

Wallington United Reformed
Church



**CONTACT
MAGAZINE**

No. 398 April 2026



Extrinsic

Did you know...

www.wurc.org.uk

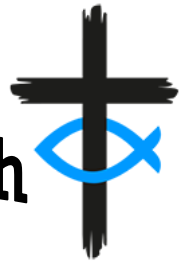
is our church internet address. Look us
up sometime!

Minister:

Reverend Craig Bowman

Email: minister@wurc.org.uk

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends

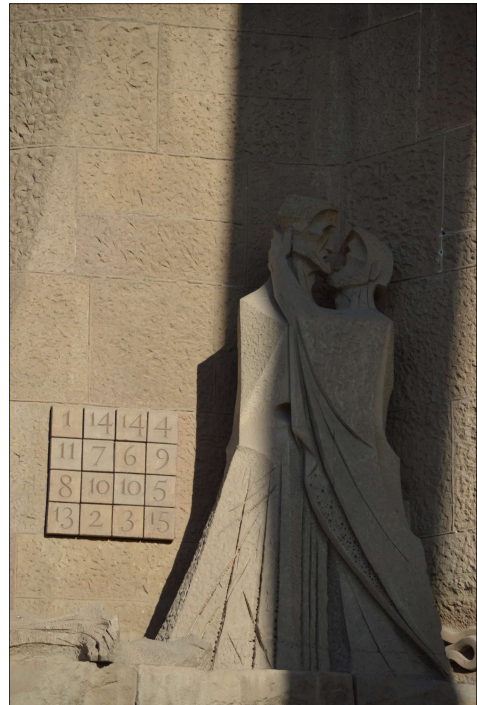
Magic Squares!

The photo alongside this article shows a magic square. This week, whilst looking ahead to Holy Week and Easter, I have been revisiting some photos I took 7 years ago when Louise, Thomas and I visited Barcelona. Whilst there we visited the Sagrada Familia, Antoni Gaudi's amazing church which is finally due to be completed this year – 100 years after his death. One side of the church is the Passion Façade and this photo is of one of the sculptures found there.

Knowing where it is to be found you may well have realised that this is a depiction of Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss. But why is there a square filled with numbers next to it?

This is a magic square, but it is a very special one, and is the work of sculptor Josep Maria Subirachs, who joined the construction team in 1989.

A magic square is a series of numbers on a square grid, placed so that any row, column or diagonal line always adds up to the same number. Adding up its central boxes and its exterior boxes also equals the same number. Magic squares start with a 3×3 grid,



where using the numbers 1-9, the magic constant (what each line or column totals) would be 15. In a 4x4 square, with the numbers 1-16, the magic constant would be 34. However, the Sagrada Familia magic square is 4x4 but it doesn't meet the basic rules – it doesn't have all the numbers from 1 to 16 (it is missing the 12 and 16) and some numbers are repeated. Then there is the symbolic key: the magic constant isn't 34 but 33.

So what is going on here?

Whilst there are inevitably some conspiracy theories the simple answer is that this is a reference to the age at which Jesus is believed to have died – 33. There on the Passion Façade, and in several other locations in the church, is a reference to a human life cut short; a reminder that life is precarious and power, fear and self-interest will take drastic and dangerous action.

Here on the western façade of the Sagrada Familia something that is normally understood in a particular way - all lines adding up to 34 - is seen to be something different – a visual and mental reminder of the death of Jesus and the fragility of life. Yet, isn't that exactly what we are celebrating in this remarkable season of Easter – that things aren't what they seem. The death of Christ upon the cross is not the end to a remarkable and miraculous life but the gateway to life – a life that triumphs over all things, even death! It is not the nightmare ending of a dream grasped by 12 men and their followers but an awakening to a whole new understanding of life and the dawning of a new age. Indeed, this is the way of God, not conforming to the ways of the world but turning them on their heads.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians about it and, of course, we see it not only at the end of Jesus' earthly life but also at its beginning – the King of the Universe born as a baby in a stable in a backward town.

As we journey through Holy Week and celebrate Easter may we be open to God coming to us in surprising ways and recognising him in familiar things given new meaning.

Craig

Careers Fair

On April 16th 2026 the Sutton College Careers Fair will return, bringing an opportunity to speak to representatives from over 20 local organisations.

Visitors will be able to meet representatives from the healthcare, teaching, construction and many other sectors. The event will run 10am – midday with an hour from 9am – 10am for SEND quiet time.

As well as information on career pathways in the various organisations, exhibitors will also be bringing information on any job opportunities that are available.



Previous events have been attended by hundreds of local residents who have found the information available useful and instrumental in planning their next steps.

Information will be available from the College Advice and Step Ahead teams on career progression, training opportunities and next steps.



Nickel Support is stepping down from running the cafe at Sutton Life Centre to focus on making the Beans and Bloom Cafe at Whitehall Historic House even more inclusive. Working with the Council, Nickel Support will be creating a new sensory and sound garden, revamping the kitchen and developing a new all-weather garden room for events.

The Life Centre cafe will be taken over by Orchard Hill College. Nickel Support and the Council are working closely with Orchard Hill College to support this transition.

Following a makeover and transition period, the cafe will reopen to the public after the Easter holidays. It will also be used to train students, giving them access to vital skills which prepare them for employment.

ART INFOCUS

Unknown Martyrs -
United Nations

Paul Hobbs

Acrylic and gold leaf on
wood

Two figures are partly obscured by the emblem of the United Nations. They are hooded and their heads are surrounded by gold haloes, but each one is framed in the crosshairs of a sniper rifle. The surface of the wood has been spattered with shotgun pellets.

The superimposed quotation is taken from Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

'Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief.'

Unknown Martyrs United Nations, is the central one of thirteen paintings commemorating individuals from a range of different contemporary situations who have suffered, and in some cases been killed, for their beliefs. The series by artist Paul Hobbs, draws attention to the fact that people all over the world are still suffering in this way.

He has chosen to draw on the symbolism of orthodox icon writing in his treatment of the figures. They are painted on wooden panels 'from God's good earth', and the use of gold leaf represents the 'uncreated light' of God. In each work Hobbs has included a visual



reference to the way in which the person was treated, including bullet holes, stab marks and plastic restraints.

Hobbs says: 'I have named each one as a saint, in the sense of being one of God's chosen people, just as all Christians are called 'saints' in the New Testament. The people depicted are icons in the sense of windows into understanding God, because their lives and struggles bear witness to him.'

'Unknown Martyrs, the forty page A5 booklet, is available from the shop on Paul Hobbs' website, arthobbs.com

Art in Focus is curated by Meryl Doney

Laurence Wareing revisits the legend of St David

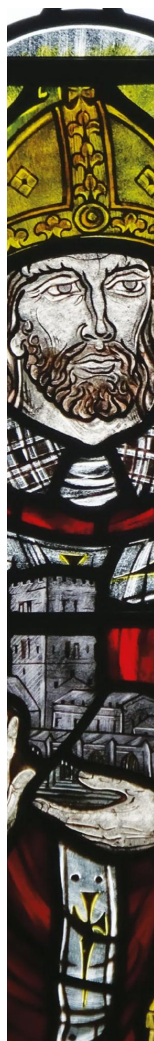
The life of Dewi Sant, St David, was written by Rhigyfarch around 500 years after the saint's death. His account illustrates three of David's defining characteristics in a single legend. David's birth, Rhigyfarch says, was foretold by an angel. The angel told David's father, Sanctus, King of Ceredigion, that when he went hunting the next day he would encounter three gifts: the stag that he would pursue, a fish, and a hive of bees. These gifts would foreshadow David's life: the honeycomb represented wisdom (as honey lies embedded in wax, so David would draw out spiritual meaning from literal utterances); the fish appears to survive on a diet of water, representing David's plain diet and abstinence from alcohol; and the stag signified power over evil, 'the ancient serpent'.

This does not mean that Sanctus's role in David's birth was good: the boy was conceived after Sanctus raped David's mother, Non.

David was born in the late fifth century in Mynyw. He was educated under Saint Iltyd and then, for a further ten years, by Pope Gregory's missionary, Paulinus. Following a period of further prayer and study in the Vale of Ewyras within the Black Mountains, David returned to his birthplace, later renamed after him, to found a monastery. From then on, the focus of his life would be the training of his disciples and establishment of other monastic foundations, mainly in Wales but also in England's west country and the east midlands.

Stories of David's fifth-century mission, like those of other great Celtic saints such as Patrick and Kessog, are of a time

WISDOM OF HONEY



when older traditions felt under threat from Christian evangelisation. The 'evil' mentioned in his birth legend, for example, surfaces in the reported attempts of a local chieftain, Baia, and his wife, to rid Mynyw of David's new community. But when Baia set out to attack the monks, he found himself powerless to do so, we are told. Instead, his cattle were unaccountably destroyed. Next, his wife sent her maids to cavort outside the monks' dwellings: a disconcerting sight for some of the men, but David persuaded them that the life of faith demands resistance to temptation. It is Baia's family that is ruined, while the monastic community thrives.

Rhigyfarch also outlines the strict discipline that David demanded, reminiscent of the ancient desert monks. He describes a routine of labour in the fields (for carefree rest was the source and mother of vices'), balanced by regular prayer and a simple diet of bread and salted herbs. David himself is said to have been nourished only by river water and meadowleek, abstaining from all animal products. The commitment of prospective community members was tested by making them stand outside the monastery doors for ten days before admittance.

This was David's preferred life but theological controversy drew him into a wider role. He was persuaded to attend the Synod of Brefi in 519 and is said to have spoken eloquently from a hill that rose up under his feet. This allowed his voice to be clearly heard and for his convictions to overcome those who were following the teachings of Pelagius. (Pelagius, arguably the only notable theologian of the Celtic Church, had over-emphasised the ability of human beings to earn salvation by combating their own sinful behaviour, thus undervaluing God's grace.)

Several miracles are associated with David, often to do with the restoration of a person's sight, and once with overcoming an attempted poisoning by his own deacon. However, it is his Christian example that impressed those who, like Rhigyfarch, wished to assert his authenticity as a saint. They attributed his consecration as archbishop to the patriarch in Jerusalem, and hailed David as 'a doctrine to his hearers, a guide to the religious, a light to the poor, a support to the orphans'.

Laurence Wareing is a Communications Officer for the URC. His book *Celtic Saints: Lives of the holy exiles* was published in 2020



Many thanks to URC Reform magazine for their articles and for allowing us to use them.

Taken from 2024 Prayer Handbook

'Full to the Brim'

Edited by Sue McCoan and Stephen Ansa-Addo

Themes of fullness and emptiness run through the Bible. The prayers gathered in this handbook speak of different kinds of fullness - fullness of blessing, fullness of being too busy - and of the need, sometimes, to empty ourselves in order to be filled afresh.

Is this His Victory?

By Simon Copley

Is this His victory, to die alone?
Stripped, scourged and mocked as failure and a fraud?
Poor, empty, naked, friendless, far from home?
A scandal anyone should call Him Lord ...

Is this His victory, a grave despoiled?
Trembling, the women flee, hearts filled with fear.
A place of ill-found rumours, false and wild?
His un-anointed body, who knows where?

Is this His victory? His Kingdom grows:
A peace-filled call of love now spreads abroad
Across all borders, barriers, down each road;
News of a crucified yet coming Lord.

There is POWER in the name of Jesus ...

By Stephen Ansa-Addo

We find ourselves in the presence of the risen Christ,
who stands before us, offering PEACE, healing and hope.
In the beauty of the moment, we are drawn to
the boundless love of Jesus.

What a wondrous name! Like a breath of fresh air,
Jesus' presence fills the room, and we are overwhelmed
with joy and amazement. His scars tell a story of
sacrifice and redemption, and his voice carries
the melody of grace and truth.

In His name, we discover the power to embrace
forgiveness, to restore brokenness, and to experience

true transformation. Oh, what a miraculous name,
a name that opens our eyes to see resurrected glory
and IGNITE a fire within our souls.

Just as he showed his wounds to the disciples, Jesus invites us to
draw near, to touch the evidence of His love.
Through His name, our wounded hearts find healing,
our doubts find assurance, and our fears find joy.

In the tapestry of life, Jesus' name weaves together the
story of salvation, reconciling us to God and restoring
our purpose in Him. With every breath, we bear witness
to the Author of Life, who, in divine wisdom, invites us
to be co-authors of this living story.

So, with hearts overflowing with gratitude and wonder,
we pray in the name of Jesus, the name that makes
the impossible possible, the Resurrected King, the
Living Word, and the Eternal Source of our hope.
Amen and Amen!

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.**



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.

Psalm 100

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy.

Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Go within his gates, giving thanks.
Enter his courts with songs of praise.
Give thanks to him and bless his name.

Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age.

Reflection

Psalm 100 lends itself to singing God's praises in worship, whether in the classic metrical paraphrase "All people that on earth do dwell" or in Fred Dunn's more recent "Jubilate everybody." But I wonder whether the overall sense of joyful thanksgiving masks the fact that the words are radical, revolutionary even?

From the start of the Psalm, with its three-fold emphasis on joy, summons to worship God, which conventionally were addressed to Israel alone, are also extended to other nations. Implicitly, in this respect, the nations are on an equal footing with Israel.

Then we have one of the most spectacular theological statements in the Old Testament. The special relationship of Israel to God which was traditionally sealed by covenant, over and against all other nations, is now shared with those same nations! The covenant is now universal in its application.

All the people on earth are invited as the Israelites are, to enter the gates of the Temple and sing together traditional songs of praise to God in the common understanding that God in his goodness saves all people from death-dealing chaos and makes co-existence in the good life possible (cf Genesis 1). Not only that, but all people will now benefit from the promise originally extended solely to Abraham and his descendants: in his steadfast love, God will be faithful to them and to their posterity.

The astonishing universalism of Psalm 100 is not in the mainstream of Old Testament thought, though we find traces of it in other psalms and in the prophets, but might it perhaps help us find a new definition of the relationship between Israel and the Church that is faithful to the Bible? That would show up as false the centuries old pattern of thought which disinherited Israel as God's people and replaced it by the Church as the covenant people?

Prayer

Gracious God, we bless you,
for you have shown us what is good.
In your steadfast love,
you have kept faith with us;
in your mercy
you have blessed us.
and given us hope of new life
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Today's writer

The Revd Fleur Houston, member of Macclesfield and Bollington URC.

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR TEA WITH A PONY



Tea with a Pony is a relaxed and enjoyable session for anyone living with dementia or other long-term conditions, who would appreciate some calm time in friendly company. You'll have the chance to spend time with one of our Diamond ponies and experience the soothing, sensory connection they bring. Many people find it brings back happy memories – and may even create a few new ones

We run Tea with a Pony every Tuesday and Thursday at 2 PM. Each session lasts an hour. We start off with a warm drink, a slice of cake, and a friendly chat with our volunteers. Then we wander down to the yard to meet one of our ponies and enjoy a relaxed time together.



The cost is:

- £15 per person (includes 1 carer per person)
- £40 Group (4 people)
- Groups larger than 4, please contact The Diamond Centre

An invoice is sent upon booking. Application form and payment must be received at least 48 hours before the day of your visit.

If you would like visit Teddy and some of his friends please contact:

The Diamond Centre for Disabled Riders,
Woodmansterne Road,
Carshalton, SM5 4DT.

Telephone: 0208 643 7764 or

Email: activity.leader@diamondcentre.org.uk

Easter Services



Sunday 29th March

10.30am **Palm Sunday**

Service

led by *Rev Craig Bowman.*

Thursday 2nd April

8.00pm **Maundy Thursday**

*Joint service with St Andrew's, at Wallington
URC,*

led by Rev Craig Bowman.

Friday 3rd April

Good Friday Happening: 10.00am

All welcome! Join us at Wallington URC for craft, flower arranging, singing, setting up the Easter Garden, and (of course) hot-cross buns.

Sunday 5th April

Easter Day

*10.30am Service to be led by Rev Craig
Bowman. Including Communion.*

| Diary Dates | | | |
|--------------|------|-----------------------------|--|
| April | | | |
| Sunday | 5th | 10.30am | EASTER DAY: Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman |
| Sunday | 12th | 10.30am | Morning service...to be led by Alan or Phil |
| Sunday | 19th | 10.30am | Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman |
| | | 12.00 Church Meeting | will follow this service |
| Sunday | 26th | 10.30am | Morning service...to be led by Alan or Phil |
| May | | | |
| Sunday | 3rd | 10.30am | Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman |

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the May 2026 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Friday 24th April** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement.
 Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail: [jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jmw321wmj@yahoo.co.uk).

Sudoku Answers for March

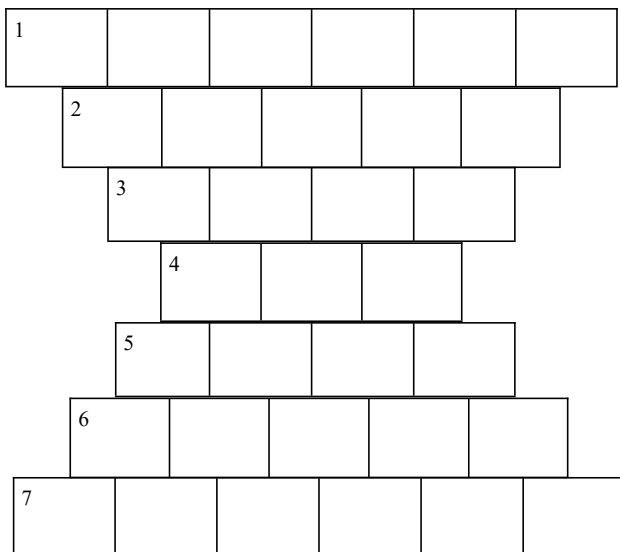
| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 8 |
| 7 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 4 |
| 9 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| 1 | 9 | 4 | 2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

Puzzle Corner

Something new to try!

A Brickwork Word Puzzle

Enter the answers to the clues in the bricks in the wall. Every word contains the same letters as its neighbour –plus or minus one letter.



1. Large showy feathers.
2. White sea froth.
3. Ponder
4. Bird akin to the ostrich.
5. Backless shoe.
6. Monkey-like mammal
7. Noise of thunder.

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

Bible Word Search: Spiritual Gifts

Faith, Gifts, God, Healing, Hope, Love, One, Ordained, Prophecy, Spirit, Tongues, Wisdom

Bible Word Search: Jesus

Cross, Disciples, John, Joseph, Kingdom, Lord, Love, Luke, Mark, Mary, Matthew, Messiah, Peace, Risen, Savior, Sinless, Son

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | I | S | C | I | P | L | E | S |
| P | E | A | C | E | C | K | V | J |
| H | M | A | R | K | U | H | O | H |
| A | D | R | O | L | P | H | L | R |
| I | R | I | S | E | N | O | S | Y |
| S | I | S | S | A | V | I | O | R |
| S | M | O | D | G | N | I | K | A |
| E | J | W | E | H | T | T | A | M |
| M | T | S | S | E | L | N | I | 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.

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

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) |
| 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 |
| | 2.00- 4.00pm | Stitching Together (fortnightly) |
| | 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!