

Wallington United Reformed
Church



**CONTACT
MAGAZINE**

No. 399 May 2026



Extrinsic

Did you know...

www.wurc.org.uk

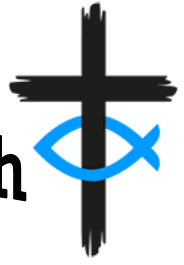
is our church internet address. Look us
up sometime!

Minister:

Reverend Craig Bowman

Email: minister@wurc.org.uk

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends....

This month we CELEBRATE Pentecost.

I emphasise 'celebrate', because that implies we do something special to mark its occurrence, and yet I suspect that for some it becomes just another Sunday.

Pentecost is one of the three main festivals of the Christian year, along with Christmas and Easter. Unlike the other two it hasn't been adopted by secular society and so the third major festival of the Christian year is rarely these days noticed by those who have little contact with the Church.

In years gone by many towns, particularly in the north of England, had their "Whit Walks" but the Whitsun break from school and even from work has been lost in fixing half-term to the Spring Bank Holiday and setting this as the last Monday in May.

Increasingly it is difficult to find expressions of faith amongst the many activities at Christmas, and the despair of Easter and the joy that follows are disguised with fluffy bunnies and hidden behind piles of chocolate. But Pentecost... well, that is free from such commercial trappings, and is in danger, therefore (even within the church) of passing by unnoticed. This year, like many others, the Birthday of the Church will pass by with few aware of it happening and maybe even those within the Church a little uncertain of its significance.

Yet Pentecost has so much to say to us, especially those of us who feel (at times, if not always) that the church is under attack, and that we are too weak, too feeble, too few, to make any sort of difference in the world.

Whilst Christmas and Easter are so much about what God does for us – in Christ he comes to us, he dies for us and is raised for us – Pentecost is about what God will do with us. Pentecost is the time when we recall that a group of frightened and reticent individuals were transformed into a bold, brave and vociferous company who transformed the world.

It is also the time when we recall that the promise made to them – that God's Spirit would fill them and equip them – is the same promise that is made to us, and we therefore open ourselves to that same Spirit.

Human history is littered with examples of individuals who thought they could change the world or change themselves – very few have managed it. However the history of the Church is full of examples of those, both individuals and communities, who achieved far more than they could ever have imagined when they opened themselves up to the Holy Spirit.

This Pentecost let us, as a church and as individuals, be open to the leading and filling of the Spirit and let us begin that process by coming to worship on May 26th ready to celebrate this important occasion in our life as a church. And if we do, we never know where we might find ourselves being led.

May God's Spirit fill us all.

Craig

Welcome to the Sutton Libraries Adult Reading Challenge 2026

Looking for a gentle nudge to read more this year? The Sutton Libraries Adult Reading Challenge 2026 is here to help you rediscover the joy of reading, at your own pace, in your own way.

What is the Adult Reading Challenge?

You choose what to read, you can dip in casually, aim for the minimum target, or set yourself a bigger personal challenge, it's entirely up to you.

To complete the challenge, you:

- Read books that match the challenge prompts

Log what you've read using a simple online Form

How many books do I need to read?

To complete the challenge: read and log 6 books in total

The Reading Categories

To help you choose your books, we've created 24 categories.

Each book you read can match one category (but the book itself is always your choice).

- 1.A book from an author you have never read before
- 2.A book with the name of a country in the title
- 3.A non-fiction book on a topic you know nothing about.
- 4.A book set in Paris
- 5.A book being adapted in 2026
- 6.A book by a black author
- 7.A classic book you've always meant to read
- 8.A graphic novel
- 9.A book with a beautiful cover
10. The first book you see in a book-store or library
- 11.A book featuring music
- 12.A librarian recommendation
- 13.A book from a place you've never been

14. A book featured at the Sutton Literature Festival
- 15.A book with a character who is not human
- 16.A book shortlisted for the Booker Prize
- 17.A book by an author who shares one of your names
- 18.A book that came out the year you were born
- 19.A book about time travelling
- 20.A short story book
- 21.A book that has a colour in the title
- 22.A book that was being read by a stranger in public transport
- 23.A book with an animal on the cover
- 24.A book with a one word title

In this reflection for Easter Sunday, Mike Hart, Transformation Director for the United Reformed Church North Western Synod, explores the variety of new life that can be found in each garden and how it relates to the Easter story:



In the Gospel of John's account of the first Easter morning, we find these six words about Mary's thoughts: "Supposing him (Jesus) to be the gardener." (John 20:15)

These six words have always intrigued me. At first, I saw it as a lovely bit of colour in the story; then they became a question. How could someone who had been so close to Jesus and his disciples fail to recognise him? But as I reflect on it now, I find a richness in the idea of Jesus as a gardener in the Resurrection story, as we celebrate Jesus bringing new life to the world.

Like many of you, I am an enthusiastic amateur gardener, usually found in early April searching for signs of new growth in the flower borders and the vegetable seedlings. However, this year, we've decided to remodel at least part of our back garden to provide some more clearly defined spaces – a play space for our three-year-old grandson, a better space to simply relax with friends

and family. It has also given us the opportunity to increase biodiversity in our planting and to support animal life – even if that involves managing the competition for the feeders between the starlings and the smaller birds.

I've also been reading Olivia Laing's excellent book *The Garden Against Time* which explores the place of gardens — good and bad — through history and literature all while she restores the walled garden in her new home to its former glory. Her exploration of the garden in *Paradise Lost* reminded me that the word in ancient Greek for garden was *paradeisos* — paradise.

And that takes me back full circle to the creation story and both our responsibilities to the natural world, living as God's gardeners, and also to the affirmation made in the URC's strategy *A Church with People at the Margins*. This affirms our belief "that all people are created in the image of God and should have life in all fullness and to flourish with all of God's creation".

In a garden, new life comes in many forms: vegetables grow from seeds, well-established shrubs and trees sprouting fresh shoots, local birds raising new chicks, migrant species stopping by on long journeys around the world, and countless varieties of flora and fauna intertwining. How apt, therefore, that we find a gardener in the Easter story.

My Easter prayer for new life in our churches is that we are similarly enriched by the variety of old and new, familiar, and freshly drawn — all examples of the richness of God's creation and our place within it.

A Prayer:

Jesus Christ, who was mistaken for a Gardener,
nurture us this Easter Day to new life in our faith in you.
Inspire in us a wonder for your creation and a commitment to live
in harmony with it.
Create in us a passion to bring fullness of life to all people that we
meet, sowing new seeds and new growth in faith in you.

Amen

Christian Aid Week 2026 10th-16th May

Christian Aid Week 2026 is your invitation to love your neighbour in practical ways, through prayer, giving and action.

For one powerful week each year, churches, families and communities fundraise together to fight extreme poverty. Christian Aid Week is more than a date in the diary, it's a chance to step out in faith and stand alongside people facing injustice worldwide.

The gifts raised support Christian Aid and their local partners as they work with communities for long-term change, so families can grow food, build livelihoods and face the future with dignity.

In 2026 we're looking to Nairobi, Kenya, where families in informal settlements face the daily fear of not having enough to eat. When money is tight and prices rise, hunger can be only one bad day away.



WHERE HARDSHIP MEANS HUNGER, URBAN FARMERS ARE GROWING HOPE

In crowded neighbourhoods, many parents must earn money each day or their children may not eat that evening.

Fridah Moraa, a widowed grandmother, knows that pressure first-hand. "When I wake up, I have a lot of worries. Sometimes I don't have food," she says.

"Now I'm responsible for everything." With rent, water and school costs to cover, putting food on the table can feel impossible.

With tools, seeds and training from Christian Aid's local partner, Beacon of Hope, Fridah is growing vegetables in a small city space. Feeding her family and selling produce at her stall.

Fridah says: "I never thought that a woman could also be a provider." Today, she is. With support from Beacon of Hope, she's building a more secure future. "When I harvest what I've planted, it makes me happy. Urban farming has changed my life."

Spring Art Exhibition

Carshalton & Wallington Art Group



7-9 May 2026 | 10am – 5pm daily

United Reformed Church

Stanley Park Road, Wallington, SM6 0EU

Free entry • Original artwork • Local artists

All welcome

**Refreshments
on sale every day
to support
Christian Aid**



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.

I am a new creation

By Josh Thomas

Today, we celebrate the birth of the church on the day of Pentecost. We thank the Holy Spirit for filling the lives of ordinary people like us on that day, enabling us to do extraordinary things in your name, O Lord.

Peter boldly proclaimed the power of this Spirit to everyone gathered there that day. Sometimes, we lose perspective on just how powerful this gift is. We theorise and, in doing so, the magnitude of this Power gets watered down. Help us regain a proper sense of awe and wonder when we think about this gift beyond words.

Creation is groaning around us, and we now know how much strain we have put on our planet, God's marvellous creation, because of our selfish desires. Help us take seriously our commission to reach out in love to those who are lost and afraid. We pray for strength for the times when we feel weak and this all feels impossible.

We praise you, Lord, for this amazing, incredible gift, the gift of your presence with all your people in the past, present, and future. We pray that You embolden us and send us out to do all we can to serve those whom You love in the power of the Spirit.
Amen.

Creation waits

By Caroline Vodden

Creation waits and we with it,
Waiting for redemption.
We long, we yearn

Together
For the salvation of the world,
For the children of God to be gathered,
The earth set free
And the glory of God revealed.

Until then we groan,
we wait,
in hope,
in longing,
in patient expectation
for God to reveal himself in glory.
For God will reveal himself in glory.

Work in us, Lord, as we wait
With all Creation
For the day of your salvation.

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.**





News reports and social media can often make it feel like the UK is more divided than ever.

The voices of those who spread hate and seek to separate communities can be loud, but the voices of hope and kindness are louder.

Across Wales, Scotland and England, United Reformed Church (URC) congregations, community groups, and projects show up for people in their

neighbourhoods every day. As part of the national "A Million Acts of Hope" week of action, taking place 13-20 May, the URC wants to celebrate these acts of care, kindness and connection.

During this week of action, congregations, community groups and projects are invited to send in photos or videos capturing some of the many acts of hope that they are involved with in their neighbourhoods. These could highlight support for parents, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, older people, warm spaces or any other community activity that brings people together and gives people hope. These examples will help to show that there is more that connects us than divides us and will be used as part of a national campaign alongside a wide range of faith groups and other organisations which will be taking part.

Roo Stewart, Head of Public Issues for the URC, said: "Jesus encouraged us to let our light shine before others and not hide it under a basket. We can do that with humility, but often we don't manage to do it at all because we're tired from all the good work we've been doing! A Million Acts of Hope is a superb opportunity to fill our media with the superb activities run by churches and other organisations, to counter the hateful rhetoric which often seems to dominate public discourse."

WURC Good Friday Event

Thanks to Craig's words in the Good Friday Happening worship, the teenagers who attended were talking about the resurrection and what happened next, days later.

This builds on our children and young people's understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection. This is also demonstrated by Ember's crucifixion picture which



she drew later, at home.



Also in April Evie, Callie, Phoebe and Ember sent messages of encouragement to church friends who are facing particular physical



challenges at the moment. This is what 1Peter2: 8-9 urges us to be; a community of believers who strengthen each other's faith at difficult times. The new Christians to whom Peter was writing were urged to be confident in their faith even though they (like us)

had not personally seen Jesus.



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 25: 31 - 46

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Reflection

I once found myself standing in a queue at a soup kitchen amongst some of the poorest people, in the richest country in the world. It was raining, I had no coat and was soaked through. My inner thoughts were wrestling with the fact that I didn't actually need to be there because I was privileged to have a safe place to stay and there was plenty of food there; but my mission, (and I chose to accept it), was to live for 12 hours as a person with no resources and stand in solidarity with the people Jesus' calls 'the least.' One of the other people in the queue spotted my discomfort and called me over. He opened his bag, the one containing everything he owned, and pulled out a clean, dry T-shirt and gave it to me. No questions, no judgement, no expectation of receiving anything in return. He saw my need and responded to it.

This, I realized, is exactly the sort of thing Jesus is talking about in this passage.

Now, I am not Jesus and, if anyone is in this story it's my generous friend; the one who had so much less than I but was prepared to give the little he had because I needed it.

Jesus was speaking out into a world where strength was power and power was often cruel and oppressive. The way to combat such ideas, he says, is to respond with non-violent acts of service.

These verses were on a poster on a wall where I was staying at the time and they came alive for me when I saw them lived out on the rain-soaked streets of Atlanta.

Prayer

God of love, you call us to serve you by serving one another.
Grant us a generosity of spirit
and give us loving hearts that we may always be prepared
to meet the needs of others. Amen.

Today's writer

*The Revd Siân Collins is a retired URC Minister and member of Christ Church,
Weston-Super-Mare*

If you see anything wrong at Church, or anywhere on the premises, please e-mail property@wurc.org, which will go through to Elaine. This means you haven't got to remember to speak to her, and she will have a record of any problems.

Thank You

We all enjoy our time after the morning service, when we can have a cup of coffee or tea, and have a chance to catch up with church friends.

Could you help with serving the tea and coffee?

Please see Janet if you are willing to help...even if it is not possible every month.



Diary Dates			
May			
Sunday	3rd	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	10th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Phil Hyde
Sunday	17th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	24th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Alan Cruchley
Sunday	31st	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Mark Dennis
June			
Sunday	7th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Revd Craig Bowman

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the June 2026 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Monday 25th May** 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 April

Some other answers

Brickwork Word Puzzle

PLUMES

SPUME

MUSE

EMU

MULE

LEMUR

RUMBLE

And the Keyword for the 'Codeword' Puzzle was

CHRISTIANITY

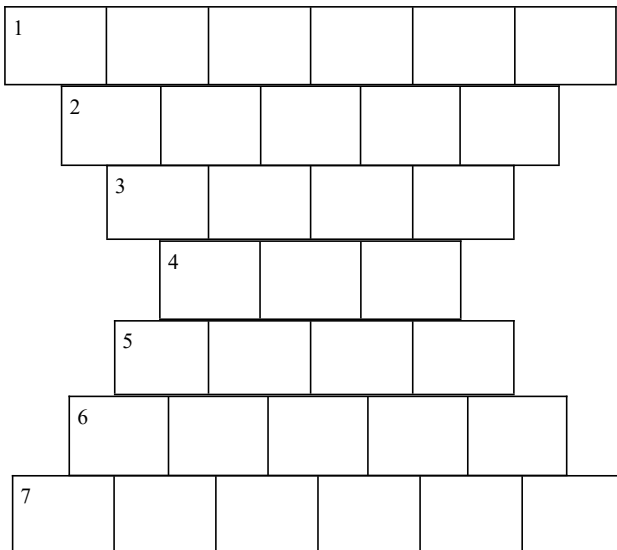
6	3	2	5	4	9	7	8	1
4	8	9	2	1	7	5	3	6
1	5	7	6	3	8	2	4	9
9	7	4	3	2	6	1	5	8
2	6	5	7	8	1	4	9	3
3	1	8	4	9	5	6	2	7
5	9	3	1	6	2	8	7	4
7	4	6	8	5	3	9	1	2
8	2	1	9	7	4	3	6	5

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. Small village.
2. Metal working machine.
3. Severe dislike.
4. E.g. Tetley.
5. Carnivore's diet.
6.train, early rail transport.
7. Least wild.

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

Bible Word Search: Giants

Amalek, Amorites, Anakim, Canaan, Emim, Hittites, Horites, Nephilim, Nimrod, Og, Zuzim

Bible Word Search: The parable of the lost sheep

Count, Crook, Faith, Field, Follow, Found, Jesus, Lost, Paddock, Parable, Pen, Sheep

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

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.

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

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!