allison S



NEW COMMUNITY SERVICE IN ROMSEY

Home Instead Salisbury & Romsey are opening a NEW Day Support Centre in Romsey this Autumn. The centre is designed to support older members of our local community, particularly those living with care needs or dementia, or individuals facing social isolation. Their goal is to provide a safe, warm, and engaging environment where individuals can socialise, receive high-quality care, and stay connected. It will be located at the Living Well Centre, Nightingale Lodge, Great Well Drive, Romsey, SO51 7AH. If you have questions or would like to learn more about the support services provided, please reach out to the team by email at: daycentre@salisburyromsey.homeinstead.co.uk

MORNING PRAYER

If you would like to take the opportunity to reflect upon the weekly bible readings and to pray for the needs of the world, and the Church, in your own time during the week, below are the relevant passages.

September 6	Proverbs 8: 22-31	St John 1: 1-5
13	Psalms 103: 8-13	St Matthew 18: 21-35
20	Isaiah 55:6-9	Matthew 20: 1-6
27	Psalms 78:1-4. 12-16	St Matthew 21:23-32

OUR MOVE TO SCOTLAND

Thank you to you all for your best wishes as we start our new life in Scotland, your prayers and thoughts have been much appreciated.

Whilst travelling up to our new home Graham and I were reflecting that, with so many Scots in our congregation, we must be two of the few people from Abbey URC Romsey who have moved north of the border.

Our journey up involved five traffic jams and took 10 hours although on good trips previously this would take us only seven hours. However, having left scorched fields and plenty of sunshine in Romsey, we entered Scotland to lush green fields and rain. What a difference!

Before leaving, we flooded the Romsey charity stores and friends with books and furniture. Despite this, we still just managed to get everything in the van. A week later we have filled every corner in John and Sue's house, a container at the local lock up store - and made the local Dumfries British Heart Foundation Charity Shop very happy.

Now life in Scotland really begins, with the occasional visits down south to see family and friends. Unfortunately, when we arrived our daughter-in-law was in hospital but we are pleased that she was discharged the following day and is now on the mend. We are starting to discover the activities held in New Galloway so will soon be able to pursue some new interests. In the meantime, below is the view I wake to each morning with the rockery garden in the foreground and the edge of the Galloway Forest Park in the background.

Our new address is Four Acres, West Port, New Galloway, DG7 3SB.

Graham and Andy B



ALLISON SYMES - AUTHOR/EDITOR

BOOK SIGNING EVENT: SEEING THE OTHER SIDE FLASH FICTION COLLECTION

Saturday, 5 September from 10.30am to 12noon
at Salisbury URC

Meet The Author

All welcome. Entrance Free.

Local author **Allison Symes**, will be signing copies of her new book, ***Seeing The Other Side***, on the church frontage.

This is Allison's third book, and so there will be an opportunity to browse her other books *Tripping the Flash Fantastic* and *From Light to Dark and Back Again*.

Come and find out what flash fiction is, listen to Allison read some stories - and enjoy tea/coffee and cake from The Spire Coffee Shop.

Salisbury URC have a monthly bookstall on the first of the month so why not put a note in your diaries to pop by for regular visits.

Books, coffee/tea, and cake – it's a winning combination.



Allison Symes is published by Chappeltown Books, CaféLit, and Bridge House Publishing amongst others. She is a member of the Society of Authors and Association of Christian Writers.

She adores reading and writing quirky fiction which she calls fairytales with bite. Her website is <https://allisonsymescollectedworks.com> and she blogs weekly for online magazine, *Chandler's Ford Today*, often on writing related topics. Allison also writes for *Writers' Narrative*, her work has been broadcast, she is a competition judge and editor.

Allison Symes has long loved what can be done with flash fiction in terms of genre and even how it is presented. Here, you will find flash tales covering a wide range of genres. Some are written in acrostic format, some are linked flashes where a character will turn up in two or more tales revealing more about themselves as the stories go on, and many will make you laugh. Others will make you shudder. Justice is served in some of the tales too, though whether it is to the characters' liking is another matter. Flash fiction is perfect for any mood or genre. Oh and a Canada Goose comes into the book too.

Chappeltown Books



Seeing the Other Side

Allison Symes

Chappeltown Books

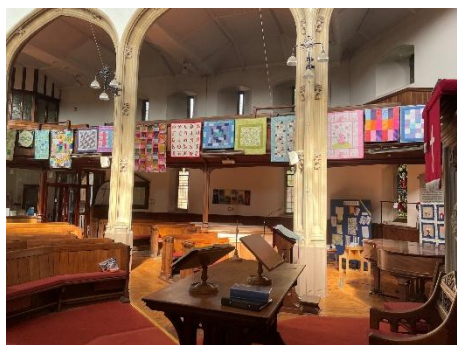
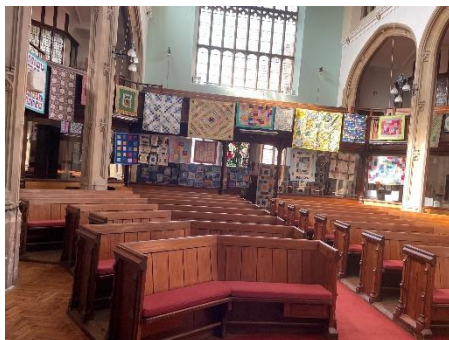
Seeing the Other Side Allison Symes



Perspective can be wonderful but will you still feel the same if your view from the fence changes?

PROJECT LINUS

A huge thank you to the Romsey Quilters. The Linus quilts decorating our church for the two weeks of Romsey Festival were a beautiful sight - and it was sad to see them come down. However, it is lovely that each one is on its way to children's care homes or premature baby units to give warmth and comfort to a child in need of a hug.



ARTSEEN EXHIBITION

We were pleased to welcome Artseen back to Abbey Hall in August, during the 10 days of Hampshire Open Studios. They were delighted to have the opportunity, once again, to display their artwork in Abbey Hall.



They will be exhibiting until 31 August and have been joined by several guest artists and makers, including a ceramicist, jewellery makers and work by pupils from a local Primary School.

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JOIN THE COMMUNITY AT DEMFEST 2026!



Save the date: Sunday 13, September 2026 10am-4pm.

DemFest is returning to the beautiful Sir Harold Hillier Gardens for a day of friendship, entertainment and support for everyone affected by dementia. Organised by the Romsey Dementia Action Group (ROMDAG), this free community event brings together local charities, healthcare professionals, support organisations and community groups, alongside live music, activities, wellbeing demonstrations and plenty of opportunities to connect with others. Whether you're living with dementia, caring for a loved one, or simply want to learn more about making our community dementia friendly, everyone is welcome.

This year's event is delighted to welcome adventurer and Guinness World Record holder **Louis Alexander** as our VIP guest. Louis has inspired thousands through his extraordinary endurance challenges, including running marathons on all seven continents and swimming seven marathon-distance swims across the world's seas, all in memory of his grandfather and to raise vital funds for Alzheimer's Research UK. His remarkable story of determination and hope is helping to raise awareness of dementia and support the search for a cure.

Come along, enjoy a fantastic day out, discover the wealth of local support available, and help us celebrate a community that cares. We look forward to welcoming you to DemFest!

DAPHNE PEARL PURVER
2 March 1939 to 28 June 2026

We all knew Daphne as a lady of strong faith, and as a loyal and willing servant of this church over many years. Yet she was a very private person and, I expect, most of us only knew her to the extent she wanted us to know her!

What we do know is that Daphne was an only child, growing up with her parents in West Wellow. She went to the local church with her father whilst her mother stayed home to cook Sunday lunch.



Her father was an insurance representative and, when Daphne came to Romsey for her senior school education, he would programme his day to start by taking Daphne to the bus stop before going on his rounds.

In later life she was an active member of the West Wellow Guild and would often visit friends from the village in her little Morris Minor.

Thinking about her little car, Daphne was not impressed with a local garage who told her that the value of that Morris Minor would not be affected when they resprayed it brown, only to be told by them, sometime later, when she went to trade it in that its value was reduced by not being an authentic Morris Minor colour.

Daphne worked for the whole of her working life at the County Reference Library in Winchester. She mentioned that not long after she started work a colleague retired and was presented with a clock; she commented that she wanted a clock on her retirement - which she duly received when she retired.

When still driving, she was very strong on visiting her wide circle of friends; Andy Bevan can remember calling in to see her on one occasion near Christmas time. She was amazed that in her little house she had Christmas cards all the way up her spiral staircase, with two or three cards on the inside of each step. In recent years Daphne was persuaded to join Alan and Brenda for Christmas Day, having previously said that Christmas was for families and therefore she would not impose herself on anyone else's family on Christmas Day.

A side often not seen with Daphne was her sense of humour, particularly remembered is her memorable address at a combined lunch with visitors from Earle Road URC, Liverpool, about an elderly gentleman

telling his friend about his visit to Handel's Messiah. This can be found later in this magazine.

Daphne was very involved at Abbey URC, particularly with the Pastoral, and Worship Groups and Tuesday morning prayers.

Daphne joined the afternoon fellowship at Romsey Methodist Church fellowship, over fifteen years ago; this was when the Ladies' Fellowship at Abbey URC came to an end. Daphne was a much-valued member of the Fellowship, and whatever the weather, rain or shine, Daphne would be there.

She took an active part in their Carol Services and fellowship afternoons, sharing readings and often leading the singing. She also delighted in telling the Fellowship about her collection of soft toys, knowing each one by name, greeting them every morning before breakfast, and wishing them goodnight before bedtime. Daphne will also be remembered for the amusing poems she loved to share. The most recent was about a jumble sale, and, as many members of the Fellowship remembered those from the 1950s, it brought a great deal of laughter.

One of the lasting memories of Daphne is her beautiful singing voice. The Thursday afternoon fellowship always ended by singing Let the Beauty of Jesus. On the occasions when there was no pianist, Daphne's confident voice would lead us all. She became a valued member, bringing warmth, kindness and good humour to their gatherings. She will be greatly missed by them all.

So, as we experience our feelings of sadness and loss, take consolation from the knowledge that Daphne would want you to remember, and to celebrate, all that she was to us; a valued church member and friend, a member of our choir and of various groups within the church fellowship, and her attendance at our social events too.

We remember Daphne with fondness. Let us smile as we remember her smiles and her sense of humour, and her strength of faith. Amen

We were pleased to be able to video the service and share with Daphne's cousin, Peter, in Nova Scotia. He said "Thank you very much for the video of my cousin's funeral. It was beautifully shot and meant a lot to me. I so appreciate all the correspondence with people who knew Daphne and attended at this funeral".

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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.

CHARITY Day GOLF

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£260 per team of 4
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Friday 2nd Oct 2026
Registration from 10:00am

To Enter - Email
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All proceeds will support the continued work of Romsey Young Carers.
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So happy to be able to offer this free drawing opportunity.
Thank you @abbeyurc and @testvalleyboroughcouncil

Drop In and Draw

a free drawing event

2 - 4pm
Saturday 10th October
at Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey

All ages and stages welcome,
all materials provided,
no previous musical or art experience necessary!

visit www.elizabeth-hammond.com/events
for more details

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, ROMSEY
Everyone is welcome to join us at our services and activities. Sunday Family Worship 10.30am

Test Valley Borough Council

HARVEST HOPE CHOIR



The Hope Choir will be singing at the following care homes in Romsey over the Harvest period. I do hope as many of you as possible will come to as many homes as you can, the residents really enjoy our visits.

Please bring any friends who would like to sing with us!

Cedar Lawn	2.30pm	Tuesday, 29 September
Abbeyfield Lodge	2.30pm	Wednesday, 30 September
Woodley Grange	11am	Thursday, 1 October
Friars House	11.30am	Friday, 2 October
Durban House	11am	Monday, 5 October
Marie Louise House	1.30pm	Wednesday, 7 October

Please can you arrive 10 minutes before the above start times.

Many thanks and looking forward to seeing you soon. Best wishes to you all.

Clive Andrews, organiser of Romsey Hope Choir

THE MESSIAH as told by Daphne Purver - a great witness to her sense of humour

Most of us are familiar with the words and music of this great oratorio but old Bill Jones from a little village in Somerset, had never been to a performance and he tried to persuade a friend to go with him to the Community Hall to hear the famous Choral Society, but his friend refused. "Nay" he said, "that sort o' music's nowt in my line. I like a good comic song or a lively jig, but I reckon now't to this sacred stuff as they call it. It's a bit beyond me. An' another thing there'll be none of our sort there. It'll be mostly religious folk and swells done up in boiled shirts and wimen wi' nowt much on. Nay, you go by theesens and then you can tell me all about it sometime.

So, Bill went by himself. The next time the old pals met, the following conversation took place. "Well, cum on, how did you get on at Messiah? Tell us all about it."



"Ee, well," said Bill, "it were fair champion. I wouldna missed it for all the tea in China. When I got there the hall was crowded, it was chock full o' folk, and I had a job to get a seat, but no wonder, it was all them singers – they took up half the gallery. Anyhow I managed to squeeze in somehow. There

was a chap larking about on the organ, he weren't playing nowt in particular, just running 'is fingers up and down as if he were practising like our Martha used to do when she started to learn to play the pianner. Well, after a bit a lot of chaps came in carrying fiddles, then they brought in the Messiah. Well, that's what I took it to be. It were the biggest instrument on the platform and it were covered in a big green bag. Anyroad, they took the bag off it and then a chap rubbed its stomach wi' a stick and you should have heard it groan. It were summat like the last expiring moan of a dying cow. I was just thinking of going when a little chap came in, all dolled up in a white waistcoat and wi' a flower in his buttonhole and everything went dead quiet. You could have heard a pin drop. He had a stick in his hand and he started waving it about and all the singers stared at him. I reckon they was wondering what was the matter with him. Then they started to sing and they hadn't been going long before they were screeching like cats. I reckon he should have



walloped one or two of 'em with that stick. First one side said they were King o' Glory, then the other side said they were, and then they went at it hammer and tongs but it frizzled out so I've no idea which side won.



Then there was a bit of bother about some sheep that were lost. I don't know who they belonged to but they must have been champion twisters and turners judging by the words and the fancy music. One lot of singers must 'ave been very fond of

mutton becoss they kept on singing "all we like sheep". I couldn't help saying to the chap next door to me that sheeps alright in moderation but that I like a bit of underdone beef meself and he looked daggers at me and said "Shhhh" so I shushed.

Then a chap stood up and sang by hisself. They must have been his sheep cos he said every mountain and hill should be made low. I thought they'd be sure to find 'em if they did that as well as finding work for the unemployed. Then up jumped another chap an' he did look mad. I wondered if they'd taken his sheep to make up for them they'd lost. He said "they'd imagined a vain thing --- he was in a right state, I can tell you. Then the organist started banging, and the rest of the band was just as mad 'cos the way they was swinging them fiddles I thought they they was going to go through 'em. I bet everybody was glad when that chap sat down. A lot of women stood up after that and all of 'em looked as if they were --- well, getting on a bit. Some of 'em must 'a bin 65 if they was a day. They sang, "Unto us a child is born" and the chaps shouted back, "Wonderful". And I thought Wonderful! it's a blooming miracle!

After that they sobered down a bit and sang about a lass called Joyce Greatly. I've never heard of her meself but the chaps had cos they all looked mighty pleased about it. Then some chap got up and said that he was king o' kings, and another said he was, and then, blow me, they started arguing about it. I was getting a bit fed up and everybody stood up to see what was the matter and they suddenly shouted "Hallelujah" ... and its going to rain for ever and ever! Well at that I jumped up and made straight for the door. I'd had me money's worth and besides I was thinking that if it were going to rain for ever and ever I'd better get home before the flood came. It was a real good do though – you should 'a come; but oh, I do hope they find those sheep."

Saxophony

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EXTRACT FROM THE THANK YOU LETTER TO CHURCH MEMBERS FROM URC HEADQUARTERS

Thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2025 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,
Alan Yates (Treasurer)
Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)

DO IT ANYWAY

People are often unreasonable, illogical
and self-centred. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish,
ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends
and some true enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you.
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone
could destroy overnight. Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may
be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often
forget tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.
Give the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis it is between you and God;
it was never between you and them anyway.

Mother Teresa



heritage open days

350 years of Romsey lives

An exhibition about the ordinary lives and stories of the people connected with Abbey United Reformed Church across more than three centuries.

Location:

Abbey United Reformed Church
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Something for everyone!

Friday 11 September 10.00am – 4.00pm
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Sunday 13 September 1.00pm – 4.00pm

Free Admission

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