

THE BRIDGE

Winchmore Hill United Reformed Church



March-April, 2025

Some thoughts from Rev Jim Gascoigne, an Elder at WH URC and current Chair of Churches Together in Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Grange Park.

From an Orange Order family, my grandmother was afraid and angry when new neighbours behind her house in the Midlands turned out to be 'Fenians'. When teenage me ordered a series of booklets about Roman Catholicism, they were forbidden by mother but my father offered a substitute collection of twenty 'answers' for Christians of all shades. A lot to get my head around and 'resolve'!

Later studies helped me to see that, to some extent, religious identity has provided flags of convenience to define political and civil rights issues. Over the years I have tried to separate the two in my mind even if it's not quite as simple in reality. From the 1960's I have been committed to understanding, mutual respect and coöperation between 'families' or denominations of Christians, allowing for differences to accommodate personality types rather than being entrenched positions. The United Reformed Church is the best place for me to be ... and for you?

- 'We conduct our life together according to the Basis of Union in which we give expression to our faith in forms which we believe contain the essential elements of the Church's life, both catholic and reformed.
- We accept with thanksgiving to God the witness to the catholic faith in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. We acknowledge the declarations made in our own tradition by Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Churches of Christ in which they stated the faith and sought to make its implications clear.
- Faith alive and active: gift of an eternal source, renewed for every generation.'¹

Keen for the Church to transcend boundaries, over the years I have identified leaders who seem to me to be worthy figureheads for the Christian Church as a whole regardless of their denominational affiliation.

¹ http://www.urg.org.uk/images/Free-Ebooks/What_is_the_URC_Statement.pdf

You may have your own nominations, some of mine are Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop Rowan, our own former Assembly Moderator, Rev John Johansen Berg of the Community of Reconciliation, and Pope Francis. We are, or should be, one in Christ.

Pope Francis



A progressive papacy was likely to be a tough call, potentially divisive and perhaps not as reforming as some might have hoped. Nevertheless, fresh air blows through the Vatican corridors, traditional teaching has been reviewed and moderated for a new generation.²

Eco-church has a fine resource in 'Laudato si' (Praise Be to You) the second encyclical of Pope Francis, subtitled, 'On care for our common home.'

As I write, Pope Francis's health is fragile. Let us pray with thanksgiving for him and for our sisters and brothers in the Catholic Church.

Church of South India (CSI)

At a ceremony on 27th September, 1947, CSI brought four church traditions together: Anglican, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Methodist. Another former URC Assembly Moderator, Rt Rev'd Dr J E Lesslie Newbigin was a Church of Scotland minister and Bishop in the CSI.

Ordination is valid ecumenically, in technical terms, 'episcopal ordination into a united ministry.' CSI and the URC are both members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

A CSI Minister has accepted a call to our pastorate.

Ministry



A joint church meeting of the South and East Pastorate held on Sunday 16th February at Winchmore Hill URC resolved to call Rev Packiaraj Asirvatham to be the pastorate's minister. This call has been accepted.

Arrangements regarding the family's move to Enfield and Packia's induction as minister are yet to be agreed.

New birth



Parker Jason Pruett

Dustin (formerly Leader of WH Restore Community Church) and Alyse welcomed Parker on 22nd February. All have caught up on sleep and are

doing well. Hayley writes, "We went to see them at the hospital and to meet the little chap, who is rather adorable!" We pray blessings for them all and have sent a card.

Rev Jack Beeson

We are sorry to hear from Pat that our friend and former minister has had another stroke. His son Chris writes, "Dad is doing physio each day to work on standing and balance. His speech has been affected but Dad can easily make himself understood. He is in decent spirits, practising imaginary organ pedals whilst listening to recitals." Some of the Elders have sent cards to Jack and can let you know his address.

² <https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/catholic/the-progressive-pope.aspx>



SUNDAY WORSHIP in Church is at 10.30 a.m. followed by time to chat over coffee.

Leadership of some services is yet to be arranged but may be devised by Elders making use of digital resources.

2nd March Traditional service with Holy Communion **Michaela Lawrence**

Lent begins Ash Wednesday 5th March

9th March **Nancy Hands** from Trinity Church, Enfield

Tuesday 11th March at 19.00

CHURCHES LAUNCH LENT TOGETHER
in
Grange Park, Palmers Green and
Winchmore Hill

'Beside Bethesda'

Gather as one, wide, church family for an insight to carry forward into our Lent reflections and prayers.

Tuesday 11th March
led by Rev Julie Coleman and Rev Jim Gascoigne
at Winchmore Hill United Reformed Church

at 19.00 for about an hour,
light refreshments together afterwards

The church by the railway bridge,
77 Compton Road, N21 3NU

16th March Shared Service

11.00 at Palmers Green _Rev Jim Gascoigne

23rd March 23, 2025 **Martin Wells**

Mothering Sunday, 30th March **Elders**

Holy Communion 6th April, **Laura Marlow**

Palm Sunday, 13th April

Shared Service with Palmers Green at WH

Leader to be confirmed

Maundy Thursday 17th March

Lancaster Road URC at 19.00

Good Friday 18th March **10.15 at WH Baptist**

PG/WH URC, Baptist, NewLife:

Rev Ebenezer to conduct, Rev Jim to preach

11.30 Churches Together Walk of Witness starts on The Green (and from PG station)

Easter Day 20th April }

} Preachers tbc

'Low' Sunday 27th April }

Sunday, 4th May **Tony Davis** Holy Communion



Flowers in March and April will be given both in memory and in celebration by Liz Brakspear for Alec and Meg Robb, by the Scouts for Martin Spooner, by Bryant Ambrose for Mother and Padre, by Dawn on her birthday and for Olivia and Brian. Whether in the Sanctuary or the Chaplin Parlour for winter-time 'Cosy Church', flowers evoke happy memories and are appreciated as gestures of care and affection when they are received by someone as a gift after the service.

Moving *Stories*

Commitment
for **Life**

Committed to supporting our global partners **ZIMBABWE**

Facing the conflict in Ukraine

Commitment for Life is supporting our partner churches in Hungary and Transcarpathia, Western Ukraine.

NATO expansion into Ukraine has been met by a devastatingly bloody, Russian special military operation. The conflict has led to the mass dislocation of ordinary Ukrainians. People have fled to the safer, western parts of Ukraine and into neighbouring countries like Hungary.

Our partner churches are doing brilliant work to support these refugees. Watch our CFL video: https://youtu.be/lK9s_v4ebPU and support our appeal here: <https://gofund./me/d99524e8>

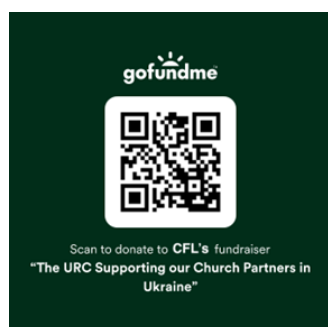


Photo credit. Charles Nambasi,



Gracious Phiri, a 43-year-old mother of five, says that she now must walk up to three hours every day to fetch water. "I have never seen anything like this."

Food is also in short supply in Zimbabwe, where 7.7 million people face hunger. Children have been badly impacted, with hospital admissions for moderate to severe malnutrition increasing. Often, ground baobab fruit is stirred into a porridge for extra nutrients.

Your donations to Commitment for Life are helping our local partners install boreholes with solar power. This is one way to help people deepen their resilience in the face of climate change. See this video for more information:

https://youtu.be/Ux9hZp5_aWg

Elders Meetings ...

... have been tabled for Thursdays 20th March, 10th April and 8th May at either 14.00 or 19.00, as required. Dates or venue may be changed to accommodate music practice in the Parlour.

Church Meeting

Bearing in mind the considerable involvement of all members during the February weekend of 'preaching with a view', and also of the Elders before and after, we have postponed the Annual Meeting due in March but will soon give due notice of it.


We are invited to St Paul's seasonal events – blurriness is down to my IT skills (Ed.)

A Devotional Tour of the National Gallery

Led by the Revd Dr Peter Anthony

with the Lord there is mercy
Psalms 103.7
LENT 2025

For 200 years the National Gallery has been bringing people and paintings together at the heart of the nation's capital.
Fr Peter Anthony, Vicar of All Saints, Margaret Street, takes us on a tour of the gallery, exploring how works of art can deepen our understanding of the Christian life.




Tuesday 11 March 2025, 2pm Book your place at office@spwh.org
This event is in partnership with All Saints, Margaret Street

Lectio Divina

with the Lord there is mercy
Psalms 103.7
LENT 2025

Lectio Divina – literally *divine reading* – is a way of reading the Bible reflectively and contemplatively, allowing the reader to be immersed in the Word of God.
Members of our Ministry Team will help us reflect on gospel passages which communicate the mercy of God. This takes place each Wednesday before the lunchtime Eucharist; come to either or both.



Wednesday 12, 19, 26 March, 2, 9 April
12pm Lectio Divina, 12.30pm Eucharist
St Paul's Church

A Celebration of Healing and Reconciliation

Preacher: The Revd Laura Darrall

with the Lord there is mercy
Psalms 103.7
LENT 2025

A liturgy of prayers, readings and music celebrating God's mercy and love, and his power to reach us at our deepest point of need. With opportunities to receive ministries of healing and reconciliation.




The Revd Laura Darrall is a priest, writer and actor, and a regular contributor to Radio 4's *Daily Service*.

Sunday 23 March 2025, 6pm St Paul's Church

Quiet Day

with the Lord there is mercy
Psalms 103.7
LENT 2025

A day of stillness and reflection for Lent run by our Pastoral Team. Meditations, prayers, songs, quiet activities and sharing of reflections. Light refreshments available, please bring your own journal and blanket (if wanted). Note that this day is not suitable for children.



Saturday 29 March 2025, 10.30am-3.30pm
St Paul's Church
Book by emailing pastoral@spwh.org

Church Secretary: All enquiries should be made either by telephone to the Vestry answering service on 020 8882 4776 or by e-mail to WHURC@btconnect.com

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