

Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT MAGAZINE



No. 395 December 2025-January 2026 *Extrinsic*

Did you know...

www.wurc.org.uk

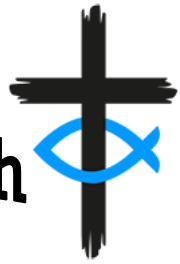
is our church internet address. Look us up sometime!

Minister:

Reverend Craig Bowman

Email: minister@wurc.org.uk

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends,

At a recent meeting of church leaders in Sutton I invited them to consider a painting by Pieter Aertsen, a Netherlandish painter active in the middle of the 16th Century. The painting appears to be a wonderful picture of a butcher's stall filled with all kind of meat – beef, pork, fowl, sausages and fish – and, indeed, its popular title is 'The Butcher's Stall'. However, as I imagine you would be thinking, I wouldn't be sharing with other church leaders a mere still life painting, however well executed, so there must be something else going on. The full title of the painting is 'The Butcher's Stall (with the Flight into Egypt)'.

Beyond the marvellous display of the elements for a feast other things are happening in the background, including a man clearing up, a glimpse into what appears to be a tavern or inn and a distant view of a church. Then through another window people dressed in contemporary



Netherlandish attire head towards the church, whilst a woman with a baby riding on a donkey, led by a man, puts something in the bowl or hat of a begging child. It is, of course, Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus fleeing from Herod and it explains the full title of the painting.

There are many things that could be said about this painting but a key thing is Aertsen is stressing that God's intervention in our lives happens whilst 'normal' life carries on around us with the intervention unnoticed by many – or even by the majority. It's a message which is echoed in the paintings of Aertsen's nephew, Joachim Beuckelaer, whose 4 wonderful paintings 'The Four Elements' can be seen at the National Gallery. In these too, the activity of God is happening in the background while the foreground is full of enticing food. I am also reminded of Peter Bruegel the Elder's painting of the Census at Bethlehem, where the arrival of Mary and Joseph at the inn, again in a contemporary Northern European setting, passes unnoticed.

We are now into Advent and our Christmas preparations will be well underway, both in church and in our homes. Much of what we do and plan will help to make the miracle of the Bethlehem birth and God coming to us more real in our lives and in the lives of our community. However there may a tendency to get so caught up in the activities and occasions that at times we forget what it is we are celebrating and marking, or that the excitement or drama mean we overlook the holy that is present in our lives, perhaps in simple and unexpected ways. Considering again Aertsen's painting it can be a reminder that you may have all the ingredients of a most sumptuous feast but if you miss out on the presence of Christ you have missed an invitation to the best banquet of all!

I pray that you may all recognise the presence of Christ this Christmas in the special and in the every-day, in the magnificent and in the humble, in the busyness and in the stillness.

Craig Bowman

Around Sutton

Discover the rich **cinematic history of the London Borough of Sutton**. From the opening of the first local picture hall in 1908, through the Golden Age of Hollywood, and up to present day, cinemas have been an ever-present fixture in our local area. More than just a venue for the latest films, learn how cinemas developed across the borough, bringing us together and shaping our society in times of war and peace.

13 Nov 2025 – 15 Feb 2026

Honeywood Museum

Free Event. Drop in throughout opening hours.

Please note, opening hours may vary, so please check before visiting.

Get into the festive spirit with **Whitehall's Winter Wonderland Trail!** Enjoy the beautiful decorations throughout the Tudor building as you follow the trail and learn what Christmas was like in the past. Along the way, you can decorate your brightest bulb to take home or make a string of lights as well as your own origami Christmas tree bookmark, ready for reading your favourite Christmas stories this holiday season.

21 Nov 2025 – 19 Dec 2025

Tickets: £2, paid on arrival via credit/debit card. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.



BUT...The Carshalton Frost Fair, a beloved winter tradition, has announced a fallow year, pausing its usual line-up of family-friendly entertainment and activities.

This is the first year since it began in 2012 that this has happened.

This is the second event in the area to be cancelled this year after the Round Table Carshalton Fireworks were cancelled last month. The event, which usually takes place on the first

Saturday of December, would have been held on December 6.

However, there will be a special Wallington Farmers' Market on Dec 13th 9am-1pm - with many of the same stalls for some proper Christmas magic !



Carshalton & Wallington Art Group

Winter Exhibition?

Each December, the Carshalton & Wallington Art Group (CANDWAG) transforms the historic All Saints Church, Carshalton (SM5 3AG) into a festive celebration of local creativity. The 2025 Winter Exhibition combines community, craftsmanship, and Christmas spirit—showcasing South London artists from Carshalton, Wallington, Sutton, Banstead and Epsom.

Admission is free and part of the All Saints Advent Fair Festivities—a community event featured in the London Open House programme.

Open Evening

Wednesday 3 Dec | 7 – 9 pm

Live music + refreshments + first look at the collection

Public Viewings

Three days of exhibition

Thu 4 Dec 10:30 am – 4 pm

Fri 5 Dec 10 am – 4 pm

Sat 6 Dec 12 pm – 5 pm



Advent Calendar Art Reveal

Beginning 1 December, CANDWAG will reveal a new painting each day on Instagram and Facebook (@candwag) as a visual Advent Calendar of colour and community spirit.

Based on previous years, these posts reach over 5,000 viewers across Surrey and South London combined (Facebook Insights 2024).

Create a quiet space:

Create a quiet, peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you. Each morning the United Reformed Church has a reading, reflection and short prayer which helps us to focus on our journeys of Christian discipleship.

St Matthew 5: 13

'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

Reflection

What a strange thing for Jesus to say, equating people with a small, grainy chemical, but Jesus was aware of how strongly salt can affect everything it comes into contact with, and how everyone could relate to it.

Salt is a very common mineral and it has been used throughout history as both a flavouring and a preservative. We still find it useful today, even if many of us are worried about our excess consumption of it.

We are, according to Jesus, the world's salt, and this places an enormous responsibility on us. We should go about 'flavouring' the world, that is to say that we should have an effect on the world like salt has an effect on food. We should always be there, hard to get rid of, infiltrating every aspect of society, and bringing with us the power and reality of God's love.

However, the truth is that we are not always keen to do this. Many and various can be the reasons that we come up with in order to try and avoid being salt in the world, but we need to ask ourselves, in avoiding the call to be salt, can we enable others to know Christ? Or, to ask it another way, does salt that is kept in a cellar have any effect on anything else?

Of course it doesn't. In order to have an effect it needs to be

sprinkled on the food so that it can permeate throughout. In the same way, we also need to come out of our 'cellars' and permeate throughout society. We need to display the qualities of God's kingdom as we live from day to day. This is our calling. This is what God expects of us. We don't necessarily need to go and do anything extra special, but we do need to ensure that we are living the life that God calls us to live and go about flavouring the world as we do so.

Prayer

Loving God, help us to be salt in the world.
Keep us full of flavour by your Holy Spirit,
and enable us to season the world around us
as we live our lives for you day by day.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

*Thank you to all those who were able
to support our*

Christmas Market



**We are very pleased to say that
we were able to raise £1271 (so
far) for our chosen charities.**

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.

Where would we be...?

By Karen Campbell

Where would we be if Mary had said 'No!'

I give thanks for the courage of Mary -
a young woman willing to put herself on the line,
to risk her own security, her own future,
for the sake of your will.

Where would we be if Joseph had refused?

I give thanks for the humanity of Joseph -
a man of faith and deep conviction,
willing to hear your voice
above accepted norms and religious doctrine.

I give thanks for people of faith in every age -
men and women

raised up to hear your voice and live your word,
that your will may be done
and others may come to know something of you.

I give thanks for people in every place
who choose a path of faith in action,
saying 'Your will, God, and not my own !'
and so change the world in big ways and small.

Thank you. God, for men and women of steadfast faith.
May my faith prove steadfast too.

Rejoicing in their blessing

By Richard Becher

**Lord, we rejoice and leap for joy today
for all who have found their blessing in heaven.**

From their wealth and comfort
they welcomed the poor.

From their tables of abundance
they fed the hungry.
When they had laughter in their hearts
they remembered the sad.
When they were welcomed and loved
they embraced the excluded.

**Lord, we rejoice and leap for joy today
for they have found their blessing in heaven.**

When they were denied justice
they sought to make peace.
When they were hated and persecuted
they worked for reconciliation.
When they were stripped of their dignity
they clothed people with love.
When they had lost everything in the world
they shared your heavenly gifts.

**Lord, we rejoice and leap for joy today
for all who have found their blessing in heaven.**

Walk and Talk



Friday mornings.
10 am for walking.
11am for a cuppa

We're often at Dobbies or Oaks
Park and sometimes elsewhere. Please
Ring Sheila on 07905 301309 for the day's plan if you
would like to join us for
Walking and/or Talking.

**Everyone
welcome.**



Conversation Starter Coasters

Introducing the new conversational coasters: an easy, welcoming way to invite people into conversations that matter.

These coasters make it really easy to spark interesting and meaningful conversation, and it can be different everyday with the QR code that gives you new questions!



The United Reformed Church and the Ugly Duckling Charity have worked together to produce Table Talk Coasters to help break the ice with strangers, go deeper in conversations with friends and family and create space for conversations about life, hope, and faith.

The coasters, made out of eco-friendly materials, will feature prompts about the big questions of life, such as: "When did you last feel a sense of wonder?" As well as having a QR code on them which takes you to a different question every day. They could be used on the coffee table at home, on the tables at a church coffee morning, in a café, around your church, universities, workplaces, anywhere you might have a chat to hopefully spark one million faith conversations! Fun to use in any setting with anyone.

- Break the ice with strangers or go deeper with friends and family.
- Create space for conversations about life, hope, and faith.
- Help people to feel less isolated.

And so Table Talk Coaster was launched. Our vision is to spark 1 million conversations in communities, cafés, pubs, schools, universities, churches, workplaces, and homes by the end of 2028.

There are 22 thought-provoking questions printed across the pack

Helpful links out to other organisations can also be found that can help you explore certain topics further including well-being charities and 'find a church' for those wanting to explore more about faith.



A Festive Quiz

Hope you enjoy this little quiz. (Answers next month)

1. Which of Santa's reindeer is named after the German word for thunder? _____
2. What is the traditional colour of |Santa Claus's suit? _____
3. Who tried to make Christmas illegal in England from 1647 to 1660? _____
4. Which Christmas song was originally written for Thanksgiving and later became a popular Christmas tune? _____
5. During WW2 and the rationing of food, what did people eat instead of Christmas pudding? _____
6. Which US state was the first to officially recognise Christmas as a public holiday in 1836, setting the precedent for the nation? _____
7. A popular dessert for the holiday period, what is Croquembouche tree made of? _____
8. What is the best selling Christmas single of all time? _____
9. Which Christmas decoration do the Royal Family not have on their trees? _____
10. Miracle on 34th Street centres on what real-life department store? _____
11. Boxing Day is also known by another name celebrating a saint, who is the saint? _____
12. Guessing Game: Collectively, how much do Brits spend on unwanted Christmas gifts? _____
13. What does holly represent? _____
14. In which year was the first Christmas card sent? _____
15. How many tips do traditional snowflakes have? _____

Christmas carols have become an ingrained Christmas holiday tradition, from traditional door-to-door Christmas carolling around local neighbourhoods to local events and singing clubs.

Yet, the origins of these beloved songs stretch back far beyond the Christmas traditions we know today. Their journey—from ancient pagan rituals to the heart of modern holiday festivities—offers a fascinating glimpse into the evolution of music, culture, and belief systems.

Long before Christianity spread across Europe, midwinter festivals such as Yule and Saturnalia featured songs to mark the turning of the seasons. These pagan communities celebrated the winter solstice with chants and music, honouring the renewal of life and light as the days began to grow longer. These early songs, often sung in circles around the fire, were not carols as we know them but were deeply rooted in nature and seasonal cycles.



As Christianity spread through Europe, early Church leaders recognised the unifying power of music. They began to incorporate songs into religious practices, adapting pagan traditions to align with Christian theology. By the 4th century, hymns honouring Christ's birth became a part of the Christmas liturgy, though these were solemn and sung exclusively in Latin.

It wasn't until the 13th century, under the influence of figures like St. Francis of Assisi, that carols took on Christian themes. St. Francis encouraged the use of vernacular languages in worship and introduced Nativity plays featuring lively songs that audiences could join. This shift marked the beginning of carols becoming accessible to the general public, moving them out of church services and into communal life.



The popularity of carols has waxed and waned over the centuries. During the Puritan era in 17th-century England, Christmas celebrations – including carolling – fell out of favour. The Puritans considered such festivities frivolous and unholy, and carols were largely suppressed, due in part to their roots in Pagan celebrations.

Some carols like "Personent hodie", "Good King Wenceslas", and "The Holly and the Ivy" can be traced directly back to the Middle Ages, and are among the oldest musical compositions still regularly sung.

The revival came in the Victorian era, fuelled by a renewed interest in Christmas traditions. This period saw the publication of numerous carol

collections, such as *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern* by William Sandys in 1833. Sandys' compilation included many now-classic carols, such as *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen* and *The First Noël*, preserving them for future generations.

In the Victorian era, people of all classes embraced carolling with enthusiasm, establishing it as a cornerstone of Christmas celebrations.



Groups of singers would go door-to-door, bringing music and goodwill to their neighbours. The concept of “wassailing,” originally a pagan tradition of blessing crops, transformed into carol singing, with participants offering their voices in exchange for food or drink.

The 19th and early 20th centuries saw the creation of many iconic carols that remain popular today. Songs like *O Holy Night* and *Silent Night* emerged during this period, blending religious themes with stirring melodies that resonated across cultures.

Today, carols are an enduring part of Christmas, bridging the gap between the sacred and the secular. Traditional hymns like *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* sit comfortably alongside more modern classics such as *Jingle Bells* and *White Christmas*. While some lament the commercialisation of Christmas, carols remain widely popular, connecting generations through shared melodies.

Good Christian men, rejoice

Words: Heinrich Suso (1295–1366). Translated from Latin to English by John M. Neale in *Carols for Christmastide* (London: 1853).

Music: In Dulci Jubilo 14th Century German tune. Harmony from *Christmas Carols Old and New*, 1871

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
News! News! Je-sus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass be-fore Him bow;
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christ-an men, rejoice,
 With heart and soul and voice;
 Now ye hear of endless bliss:
 Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this!
 He has op-ened the heavenly door,
 And man is blest forevermore.
 Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men, rejoice,
 With heart and soul and voice;
 Now ye need not fear the grave:
 Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was born to save!
 Calls you one and calls you all,
 To gain His everlasting hall.
 Christ was born to save!
 Christ was born to save!



Sudoku Answers for
 November

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

Diary Dates			
December			
Sunday	7th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	14th	10.30am	Morning service...Our Gift Service
Saturday	20th	6.30pm	SLTC Carol Service...All Welcome
Sunday	21st	4.00pm	NO Morning service. Our 'Carols by Candlelight' will be at 4pm
Thursday	25th	10.00am	Christmas Day Service
Sunday	28th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Phil Hyde
January 2026			
Sunday	4th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	11th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Jo Patterson (Mission Development Officer for Southern Synod)
Sunday	18th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
		12.00	Church Meeting will follow this morning's service
Sunday	25th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Leonora Jagessar-Visser't Hooft

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the February 2026 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Friday 23rd January 2026** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement.
Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail: jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk.

Puzzle Corner

The Underground Game...Part 3 (Answers)

Find the name of a London Underground Station for each of these clues.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Bigger than Big | Wapping |
| 2. Trumpeting New York
Thoroughfare | Tooting Broadway |
| 3. A bear | Paddington |
| 4. Red Rose Entrance | Lancaster Gate |
| 5. Ballet & Vegetables here | Covent Garden |
| 6. Where the money is | Bank |
| 7. Where Blackboard Materials
are grown | Chalk Farm |
| 8. There's one on Merseyside | Liverpool Street |
| 9. Royal Route | Queensway |
| 10. Elementary my dear Watson | Baker Street |
| 11. A Television School | Grange Hill |
| 12. You won't find Acrobats at
this University | Oxford Circus |
| 13. Sounds like the Bard was
born here | Stratford |
| 14. Mad dogs stop here | Barking |
| 15. Big Gun Road | Cannon Street |

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

Bible Word Search: Unto Us a Son is Born

Child, David, Father, Given, Isaiah, Justice, Kingdom, Mighty, Prince, Reign, Virgin, Zeal

Bible Word Search: Jesus left at the temple

Father, God, Joseph, Lost, Love, Mary, Mother, Nazareth, Passover, Teacher, Temple, Twelve

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

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.

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

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
	7.00-9.30pm	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	U3A Art group (fortnightly)
	5.00-6.00pm	Rainbows(1st South Wallington)
	6.00-7.30pm	Brownies (10th Wallington)
Wednesday	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!