

**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

Charlotte Ferris

Treasurer

Dear Friends,

I'm writing this letter in the week before Advent Sunday and looking forward to the celebration of Christmas. I love to hear the gospel readings from Matthew and Luke giving the accounts of a baby being born - the birth of God amongst us.

Luke gives more information than Matthew, with the account of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, Jesus' birth in a stable, the angels announcing news of great joy to the shepherd's and the shepherd's rushing off to worship Jesus'. And in most churches the story of Jesus' birth is acted out in a Nativity Service when the children (and sometimes adults) dress up to recount this wonderful story - always popular.

Some churches also have a service of nine lessons and carols with the 'prophecy' from the Old Testament, then going through the gospel accounts and traditionally ending with the reading from John 1:1-14. The reading from John isn't as popular as accounts of the birth in Matthew and Luke. We all like to hear the birth stories, the news of great joy but John's gospel isn't as easy to understand, he doesn't start with the birth of Jesus, he begins by telling his readers of Christ's existence before the world was created.

'In the beginning was the Word' (Christ) 'The word was with God and the Word was God. All things came into being through him....'

John also states that 'He came to his own, and his own people did not accept him.' At that first Christmas, the Word became flesh. God walked among us, full of grace and truth.' God came into the world and his own people didn't accept him. What a tragedy!

Welcoming Christ into the world, into the church, into our lives, is what Christmas is all about. Welcoming Christ is actually at the heart of Christmas.

Jesus was born to a loving couple. And then humble, poor shepherds, despised by society, welcomed Christ - but the holy and religious people didn't welcome him.

This is a challenge to the comfort and complacency we have about the birth story. It's an upside-down story - surely the priests and religious people should have been there to welcome Jesus - but they're the ones who were missing. It's the lowly, the poor and the marginalised who recognise the Christ for who he is.

God meets us in our humility and poverty of spirit. Welcoming Christ is something we do humbly and out of our poverty of spirit. It's not about putting on a show of how religious we are. When we say, 'Lord, I don't have much to give you....I'm not always good, in fact I get so much wrong in my life...Lord I don't have that much to give you at all, but what I have, you can have.'

This is the type of welcome Jesus wants. To quote from the carol, In the bleak midwinter, 'What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what I can I give him - give my heart.'

That's all Christ wants.

John writes, 'He came to his own, and his own did not accept him.' Let's not be like those people. Let's welcome Christ - in the only way we know how - by giving him our hearts this Christmas.

Yours in the most wonderful love of Christ,

Pam.

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 FEBRUARY 26 MAGAZINE

Sunday 18 January 2026

**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 December 25

Oadby	7	Ray Green	Communion
	14	Worship Group - Carol Service	
	21	Revd Martin Ferris	Communion
	28	South Wigston Elders	
Saffron Lane	7	Eileen Williams	Communion
	14	4.00 - Carol Service	
	21	Shirley Eastman	Communion
	28	Rowena Francis	
South Wigston	7	David Miller - Café Style Service	
	14	Revd Leslie Gill	
	21	Marion Bartholomew	
	28	Joining Oadby URC	
Wigston Magna	7	Shirley Eastman	
	14	Eileen Williams	
	21	Worship Group - Carol Service	
	28	Julie Slatford	
Whetstone	7	Revd Martin Ferris - Communion	
	14	Revd David Howlett	
	21	5.00 pm - Carol Service	
	28	Mr Ray Green	
Abbots Road	7	Revd Pam Smith	Communion
	14	The Elders	
	21	Revd Pam Smith - Nativity	
	28	Revd Martin Ferris	

Worship Leaders for January 26

Oadby	4	Revd Richard Eastman
	11	Shirley Eastman
	18	Revd David Howlett
	25	Eileen Williams
Saffron Lane	4	Eileen Williams - Communion
	11	Revd Les Gill
	18	Ray Green
	25	Philip Tiplady
South Wigston	4	To Be Confirmed
	11	Revd Martin Ferris
	18	Di Statham
	25	Revd David Howlett
Wigston Magna	4	Revd Les Gill
	11	Worship Group
	18	Revd Martin Ferris - Communion
	25	Julie Slatford
Whetstone	4	Mrs Shirley Eastman - Communion
	11	Revd David Howlett
	18	Eileen Williams
	25	Revd Richard Eastman (A2S2)
Abbots Road	4	Revd Pam Smith
	11	Revd Jacqui Gavin
	18	Revd Les Gill
	25	Revd Martin Ferris

Christmas Eve / Christmas Day Services

Whetstone

Christmas Eve 2pm Christingle Service Revd Richard Eastman
Christmas Day Mrs Shirley Eastman

Saffron Lane

Christmas Eve 11.30 pm Communion Revd Martin Ferris

Wigston Magna

Christmas Eve 4.00pm Christingle Service

Christmas Day 9.30 am Christmas Day Worship Ray Green

Abbots Road

Christmas Eve 11.30 pm Communion via Zoom
Meeting ID - 862 7354 8374
Password - welcome

Christmas Day 10.00 am Christmas Day Worship for the Family
Revd Martin Ferris



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 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 charity RNIB

Bible Bytes

Wednesday 3 December 2025

Wednesday 7 January 2026

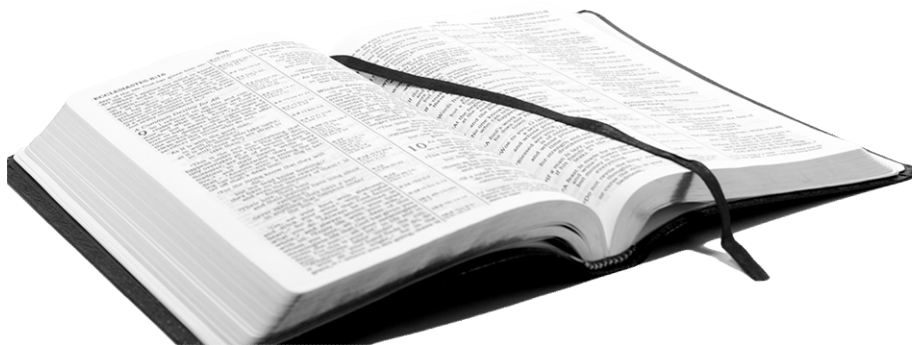
10.30 am

Saffron Lane URC

Come and enjoy a light and friendly discussion

No Need to be a " Bible Expert"

EVERYBODY welcome



Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 6th December

10am to 4pm

Sunday 7th December

12 noon till 4pm

Soup Lunches will be served

Vote for your favourite tree!

Tea, coffee and cakes available

Also various stalls and raffle

Wigston United Reformed Church

Long Street, Wigston, LE18 2AJ

Christmas 2025

at Wigston United Reformed Church

Advent Sunday, 30th November, 10.30am

Toy Service

Toys will be collected for the Salvation Army

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th December

Christmas Tree Festival

All funds raised for LOROS

Sunday 21st December, 10.30am

Carol Service

Music by Magna Music Band

Wednesday 24th December, 4pm

Christingle Service

Thursday 25th December, 9.30am

Christmas Day Service

Wigston Magna News

Here are our upcoming birthdays. Congratulations to 2 of our members who will be celebrating "BIG" birthdays over the next 2 months

Birthdays for December:

3rd - Clare Allen (50!)

Birthdays for January

13th - Alison Termie

25th - Graham Wiggins (80!)



We are Changing our Name

From the start of 2026

Community Cinema

will be changing to

MOVIE CLUB

Films will still be bi monthly but will start at 2 pm with doors opening at 1.30 pm

Free Tea and Coffee will be available PLUS there will be an opportunity to buy

MOVIE SNACKS

(popcorn /choc-ices / sweets hot dogs)

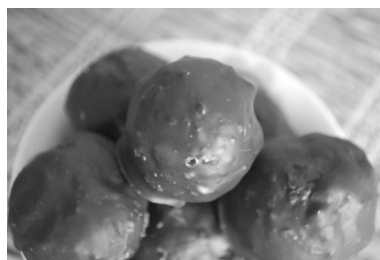
The 1st MOVIE will be

2nd February 2026 - "Mrs Harris goes to Paris"

RECIPE: DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE KISSES

3 ozs plain chocolate (broken into squares)
3 ozs white chocolate (broken into squares)
4 and a half ozs butter
4 ozs caster sugar
2 eggs
8 ozs plain flour

- 1 Put each pile of chocolate squares into a separate bowl and melt over a pan of hot (not boiling) water. Set aside to cool.
- 2 In a separate bowl, whisk together butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs one at a time.
- 4 Sift the flour into the egg mixture and mix well.
- 5 Halve the mixture, and divide it between the two bowls of melted chocolate, thoroughly mixing the chocolate into the dough mixture.
- 6 Knead each dough mixture until smooth and pliable, wrap them separately in cling film and place in the fridge for about 1 hour.
- 7 Preheat oven to 190 C/375 F/Gas 5.
- 8 Roll slightly rounded teaspoons of both doughs in the palms of hands to make balls.
- 9 Place on greased baking trays and bake for 10 - 12 minutes.
- 10 Dust with sifted icing sugar and place on wire rack to cool.



GARDENING TIPS - December

- 1) Remove the last of the fallen leaves from the lawn, trying to keep off it if it is wet or frozen.
- 2) To stop the pond freezing over, place a ball in the water.
- 3) Pick Brussels sprouts.
- 4) Harvest winter vegetables, and check on those you have stored.
- 5) Grow herbs, such as cress and parsley, on the windowsill.
- 6) Apple trees, fruit bushes such as gooseberries; red, white and blackcurrants can be pruned between now and March.



DECEMBER: Diary

- 3rd - Bible Bytes 10.30am Saffron Lane Church.
10th - Elders' Meeting 10.00am.

December Birthdays:

9th Noel Oldershaw.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop.

Ovid

South Wigston News

MY TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me;
"I'm glad we bought fresh turkey, and a proper Christmas Tree".

On the second day of Christmas, much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our turkey, a most delicious bird.

On the third day, we entertained the people from next door.
The turkey tasted just as good as it had the day before.

Day four, relations came to stay; poor Gran is looking old.
We finished up the Christmas pud and ate the turkey, cold.

On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes flurried.
But we were nice and warm inside, for we had our turkey curried.

On the sixth day, I must admit, the Christmas spirit died.
The children fought and bickered, we ate turkey rissoles - fried.

On the seventh day of Christmas, my true love, he did wince
When he sat down at the table and was offered turkey mince.

Day eight and nerves were getting frayed, the dog had run for shelter.
I served up turkey pancakes, with a glass of Alka Seltzer.

On the ninth day our cat left home; by lunch time Dad was blotto.
He said he had to have a drink to face turkey risotto.

By the tenth day the booze had gone (except our home made brew).
And if that wasn't bad enough, we suffered turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of Christmas, the Christmas tree was moulting.
The mince pies were as hard as rock, and the turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day, my true love had a smile upon his lips -
The guests had gone, the turkey too - and we dined on fish and chips.

Anon.

South Wigston News

DECEMBER PRAYER LIST

Please pray for:

- 1 Noel and his family as they face life without Lesley; a loving wife, mother
And grandmother.
- 2 All those who over the past year have been affected by war:
- 3 Those who have been bereaved.
- 4 Those who have been injured.
- 5 Those who have been left homeless.
- 6 Those who have become refugees.
- 7 Children who have lost parents, and parents who have lost children.
- 8 Those we know who are sick, and are awaiting hospital treatment.
- 9 Those of our fellowship who are ill or housebound.
- 10 Those who live in, or work in our local Care Homes.
- 11 Families living in temporary accommodation.
- 12 All who seek to create unity and resolve differences.
- 13 Our Group Ministers, Eileen and Martin, as they prepare Christmas
Services.
- 14 All who preach the Word of God in our churches today.
- 15 All who work for Christmas Shelter.
- 16 All who are busy preparing for Christmas.
- 17 Shop assistants working long hours for the convenience of shoppers.
- 18 Children everywhere, especially those who will have no presents this year.
- 19 Those who will spend Christmas away from home.
- 20 Those who will spend Christmas in prison.
- 21 All who work for the Hospice Movement.
- 22 Our friends in the other churches in our localities as we all celebrate the
birth of our Saviour.
- 23 For those who will spend Christmas bringing Christ to the homeless.
- 24 For excited children everywhere.
- 25 **ALLELUIA! HE IS BORN!**
Happy Christmas everyone!
- 26 All those who have spent Christmas alone.
- 27 All those searching for a meaning in life.
- 28 All who are listening to the Word of God in our churches today.
- 29 Give thanks for the love of family and friends.
- 30 Give thanks for the blessings of the past year.
- 31 Ask for God's guidance as we look forward to 2026.

RECIPE - JANUARY: NUTTY BITES (Makes 38 - 40)

2 ozs unsalted butter
2 tablespoons golden syrup
1 oz cocoa
2 ozs raisins
2 ozs hazelnuts, toasted and chopped
2 ozs cornflakes.

- 1 Put butter, syrup, cocoa and raisins into a saucepan and stir over a gentle heat until melted and well blended.
- 2 Stir three quarters of the nuts, and all the cornflakes into the melted mixture.
- 3 Spoon mixture into petits fours cases and sprinkle the remaining nuts over the top.
- 4 Refrigerate for 1 hour until set.

Variation:

If desired, glace cherries and toasted almonds can be used instead of hazelnuts.



GARDENING TIPS – JANUARY:

- 1 Sow broad beans for an early crop.
- 2 Before the middle of the month, feed with nitrogen, trees or bushes grown in grass.
- 3 If the weather is mild, give fish in ponds a little light food such as daphnia.
- 4 Keep house plants warm and supplied with plenty of light.
- 4 Although late, turfing of lawn is still possible in favourable weather.
- 5 It is wise to knock snow off branches, as heavy snow can break them.

BIRTHDAYS – JANUARY:

30th: Shirley Eastman & Sue Siddon.

DIARY:

- 8th South Wigston Churches Together Meeting 2.00pm. at St Mary's Church.
- 14th Elders' Meeting 10.00am, Church Meeting & Budget 10.30am.
- 28th Burn's Night Dinner - 7.00pm at Rosemead Drive URC.

Thought for the Month Ahead

Happiness isn't a goal,
It's a by-product of a life well-lived.

Eleanor Roosevelt.

South Wigston News

JANUARY PRAYER LIST

Please pray for:

- 1 The people of the world, that this New Year may bring peace and reconciliation.
- 2 God's guidance those we love, and for ourselves.
- 3 All those living in war-torn countries.
- 4 All those preaching the Word of God in our churches today.
- 6 Our Ministry Team and all our Lay Preachers as they plan for the year ahead.
- 6 Children and students returning to their studies.
- 7 The homeless, and all who work for them.
- 8 Christian Unity.
- 9 Understanding and friendship with those of other faiths.
- 10 All who are grieving the loss of a loved one.
- 11 Those in our churches listening to the Word of God.
- 12 All who are lonely.
- 13 The King and the Royal family.
- 14 All who work in our hospitals.
- 15 The work of LOROS.
- 16 All who work for our Emergency Services.
- 17 All who have a part in the governing of our country.
- 18 Give thanks for the fellowship we find within our churches.
- 19 The victims of violence and crime.
- 20 Young people who have nowhere to live.
- 21 That this New Year may bring hope to the hopeless.
- 22 All who work for racial harmony.
- 23 All who are in training for the Ministry.
- 24 Those who are in constant pain.
- 25 All who use music to praise the Lord.
- 26 New parents and their babies.
- 27 Counsellors, and those they seek to help.
- 28 For those thinking of taking a new direction in life.
- 29 All who suffer from depression.
- 30 All those we love, that they may remain safe.
- 31 Give thanks for the blessings God has given us.



South Wigston URC are holding a

BURNS DINNER

at

Oadby URC

Wednesday 28 January 2026

At 7.00 pm

Cost - £15

**For information / to book a place
Contact Di Statham 0116 296 2847 / 07739 286489 or
di.statham@btinternet.com**

By Friday 16 January 2026

Please advise if Vegetarian Haggis is required

Saffron Lane News

Preachers and Readers list for Dec 2025 Jan- Feb 2026

	OT	NT	SER	COL	Preacher	
Dec 7 th	30	12	30	13	E Williams	Communion
Dec 14 th	9	3	#	13	S Clay and others	4.0pm Carol Service No Morning Service
Dec 21 st	5	14	5	13	S Eastman	Communion
Dec 24 th	3	30	#	13	M Ferris	Communion 11.30pm
Dec 28 th	36	6	#	13	R Francies	Communion
Jan 4 th	8	7	8	13	E Williams	Communion
Jan 11 th	12	30	12	13	L Gill	Communion
Jan 18 th	3	9	3	13	R Green	Communion
Jan 25 th	5	14	#	13	P Tiplady	Family Service
Feb 1 st	36	6	3	13	M Ferris	Communion
Feb 8 th	7	8	7	13	P Smith	Communion
Feb 15 th	30	12	30	13	J Slatford	Communion
Feb 22 nd	9	3	#	13	R Waterton	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	

December Birthdays

11th Terry Storton Big (90)

16th Judy Muiruri

January Birthdays

6th Brian Slater

8th Carol Thompson

16th Dec Bieronski

17th Maureen Woollett

Saffron Lane News

Charity Afternoon Tea

On Saturday 18 October Mary held an Afternoon Tea to raise money for Loros. Members throughout the Area were invited to book a place and then come along and enjoy tea, sandwiches and cakes together AND raise some much needed money for Loros.

A total of £655.96 was raised and thanks go to everybody who supported this event. Plus of course thanks to Mary for organising it.



Our Christmas Services

Carol Service Sunday 13 December 4.00pm

This will be led by our own members.

PLEASE NOTE there will be no morning Service on that day

Midnight Communion Christmas Eve 11.30 pm

Led by Revd Marton Ferris

The collection at both services will go to Shelter

Saffron Lane News

Bazaar November 15th 2025

Well, it all started on Friday morning. As we were taking things to the office ready for setting the hall up Friday night we noticed a little puddle of water on the floor of the office. We thought no more about it !!

You may remember that on Friday 14 November it did not stop raining all day. So, when we all arrived at 5 o'clock to get the things out to put on the trolley to take down to the hall we found that the water had poured through the office ceiling and the office was a complete flood. A lot of things were wet through but luckily most of the things were at the other end of the office. We managed to save most things and then we had to go through the pouring rain to get everything to the hall. What a night!! Still at least we did manage to set up the room for the next day's Bazaar.

Thankfully Saturday 15 November was dry and we were certainly thankful for that. I had got hold of our man to have a look and he told us it was too wet on the flat roof and he would be unable to do anything until it had dried out. But we were able to go ahead with our Bazaar. We all had a very busy two hours behind the stalls, cooking in the kitchen and washing and drying the pots. We were thankful to all the members of the Area who attended and supported us and to Richard and Shirley who helped behind the stalls, as they do every year. We were thankful to all our members who stayed afterwards to move things back to the Church. Plus, we had enough cakes for after our Sunday service.

We were able to raise £450 on the day thanks to everybody who came along.

THANK YOU

Sandra

Saffron Lane News

Sunday November 16th

Was also had a very special day at Saffron Lane on Sunday 16 November when we welcomed 3 new members into our Church at a special service led by Eileen Williams.

Firstly, Maureen was made a full new member and Elder's Elizabeth and Sandra laid hands on to her during her part of the service.

Then Judy and Samual had transferred their membership from their last Church and Elder's Pat and Kath gave them the right hand of fellowship.

Eileen served them all first at communion and they were given personal certificates and the Church gave them each a welcome to the Church card and a cross-book mark to remember their special day.



Evening

by Doreen Storton

As darkness falls at the end of the day,
The world seems a different place:
The stars are twinkling in the sky
And I see the moon's bright face.

The air is cooler as evening comes,
The heat of the day has gone:
And fragrance wafts from summer flowers,
On which the sun has shone.

Peace and quiet descend once more,
As children prepare for sleep,
No hooting cars or lorries go past:
From the birds - not even a cheep.

Some normal noises can still be heard,
But sound so different now:
A baby's cry, the bark of a dog,
All seem pathetic somehow.

The street lamps spread a warm soft glow,
O'er road and pavements too,
And shadows merge in corners dark,
Till daybreak comes anew.

Whetstone News

November Activities

A massive thank you to everyone who supported our Menphys Charity Coffee Morning. Through the generosity of those who attended, an amazing £310 was raised!

We held a Christmas Crib Festival on Saturday 29th November from 9.30am - 12noon. Light refreshments were available and we also sang some carols between 11.00 and 12.00

Forthcoming Events

On Sunday 21st December, we will be holding our Candlelit Carol Service at 5pm. It will be led by Bernard and Kevin, with Matthew Brookes playing the organ. It will also include performances from Whetstone Youth Drama Group.

Afterwards, there will be tea, coffee, mulled wine and warm mince pies. It is always a lovely event so please do come along!

Please note, there will be no morning service on that day.

On Christmas Eve, Richard will lead a Christingle Service at 2pm and then on Christmas Day, Shirley will lead a short service to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This will begin at our usual Service time of 10am. All welcome!

Apologies for two important omissions from last month's magazine: Congratulations to Thomas, who celebrated his 21st birthday on 29th October. He is a wonderful young man, working hard as deputy manager at the Co-op and in the final year of his degree in Computer Science. We are all so proud of him!

Also, Congratulations to Rebecca and Steve on their recent engagement!

Whetstone News

Whetstone Family Thoughts

We all send our love and Congratulations to Glenis and Paul on becoming proud grandparents to baby Theo Jack and also to proud parents, Joseph and Sophie.

Please remember Sheila and John in your prayers, as Sheila continues to struggle with ill health.

Please also remember Betty and Ken.

Thoughts of the End of the Year

As we draw to the close of another year, we reflect on all that has happened over the last twelve months. We think of the good and bad things that have happened in the world, in our communities, in our churches and in our own lives. We pray that God will bring peace into the lives of those in war-torn countries, hope into the lives of those who are facing uncertain futures because of health issues or financial worries, joy into the lives of those for whom Christmas will be a difficult time, due to loss and loneliness, and love into the lives of each and every one of us, that we may share that love and make the world a better and happier place.

We thank all who have supported us in any way during 2025. We thank our church family, which now includes all our friends who meet with us on Thursdays, at our Community Coffee Morning. We thank our hard-working Elders for all that they do and all those who lead our worship, including our Area Minister, Martin. We thank Richard and Shirley for all they do to support and grow the church. We thank Bernard and Kevin, who play the organ for us every week. It makes such a difference to the worship experience. Thanks also to Joan and Phil for all their help and to Richard T for his work.

We wish everyone a very happy Christmas and every blessing for 2026.

We are already planning many events for next year so watch this space for further details!

Whetstone News

A Christmas Gladys

I think I'll write a Gladys
cos a Carol is "old hat"
I tried to write a Betty
but I didn't get far with that!
I tried to write a Hilda
as a new Christmas song,
But the problem with my Hilda was
The rhyming went all wrong!
I tried write a Janet -
But then I couldn't decide
Would an Ermintrude or Nancy
Be more fitting at Yuletide?
Should I try to write a Mary?
Or a Shirley or Annette?
Adele, Yvonne or Barbara,
Jean, Sandra or Lynnette?
No, I think I'll write a Gladys
That is full of Christmas cheer!
Spread glad tidings with a Gladys
Merry Christmas and New Year!

Kevin West



Oadby Eleven O'clock Group

Meetings In December

Thursday 4 December

Talk - Helping Hands

By Revd Les Gill

Thursday 18 December

Talk - Carol Service

Why Not Come Along and

Join Us

Everybody Welcome

Oadby Eleven O'clock Group

Meetings In January

Thursday 8 January

Games

By Paddy Letts

Thursday 22 January

Talk - To be Confirmed

**Why Not Come Along and
Join Us**

Everybody Welcome

Abbots Road URC



Key Dates for your diary at Abbots Road United Reformed Church this festive season

Sunday 21st December 2025

10:45am - All Age Nativity Service

4:30pm - Outdoor Community Carol Service

Blankets & cushions provided with hot drinks and mince pies after

Wednesday 24th December 2025

11:30pm - Midnight
Communion (Zoom)

Meeting ID: 862 7354 8374

Passcode: welcome

Thursday 25th December 2025

10:00am - Christmas Day Worship

Sunday 28th December 2025

10:45am - Morning Worship

Thoughts on New Year

'Sometimes', said Pooh quietly, 'we spend so much time thinking about what went wrong that we forget to see all the little things that went right. The sun still rises. The tea is still warm. A friend still sits beside you. And that's enough, really. Life isn't meant to be perfect - it's meant to be lived. So forgive quickly, hold on gently, love deeply, and keep walking forward with a thankful heart. The world feels kinder when you choose peace over pride, and smiles over arguments.'

- Facebook, Barb Jones page

Abbots Road News

More Thoughts on New Year

'With a new year comes new strength and new thoughts.'

- Eleanor Roosevelt

New year, new feels, new chances, same dreams, fresh starts.

Anon

'Take a leap of faith and begin this wondrous new year by believing.'

- Sarah Ban Breathnach

Looking back helps you appreciate the path that led you to now.

ANON

Cherish the memories of the year gone by, and welcome the blessings of the new year ahead.

- ANON

The most beautiful way to start and end the year is with gratitude.

- ANON

'Cheers to the new year and another chance to get it right.'

- Oprah Winfrey

'Dream big, start small, act now.'

- Robin Sharma

'Life's not about expecting, hoping, and wishing; it's about doing, being, and becoming.'

- Mike Dooley

Stories from the Friendship Book 2018

In the run up to Christmas 2017 the local food bank started receiving donations of selection boxes as well as the usual staples.

Then, one night after the place was closed, someone broke into the store room. They were looking for money and didn't find any. They obviously thought their hard work deserved a treat, though, because they stole maybe a dozen selection boxes.

The news of the break-in and what had been stolen hit the local papers a few days later and everyone was outraged.

But then something happened that was more powerful than outrage - the selection boxes started flooding in, along with tubs of sweets.

Every child in every family who came to the food bank received an extra treat over the Christmas period. And a local company, impressed by the good work that was being done, fitted a top-notch alarm system in the food bank for free!

Sure, there are people out there who will do bad things, even at Christmas. But never forget, there are infinitely more good people in the world and love beats hate all year round.

Elvis sang "Why can't every day be like Christmas?" Dale Evans Rogers, wife of Roy Rogers, suggested it could be.

"Christmas", she said, "is love in action. When you love someone you give to them as God gives to us. The greatest gift he ever gave was his son, sent in human form so that we might know what God the Father is really like. Every time we love, every time we give, it's Christmas."

It's good to have one day a year to remember what the others might be like.

SILENT NIGHT

Christmas Eve in Oberndorf, Austria 1818. The vicar of the Church, Joseph Mohr, had written a new song to be sung on Christmas Eve, and the organist, Franz Gruber, had set it to music. But the organ broke down, so Gruber quickly accompanied its singing on the guitar. The carol would have been lost, except the man who came to repair the organ, to check all was well, played the music which was on the organ. He liked it so much he took a copy to his own village and it quickly became a favourite all over Austria, and then the world.
An example of a 'God-incident', not just a coincidence!

HIDDEN JOURNEYS OF THE NATIVITY

Think of Mary's journey to Bethlehem. How did she travel? With excitement and expectancy, and also with anxiety and fear? She must have travelled with lots of questions, and probably with exhaustion and physical pain.
Joseph's journey was a mixed one. He seems to have been caught in that place between faith and doubt - willing to be faithful in his commitment to Mary, but struggling to believe those things he couldn't understand.
The shepherds journey was that of simple faith. They simply received the good news of the angels and responded.
The wise men travelled from far off. They were seized with wonder at the mysterious star and set out on a search- following, seeking, asking questions when they were lost. For them it was an intellectual journey, seeking to understand the signs on the heavens.

Can we identify with the people on any of these journeys?

In our journeying we find you,
God of the unexpected places.
We find you there - in our doubts
as well as our certainties,
in our fear as well as our courage,
in our questions as well as our wonder.
Help us to journey on
looking expectantly to find you.

Lynda Wright

Taken from words from the Iona Community. (abbreviated)

Abbots Road News

Please pray for:

Peace in Ukraine

Continued ceasefire between Israel and Palestine

Safety for all who have had to flee their homes and country.

That our country will be a place of welcome and comfort to all

For those who are homeless living on the cold streets.

For all those who are suffering because of addiction to alcohol or drugs

For all who are being abused, whether mentally, physically, sexually, or emotionally, that they may find the help they need to escape from the nightmare they are living through.

For all those suffering from mental health problems.

For doctors, nurses and all workers in the NHS

For all of our emergency workers

For the United Reformed Church as we put into practice the initiatives that have come out of the Church Life Review.

For the mission and outreach of our churches

For everyone in our churches and families who are suffering at this time.

For Alison as she recovers from an operation on her eye.

For Brian and Dorothy

For Anne and John

For June and Andrew

For Joyce and David

For Anne and Rob

For all who are grieving the loss of a loved one

For our Ministry Team, Martin and Eileen, especially during this particularly busy time of year as they prepare for Christmas worship.

For the churches of SELA as we await the recommendations from the review panel and look to the future.

A Prayer from Commitment for Life
(by Grace Krariuki of Christian Aid)

Dear Loving God and Father, Creator of the Universe, who recognises each of us as your image bearers, we pray that you would convict our hearts to treat and value each other as your image. May we pursue justice and dignity for all. Help us to be conscious of the impact of our actions toward those marginalised and oppressed. Give us courage to challenge the systems that continue to bring division instead of unity and love.

God of peace, may you bring an end to war and violence across the world. God of love may of compassion and mercy flow in our streets and communities. God with us, may those in difficult and unbearable situations experience your presence with them.

God of creation, may you cause us to look after and treasure the world you have given us and work together to address climate change. God of heaven, may we know that in eternity we will experience

the perfect shalom. In Jesus' precious name. Amen.

A prayer for divine direction
(by Ana Gobledale, URC)

Unite us to be peace makers building peace among people promoting human rights churning arms into ploughshares. Empower us to be justice workers speaking truth to evil dismantling oppression liberating the occupied.

Peace perfect peace, justice perfect justice

Show us how to walk your path, guide us in the ways of Peace and justice. Amen.

YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH

If anybody's got any ideas how to fix my terrible condensation problem, please pop round anytime, the kettle's always on.

I own a French bulldog and every so often I have to let him out for a oui.

My imaginary friend is staying this weekend. I've made his bed up.

My mate rang me last night to tell me he failed his first exam in Aboriginal music. I said, "Didja redo it?"

With all this recent flooding, I went to the library and asked if they had any books on fish. The librarian told me to look under water.

I dropped a tub of margarine on my foot two-weeks ago and it's still aching. I can't believe it's not better.

I went for an Italian this evening, well, he was annoying me.

I used to hate walking under Horse Chestnut trees in the autumn. However, after therapy I've finally Conckered it.

Travelled home from work today on my Pogo stick, but got done by the police for jumping a red light.

I've been thinking about my old college days. I hardly ever turned up for lectures. That's probably why all my students failed their exams.

Just tried a frog flavoured beer. You can really taste the hops.

Abbots Road News

Cont.....

Nobody has won this weeks 'Beethoven Lottery.' So next week, there will be a rollover.

Went into a church and saw two groups of bell ringers fighting. It was a right old ding dong.

I caught my neighbour stealing my socks off my clothes line. I was going to confront him, but I got cold feet.

I bought one of those memory foam pillows last week. I've forgotten where I put it.

I accidentally bought some topical fish and they kept me up all night making jokes about Donald Trump.

A police officer stopped me due to the state of the sleeve on my jumper, it's covered in balls of thread. I've been charged with grievous bobbly arm

EDITH'S POEM.

I looked out of my window,
What did I see ?
Dark clouds in the sky
Summer is gone,
We must say goodbye,
Autumn is with us, a change of scene,
Holly berries, brown conkers,
A young person's dream,
Bonfires, Guy Fawkes, hot dogs and more
There's fun in the autumn, take part in it all.
God sent us the fun
For all to enjoy

The Gift

Five-year old Tonio was chosen to be the youngest shepherd in the nativity play. The children were asked to bring a present for the baby in the manger.

Tonio, whose family were very poor, brought his most treasured possession, a piece of wood, worn smooth with handling. It was his only toy, which he had kept hidden and played with in secret, otherwise it would have been taken from him and used for firewood. He wept a little as he parted with it.

A visitor, hearing the story of his gift, sent a beautiful red engine to Tonio in place of his piece of wood.

Beaming with delight, Tonio tiptoed to the crib and retrieved his piece of wood, leaving the beautiful red engine in its place.



The Price of True Love

The price of giving all the items by the "true Love" of the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" may be a little beyond most peoples budget. The following costs were calculated in 1998 - so they will have increased further by now :-

1	Partridge in a pear tree	£20
2	Turtle Doves	£25
3	French Hens	£10
4	Calling Birds	£150
5	Gold Rings	£250
6	Geese a laying	£100
7	Swans a swimming	£4,000
8	Maids a Milking	£20
9	Pipers piping	£1500
10	Ladies dancing	£1500
11	Lords a leaping	£500
12	Drummers drumming	£750

Total to give all the gifts once each £8825

Singing the song in it's entirety results in 364 presents



Lectionary Readings

Sunday 7 December

Isaiah 11.1-10;

Psalms 72.1-7, 18-19;

Romans 15.4-13;

Matthew 3.1-12

Sunday 14 December

Isaiah 35.1-10;

Luke 1.46b-55 (Magnificat);

James 5.7-10;

Matthew 11.2-11

Sunday 21 December

Isaiah 7.10-16;

Psalms 80.1-7, 17-19;

Romans 1.1-7;

Matthew 1.18-25

Sunday 28 December

Isaiah 63.7-9;

Psalms 148;

Hebrews 2.10-18;

Matthew 2.13-23

Lectionary Readings

Sunday 4 January

Isaiah 60.1-6;

Ephesians 3.1-12;

Psalm 72;

Matthew 2.1-12

Sunday 11 January

Isaiah 42.1-9;

Psalm 29;

Acts 10.34-43;

Matthew 3.13-17

Sunday 18 January

Isaiah 49.1-7;

Psalm 40;

1 Corinthians 1.1-9;

John 1.29-42

Sunday 25 January

Isaiah 9.1-4;

Psalm 27;

1 Corinthians 1.10-18;

Matthew 4.12-23