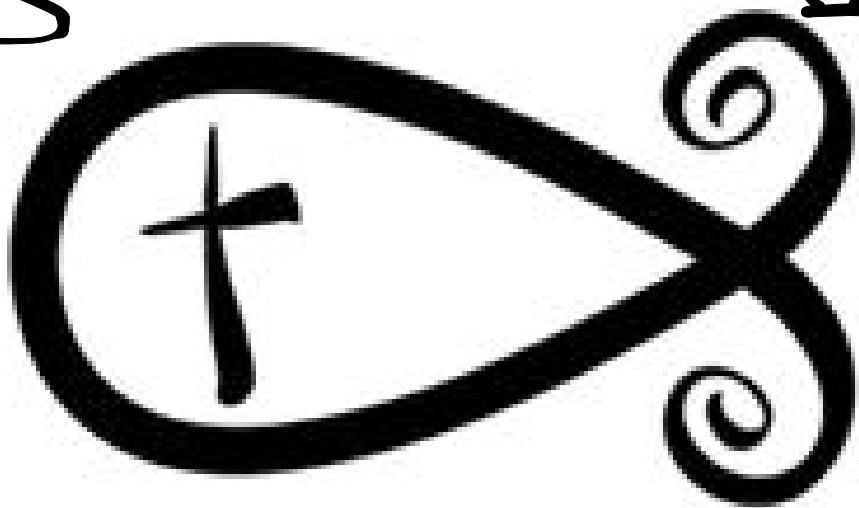


Wallington United Reformed
Church



**CONTACT
MAGAZINE**



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Extrinsic

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Wallington United Reformed Church



Happy New Year!

I know we are now a month into the New Year but this is my first chance to say it in Contact. This is also my first chance to look back on our Christmas services and celebrations, so let me say 'thank you' to all who helped make those events successful and uplifting.

As we reflected at the recent church meeting these were good occasions made so by the effort of those who led, prepared, catered and decorated, as well as everyone who came to worship.

One of our services this year was a little different. I had invited people to let me know if they had a nativity set that they were willing to tell us a little about. Then on December 15th we had several sets in church as well as photos of those and others as their owners talked about them or I read something they had previously written. It was lovely to see the variety of sets with the stories of their backgrounds and the meaning they had for their owners.

This occasion meant people shared something about their faith journey and what the Christmas accounts meant to them.

This added to the wonderful contributions from Wallington URC members, alongside St Andrew's and the South London Tamil Church members for our joint Advent Booklet. There were many wonderful contributions across the three churches so 'thank you' for this too.

Talking about our faith and our religious experiences can be hard for most of us and yet it is important if we are to help others

understand why our faith matters, so I am always looking for ways in which I can help others to do that.

The Advent Booklet was one opportunity but may have seemed overwhelming for some if I had asked them. Talking about a Nativity Set may have been more manageable for others.

I am now thinking about another way of doing this and am considering hymns. I am planning for a 'Songs of Praise' where we sing the hymns/songs that are chosen by the members of the congregation. For those that are chosen I would be looking for someone to explain why a hymn/song is a favourite of theirs and what it means to them.

As with the Nativity Sets service it would be great to have folk stand up and speak about their choice in the service but it could also be done by writing something for me to read out.

This will be coming soon so watch this space.

Craig Bowman

February:

February comes from the Latin word *februa*, which means "to cleanse."

Is this when we traditionally start our 'Spring Cleaning'?

It was named after Februalia, the Roman festival of purification, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place this time of year.

While February is the second month in our Gregorian calendar today, it was originally the very last month added to the Roman calendar (c. 713 BC)!

Originally, the calendar was 10 months because winter was considered a dormant, month-less period. January and February were added by the Roman king Numa Pompilius to better align the calendar with the lunar year.

Even though so many roses are sold during February due to Valentine's Day, the Violet and the Primrose are the symbolic flowers.

The **violet** signifies watchfulness, loyalty, and faithfulness. Give a violet to someone to let them know that you'll always be there for them.

The **primrose** lets someone know that you can't live without them.

Like the violet, February's birthstone is a purple colour. It's the beautiful amethyst.

This gem is a form of quartz; it can range from a pale lilac colour to a deep, rich purple.

The name is based on a Greek myth that speaks of a nymph named Amethyst who was inadvertently turned into white stone; in remorse, the Greek god Bacchus poured wine over her to turn her a beautiful purple.

We wish everyone a peaceful and happy February.

The Welsh call February "y mis bach" which means "little month".

The Saxon term for the month, Sol-monath, means "cake month". This is because they offered cakes to the gods during this month.

To all students who are looking towards their Summer exams, we hope they find a way to study that will enable them to achieve the results they are hoping for.

February is a good time to start to think about the coming Spring and Summer when it comes to getting your garden ready.

Take a walk round the garden centres, and read the seed catalogues, decide what you might want to achieve in this coming year. Sow the seeds for parsley, to start your herb patch.



This January marks the start of Christian Aid's 80th anniversary year.

Our work began in 1945 when we were founded by the British and Irish churches to support refugees in Europe following the devastation and upheaval caused by the Second World War. Ever since we have worked around the world to overcome the injustice of poverty and tackle its underlying causes.

For 80 years, we've been an expression of faith in the unstoppable power of hope to create a more just and peaceful world.

It is thanks to your support, and that of generations of supporters before you, that Christian Aid and our partners have been able to do our work. Your gifts, campaign actions and prayer continue to enable us to respond to a world disfigured by the effects of conflict, inequality and the climate crisis.

You're helping to ensure that people's voices are heard and that local communities are given the means to identify their own solutions to poverty. Our close working relationship with over 250 partners in 26 countries meant that in 2024 we were able to reach 4.5m people directly and 19.3m people indirectly.

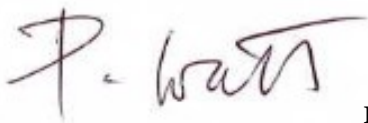
A highlight for me last year was **travelling with our chair, Bishop Sarah Mullally to meet with our partners in Colombia**. I was inspired by a group of lawyers, CCALCP, campaigning for the human rights of environmental defenders, who face threats and intimidation from gangs and paramilitaries. In Santander province, I saw how our partner Corambiente is helping women smallholder farmers adapt their agricultural methods in the face of climate change, and provide for their families.

Christian Aid has always collaborated with national and local organisations, many of them rooted in the churches, which understand their context and can sustain their work over the long term.

In Gaza, our partners are delivering life-saving aid to civilians caught up in the conflict. In South Sudan, partners are responding to the needs of **almost a million people forced across the border** by the brutal civil war in their northern neighbour. In the **Middle East**, South Sudan, and Colombia – and in other countries beset by conflict – we are working for peace: both at the community level, and in our advocacy towards governments and international institutions.

Thank you for all your ongoing support, which brings hope to people in situations that sometimes appear hopeless.

Wishing you a blessed and hope-filled year ahead.



Patrick Watt
CEO Christian Aid

The cost of climate change in 2024

2024 has been a year of climate extremes. A year where climate breakdown has been on display across our world. Terrible storms, flooding in desert regions, and droughts along the Amazon River. The climate crisis is truly turning the world upside down. The scientific evidence of the lethal toll that burning fossil fuels is taking on our fellow humans and the planet at large is incontrovertible.

This will likely be the hottest year ever recorded, breaking last year's previous record. The data is now also showing that climate change is doubling the likelihood of many extreme weather events like floods and tropical cyclones and increasing their intensity, leading to massive destruction and loss of life. These climate disasters are a warning sign of what is to come if we do not accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. They also show the urgent need for adaptation measures, especially in the global South, where resources are stretched, and people are especially vulnerable to extreme weather events.

The good news is that the transition to clean energy is underway. Renewables are the cheapest form of new electricity and the roll out of solar power consistently exceeds even the most optimistic predictions. Public support for clean energy is robust and the consequences of not acting are becoming increasingly clear.



The Word in pictures

Adoration of the Shepherds
between 1650 and 1700

Ivan Honchar Museum, Ukraine

The artist is unknown, but the scene is very familiar. The young mother Mary, looking up to heaven. The older Joseph, standing guard. The tiny baby, swaddled in linen cloths in the traditional manner. A manger and stable in the countryside and a rather questionable ox and ass. Suddenly, a group of excited shepherds crowd in carrying their crooks, one doffing his hat.



They point to the figure in the sky, surrounded by clouds. They are telling their amazing story. They have seen an angel who announced, 'I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.' Then there was a sky full of angels, praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' This charming painting from 15th or 16th century Ukraine, with its reference to the angels' proclamation, represents a prayer – not only for Ukrainians, but for the people of more than 45 countries where armed conflicts are currently raging – that their hopes for peace will be fulfilled.

Art in Focus is curated by Meryl Doney

*Many thanks to Reform for these
articles and for allowing us to use them*



The United Reformed Church (URC) has sent greetings to the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) on its 60th anniversary.

On January 16, 1965, the UCZ was formed with four separate missions coming into union representing different Christian traditions. These were the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (PEMS), The London Missionary Society (LMS), the Methodists and the Church of Scotland.

The political liberation of Zambia contributed to the union of the Churches echoing the slogan of "One Zambia, One Nation" coined by the first Republican president, Dr Kenneth David Kaunda, whose father was a Church of Scotland missionary.

URC General Secretary, the Revd Dr John P Bradbury, sent the following message to the General Secretary of the UCZ, the Revd Chipasha Musaba:

Dear Friends of the United Church of Zambia,

On behalf of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom, I would like to congratulate you on your 60th anniversary, commemorating the life, ministry and witness of the UCZ over the past 60 years.

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we rejoice with thanksgiving on the anniversary of your union, a communion that created a community with many different languages, peoples and cultures, all bonded together by a deep Christian faith.

We also give thanks for the links between the URC's Wessex Synod and the UCZ, and for the exchange programmes and other activities over many years.

The formation of the UCZ was driven by the word of God and the spirit of integration. The jubilee is a time during which the covenant community of unity and peace is restored through the establishing of shalom based upon God's justice.

It is a time to remind ourselves that God has remained faithful, so that we must continue to walk the path of God with love, peace and reconciliation.

May the spirit of the Lord be upon you as you proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

The UCZ held an anniversary celebration on January 16 at its Mindolo Congregation in Kitwe. The service was attended by Zambia's Minister of Commerce, Trade and industry, the Hon Mulenga Chipoka, and attended by UCZ Synod officials, mission partners, clergy, and congregations.

The milestone celebration reflected on God's faithfulness and the church's impactful journey over the past six decades.

Many thanks to Reform for these articles and for allowing us to use them

Israel and Hamas have agreed to a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal, according to US and Qatari mediators. The first six-week phase took effect on 19th January.

The agreement follows 15 months of devastating violence. Israel has attempted to root out Hamas fighters and secure the safety of its citizens. It has conducted a relentless bombing campaign in Gaza destroying homes, schools, hospitals, mosques and churches. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed in what Amnesty International describes as a genocide, though this has yet to be confirmed under international law. International arrest warrants have

been issued for leaders in Israel and for Hamas.



The United Reformed Church has been calling for an unconditional and permanent ceasefire for well over a year, and joins with the Methodists and Baptist churches in the UK welcoming the news of the ceasefire deal.

The following joint ecumenical statement was signed on behalf of

the United Reformed Church by the Revd Philip Brooks, Deputy General Secretary (Mission):

The commencement of a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel will come as an enormous relief for all living in Gaza and for those waiting for the release of hostages held by Hamas.

We give thanks for the ceasefire announcement:

God of Love,

We are thankful for the work that has been done to secure a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and pray that it may be implemented and lead to a lasting peace in the region.

With grateful hearts we celebrate the promised release of all those held against their will and pray for their recovery and recuperation as they are reunited with family and friends.

We pray that we never see such death and destruction in this region again.

May justice reign, justice that establishes peace, promotes hope, frees people from fear, encourages neighbours to love another and brings an end to the seemingly endless cycle of injustice, violence and death in the region.

This we ask in the power of your Spirit.

Amen

Many thanks to Reform for these articles and for allowing us to use them

Taken from 2021 Prayer Handbook

'hidden in plain sight'

Edited by Francis Brien and Michael Jagessar

The 2021 Prayer Handbook is made up of a mixture of prayer styles and approaches. We live in a world of distractions. Information overload disables our sense of perception. What is right before and around us can seem so far away, even non-existent. We hope that these prayers, inspired by God's Spirit will lead us to discern God's goodness at work, extending far beyond our sight and imagination.

For everything a season

By John Proctor

God of heaven and every season beneath,
help us to leave in the year that has died
all that it held of shame, sorrow and sin,
and to treasure the riches it leaves -
the learning, laughter, the love.

God of past and future,
teach us how to grasp in the year that is born
promises by which we may live,
kindness we can offer,
hopes you set before us.

God of work and toil and busy-ness
we ask for confidence for the year's duty,
energy amid its demands,
and wisdom in the unfolding days,
that we may know the times
and discern our task.

God of every season,
may the living of our years,
serve the purpose of heaven.

Praise our God

By Melanie Smith

Praise and worship God. Our God is holy.

Amidst backstreets and backwaters,
help us to know your presence.

Praise and worship God. Our God is holy.

Amidst the boggy and miry places,
help us to see you.

Praise and worship God. Our God is holy.

Amidst our daily uphill struggles,
help us to focus on you.

Praise and worship God. Our God is holy.

Walk and Talk



Friday mornings.
10 am for walking.
Meet outside the first
entrance for walking.

11 am for tea and cake at Dobbies, at the Coffee
Shop, often outside, if you don't wish to walk.

**Everyone
welcome.**



Activities of our Junior Church



Christ the King Sunday was just before Advent and, using Daniel's vision of what we now understand to be Christ's kingship in the end times, we made edible crowns in Junior Church. Can you see which food we used for the glistening jewels? They never made it home as we ate them straight away.

After Christmas we took the excitement, promise and light of Christmas into the New Year with these star lanterns as we grappled with John 1, which says Jesus is the Word and the Word is life and light. You will know these words well if you generally go to a carol service.



Moving on to the beginning of Jesus ministry, recently we learned about how Jesus showed God's abundant blessings when he turned water into wine at a wedding, which was his first miracle as told in John 2: 1-11. We made clay jars and discovered that, in biblical times, these could sometimes be the size of an adult! Ours were much more portable. Phew!



We can get quite deep in Junior Church but we always aim to give a clear biblical message while having fun.

Sheila.

Epiphany

Epiphany is an ancient feast celebrating the appearance or manifestation of God to the whole world. Traditionally celebrated on January 6 (still the practice in some places around the world), the liturgical reforms of 1970 moved Epiphany to the second Sunday of January.

Epiphany was once a more prominent celebration; not only was it the preferred day for gift-giving (in imitation of the Magi), but Christians originally celebrated Epiphany as *all* the manifestations of the divinity of Jesus prior to the start of his public ministry: his birth (with the visit of the Magi), the presentation in the Temple, the finding in the Temple, his baptism in the Jordan, and even the miracle at Cana.

The Epiphany season is a period of 4-9 weeks that begins on January 6th and ends on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. The length of the season depends on the date of Easter.

It is a meaningful time for many Christians. As one of the very first holidays (also called feast days) of the year, Epiphany comes on the heels of Christmas celebrations and is a time of joy and faith.

Epiphany is about the visit from the Magi, aristocratic men from the east (often referred to as kings or wise men) who followed a star to see the newborn baby Jesus in Bethlehem. The Magi brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold was considered a symbol of kings, frankincense a perfume representing



divinity and myrrh an anointing and embalming oil that symbolized death. The Magi represented the non-Jewish peoples of the world, so this was considered a "revelation to the gentiles".



Epiphany is celebrated by both the Eastern and Western Churches, but a major difference between them is precisely which events the feast commemorates. For Western Christians, the feast primarily commemorates the coming of the Magi, with only a minor reference to the baptism of Jesus. Eastern churches celebrate the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan.

According to ancient custom, the priest announced the date of Easter on the feast of Epiphany. This tradition dated from a time when calendars were not readily available, and the church needed to publicise the date of Easter, since many celebrations of the liturgical year depend on it.

Epiphany can be extended to include the birth of Jesus; the visit of the Magi, all of Jesus' childhood events, up to and including the Baptism by John the Baptist; and even the miracle at the wedding at Cana in Galilee.

Things to do during Epiphany: ***Give gifts***

Some families make it a tradition to save Christmas gift-giving until Epiphany...and then to give each person just three gifts. This might be a fun tradition to introduce as children get older. One advantage: More time to get the perfect gift, which means less stress around Christmas... plus, take advantage of those after-Christmas sales.





Bless your home

It is traditional to bless your home and household on the Feast of the Epiphany, perhaps because of the biblical reference to the three kings entering the home where the Holy Family was staying in order to worship the Christ child there.

Send the Magi on a journey.

If you have a manger set, bring out the three kings on Christmas Day- but instead of placing them near the manger right away, put them somewhere else in your house so that they can journey to the manger over the twelve days between Christmas Day and the traditional date for the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6th). You can have the three kings move to a different room or area of your house on each day.

Eat King's Cake

A popular Epiphany tradition in many cultures is the King's Cake (or King Cake), a sweet cake in which a small figure of the baby Jesus is hidden. Searching for the baby Jesus in the cake imitates the Magi's search for the baby Jesus.

On the Feast of the Epiphany in some parts of central Europe the priest, wearing white vestments, blesses Epiphany water, frankincense, gold, and chalk. The chalk is used to write the initials of the three Magi (traditionally, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar), over the doors of churches and homes.



Diary Dates			
February			
Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Rev Leonora Jagessar -Visser't Hooft'
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	23rd	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Alan Cruchley
March			
Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Rev Dr Michael Jagessar

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the March 2025 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Tuesday 25th February** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement.
Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail: jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk.

Sudoku Answers for
December/January

3	7	1	4	9	6	2	5	8
6	9	8	5	7	2	3	4	1
5	2	4	1	8	3	9	7	6
4	6	5	7	2	9	8	1	3
9	8	3	6	1	4	5	2	7
2	1	7	8	3	5	4	6	9
7	4	2	9	6	8	1	3	5
8	3	6	2	5	1	7	9	4
1	5	9	3	4	7	6	8	2

Puzzle Corner

T	C	R	R	S	M	L	H
U	A	A	H	O	W	I	D
R	T	V	I	N	P	O	K
T	S	E	N	P	V	N	C
L	H	N	O	E	E	S	Y
E	E	S	S	R	A	E	B
S	E	F	F	A	R	I	G
S	P	Z	E	B	R	A	S

Bible Word Search: Animals in Noah's Ark

Bears, Cats, Cows, Doves, Giraffes, Hippos, Lions, Ravens, Rhinos, Sheep, Turtles, Zebras

Bible Word Search: Cain and Abel

Abel, Adam, Cain, Fresh, Fruit, Garden, God, Killed, Punish, Rotten, Sad, Spoke, Walk

G	R	O	T	T	E	N	A
O	B	R	I	K	E	P	D
D	O	U	O	D	U	E	A
T	R	P	R	N	L	H	M
F	S	A	I	L	E	B	A
D	G	S	I	N	I	A	C
A	H	K	F	R	E	S	H
S	E	W	A	L	K	R	S

A sudoku puzzle consists of a 9 by 9 grid. This grid is subdivided into nine 3 x 3 boxes.

Some of the cells in the grid are prefilled with a number between 1 and 9, while many other cells are blank.

Your job is to determine the correct number to be entered in each of the empty cells.

The numbers 1 to 9 must appear just once in each row, column, and 3 x 3 box.

	9	2				8	1	
8			7	9	1			4
4				2				7
	7		4		2		6	
	4	5				7	3	
	6		5		3		4	
5				1				3
6			2	4	7			9
	8	7				4	2	

EVERY WEEK AT WALLINGTON U.R.C.

Times of Worship

Sunday 10.30am Family Service

Activities you can find on our Premises

Monday - Friday 9.15am-1.15pm *Holmwood Pre – school*

Monday	10.00-11.00am	Yoga
	1.00-2.30pm	Al-Anon
	2.00-4.00pm	Bananas Art
	7.00-8.00pm	Yoga
	7.00-9.30pm	Pilates (two classes)
Tuesday	9.15am-1.20pm	Hartbeeps (mother and baby activities)
	10.00-11.00am	Pilates
	12.30-2.30pm	AA Meeting
	1.40-3.40pm	USA Art group (fortnightly)
	5.00-6.00pm	Rainbows
	6.00-7.30pm	Brownies (10th Wallington)
	8.00-10.00pm	Epsom Downs Badminton, Winter(Sept-May)
Wednesday	10.00-11.30am	Baby Massage
	7.30-10.00pm	Chess Club
Thursday	10.00-11.00am	Pilates
	11.00-12.00noon	Senior Movers Exercise
	1.15-3.15pm	Lace Making
	2.00-4.00pm	Ladies' Badminton, Winter(Sept-April)
	2.00-4.00pm	Fallen Angels Drama
	6.00-7.00pm	Pilates
	7.25-10.00pm	Carshalton & Wallington Art Group
Friday	9.30am-12.30pm	NAS Coffee morning (monthly)
	9.30am-3.00pm	Reading Fairy Sutton
	6.45-8.30pm	Guides(8th Wallington)
Saturday	8.30-9.30am	Fitness
	10.00-12.15pm	Zumba



South London Tamil Church (SLTC)

SLTC invite you to join them for
their Sunday service which starts
at 3pm.

Everyone welcome!