

# CHURCH NEWS

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The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

Partnership Ministers:

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**MARCH 2023**

Friends,

## Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday is a day of mixed emotions. For many it's a happy, joyous day, but for others it's one of pain and grief. A day to celebrate love, while acknowledging those who cannot have children or have lost them and those who have no relationship with their mother.

In the dying moments of His life, Jesus honored Mary his mother by showing her love and care. He entrusted His mother to John's protection: *'When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to her, 'Woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.'* (John 19:26,27). While affirming the importance of mothers, Jesus reminds us that the love we show on Mothering Sunday is just a token of our continuous appreciation of them.

Jesus also creates a new way of being family, marking the beginnings of the church. In the past, people would go back to their *'mother'* church on this Sunday, to acknowledge its importance in their lives. Jesus invites us into this new family of love and mutual belonging, where we can find a place, irrespective of our own family circumstances.

Church is not always an easy place to be, because we are shaped by our own experience of mothering. We may find it hard to give or receive love without ourselves getting in the way. However, God's help is available to change things, *'because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.'* (Romans 5:5)



The mother of three difficult youngsters was asked whether she'd have children if she had it to do over again. 'Yes,' she replied. *'But not the same ones.'*

**Canon Paul Hardingham**  
Parish Pump

## NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

We remember friends and families of our Church 'fellowship' who are unwell or just confined to their homes for other reasons. The many people who are anxious or depressed, we pray for them and hope they find healing and peace

Our thanks go to Sandy Smith for leading our worship on the first Sunday in February. We welcomed Prof Chris Whitehead on 12 Feb and Rev Jonnie Hill on 26 Feb. It would be the last time that Jonnie would lead our worship through our Partnership when he not only inducted two Elders but celebrated holy communion. We wish him well with his forthcoming move to a different partnership. On 19 Feb, we joined with Wilmslow URC via their YouTube live streaming service, when Rev Martin Smith led worship with communion. This was well received and, because of the challenges of filling the pulpit, something we may do again occasionally.

The February Coffee Morning in aid of the Leprosy Mission raised £85 - thank you to all.

Best wishes to everyone who will be celebrating their birthday in March.

Once again, by way of trying to simplify the collection of items for the Shoeboxes this year, we are going to ask for specific donations each month - therefore, during March we would like to concentrate on soap/flannel, shampoo, razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes, small scissors.

**The News Team**

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

Sat 4 MAR - Coffee Morning in aid of Fairtrade

Sun 26 MAR - CLOCKS GO FORWARD

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## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

from **Taiwan**

**"I have heard about your faith"**

**at All Saints' Church**

**2 pm - FRIDAY 3 MARCH**

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

\*\*\*\*\*  
**CHURCHES TOGETHER...**

### Lenten Lunches 2023

12 noon ~ 2 pm

4 MAR - Grove Lane Baptist

11 MAR - United Reformed Church

18 MAR - All Saints'

25 MAR - Friends Meeting House

1 APR - Methodist



**Everybody Welcome**

## FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

Our first meeting went very well  
When Mavis produced bagatelle  
We opened our eyes  
And discovered a prize  
So we all enjoyed that you can tell.

The following Wednesday was bingo  
And Eric took charge of the game  
So nobody cheated  
And all remained seated  
We were generally glad that we came.

On 15th we read out our rhymes  
Our favourite poems we brought  
Some were funny, some sad  
We were all very glad  
That they sounded as good as we thought.

The last meeting, oh what a treat  
When Mavis decided to bake  
With her helper called Mary  
(Who is sometimes contrary)  
They gave everyone a pancake!

**Carole Davies**

## ECO TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

Go Green(er) for Lent. The weeks leading up to Easter are a great time to start or give something up that benefits nature and helps address climate change. Is there a change you can make to better care for creation and improve our lives and the lives of others through healthy, eco-friendly and sustainable living? For more practical ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature, sign up to A Rocha UK's Wild Christian email at: [arochoa.org.uk/wild-christian](mailto:arochoa.org.uk/wild-christian)

**arochoa.org.uk**

## World Water Day is 22<sup>nd</sup> March

We take clean water for granted. After all, when did you last turn on the tap and expect filthy water to come out?

But sadly, bad water is still a daily reality for billions of people. The United Nations wants to help them by ensuring that everyone can access clean water by 2030. It is part of the so-called '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', and it is an enormous challenge.

Meanwhile, this year each one of us can do at least something to help on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. A donation to Water Aid will help provide safe water to marginalised communities worldwide. Simply go to: [www.wateraid.org/uk](http://www.wateraid.org/uk)

**Parish Pump**

## INTRODUCING TRANSFORM TRADE

You may already know of **Traidcraft Exchange**, a charity arm of Fairtrade and be well aware of their fantastic work, now they have changed their name to **Transform Trade**!

We have worked with both Traidcraft and Traidcraft Exchange for many years, for those that don't know, Traidcraft have been championing Fair Trade since 1979, publishing their first hand drawn catalogue showcasing jute handicrafts from Bangladesh. In 1986 the charity Traidcraft Exchange was created to work alongside Traidcraft to promote work with farmers, workers, collectives, campaigners, donors and supporters to promote a more people centred trade.

In 2018 the board split Traidcraft Exchange and Traidcraft PLC into two organisations so they both had the opportunity to focus on their distinct but complementary missions and enabling them to go deeper and wider with their impacts. To reach new supporters Traidcraft Exchange has decided to change to Transform Trade, to avoid confusion with Traidcraft and to have a name that can instantly communicate what they are about.

The name was actually suggested by one of their supporters and was chosen as it's a name that just gets on with it, no fuss, no hidden meaning, just one big goal – to see transformation in the world of trade!

Globally we face greater challenges than ever before with the impacts of Covid-19, the climate crisis, food supply disruption and polarising inequality. So they needed a rallying cry for more people to join the movement for trade and climate justice.

Changing to Transform Trade means they can now focus all resources and energy on fulfilling the mission: to Transform Trade, to the benefit of everybody .

Trade isn't a bad thing. Far from it, it's the worlds' way of sharing. It has the potential to raise living standards, protect the planet, and transform lives for good. Like us, Transform Trade believe in the transformational power of trade – they now have a name which reflects just that!

**Peter Leatherhead**

## LINK TO HOPE SHOEBOXES

We are delighted that we sent out 26,015 shoeboxes to Ukraine, Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania. We were able to get shoeboxes into the East of Ukraine to project managers, as well as other places around the country. Our project managers also travelled far and wide in our other countries in order to make sure the right people received your shoeboxes and were blessed at Christmas time.

We did manage to send out a small team from the UK to deliver shoeboxes to some of our Moldovan project managers. As we were travelling so near to the Ukraine border then it was felt best to minimize the number, so only 4 people went out in case of any issues. We were able to get some great photos and write up a Shoebox Delivery Diary which are both on our website for you to see and read – [www.linktohope.co.uk](http://www.linktohope.co.uk)

Unfortunately, due to the sheer cost involved in sending out printed photos, we are not able to do that this year. We have decided to continue with our photo montage that people can display instead which was received very well last year – a selection are on our website at <https://linktohope.co.uk/family-elderly-shoebox-deliveries-2022>

It was great to connect with some of our project managers of whom we haven't seen in nearly three years. We also managed to do some project visits and see the results of our supporters' faithful giving. Of course people in Eastern Europe are also burdened by rising costs of food and fuel and we have also been trying to fund hospital visits and the costs of scans and treatment for some close contacts. Mystifying that if you have gall stones then you need to find £1,500 to be admitted and have them removed. We are so fortunate with our 'free' healthcare.

Also, thank you so much for being able to help us do #morethanashoebox. With the extra funds we have from your £3 shoebox donation, we were able to buy multiple stoves, wood and food parcels for people who really needed them. An extra blessing along with your shoeboxes. Thank you for all your support. We think that 2023 is going to be an exciting year.

**Lisa Hector**  
**General Manager**

## UKRAINE, ONE YEAR ON...

Churches are being invited to pray, reflect and respond around the anniversary of Russia's military assault on Ukraine on 24 FEB 2022. The Rev Fiona Bennett, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, has issued the following statement and prayer:

"The anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine is an occasion for lament and sober reflection. Over the last year, Russia's military action has led to devastation and destruction on a massive scale, and thousands of deaths and casualties among Ukrainian civilians. Nearly eight million Ukrainians have fled the country to seek refuge. The conflict is also taking its toll on people in Russia, as economic sanctions bite, political freedoms and access to information are restricted, and many men have been conscripted to fight. The human cost of war is vast and the legacies of war stretch for generations. Our prayers are with all who suffer and grieve.

### 'Breakfast Before'

**9.30am ~ 12 MAR**  
[& every 2nd Sunday]

**Typical menu:**  
**Drinks, bananas**  
**toast, Cereal, pancakes,**  
**~ Croissant or pain au chocolat?**

Amidst the overwhelming horrors of this war, there are nonetheless glimmers of hope. Ukraine's people and its leadership have shown remarkable resilience in the face of President Putin's aggression. The welcome that Ukrainians have found in other countries, including through many in the UK who have opened their homes to strangers, is heartening. We must be mindful that as the war continues, so does the need for generosity in offering hospitality and humanitarian support.

So 'let us not become weary in doing good' (Galatians 6:9).

Ultimately, the suffering will only be ended by dialogue which establishes a just peace that provides security for all. As we express solidarity with the people of Ukraine on this sorry anniversary, we pray that opportunities will soon open up for this to begin.

We offer a prayer...

### A prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice  
With sorrow and lament, we hold the situation in Ukraine before you, a year on from the Russian invasion.

We long for an end to the conflict and the bloodshed and suffering.  
We remember people in Ukraine living in fear of death and destruction.  
We pray for all who grieve lost lives and opportunities.

May those who have been displaced find safety and welcome in their new communities.  
We pray that those with authority and influence will work for a just peace which provides security for all.

As we hold in our prayers all affected by the war, we pray that they may know that they are held in your loving arms.  
In your name we pray, Amen

[URC website](#)

## NATIONAL DAY OF REFLECTION

For the third year running, Marie Curie will lead the National Day of Reflection on Thu 23 March.

It is a day for everyone to remember loved ones who have died, and to support people who are grieving. There will be a minute's silence at noon, a nationwide network of Walls of Reflection, and a series of grief-themed online event.

Taking place on the third anniversary that the UK went into lockdown, the National Day of Reflection raises awareness of the impact of grief on our lives and of the need for better support. Millions of people across the UK – adults as well as children – are grieving now and need support, whether in the workplace, at home, in schools or across communities.

## GREAT DAFFODIL APPEAL 2023

The National Day of Reflection also ties in with the charity's flagship annual fundraising appeal

in March – the Great Daffodil Appeal – with people donating and wearing one of their iconic daffodil pin badges. Every year thousands of supporters from across the UK come together to raise money to support the charity's nurses, doctors, and hospice staff so they can continue to provide expert care to people at end of life, and their families.

More details at:

[www.mariecurie.org.uk/dayofreflection](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/dayofreflection)

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## BECOME A LITTER PICKER

Litter pickers will be able to make about 20p per can or bottle from a new deposit scheme in England and Wales, according to an environment minister.

From 2025, bottles and cans will include a deposit, likely to be 20p, that can be reclaimed when containers are returned to reverse vending machines at designated sites, according to a recent government statement.

As one environment minister explained, “there will be an opportunity for people to go around collecting up litter and so forth, and taking it back, and receiving the deposit, which we think might benefit a range of charities and individuals.”

The scheme will include all polyethylene terephthalate plastic bottles and cans up to three litres in size, meaning households will have to take their rubbish to a recycling point instead of leaving them on the kerbside for collection.

Councils will be able to cash in on any bottles and cans left in the recycling by collecting the deposit. The exact amount of the deposit will be decided by a new quango that will run the scheme, which was first announced in 2017.

The scheme is expected to save local authorities around £35 million a year by reducing the amount of recycling they pick up. The UK uses 14 billion plastic drink bottles, and nine billion drink cans every year. The country already recycles around 70 per cent of these.

Editor: Churches Together are planning to be involved in litter picking on Monday 8 May - a day to volunteer somewhere after the King's coronation that weekend.

**Parish Pump**

## Our own Jenny Hodson is in *Calamity Jane* at The Brookdale Club & Theatre 24~29 APR 2023

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### THE VICAR'S LOST HIS IPAD

The Vicar's lost his iPad –  
Disaster's come to church!  
His sermon's on that iPad  
It's left him in the lurch!

He's been looking for that iPad  
For most of half an hour,  
He's searched the chancel and the nave  
So now he's up the tower!

Oh! Where's he put that iPad?  
He had it when he came!  
He's searching high and searching low  
It's driving him insane!

The angels in the hammer beams  
For several hundred years  
Have witnessed proper order  
But now they're all in tears.

For chaos reigns below them  
Upon this modern day  
For everyone is searching now –  
Both clergyman and lay!

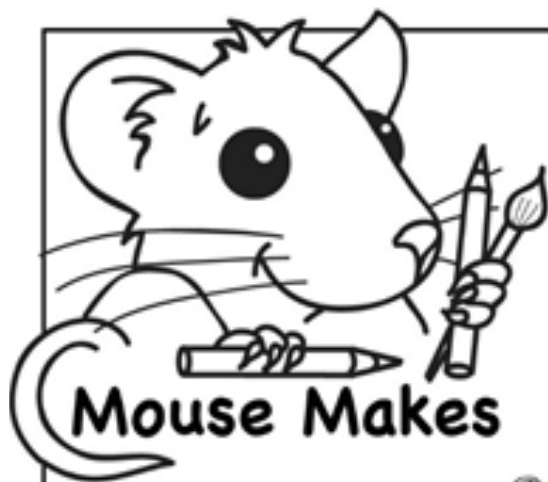
The Vicar found his iPad  
Tonight, we'll all be sleeping!  
He sent a message from his phone  
And set his iPad beeping!

And as he holds his iPad  
We feel his happy glow;  
But could he not have done that trick  
That half-an-hour ago?

The answer comes upon us  
That trick he could not do!  
For, in the caverns of our church  
He'd lost his smart phone, too!

*By Nigel Beeton*

**FILM MATINEE**  
**Saturday 25 MARCH**  
**2.30 pm**



## BIBLE MOTHERS

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?

— — — —  
Genesis 4:1-2

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?

— — — — —  
Genesis 17:19

Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?

— — — — —  
1 Samuel 1:20

Who was Ruth's Mother-in-Law?

— — — — —  
Ruth 1:1-5

Eunice was Timothy's mother, but who was her mother?

— — — — —  
2 Timothy 1:5

Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

— — — — —  
Exodus 6:20

Look up the Bible verses and find out who the Bible mothers are.



M — — — —

Matt 1:16

— O — — —

2 Tim 1:5

— T — — — —

1 Kings 1:11

H — — — — —

1 Sam 1:20

— E — — — —

Gen 34:1

R — — — — —

Gen 30:22

## WHO IS MY MOTHER?



CAIN	ELIZABETH
ISAAC	HANNAH
JESUS	RACHEL
JACOB	REBEKAH
TIMOTHY	EVE
JOSEPH	MARY
SAMUEL	SARAH
JOHN	EUNICE



How many other words can you make from:  
**MOTHERING SUNDAY**



Look up the Bible verses then find the answers and the names below in the word search

REBEKAH  
ELIZABETH  
EUNICE  
RUTH  
MARY  
RACHEL  
LEAH  
ZIPLAH  
MOTHER  
MUM

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



## SERVICES

Elders' wish to keep everyone safe, so please stay home if you are ill. You may wear masks (perhaps for singing). Also, understand our plans may change with little notice. We may sometimes have a speaker and sometimes a simple in-house led service. Video conferencing continues and Leaders or readers may Zoom in or speak in church.

**Duties** are performed by a small team on a rota. Please check the board for swops.

Date	5 MAR	12 MAR	19 MAR	26 MAR
Service	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Communion
Time	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am
Leader	Sandy & Morag Smith	Alison Stevens	Rev Kurauone Mutimwii	In House
Elder Duty	A Stevens	P Oliver	D Phillips	B Stevens / A Stevens
Door	G Elsdon	M Hardie	H Elsdon	P Grieve
Reader			D Green	
Flowers	Silk	R Pollitt	Silk	J Hodson
Coffee	M Morton	S & M Smith	B & A Stevens	D Green
Notes		Songs of Praise	Mothering Sunday	<b>Passion Sunday HOLY COMMUNION</b>

## CHURCH REGISTERS - none

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## LECTIONARY for March

**5 MAR:** Genesis 12.1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4.1-5,13-17; John 3.1-17

**12 MAR:** Exodus 17.1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5.1-11; John 4.5-42

**19 MAR:** 1 Samuel 16.1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5.8-14; John 9.1-41

**26 MAR:** Ezekiel 37.1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8.6-11; John 11.1-45

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## Adam and Eve's true nationality

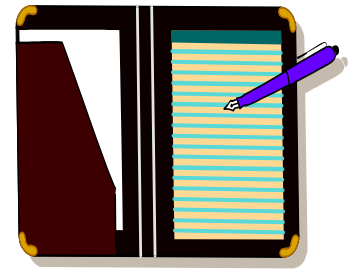
A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian were viewing a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden. "Look at that garden they are maintaining so well," mused the Brit. "They must be British."

"Nonsense," the Frenchman disagreed. "They're naked, and so beautiful. Clearly, they are French."

"Ah, but no clothes, no shoes, no shelter," the Russian pointed out, "they have only an apple to eat, and they're being told this is paradise. They are Russian."

# CALENDAR

.....to the best of the editor's knowledge, unless you know better.....



## MARCH 2023

Wed 01	1.30~3 pm	FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Grove
Thu 02		
Fri 03		<b>2 pm World Day of Prayer ~ All Saints' Church</b>
Sat 04	10am~12 noon	Coffee morning ~ for <b>Fairtrade</b> 12~2 pm CTCH Lent Lunch ~ Baptist
Sun 05		<b>3 ~ 5 pm Traidcraft Afternoon Tea</b>
Mon 06		
Tues 07	11am ~ 2 pm	WARM SPACE / SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 08	10.30 am	Elders' ~church 1.30~3 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Gr
Thu 09		7.30 pm Worship Group meeting on Zoom
Fri 10		2 pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 11	<b>12 - 2 pm</b>	<b>CTCH Lent Lunch ~ URC</b>
Sun 12	9.30 am	Breakfast Before
Mon 13		
Tues 14	11am ~ 2 pm	WARM SPACE / SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 15	1.30~3 pm	FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Grove
Thu 16		7.30 pm Steering Group
Fri 17		2pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 18	12 - 2 pm	CTCH Lent Lunch ~ All Saints'
Mon 20		
Tues 21	11am ~ 2 pm	WARM SPACE / SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 22	1.30~3 pm	FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Grove
Thu 23		
Fri 24		2pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 25	12 ~ 2 pm	CTCH Lent Lunch ~ Friends Meeting House <b>2.30 pm FILM MATINEE</b>
Mon 27		
Tues 28	11am ~ 2 pm	WARM SPACE / SOUP, SWEET & MEET in coffee lounge
Wed 29	1.30~3 pm	FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Grove
Thu 30		
Fri 31	10 am	Management meeting ~ Church 2pm Choir Rehearsal

## APRIL 2023

Sat 01 12 ~ 2 pm CTCH Lent Lunch ~ Methodist

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