



MARCH 2025

South & East Leicestershire Area United Reformed Churches



**SAFFRON LANE, WIGSTON MAGNA, SOUTH WIGSTON,
OADBY, WHETSTONE, ABBOTS ROAD**

<http://selaunc.org.uk>

Contact us:**Revd Martin Ferris****0116 2419357**

Area Minister

Mrs Eileen Williams**0116 2478929**

Local Church Leader

South Wigston

Di Statham

Secretary

0116 2962847

di.statham@btinternet.com

Noel Oldershaw

Treasurer

0116 2813398

Marion Bartholomew

Magazine

0116 2717755

Wigston Magna

Eileen Williams

Secretary

0116 2478929

Ray Green

Treasurer

0116 2887774

Ray Green

Room Lettings

0116 2887774 /

07518 214144

Church Office answerphone

0116 2882666

Saffron Lane

Sandra Clay

Secretary/Finance/Magazine

0116 2835375

Elizabeth Richardson

Treasurer

0116 2993176

Oadby

Pauline Hudson

Secretary

0116 2712913

Tonyhudson727@btinternet.com

Tony Hudson

Treasurer

0116 2712913

Whetstone

Shirley Eastman

Secretary

0116 3484121

Glenis Chapman

Treasurer

Jean Warner

Room Lettings

0116 2752405

Kevin West

Magazine

0116 2779402

Abbots Road

Paul Hadley

Secretary

07948 802031

Eric Hanson

Treasurer

It is on March 5th this year that our period of Lent begins which is Ash Wednesday, and the day when Bible Bytes meets at Saffron Lane URC from 10.30am, to which you are all welcome.

Lent is a set time of forty days, leading up to the celebrations of Easter Day, when we are encouraged to turn away from the temptations of this world and concentrate on what this period of Lent means to us personally and to the church universal. We are encouraged to come together to, perhaps, follow a course of Bible readings to help us better understand the meaning behind the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. There are many books that can be followed and, if you are au-fait, many items on the internet to delve into. The book that I am following this year is written by Delia Smith, yes, the cookery writer, entitled 'A Feast for Lent'. Delia is a devote Christian and shares some of her voyage of discovery in her selection of Bible readings and prayers, one every day during Lent and for Easter Sunday.

Can I encourage you to find a way to explore, every day during Lent, some poetry, Bible readings or whatever helps you to take a moment of quiet and ponder on Christ's way to the Cross and beyond.

Together we can deepen our understanding and make it easier for us to help others better understand too what Jesus went through to save us all. And don't forget to tell someone what you have discovered along the way.

With God's blessings

Eileen

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

Whetstone URC	10.00 am
Oadby URC	10.15 am
South Wigston URC	10.30 am
Wigston Magna	10.30 am
Saffron Lane	11.00 am
Abbots Road	10.45 am

Please check with the relevant Church Secretaries to confirm when services are taking place at any of the Area Churches.

DEADLINE FOR APRIL 25 MAGAZINE

Sunday 23 March 2025

**Send your items to your church representative or direct to
di.statham@btinternet.com**

**If you do not have a computer a hand written copy can be accepted.
Contact Di Statham 0116 296 2847 for information**

Worship Leaders for March 2025

Oadby	2	Ray Green Communion
	9	Worship Group
	16	Revd Jacquie Gavin
	23	Revd Martin Ferris
	30	Revd David Howlett
Saffron Lane	2	Julie Slatford - Communion
	9	Ray Green - Communion
	16	Eileen Williams - Communion
	23	Ivor Smith - Family Service
	30	Geoff Milnes
South Wigston	2	David Todd - Café Style Service
	9	Eileen Williams
	16	Ray Green
	23	Marion Bartholomew
	30	Revd Martin Ferris
Wigston Magna	2	Eileen Williams
	9	Julie Slatford
	16	Revd Les Gill - Communion
	23	Pam Smith
	30	To be Confirmed
Whetstone	2	Revd Richard Eastman - Communion
	9	The North's
	16	Julie Slatford
	23	Paul Baxter
	30	Shirley Eastman
Abbots Road	2	Revd Martin Ferris
	9	Revd Pam Smith
	16	Revd Martin Ferris
	23	Elders
	30	Revd Les Gill

Regular Church Events

Oadby URC

Weekly Coffee Morning
Every Monday from 10.00 - 12.00 -
including Bank Holidays

11 O'Clock Club
1st & 3rd Thursday 10.30 am for 11.00 start

Ladies Group
4th Thursday 2.30pm - 4.30pm

Craft Group
4th Saturday 11.00 am - at 25 Chestnut Ave, Oadby

Whetstone URC

Community Coffee Morning Thursday 10.00 to 12.00

Saffron Lane URC

Weekly 3T's (Tea, Toast & Talk) Thursday 10.00 to 12.00

Wigston Magna

Community Cinema
Alternate Months from February - 1.30 pm

Sit Sip and Social
2nd Wednesday of each month 2pm - 4 pm

Coffee Morning
Every Saturday 10.00 am to 12.00 pm

South Wigston

Drop In with coffee / tea. 4th Wednesday of each month

Abbots Road

Lunchbox every Tuesday from 12.30pm - 3 course meal
£5.00

Quiz **NOW** Thursday evenings from 7.15pm (on Zoom)

Thursday Stay and Play and Little Borrowers toy library.
For children aged 0-4 years old and their parents/carers
10.00 to 11.30 £1.50 per family

Saturday Coffee Morning including a raffle, on Zoom
from 10.30am. Raising funds for our chosen charities.

Bible Bytes

Wednesday 5 March 2025

10.30 am

Saffron Lane URC

Come and enjoy a light and friendly discussion

No Need to be a " Bible Expert"

EVERYBODY welcome



Area AGM & Covenant Service.

On the afternoon of Sunday 16 February 2025 23 members from the 6 churches which make up the South and East Leicestershire Area joined together at Saffron Lane URC for the Area AGM and Covenant Service.

The afternoon started with the AGM at which we discussed issues relating to the Area including finances, training opportunities and our Area Website. It was also agreed that due to falling attendances at the additional Area Elders and Area Church Meetings previously held throughout the year these would no longer be held with the understanding that should a specific issue arise during the year a special Church Meeting could be called. In place of these meetings we will hold at least one Area Prayer Time and Faith Tea during the year which will provide an opportunity for all the Churches to get together for prayer and then social time. The first one will be held at South Wigston URC on the afternoon of Sunday 13 April 2025.

Following the completion of the AGM discussions the Annual Covenant Service took place led by Revd Martin Ferris. Representatives from the Area Churches all took part providing prayers and readings and following a talk from Revd Ferris on "Fruitfulness and Growth" everybody took part in the Covenant Renewal part of the service.

After the service everybody was invited to stay for a bountiful faith tea which had been provided by all of the churches and of course a "chat". This brought a lovely end to an enjoyable afternoon.



Wigston Magna News

Cinema at Long Street

Our first film of the year was "Thelma", which seemed to be enjoyed by all the folks who streamed into our church and packed the rows of seats. Nearly seventy smiling faces and all eager to enjoy hot drinks with cakes and biscuits before film.

At the end of the film there was also the usual raffle - for something connected in some way with the film and usually with a "sweet" origin. There was also a chance to have another cup of tea etc. and to meet up with friends again. There was also an opportunity to find out about the next film to be brought along by our stalwart operator Peter. Then it was homeward bound promising each other to "see you again soon".

A great afternoon's outing enjoyed by all judging from the smiles and laughter. Many thanks to Julie, Malcolm and Pete.

Grace

***** The Next Community Cinema will be on Monday 7th April *****



Birthdays In March

6th - Debra Chauhan

□ 13th Grace Fisher

□ 15th - Malcolm Briggs

□ 18th - Julie Barnes



Coffee Morning

Every Saturday

10.30 to 12.30

Come and Join Us

RECIPE - MARCH:

OAT CRACKERS
(Makes about 30)

4 ozs wholemeal flour, plus extra for rolling.

1 teaspoon baking powder

Half a teaspoon of salt

5 ozs fine oatmeal

3 ozs butter, plus extra for greasing

1 tablespoon caster sugar

4 tablespoons cold water

- 1) Preheat the oven to 180 C/350 F/Gas mark 4, and lightly grease 2 baking sheets.
- 2) Sieve the flour, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl, then mix in the oatmeal.
- 3) Add the butter and rub into the dry ingredients.
- 4) Spoon in the sugar and the water, and mix to a smooth dough.
- 5) Turn the mixture onto a floured surface, and knead until smooth.
- 6) Roll the dough to 1/8 inch thick, then cut out the crackers using a 2 and a half-inch round cutter.
- 7) Place the biscuits onto the prepared baking sheets, and bake for about 15 minutes until golden.
Change the position of the sheets in the oven halfway through the cooking time to ensure even cooking.
- 8) Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool.

Serve with a variety of British cheeses with some grapes.

GARDENING TIPS - MARCH

- 1) Sow seeds of late summer cabbages and summer spinach.
- 2) Sow early-flowering biennials and hardy annuals.
- 3) Check plant ties.
- 4) Prune blackcurrant and gooseberry bushes.
- 5) In cold areas, plant anemones for summer flowering.
- 6) Prepare vegetable beds for sowing and planting.

BIRTHDAYS:

24th - Marion Bartholomew

DIARY: MARCH

- 4 Choir practice for the World Day of Prayer - 2.00pm at the South Wigston Congregational Church.
- 5 "Bible Bytes" - 10.30am at Saffron Lane Church. All welcome.
- 7 World Day of Prayer service - St Mary's Church 2.00pm.
All welcome!
- 12 Elders' Meeting 10.00am.
- 22 Bible Society coffee morning -
Congregational Church 10.00- 12.00 noon
- 26 Drop In 10.00 am - Talk by Revd Richard Eastman

A Thought for the Month Ahead.

The shorter way to do many things,
is to do one thing at a time.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

South Wigston News

Burns Dinner

On Friday 31 January 2025 South Wigston URC held their Annual Burns Dinner. As usual Oadby URC very kindly let us use their kitchen and hall to prepare and serve the meal. This is a very popular event which has to have a limit on numbers in order to make sure everybody can be served in a timely period. This year the meal was attended by 42 people from around the South and East Leicestershire Area Churches.

We were joined by "Piper Carl" who played a variety of tunes on his bagpipes whilst everybody was arriving and taking their places.

The meal started with vegetable soup which was served to everybody by the members of South Wigston URC.

Then followed the main event - led by "Piper Carl" the haggis was paraded around the room by Peter and then set down on the top table to be addressed by David in his best Scottish voice. I am not sure how many understood all that he said but it sounded good !!.

Everybody was then served with a plate of haggis (vegetarian haggis for those who required it) mashed potato and a carrot and swede mix. Seconds were available for those who wanted them.

This main course was followed by a choice of delicious desserts and then cheese and biscuits for those who still had a little empty corner in their stomach.

Following the meal everybody joined together with the assistance of the bagpipes to sing Happy Birthday to Shirley who had celebrated her 70th birthday the day before. She was then presented with a birthday cake.

It was a very enjoyable social evening and it was lovely to see so many people from around the various churches.

A big thank you goes to everybody who helped to wash up and tidy up afterwards and a special thank you to Oadby URC for allowing us to use their room and kitchen and to Carl for playing his bagpipes.

South Wigston News

PRAYER LIST – MARCH

Please pray for:

- 1 All those refugees who have returned home to find families gone, and homes in ruins.
- 2 All those preaching the Word of God in our churches today.
- 3 Children everywhere, especially those living in fear.
- 4 Those still being affected by the recent floods, fires and storms.
- 5 All those suffering through an act of violence.
- 6 All who have suffered a recent bereavement.
- 7 People across the world as they unite in the World Day of Prayer Service.
- 8 Give thanks for our pets – they give so much comfort and joy.
- 9 All those worshipping in our Group Churches today, on this, the first Sunday in Lent.
- 10 Doctors, nurses and all who work in our hospitals.
- 11 Students studying at university, finding it hard to be away from home.
- 12 All who look after our parks and public gardens.
- 13 Ask for God's blessing on our Ministry Team, Eileen and Martin.
- 14 Those who drive for a living, that they may stay safe on our busy roads
- 15 All who are attending the Synod Meeting today.
- 16 All who long to attend their church, but cannot because of age or infirmity.
- 17 All who are ill, whether physically or mentally.
- 18 Take time to bring your problems to God.
- 19 For fathers on St Joseph's Day, may they guard and nurture their children.
- 20 Those who do not have enough to eat.
- 21 Refugees, wherever they are.
- 22 All who work for the Bible Society, & those who would love to own a Bible, but do not have one.
- 23 Those attending church today for the first time – may they feel uplifted.
- 24 Give thanks for the blessings in your life.
- 25 Those who are seeking work.
- 26 All those going through great sadness at this time.
- 27 Young people living on the streets.
- 28 Those living with terminal illness that they may feel loved and cherished.
- 29 As the days lengthen, give thanks for the gift of light.
- 30 Mothers everywhere on this special day, especially those whose children are far away.
- 31 Pray for peace in this troubled world.

South Wigston URC
(North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College)

DROP IN

Wednesday 26 March 2025

Coffee From 10.00 am

Talk by

Revd Richard Eastman

From 10.30 am

Everybody Welcome

Saffron Lane News

Preachers and Readers list for March - April 2025

	OT	NT	SER	COL	Preacher	
Mar 2 nd	5	14	5	13	J Slatford	Communion
Mar 9 th	36	6	3	13	R Green	Communion
Mar 16 th	10	11	#	13	E Williams	Com/B Meeting 10,30
Mar 23 rd	30	12	#	13	I Smith	Family Service
Mar 30 th	12	30	#	13	G Milnes	5 th Sunday
Apr 6 th	9	3	9	13	I Smith	Communion
Apr 13 th	5	14	5	13	M Ferris	Communion
Apr 20 th	6	36	3	13	L Gill	Communion Easter Sunday
Apr 27 th	7	8	#	13	P Smith	Family Service

3. Kath T	8. Brian S	12 Elizabeth R	36 Dec B
5. Sue B	9. Terri D	13. Darren C	# No server
6. Pat S	10. Malvolia B	14. Mackenzie B	
7. Angela S	11. Richard B	30 Sandra C	

Church Birthdays 2025

March

19th Angela Slater

April

16th Peter Clay

PLEASE NOTE

Our "Puddings Evening" on Tuesday 11 March will now start at 2.00pm
DO NOT MISS IT

Saffron Lane News

Our 2024 Charity Effort

Our charity for 2024 was chosen as "Children's Heartlink" as Pat's grandson spent most of his young years at the *Glenfield* hospital being looked after by the doctors and nurses there. He underwent a lot of tests and operations and Pat had nothing but praise for the way they looked after him and the family. He is now in his 30s and living a full life in Australia.

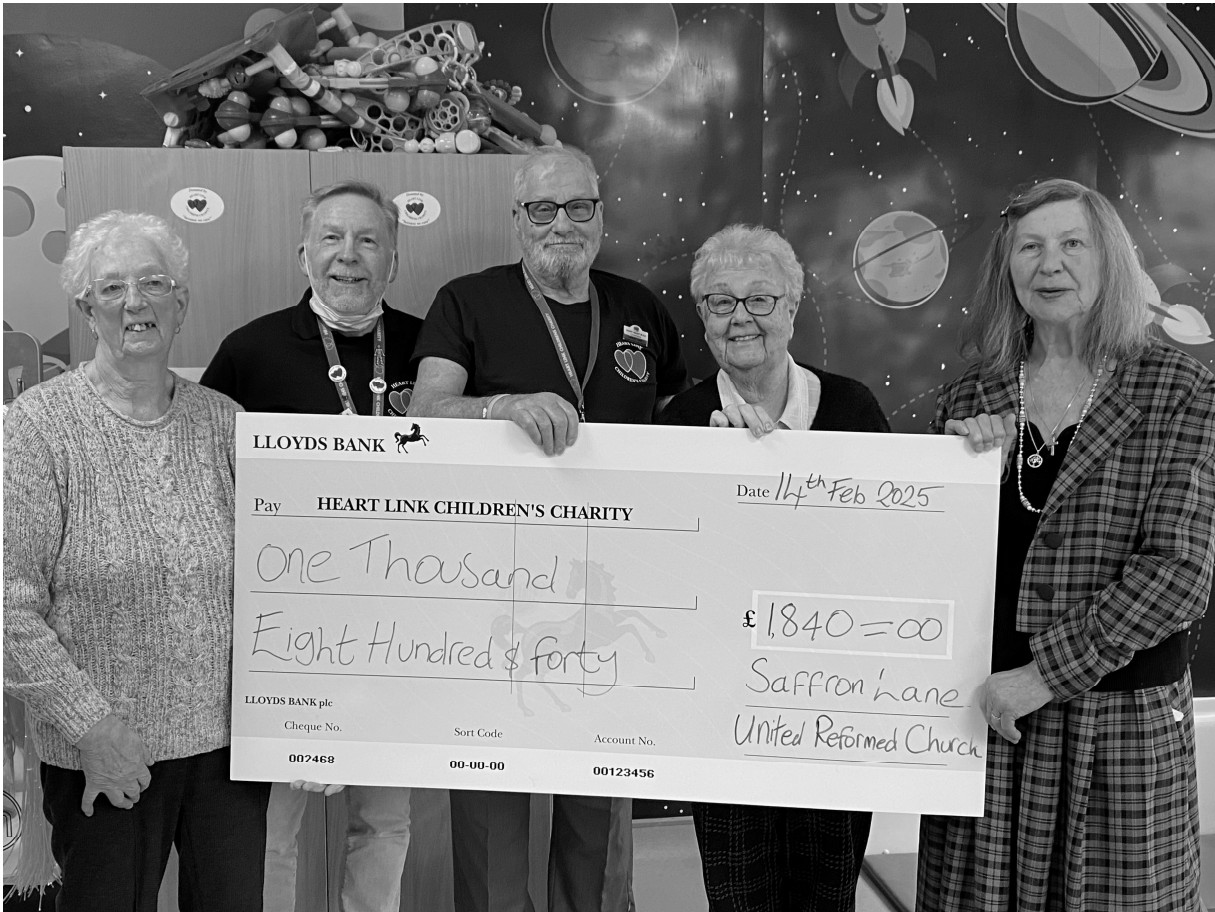
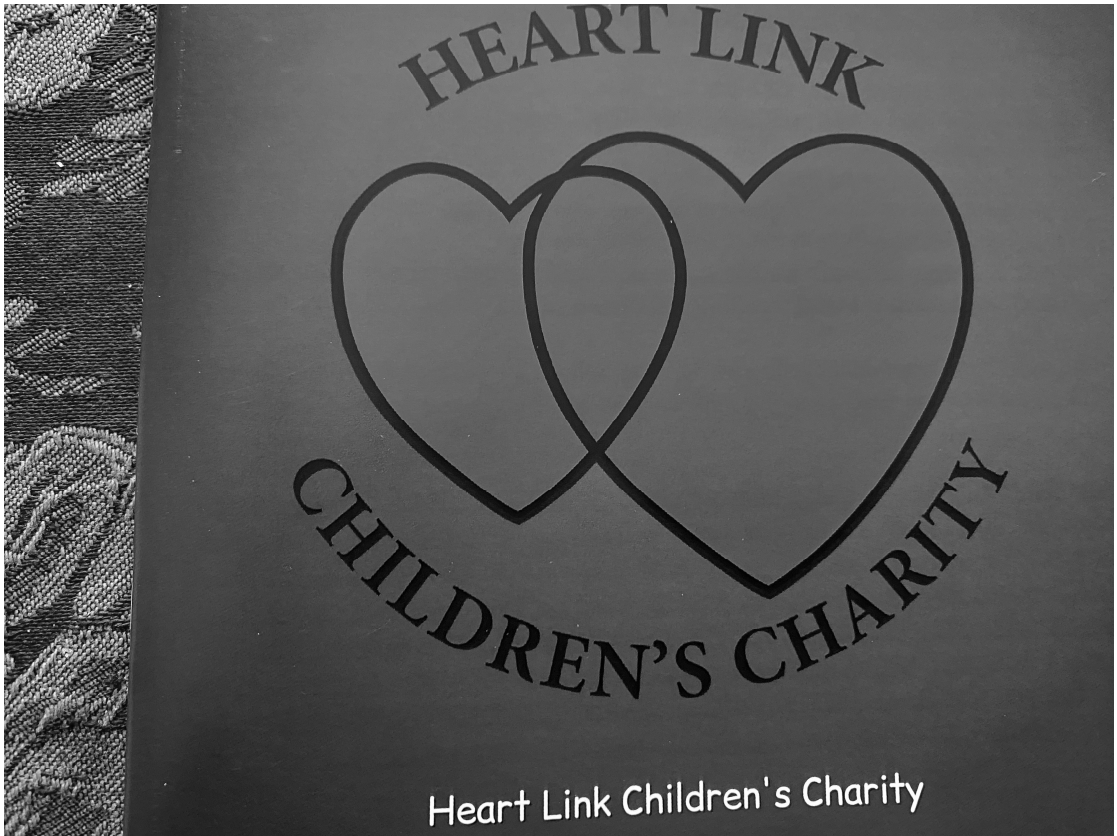
During the year we managed to raise a total of £1,840.

We took the cheque into the Leicester Royal Infirmary where "Heartlink" are now based in person and handed it over to them.

While we were there we asked what they would put the money towards. They said that when they were at *Glenfield Hospital* they had family rooms where the parents of children who were very ill or undergoing treatment or operations were able to stay overnight due to the fact that they brought children and babies in to the hospital from 100's of miles away. But when they had to move to the LRI they only had half the bedrooms so not all the parents were able to stay with their child. They are currently fundraising to buy a building to have rooms for them to stay so that is where the money will go.

You may want to think about this charity for your own churches.





Whetstone United Reformed Church LE8 6LP

Charity Coffee Morning

Saturday 1st March
10.00 – 12.00

Tea, Coffee and Light Refreshments.
Bring and Buy Stall
Raffle

Raising Money for
We are Mission Aviation
Fellowship – or MAF – a
Christian mission organisation
that uses planes to overcome



barriers. Our pilots and personnel deliver relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food, medicines – everything that can only be safely and speedily transported by air. Our supporters give and pray to make this all possible.

All Welcome

Whetstone United Reformed Church LE8 6LP

Saturday 22nd March
3.00 P.M.

Luxury Afternoon Tea.

Deluxe Raffle
£15.00 per head.

Must be booked in advance

Tickets from
Shirley Eastman
(0116 3484121)



WONDERFUL NEWS.

Easter Sunday is a day of celebration as we rejoice and give thanks to God for our Lord Jesus Christ's glorious resurrection.

In the past those who were going to be baptised prepared throughout Lent and then they were baptised on Easter Sunday. This Easter Sunday at Abbots Road we have a baptism, an extra reason for us to celebrate.

Jack, who was part of our Seekers Alpha Group, and comes to worship each Sunday along with his partner Laura and their children, has asked to be baptised ! His baptism will be by full emersion and because we haven't got a baptistry, Martin is borrowing/hiring a baptismal pool for the occasion.

We give thanks to God for Jack's growing faith, and pray His blessing on Jack, Laura and his family.



Abbots Road News

Please pray for:

Release of all the hostages taken and peace between Israel and Gaza.
That America won't get involved in the aftermath of the war.

Peace between Russia and Ukraine

Refugees and Asylum seekers

People who are homeless and finding life even more difficult during the winter months.

Those people who are suffering with mental illness.

Those people who have lost loved ones to suicide and are left feeling guilty because they feel they should have known it would happen.

Especially pray for children and young people as they try to cope with one of their parents taking their own life.

Those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

Those young people who have been a victim of knife crime.

For Brian and Dorothy

For June as she moves house

For Chris and her family

For Kay and her family

For Joyce recovering from a broken ankle

For Charlotte, after a fall onto her already painful knee

For the mission of the churches in SELA our Ministry team Martin and Eileen.

Giving thanks for answered prayer.



I'LL STILL BE LOVING YOU

When your hair has turned to winter
And your teeth are in a plate,
When your get up and go
Has gone to stop and wait -
I'll still be loving you.

When your attributes have shifted
Beyond the bounds of grace,
I'll count your many blessings,
Not wrinkles on your face -
I'll still be loving you.

When the crackle in your voice
Matches that within your knee
And the times are getting frequent
That you don't remember me -
I'll still be loving you.

Growing old is not a sin,
It's something we all do.
I hope you'll always understand
I'll still be loving you.

By C. David Hay (1936 -)

Abbots Road News

Pondering thoughts shared at the Elders' service and the questions asked since. I wrote this poem.....

I dreamed I met a man today, who said he was the Lord.
But you were crucified I'm told it's written in the Word.
'It's also written I would return one day, when the time is right. For
some of you are great in need and long to see the light.'
And so, amid my vivid dream, I had a conversation with this great
man,
Who, so it seemed, could bring us all salvation.
I asked him if he'd visit his friends, the fishermen.
'They are long gone', he said to me, 'I've come for everyone.'
So, what have you been doing Lord, have you come awhile to stay?
'I've come along to see all those in need and those who've lost their
way. You'll find me in the streets, the shops or walking right beside
you. I'm waiting for you where you are, just ask, I'm here to guide
you. You'll find me in the hospitals, in prisons, factories and farms.
You'll find me in the battlefields, beside the folk with arms.'
But aren't you just in churches Lord? That's what some people say.
For that's the place where some folk go when they feel the need to
pray.
'You're wrong my friend, I'm everywhere, not just inside church walls.
Though worship shared together helps you listen to God's call.....and
then go out
And spread the gospel to the ones you meet.
To greet them in the name of Christ the one who washes feet.
Yes, everyone can meet me here no matter who they are.
They only have to knock and ask, my door's always ajar.'
But Lord this is a troubled time we find that we are in.
And you have said if we repent you will forgive our sin.
But how Lord do we know you're real, and your promises are true?
'You answered your last question when we met.....I DIED FOR
YOU!'

Written by Dorothy Russell

Abbots Road News
YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH

One Liners.

1. A man walks into a bar with a roll of Tarmac under his arm and says, 'Pint please, and one for the road.'
2. Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.
3. Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician.
4. Never trust atoms they make up everything.
5. My wife just found out I replaced our bed with a trampoline. She hit the ceiling!
6. Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation toward the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water.
7. I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.
8. It was an emotional wedding. Even the cake was in tiers.
9. I just got kicked out of a secret cooking society. I spilled the beans.
10. Blunt pencils are really pointless.
11. What's the difference between ignorance and apathy? I don't know, and I don't care.
12. Last night my girlfriend was complaining that I never listen to her.....or something like that.
13. I know people say that money talks, but all mine says is 'Goodbye.
14. My wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.
15. Adam and Eve were the first ones to ignore the Apple terms and conditions.
16. The man who invented Velcro has died. RIP.
17. The rotation of the earth really makes my day.
18. A book fell on my head the other day. I only have my shelf to blame.
19. A ghost walked into a bar and ordered a shot of vodka. The bartender said, 'Sorry we don't serve spirits in here.
20. The person who invented knock-knock jokes should get a no bell prize

World Day of Prayer

Friday 7 March 2025

I made you wonderful

**A Service Prepared by
Christian Women from
The Cook Islands.**

Services Throughout the Area

**Speak to your Church Secretary to
find out the nearest service.**

Sharing

An elderly couple walked slowly into McDonalds one cold winter evening. They looked out of place among the young people and families who were eating there.

Some of the customers looked admiringly at them. You could tell what they were thinking - "Look there is a couple who have been through a lot together, probably over 60 years."

The man walked up to the counter, ordered, paid for and collected his meal. The couple then took a table at the back of the room and started to take their food off the tray - one hamburger, one portion of French fries and one drink.

The man unwrapped the hamburger and carefully cut it in half. He placed one half in front of his wife and kept half himself. Then he counted out the French fries, divided them into 2 equal piles and then placed one pile in front of his wife. He took a sip of the drink and his wife took a sip and then placed the cup on the table between them.

As the man began to eat his half hamburger the crowd started to feel concern. You could tell what they were thinking - "That poor couple can only afford 1 meal for the 2 of them" As the man started to eat some of his small pile of French fries a young man went over to the elderly couple and offered to buy them a 2nd meal. The elderly man responded that it was fine and that they were used to sharing everything.

They then noticed that the elderly women had not eaten any of her half of the meal, she had just had a few sips of the drink. Again the young man went over and begged them to let him buy them a 2nd meal. Again they said that it was fine and that they were used to sharing everything.

When the man had finished eating and started to wipe his face the young man could stand it no longer and went over a third time and offered to buy more food. After being politely refused again he asked the question " Ma'am, why aren't you eating ? You said that you share everything. What is it that you are waiting for ?"

She answered "the teeth".

Lectionary Readings

2 March

Exodus 34 v 29 - 35

Psalms 99

2 Corinthians 3 v 12 - 4 v 2

Luke 9 v 28 - 36 (37 - 43a)

9 March

Deuteronomy 26 v 1 - 11

Psalms 91 v 1 - 2, 9 - 16

Romans 10 v 8b - 13

Luke 4 v 1 - 13

16 March

Genesis 15 v 1 - 12, 17 - 18

Psalms 27

Philippians 3 v 17 - 4 v 1

Luke 13 v 31 - 35

23 March

Isaiah 55 v 1 - 9

Psalms 63 v 1 - 8

1 Corinthians 10 v 1 - 13

Luke 13 v 1 - 9

30 March

Joshua 5 v 9 - 12

Psalms 32

2 Corinthians 5 v 16 - 21

Luke 15 v 1 - 3, 11b - 32