

Wallington United Reformed Church



CONTACT MAGAZINE



No.403 October 2026

Extrinsic

Did you know...

www.wurc.org.uk

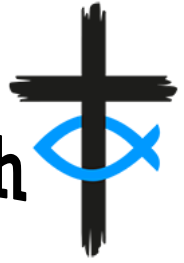
is our church internet address. Look us
up sometime!

Minister:

Reverend Craig Bowman

Email: minister@wurc.org.uk

Wallington United Reformed Church



Dear Friends,

Conkers!

It's that time of year when you used to take your life in your hands when you passed anywhere near a mature horse chestnut tree - young (and not-so-young) boys and girls hurling sticks into the branches of these magnificent creations in the hope of knocking down a few of their prized fruits.

Nowadays they do not have the popularity or value that they had when I was much younger. There are so many just lying on the pavement a few hundred yards from the manse.

But what colour are conkers?

Brown, would you say?

If you could look at one now you would see that it is quite extraordinary - yes it's brown, but within the brown there are so many other colours, purples and reds and yellows and ochre shades - amazing colours blended together - yet another wonder of creation.

People are as varied and beautiful like the conkers covering the earth; an amazing piece of creation.

Each person you get to know really well turns out to be rather extraordinary.

Everyone is pretty wonderful when you get down to them - I mean "wonderful" in the sense of "I wonder about him or her".

If they look humdrum or ordinary, it's probably because they are keeping their extraordinariness quiet, hiding away something precious about themselves.

There is something special in each and every person, too often it is hidden, and remains unshared but when you get to know someone well that wonder comes out.

Real life is so much richer than anything you could read in a book: more comic, more sad, more everything.

You don't see it, very often - it's things like weddings and funerals which bring it out.

So conkers!

What can you do with them?

Well you could keep them just for fun; use them to keep moths away from your clothes (apparently), to help in the making of the explosive cordite, or even thread them on a string and play the traditional game of conkers, making them break each other to pieces, to the opponent's dismay.

Think about it - such a beautiful piece of creation used to destroy itself and its own kind.

Much of the human race spends its time destroying people and peoples;

knocking them down;
making them feel small;
making them feel inadequate;
making them feel unwanted and useless.

And yet people are as varied and beautiful like the conkers covering the earth, an amazing piece of creation.

They should be recognised for their beauty and valued for their individuality.

Craig

When We See The Harvest

by Susan Y Nikitenko

A harvest of apples, a harvest
of corn;
A harvest of plenty, an autumn
adorned.
With bright coloured leaves, a
fall festive blend;
A wonderful time for families
and friends .



A harvest of pumpkins, a harvest of grain;
A harvest of bounty, and cool autumn rains.
A big harvest moon- way up in the sky;
A harvest of blessing that God has supplied.

Be grateful, be humble, give thanks to the Lord;
He has showered His blessing here in our world.
But have we been faithful , and have we been true?
Have we put God first in all that we do?

A harvest that God sees is not food or crop;
Not pumpkins, or grain, not apples that drop.
But God see the harvest of souls needing Him;
A harvest of people who need saved from their sin.

A harvest of souls and A harvest of love;
A harvest of mercy from our Father above.
When we see the harvest, let's see through God's eyes;
And share with the nations the life He supplies

See what Julia had to say about Taizé and how much she enjoyed her Pilgrimage.

Taizé Talk

By Julia Seal

As many of you know, I went back to Taizé in August. I travelled with a group of 18 to 24-year-olds to the Taizé Community in France. I'm going to be honest, I really wanted to go back this year, but I wasn't sure life was going to let me.

I'd seen loads of adverts for the trip on the URC Instagram, but I never actually applied. Partly because I thought other people should have the chance to experience Taizé and, of course, the famous chocolate breakfasts.

I felt like, maybe, I'd had my turn and should let someone else go. I was also slightly worried about asking for more time off work. After spending a month travelling around East Africa earlier in the year, asking for another week away felt a little bit ambitious and well... frowned upon.

So I decided that perhaps this wasn't my year and that I could always go back next year instead.

Then I started getting emails from Tom Hackett, the Southern Synod's Children and Youth Development Officer. Every time one landed in my inbox, I found myself thinking, "Maybe I should just apply..." Looking back, those emails felt a bit like a nudge from God. Not a huge dramatic sign. Just a gentle reminder not to write the idea off too quickly.

Eventually, I decided to ask for the leave...and...to my surprise, work said yes, life didn't get in the way, and before I knew it I was getting ready to head back to Taizé.

Which, of course, meant it was time to start packing...

Before The Reading

Before we heard the reading I'd shared something the brothers encouraged us to do when reading or listening to the Bible.

They encouraged us to read passages almost like a film script. Don't just read the words. Imagine the scene. Imagine the setting. Imagine what the writer wants you to see. Read the bible like a movie script.

Reading : John 1 v.1-14

Talk

What does the Gospel of John have to do with my pilgrimage?



Well, every day at Taizé we took part in Bible studies led by one of the Taizé Brothers. During those sessions, I found myself looking at Scripture in a completely different way. The Bible stopped feeling like something distant or familiar & became exciting again. It felt alive.

I hope I can share some of the excitement of the John's gospel with you today.

As the brother of Taizé said, we first have to set the scene. Well, the scene that John has set isn't like the rest of the Gospel's. Matthew starts with the family tree of Jesus, Luke talks about Jesus' birth & Mark jumps straight into the ministry. But John... John does something new; he starts before time itself.

'In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

John shows us that God was there, before creating light, before the birth of Jesus, before the dinosaurs...before anything... God was there.

But I also want to hi-light the rhythm of the text; there's a pattern, a rhyme & poetry.

Compared to the rest of the gospels, it seems revolutionary, almost like John is the equivalent of Eminem or 2Pac. Out of all the Gospels John's is the cool one.

Each line builds on to the next, bringing the reader towards Jesus, reaching a crescendo...

"The World became flesh & dwelt among us".

The creator entered his creation. Our God, he chose to step on to earth with us & become human. The one that gives light & made the stars walks beneath the sky. He came to connect & relate to us.

Not only do we search for him, but HE searches for us. And that reading stuck with me this year at Taizé.

When people hear the word pilgrimage, they think about long, hard travel with ancient architecture, generations of history, sacred sites. I've come to realise the destination is only part of that pilgrimage; the rest is about the journey.



A pilgrimage is a chance to step away from everyday life, to discover the unfamiliar, and to be open to what God might be trying to show you. I arrived at Taizé hoping to find peace, spend time painting, and simply have some space for myself.

Instead, I was challenged. Not by one particular event or Bible

study. By people.

Going to Taizé has helped me find new friends, I connected with people across different countries in Europe I had the opportunity to laugh, have fun, be myself and, if I'm honest, simply act my age. I was able to let go of some of my day-to-day responsibilities and built genuine friendships rooted in God. We were all there to worship. No matter where we were from, what language we spoke or what our background was, we were gathered for the same purpose.

That's what I love about Taizé. It's not the place that changes you, it's the people you meet. Just like Jesus in John's Gospel. The God John shows us is one that didn't stay distant; he got stuck in & messy with us. He lived among us, shared meals with us, laughed with us, walked alongside us & made a community around him. He shows us our faith does not just bring us peace, it challenges us to create relationships.

Relationships with God, one another, friends & foes. In a small way Taizé is a snippet of God's Kingdom in heaven.

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.

A harvest of joy

By Isabel Bala

O Lord, we give thanks
For all your blessings.
You give us rain to water the earth
And sunshine to make our crops grow.
You fill our mouths with good things
And satisfy our thirst.

We rejoice in the great things you do for us.
Keeping us from harm and evil,
Forgiving our sins
And giving us the hope of new life
Through Jesus, our saviour.

Even though we have sown in tears
We will reap in joy
And be filled to the brim with your love.

Afraid to spill

By Johnny O'Hanlon

Lord, our hearts are filled to the brim and we feel unable to
move lest they should spill:
Spill out the concerns of this, your beautiful but broken world.
With 24-hour news and information always at our fingertips
we are over informed. It sometimes feels
like each moment of our day is filled up and accounted for.

We've had it up to here Lord, with stress and concern and, on occasion, a sense of our own powerlessness.

But you remind us of an alternative,
a different way to take things, to breathe
and know that we are loved.

With your love in our lives we can carve out opportunities to
regain our own control. Remind us again
to fill our hearts with love of God and then
to simply let them overflow - not with concerns and stress and
anxiety and hopelessness, but with love:

Love for ourselves and for our neighbour, so that
our communities and the relationships we have with others
might flourish and prosper with light and life and hope.

Love God and know that God forgives.

Forgive yourself and know that you can forgive others.

Don't keep trying to contain the deluge.

Allow your heart to overflow with love.

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.**



Macmillan Coffee Afternoon

WHEN: Friday 16th October

WHERE: Elles House, Shotfield

TIME: 3.30pm onwards

Tombola and Cake Stalls



Since 1990,
Coffee
Morning has
brought
together
millions of
people from
across the UK
to have fun
and raise
money for a
good cause.

The first Coffee Morning happened in 1990. It was a small affair with a simple idea: guests would get together for coffee and donate the cost of their drink to Macmillan. It was so effective, we did it again the next year - *only this time nationally.*

Harvest Festival

Sunday
18th October

We will be supporting The
Sutton Women's Centre

We will be collecting fresh
produce and tins of fruit,
fish, meat or vegetables.

Also Shampoo, Conditioner,
Soap, Shower gel, Tooth-
paste and Toothbrushes are
always needed.

Donations of any of these will
be gratefully accepted.

Thank You



A Poem for Harvest

Daily bread - with The Lords Prayer

As the sun gives light to the new morning
May God's kingdom come
As the gentle dawn overpowers the grip of darkness
May God's will be done
As the new light energises the growing crops
Please may I have my daily bread

As blue and pink creep across the sky
May my deep dark sins be forgiven
As the clouds become lighter and brighter
May my heart be filled with loving forgiveness
As the early morning rain freshens the growing fields
Please may I have my daily bread

As the layers of grey give way to multi-coloured daylight
May the ways of temptation be barred from me
As the depths of darkness give way to glorious light
May evil powers be blocked from me
As the power of sunshine warms the fields of wheat
Please may I have my daily bread

Holy God, the kingdom of each day is yours
The power of the new morning is yours
The glory of reawakening is yours for eternity
May this basic earth become more heavenly
Please may everybody everywhere have their daily bread

Christmas Fayre



As usual there will be a range
of stalls: **Bric-a-Brac** **Cakes**

Gift Items and Toiletries

Games **Cards & Paper**

Chocolate Tombola **TOYS**

**Christmas Decorations & Send
a letter to Father Christmas**



From October 18th
there will be tubs out for
donations of:

Toiletries TOYS

Christmas Decorations

Chocolate for the Tombola

Wrapped Home made sweets

AND on the 12th or 13th November

please bring any wrapped

Home made cakes

**Christmas is
coming
around ...sooner
than you think!!**

*We are now in October! As we
look towards Christmas we are
happy to offer you the
opportunity to send your
Christmas Greetings to your
Church friends through the
pages of Contact.*

& Save on Postage!

Your design, including a
signature, if you wish, can
be sent by e-mail, or
handed to Janet or Robin.

**Black and white or colour
can be reproduced.**

Design your own greeting, or give
us the wording and we will
produce something for you.

For a quarter portion of a page in
the December Contact,
approximately this size,

(95 x 60mm) production costs are
£3.00, and for half a page, if you
would like a larger format, £6.00.

Any donations over this amount
will be passed to Elaine.

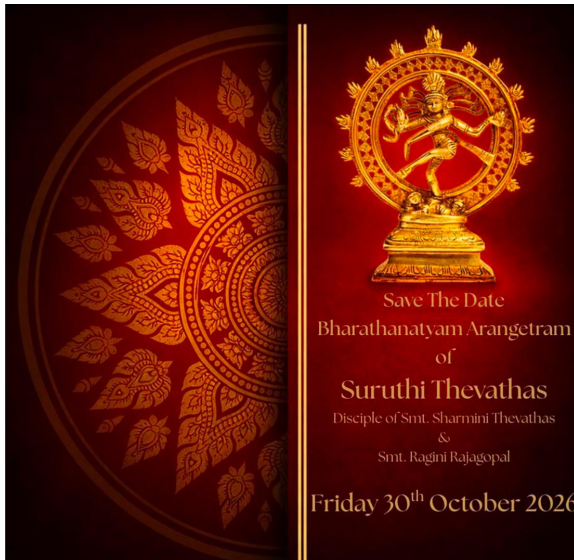
However we will need the
details together with your

Donation by the
22nd November,
please.

Who Uses Our Premises?

To give you an idea of how wide ranging the users of our premises are...here are just two of them.

Sharmini Trevathas teaches the sacred Hindu temple dance Bharatanatyam to all ages, children from about 5 years old up to older teenagers.



She has invited everyone to her daughter Suruthi's Bharathanatyam Arangetram (dance graduation). On Friday 30th October at Fairfield Halls.

...and a range of Art Groups...
Bananas Art, U3A Art Group
and Carshalton & Wallington Art Group



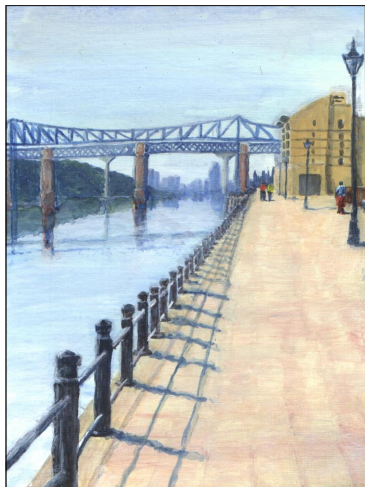
U3A....We are quite an industrious group and our programme is made up from suggestions and discussions as to what we would like to do every term.

We normally work in watercolours, acrylics, and pen and wash.

This is not a teaching group but there are those of us who are experienced enough to advise and encourage!

Carshalton & Wallington Art Group

Experience creativity in action with live demonstrations,



workshops, and a welcoming community of artists.

Friendly community atmosphere...Professional demonstrations...All skill levels 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.

The Lord is my Rock

verses from *Psalms* 18

I love you, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised,
so I shall be saved from my enemies.
The cords of death encompassed me;
the torrents of perdition assailed me;
the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.
In my distress I called upon the Lord;
to my God I cried for help.

From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears...

He reached down from on high; he took me;
he drew me out of mighty waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy
and from those who hated me,
for they were too mighty for me.
They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
but the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a broad place;
he delivered me because he delighted in me.

Reflection

Pilgrimage can profoundly change how you see the world and your place in it. God is not distant but woven into the very fabric of creation; alive in wind and water, flame and stone. When Psalm 18 speaks of the Lord as rock, fortress, and deliverer, a Celtic imagination might hear not only metaphors but also encounters the Divine Presence that pulses through the natural world.

God is not an abstract refuge; God is the firmness of the granite beneath our feet, the sheltering curve of the hills, and the steady rhythm of the tides, perhaps along the Northumbrian coast.

The Psalm describes a God who hears our cry and bends low, who moves heaven and earth to reach us. In Celtic spirituality, this is the God who walks the shoreline with us, who whispers through the rustling of oak leaves, who meets us in the ordinary places where our hearts become quiet enough to listen.

The Psalm's imagery of God reaching down into chaos to draw the psalmist out mirrors the Celtic sense of God as Anam Cara; the soul-friend who descends into our depths, not to condemn but to free.

To be found and to be freed from the self-imposed guilt of failure and regret at not having been strong enough alone withstand loss and sorrows.

Service then becomes an act of gratitude, a response to being rescued and restored. Joy comes from gratitude not perfection. It is okay to not be perfect.

To answer God's call is to step into a path that is both ancient and deeply personal. It is to trust, with the Psalmist, that: "He brought me out into a broad place; he delivered me because he delighted in me."

The broad place is not only safety; it is vocation. It is the wide-open field where our gifts, wounds, passions, and hopes are gathered and offered back to God for the healing of the world.

Prayer

Lord, if we listen for You,
You can rescue us from the dark places,
that we place ourselves in.
Your voice calls us to serve You, Lord.
We are grateful to You.
Let our gratitude become our joy,
and may that joy be pleasing to You.
Amen

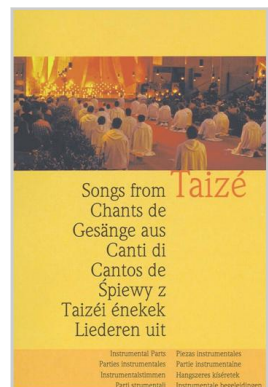
Today's writer

Andrew Bodsworth is a first year student at Westminster College, training to be a Minister of Word and Sacraments

Taizé Chant Book

The taize chant book is a little hymn book that is one of the most important things at taize. It unites us though God, overcoming language, miscommunications & other things. Each prayer, chant & song is handpicked by the brothers every two years & made into a book.

Each one is only a half a dozen words long which is sung over & over again which helped us all connect & rejoice. My favourite was *Jubilate cœli* (Heavens Sing with Gladness) or *Wysławiajcie Pana* (Praise the Lord).



Diary Dates			
October			
Sunday	4th	10.30am	Morning service...with the Sacrament of Holy Communion...to be led by Alan Cruchley
Sunday	11th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Alan Cruchley
Sunday	18th	10.30am	Morning service...to include Harvest Festival Thanksgiving to be led by Revd Craig Bowman
Sunday	25th	10.30am	Morning service...to be led by Phil Hyde
November			
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...for Remembrance Day
Saturday	14th	<i>CHRISTMAS FAYRE</i> 11.30am -2.30pm	

PLEASE NOTE...Articles for the November 2026 issue of Contact should be given to Janet or Robin Willis by **Monday 26th October** unless a later date has been agreed by prior arrangement. Contributions are very acceptable by e-mail: jmw321wmj @ yahoo.co.uk.

Sudoku Answers for September

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

Answers

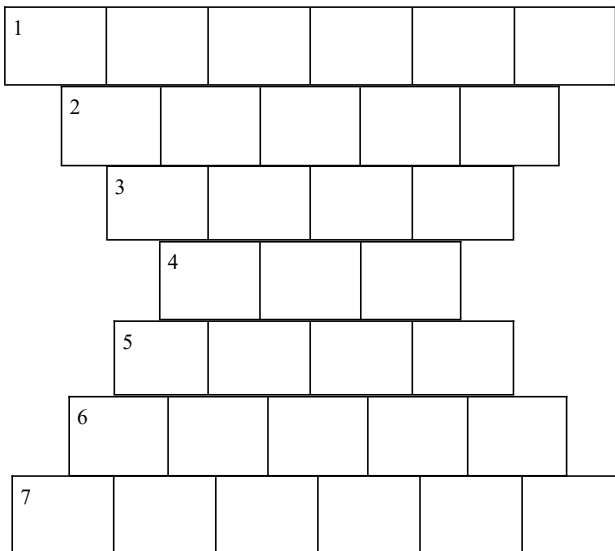
Brickwork Word Puzzle

PREACH
REACH
HEAR
EAR
ERAS
SHARE
SEARCH

Puzzle Corner

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. Wooden containers
2. Gaze fixedly
3. Non-scientific subjects
4. Relaxed in a chair
5. Portions of butter
6. Sudden flood
7. Plates

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

Bible Word Search: Fruits of the Spirit

Control, Dove, Faith, Flesh, Freedom, Goodness, Joy, Kingdom, Love, Patient, Spirit

Bible Word Search: How God Speaks

Ask, Comfort, Hard Time, Help, Peace, Prayer, Protect, Provide, Rejoice, Sorrow, Spirit

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

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		7		4		5	
	4			5	1			9
1		5	3	2				
		6					1	7
	2	1				4	6	
7	5					9		
				3	5	1		6
3			8	1			9	
	1		9		2		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 1.00-2.30pm 1.30-3.30pm 7.00-9.30pm	Yoga Al-Anon Bananas Art Pilates (two classes)
Tuesday	9.15am-1.20pm 10.00-11.00am 12.30-2.30pm 1.30-4.30pm 6.00-7.30pm 8.00-10.00pm	Hartbeeps (mother and baby activities) Pilates AA Meeting U3A Art group (fortnightly) Brownies (10th Wallington) Epsom Downs Badminton, Winter(Sept-May)
Wednesday	10.00-12.00am 7.30-10.00pm	Baby Massage Chess Club
Thursday	10.00-11.00am 11.30-12.30noon 1.15-3.30pm 2.00-4.00pm 2.00-4.00pm 6.00-7.00pm 7.25-10.00pm	Pilates Senior Movers Exercise Lace Making Ladies' Badminton, Winter(Sept-April) Fallen Angels Drama Pilates Carshalton & Wallington Art Group
Friday	9.30am-12.30pm 2.00- 4.00pm	NAS Coffee morning (monthly) Stitching Together (fortnightly)
Saturday	8.30-9.30am 10.00-12.15pm 2.00-5.00pm	Fitness Zumba Reading Fairy



South London Tamil Church (SLTC)

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

Everyone welcome!