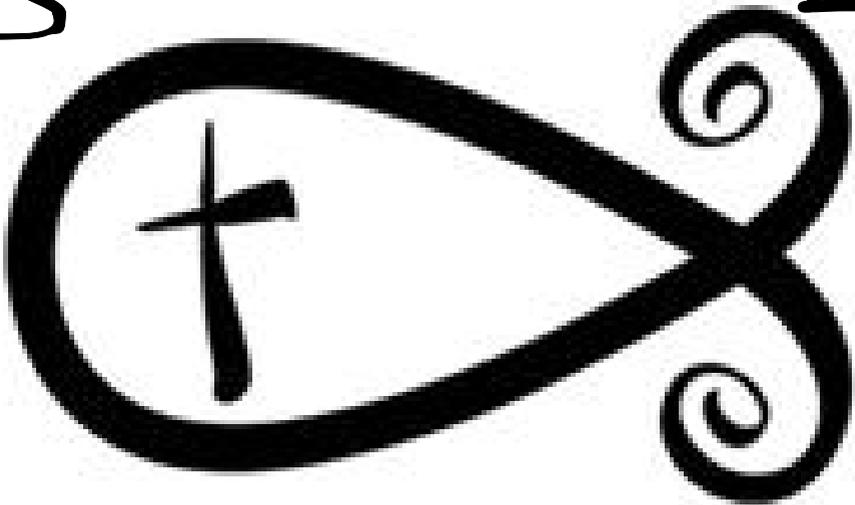


Wallington United Reformed
Church



**CONTACT
MAGAZINE**

No. 397 March 2026



Church

Did you know...

www.wurc.org.uk

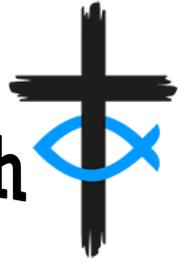
is our church internet address. Look us
up sometime!

Minister:

Reverend Craig Bowman

Email: minister@wurc.org.uk

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends

Following a conversation a few days ago I was reflecting on how we treat other people. That 'we' covers both the general population and those of us in the church. If we think back 5 or 6 years to the peak Covid time there was a real sense of not only looking out for others but also valuing those who serve others. There was a strong desire that when the worst of the pandemic was over, and we were adapting to a 'new normal', things should not be just as they had been and this deeper sense of community and caring should continue to be nurtured. And for a while in some places that happened. However it wasn't long before self-interest and a sense of wanting what we used to have became dominant. Those key workers that we recognised as so crucial only a short while ago now became those who were expected to make our lives better and more comfortable. The wish to be served is a strong one in our society and in the world.

We are now on our Lenten journey where we follow Jesus to Jerusalem and the cross. As we follow we are reminded, both by his words and his actions, how Jesus comes to serve not be served and calls us to follow in his way. This is counter to the prevailing mindset of our society, yet it is one that is embraced by so many, including those within the church. We all know of those who have lived their lives selflessly serving the needs of their family, their church, their community. However, around us, every day, both

within the church and outside it, there are so many acts of service that may seem small but which make a big difference in the lives of others. For these we should be grateful, not taking them for granted nor taking those who offer them for granted. For therein lies a danger – getting used to people doing things, whether for us or for others, and forgetting to be grateful for it and the one who does it. I think this was one of the key things we learnt early in the lockdown of 2020: that our society works because people do things for others – they serve.

I wonder if we can make gratitude part of our Lenten discipline; intentionally looking for those who serve us and our community and thanking them for it? I wonder, can we also look for those opportunities where we can serve, not some mammoth task that totally changes our life but the little thing that makes another's life easier or richer? In all of this I hope we can also be generous in the words we use; words of gratitude and affirmation rather than words of impatience or frustration. When we're about to speak considering for a moment 'How will what I am about to say make this person feel?'. Then, maybe, if this has been our intentional discipline for these Lenten weeks we may find that it has become a habit and we continue to live this way through Easter and beyond.

Thank you, for all you do.

Craig

How is 2026 going so far?

Did you know...we have UK Awareness Days, in March, that spotlight national causes, campaigns, and cultural moments. March 3 - March 8

British Pie Week is

observed annually during the first week of March. It's a delightful seven days where pie enthusiasts unite in their love for this delicious dish, sharing recipes, stories, and, of course, slices of pie.

British Pie Week began as a marketing campaign by a pastry-making company but quickly resonated with the public, evolving into a national celebration. Given the deep-rooted love for pies in British culture, from medieval banquets to modern-day family dinners, it's no surprise that an entire week has been dedicated to celebrating this scrumptious dish.



This is followed by **National Butchers Week**



This is an annual event that celebrates the artistry, dedication, and expertise of butchers. It emphasizes the value of purchasing high-quality, ethically sourced meats and supports the local businesses that provide them.

Every year, National Butchers Week is observed during the second week of March. It's a week dedicated to supporting, promoting, and appreciating our local butchers and the essential role they play in food quality and sustainability.

We also have some special saints days in March:

March 1st: St David's Day patron saint of Wales.

March 5th: St Piran's Day is the national day of Cornwall.

March 17th: St Patrick's Day patron saint of Ireland.

March 20th: St Cuthbert, who is regarded as the patron saint of Northumbria.

March 27th: St John of Egypt, St John is the saint of obedience. He went out into the desert to seek the spiritual guidance of a holy hermit. This hermit had him perform mystifying tasks, such as planting a dry stick in the ground and watering it every day and rolling large rocks from place to place. Perhaps John wondered why on earth this was necessary, but soon he came to see how the tasks trained him to be obedient to God.



An eighty-year-old Anglo-German partnership

is still bearing fruit, says
Russell Furley-Smith

In 1946, after the end of the Second 1 World War, Auguste Radbone, a remarkable German woman living in Goring, Worthing, Sussex, and married to an Englishman, made a visit to her homeland.

Auguste travelled to Wolfstein, a small town in Rhineland-Palatinate in Germany, to visit her mother and her aunt. She found Germany devastated by war, its people living in appalling hardship.

That winter was harsh, and food, clothing and fuel were all scarce. One eyewitness wrote of 'prostrate cities' filled with ghosts 'that peer at us as if to give grim testimony and warning against the philosophy of hate and the way of the sword'. Desperate to help the people of Wolfstein, Auguste approached some of the churches in Worthing, with a letter from the Minister Pfarrer Wilhelm Schwarz, asking for aid. The Revd Barnard Spaul, of Shelley Road Congregational Church, took the matter to the church's Social Service Committee, who recommended that two test parcels should be sent. At a time when food and clothing were still rationed in Britain, it is remarkable that anything was sent at all.

Initially, it was difficult sending the gifts because postmistresses refused to handle parcels for a country still regarded by many as the enemy. But the committee persisted and eventually the parcels were posted, one containing seven pairs of shoes and one containing food, including dried egg powder, a pound of semolina and a marmalade pudding. They arrived in Wolfstein early in 1947, and over the next twelve years 161 parcels altogether were posted, each one meticulously recorded by the committee secretary, Rose Black.

However, the church in Worthing wanted more than a relationship through gift parcels. In August 1949, three young people travelled to Wolfstein to stay with members of the church. They were Beryl, Kenneth, Alison who was Rose Black's daughter. They took with them money, and the authorisation to organise and pay for a return visit by four young Germans. Those links led, in 1957, to a Covenant of Pulpit and Table Fellowship between the Congregational Union of England and Wales and the Protestant Church in the Palatinate region of Germany, the Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz.

The partnership, continued from 1972 by the URC, had an emphasis on reconciliation, already the hallmark of relations between Protestant churches in West and East Germany. A programme of Minister Exchange cemented this emphasis.

Today, around twenty URC congregations are twinned with partner German churches from the Pfalz. They are linked together by the Friends of the Pfalz and the Freunde der URC. Exchanges and youth visits have included German representatives at the URC's Youth Assembly. A long-established bi-annual theological consultation continues this year with the theme, 'The prophetic task of the Church'. Shared annual online Advent services began during the Covid pandemic.



In 2007, the 50th anniversary of the partnership was marked by a service at the imposing Gedächtniskirche in Speyer and a weekend gathering at Hinsley Hall (seen here) in Leeds, and in local twinings were also celebrated. One event was

held at Purley URC where one of the three young people who made that formative visit to Germany in 1949 is a member. At age 103,

Alison, now Alison Morgan, remains an inspiration, but she worries about the world of 2026. Values that have been established and long-accepted appear to be shifting beneath our feet. Now, as in 1946, we need to bridge gaps of understanding, history, culture and fake news. This makes the links between the URC and the Evangelical Church of the Pfalz as important now as they have ever been. Those who make trips to visit their partners don't just enjoy the scenery and vineyards, and catch up with friends. They build bridges, and show the world that peace and reconciliation between old enemies can happen. They go because we are called to be people of peace and reconciliation.

Writing the story of the Pfalz partnership in his 2007 book *Together Met, Together Bound*, the Revd John Reardon urges us never to forget the power of a shoe box and a bar of soap. Noting that the PfalzURC partnership has challenged and enriched Christian discipleship in Britain and Germany alike, he concludes that the food parcels first sent from Worthing to Wolfstein were 'something holy'.

This article was adapted by Laurence Wareing from a presentation by Russell FurleySmith to the Friends of the Pfalz in autumn 2025, with additional material by Felicity Harris.

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



As the 21st Century gathers speed, often dragging us with it at a rapid pace...sometimes kicking and screaming (speaking for myself!!). *We are hoping (& planning) to create a new church website this year, and would like to include a range of photos. Do you have any fairly recent, good quality photos of the church or our activities? If so please speak to Elaine.*

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.

Full but empty

By Heather Whyte

Eternal God, like a temple full of traders
we fill our lives with busyness.
Scarcely pausing in our rush
to make the best use of every moment,
we forget to evaluate what we are doing,
we forget to pause and consider
 How does this bring you glory;
 how does this build the kingdom;
 how does this enable my journey
 towards the fullness of my humanity?
You call us to walk the way of Jesus,
to be love in the world,
to radiate compassion and justice.
When our lives are full of haste,
but empty of love,
may we feel your cleansing Spirit
questioning and overturning our mindless actions,
and the mindful way of Jesus nudging us back
onto the path of love and the journey to wholeness.

Do not be disheartened

By Julia Marsh

When troubles overwhelm us and we feel anxious
 and afraid
you hear us, God, and your constant love is even stronger.
You are in all of our hearts, so how can we not know you?
You know all about us - our strengths and our weaknesses.
You send helpers to pray for us
so that comfort and peace may come to all who need it.
It may start with just a glimmer of hope
but it is possible to feel joy and happiness again.

The unpaid debt

By Julia Marsh

For a long time I didn't know you - I thought I did, but not how I know you now.

Thank you, God, for all your goodness to me.

I was suffering but didn't ask for your help – you already knew and helped me anyway.

Thank you, God, for all your goodness to me.

I want to give you something in return
without expecting anything back
but you continue to bestow your blessings upon me.
I try to do what I can to serve you
and you still give me more back than I give.

I can never replay you, God. For all your goodness to me.

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.**



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.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service for everyone!

Friday 6 March

I will give you rest, come

1-30pm

St. Elphege's Church

120 Stafford Road, Wallington

SM6 9AY



7-30pm

**Carshalton Methodist
Church**

Ruskin Road,

Carshalton

SM5 3DE



Nigeria 2026



INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION

24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led

wwdp.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 233242

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 10: 40 - 42

Jesus said: "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

Reflection

My neighbours are Muslims - Kurds from Turkey - and speak very little English. Occasionally the doorbell will ring and Fatima will pass me a plate of food cooked on their barbecue. She wants nothing in return, though she is rather pleased when I resurrect my minimal Turkish sufficiently to say "tesekkur ederim".

I write this reflection as the news and social media teem with news of England flags suddenly appearing on flag posts and roundabouts. There's nothing wrong with this per se, of course, but it currently feels tarnished with the undertones of a hostile welcome to those from overseas seeking sanctuary or a home in the UK. By contrast, this reading from St Matthew reminds me that one of the foundations of our faith, and our Christian practice, is the holy habit of hospitality.

Hospitality is the calling of every follower of Jesus. It is made clear here that you don't even have to have a lot to share - even offering a cup of water is hospitality in the sight of God. Should our

hospitality be directed only towards those of the same faith or ethnicity as us? No. Paul reminds us that whenever we give hospitality to strangers we may be entertaining angels unawares. And in Leviticus we read, "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born."

Jesus calls us to counter the xenophobia and social isolation of the time, even if only in small ways. What could the equivalent be? Maybe a smile to the person sitting next to you on the bus, a friendly word in the queue for the supermarket checkout, a suspended coffee at your favourite coffee shop, or maybe taking the trouble to learn a few words of another language to share a greeting. Let's claim God's country back!

Prayer

God of all,
help us to be a people of welcome,
of hospitality,
of generosity;
putting the needs of others before our own
and seeing not strangers, but siblings we have yet to know.
Let our reward be the building of relationship,
the joy of a shared smile or seeing another thrive,
and the knowledge that in welcoming them, we welcome you.
Amen

Today's writer

Lorraine Webb, Methodist local preacher

February's Bible Word Search:

Apologies for my 'non-deliberate' mistake...I didn't realise how many people enjoyed doing the word searches...Will try  to be more careful in future...

Bible Word Search: Psalm 117 [correct version, I hope]

David, Endures, Great, Kindness, Lord, Merciful, Nations, Praise, Psalms, Toward, Truth

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

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

So to make up for my mistake ..Try this:

Bible Word Search: Before the Flood

Cherubim, Creation, Driven, Enos, Father, God, Jared, Judgment, Noah, Serpent, Seth, Sword



Diary Dates			
March			
Sunday	1st	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	8th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Rev Leonora Jagessar -Visser't Hooft
Sunday	15th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	22nd	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Dr Steve Tomkins
Sunday	29th	10.30am	Palm Sunday service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
April			
Sunday	5th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the April 2026 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Monday 23rd March** 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 February

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

Puzzle Corner

Try something different! Can you fit all the words into the grid. Practice thinking logically with a Kriss-Kross puzzle.

3 Letters

- Air
- Dew
- Fog
- Mud
- P.O.P.
- Sky
- Sun
- Wet

4 Letters

- Cool
- Melt
- Mild
- Rain
- Rays
- Temp
- Thaw
- warm

5 Letters

- Balmy
- Brisk
- Clear
- Drops
- Sunny
- Windy

6 Letters

- Breezy
- Cloudy
- Flood
- Jacket
- Puddle
- Warmth

7 Letters

- Celcius
- Degrees
- Drizzle
- Rainbow
- Showers
- Weather

8 Letters

- Daylight
- Humidity
- Overcast
- Raincoat
- Rainfall
- Snowfall

Sunshine

- Umbrella
- 10 Letters**
- Fahrenheit
- Longer days
- Springtime
- Sunglasses

11 Letters

- Spring fever
- Temperature
- Thunderhead
- Windbreaker

 **SPRING WEATHER** 

Bible Word Search: The Perfect Gift - James 1:17-18

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

Above, Angry, Birth, Blessed, Father, Fruits, Gifts, God, James, Lights, Listen, Speak

Bible Word Search: Healing

Awe, Crowd, Faith, Forgiveness, Friends, Healing, Jesus, Love, People, Prayer, Roof, Walk, Wonder

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

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

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!