



Yours

July/August 2026

Magazine of
The United
Church
Winchester



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Yours magazine

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Tim's Letter: Thank You

Before I get to my final article I want to express how grateful I am for the words of appreciation, thanks and goodwill you've shown me over the past few weeks, and at recent farewell events. I've been genuinely touched by the love and kindness of people's words, notes, cards, emails and letters. It's clear that you carry me in your hearts as I move into this next season of ministry, and I want you to know that I carry you all in my heart too. You, through your openness to be led by God's loving Spirit, have helped shape and form both the person and the minister I am today. From the bottom of my heart: thank you!

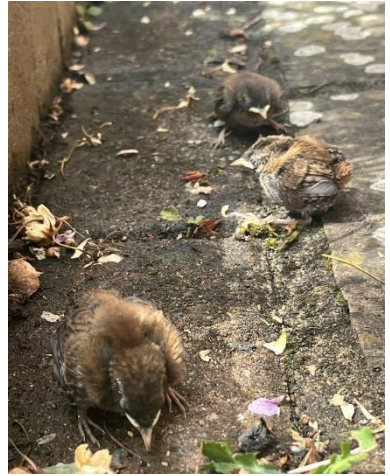
Fledglings



A few weeks ago, I walked out of my front door to find a tiny fledgling nestling against my doorstep. It had fallen from its nest in a bush above my front door. I immediately consulted the internet to find the dos and don'ts in this situation, and when I realised it was ok to do so, the ladder came out and I gently replaced it on the flat roof above in sight of its mummy. Job done, or so I thought.

The next morning, on stepping out of the front door I was met with a familiar 'cheep'! There it was again. So once again, up it went to be back closer to its nest. But bless me, when I returned home a few hours later, not one, not two, but three little fledglings perched against the front step all shrieking for food. I could see mum (or dad) flitting to and from a nearby bush keeping watch but obviously not wanting to get too close to human habitation. So, in the end, I picked up the wee three and placed them on the garden path away from the door hoping the neighbour's cat was fast

asleep. I hid, and in time, mum (or dad) came down from the bush responding to their cries. Worms and grubs were found, mouths (or should I say beaks) were fed, and by later that evening there was no sign of them, nor have I seen them since. Had I done enough, were they ok, had the cat eaten them?! I couldn't answer any of those questions. I just had to let it go and accept that I'd done what I could within the time and opportunity given to me.



It made me think that there are always times when we ourselves are *fledglings*. Whether by impulse, necessity or choice we emerge from the known, the comfortable and the, so far as it can be, safe into a new unknown reality without any chance of returning to what was. Whatever our age, whatever our role, whatever our experience, life will undoubtedly be ready to turn the world upside down when we least expect it. In those situations, we must fledge the nest into the unknown, taking a chance by stepping out (or sometimes flying out) in faith. And like me with the chicks, there is a need to let go. A need to consign what has been done, or not done, said, or not said, felt, or not felt to the past. A changing of the seasons as the Spirit wills and which is not ours to control, contain or constrain.

As we, both minister and church, emerge from one time to the next, we of course look back with thankfulness, but we also 'let go' in faith into the new season God has created for us.

Be free! Let go! Let God.

Yours, ever,
Tim

Editorial

This month's front cover by Tony Wood is of Azaleas from his own garden.

In this edition we have Tim's final letter. We will miss your inspired writings and preaching, Tim, and so much more. Every blessing in the Solent Group. At least you're not too far away.

This month Rosemary MacMullen completes her cruise in Lisbon, Pat Fry delves into a tourist hot spot in Cornwall and new contributor, Margaret Fields, has a special memory from 1966 which will stir memories for many.

Could you emulate Margaret by sending something in for our September magazine?

Wishing all our readers a relaxing summer.

**Yours Team—Bob Lord, Dorothy Lusmore and
Sophie Armstrong**

News of the United Church Family

Friends will be saddened to hear of the death on 20 May of Jenny Allan. A service of thanksgiving for Jenny's life took place on 22 June, led by Tom Belshaw. We remember in our prayers Jenny's daughter, Susan, and all Jenny's friends and family.



A thanksgiving service for the life of Val Hillier took place on 10 June. A real celebration of Val's life and of who she was. We continue to remember all the family in our prayers. Val's family sent the following message to all at the United Church:

'Thank you so much for conducting such a very special service for Mum ... We are so grateful to you and all at UCW who were involved in the service in so many ways.

Please also pass on our thanks to those who attended and have supported Mum, Dad and us all, particularly over the last year, with their prayers and friendship’.

We remember a number of those in our church family who are living with long term illness, including Ralph Jessop. We think of Carol too, as she anticipates surgery later in June. Ralph and Carol would welcome our prayers.

Howard Mellor has recently received a difficult diagnosis and surgery will be necessary. This is of course challenging for Howard and Rosie and their family. They ask that we remember them all in our prayers.

We celebrate with the Messer family. Fiona will be married to Robbie Mackenzie on Saturday 27 June. All good wishes to Fiona and Robbie for their future together.

Congratulations too to Susan and Gordon Colverson. Grandparents again! A daughter Harriet, to Tulasha and to Stuart. A sister to Laurie and Jasmine.

We think of all those who have just completed exams and trust that for those making plans for next steps into education or work, this is going well.

On the subject of ‘next steps’, as I write, Tim Searle has just ten days left serving alongside us as minister at the United Church. Time to say ‘farewell’. It’s been a great ten years, and you have left us a rich legacy, Tim. We wish you well and trust that you will keep in touch from time to time. Our thanks and our prayers go with you.

Please do let me know if you would like me to include anything in this space in future editions of *Yours*. You can email me on: pastoral@ucw.org.uk

Jane Lawson, Pastoral Lead

Photos Sent in by Our Readers



Snap, Crackle and Pop! (Sent in by Lesley Worrall)

Tim's Farewell Party – The Tables Before and After!



Snap, Crackle and Pop! (Sent in by Moireach Harmer)

Tim Searle's Induction to the Solent Group

Tim's Induction to the Solent Group will take place at Fareham United Reformed Church (18 Osborn Road South, Fareham PO16 7DG) on **Saturday 18 July** at **3 pm**.

The people arranging the catering would like an idea of the numbers attending. Please let Adrian Bulley (secretary@ucw.org.uk) know by noon on Sunday 12 July and he will pass details to the Church Secretary.

Alternatively, it will be possible to join the service on Zoom, details as follows.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84158309696?pwd=bmW3tBX8cQDnp2SDKGRcDhzRpHpJFr.1>

Meeting ID: 841 5830 9696

Passcode: 180726

Adrian Bulley

Any views or opinions expressed in Yours are the views and opinions of the individual contributors and do not represent the views or opinions of The United Church unless clearly stated.

Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer

During her service on 31 May, Sandra Timms introduced a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer. She had been on a Safeguarding course arranged by the circuit and her reasons for using the prayer follow.

We are also including the blessing she used. Catch up with her service at ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/

A Few Reasons to use this Prayer

In the days of the Old and New testaments, it was a very male dominated society, therefore God was always understood to be male, and Jesus had to be also. Jesus spoke to people in the language of his day, using symbols and traditional images that the people could readily understand. Although the traditional prayer may sound more poetic and familiar to us oldies, I think the wording of the paraphrase is more easily understood by the generation of the 21st century. All the points of the original prayer are in it, but just in a different way ... and may be expanded a little!

Also, having completed a Safeguarding course a few years ago, with the theme GOD WELCOMES ALL, to me, this prayer is not only more understandable for today (which makes it more inclusive) but it is also more sensitive to anyone who has ever suffered from abuse. Many of those who have experienced abuse will (understandably) not share this widely, so it is important to be mindful of the language we use so as not to hurt them even more. To some, the idea of God as a father, whose love for them doesn't hurt them, is difficult. But God as Life-giver who brings justice, peace, strength and tenderness may be more helpful. Abuse comes in all forms and even the idea of forgiveness can be difficult for some to cope with – and often a heavy guilt lies with the abused themselves. Even the words, Kingdom, Power and Glory can have negative connotations today. God is never intimidating and authoritative.

(To discover more ideas about how to make the worship experience as inclusive as possible, please refer to the Unconscious Bias and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training at methodist.org.uk/inclusive-church/training.)

O Most Compassionate Life Giver, may we honour You & praise You.

May we work with You to establish Your new order of justice, peace and love.

Give us what we need for growth and help us, through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.

Strengthen us in the time of testing that we may resist all evil.

For all tenderness, strength and love are Yours,

Now and forever. AMEN!

A BLESSING (from *Prayers for all Seasons* – Nick Fawsett)

To God, who blesses us beyond our imagining,

Who loves us beyond our dreaming,

Who forgives us beyond our deserving,

And who uses us beyond our hoping

Be praise and thanksgiving,

honour and adoration,

now and always AMEN!

Sandra Timms

Please send us your reactions to the prayer and/or blessing at yours@ucworg.uk (Ed.)

A Hidden Gem in a Cornish Tourist Hotspot

At May Half Term I travelled down to Penzance a day before the rest of my family, so had an opportunity to explore on my own. I took a bus to the village of Marazion intending to walk back along the coast path taking photographs, but the early morning mist had not yet cleared. The sea front at Marazion is often very crowded with tourists setting out across the causeway to St Michael's Mount, or waiting to catch a boat there, as the causeway is only usable for a few hours each day.

I got off my bus one stop too soon, and, as I strolled along the road, I noticed an interesting street name 'Beacon Road, formerly Meeting House Lane'. Curious, I turned into the narrow side street, climbing uphill between what had once been fishermen's cottages. At a crossroads a brown

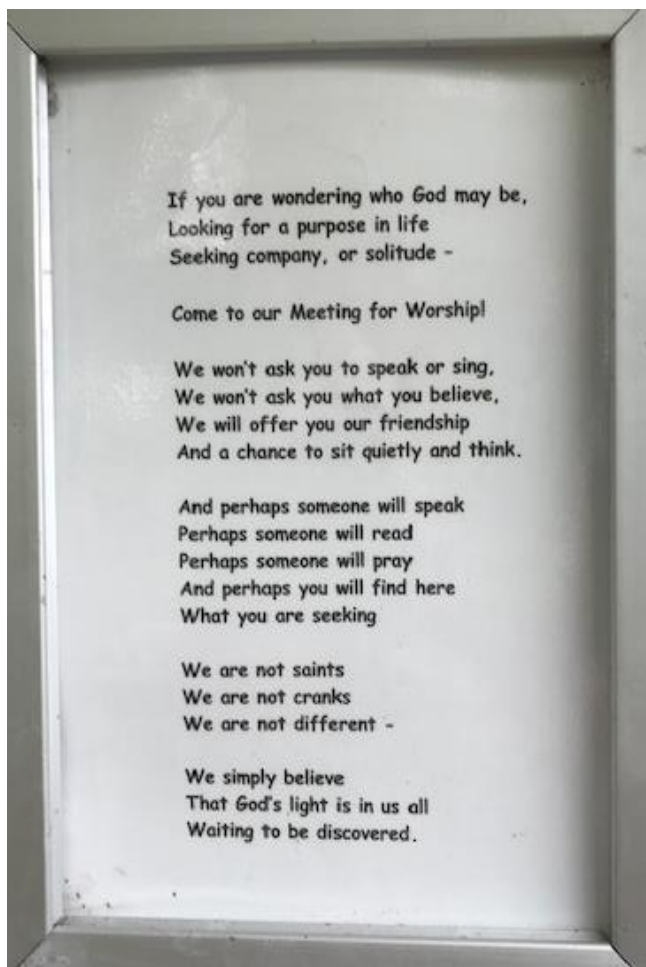


tourist design pointed straight on 'To the Quaker Meeting House'. I soon came to a gate, with a notice saying, 'Please come in and enjoy our peaceful garden'. An ancient Quaker burial ground had been changed into a delightful semi-wild garden in full bloom, and I sat for a while looking out across the bay as the mist had cleared.



But there was another surprise: the meeting house itself, still actively in use for Quaker worship, was a low traditional seventeenth century building, dating from 1688. Now, I had studied the history of seventeenth-century nonconformity in some depth,

learning that these congregations largely developed in Eastern England, the Midlands and the Home Counties (I had studied their history in Berkshire). Cornwall had remained a stronghold of Roman Catholicism tracing its origins back to the early Celtic Saints like St Petroc and St Piran, yet this meeting house had been established in 1688 one year before the law forbidding such places of worship had been repealed, so when it was still illegal to gather for worship anywhere other than the Parish Church, a crime punishable by fine or imprisonment!



If you are wondering who God may be,
Looking for a purpose in life
Seeking company, or solitude -

Come to our Meeting for Worship!

We won't ask you to speak or sing,
We won't ask you what you believe,
We will offer you our friendship
And a chance to sit quietly and think.

And perhaps someone will speak
Perhaps someone will read
Perhaps someone will pray
And perhaps you will find here
What you are seeking

We are not saints
We are not cranks
We are not different -

We simply believe
That God's light is in us all
Waiting to be discovered.

The invitation on their door gave me food for thought.

Reading more widely I discovered that Quaker silence invites you to think prayerfully about the people with whom you are sitting, there's a community dimension to that silence, a dimension to praying in silence together that I have often failed to grasp - something more for us to ponder?

Pat Fry

My Role as an Anna Chaplain

At a time that I considered retiring from Local Preaching, a dear friend telephoned, invited me to listen to Debbie Thrower speak at Chandler's Ford Church. We listened to Debbie explaining this role. First Pastoral Visiting, then the giving of Communion and finally what is called Messy Vintage.

After her talk, we were all invited to the church hall to take part in Messy Vintage. We sang, laughed and prayed. I returned home in deep thought.

Sometime later Debbie came to speak at United Church, during the 'Space in the City' series, I introduced myself to her, and after some discussion, I later received an invitation to the 3-day annual gathering at a Christian Centre in Hoddesdon, during which I met a couple who recommended that I contact The Caraway Trust in Southampton.

On my return I contacted the charity. There followed two interviews with Revd Dr Erica Roberts. This led the way to joining their Messy Vintage renamed Vintage Adventure. This opened up the opportunity for training as an Anna Chaplain. There followed six weeks of training online and further involvement in their Vintage Adventure. Revd Dr Erica Roberts became my supervisor.

After a discussion with Revd Tim Searle he became my Line Manager. Then a support group was arranged. A budget was set up for Vintage Fun costs, and travel to venues outside of Winchester for relevant training events. Everything was ready.

Where to start?

I contacted every Manager of the care homes in Winchester, quickly discovered which Churches were supporting relevant care homes. This resulted in my being welcomed to Winchester Heights and Tegfield House. I take Extended Communion to Winchester Heights plus Prayer and Praise Services to Tegfield House, monthly.

I also visit people who live at home or in other Care Homes. Our Vintage Adventure was renamed **Vintage Fun**. We meet monthly at The United Church, on the second Monday of each month, which includes afternoon tea from 2 to 4 pm.

Then came the time for my Commissioning at The United Church, 30 May 2021, the only day when everyone was allowed to leave their homes. A momentous



occasion with lovely friends. Debbie Thrower carried out the Commissioning part of the service. Revd Dr Erica Roberts spoke. Revd Helen Jesty also spoke.

At that point I was commissioned to serve for 5 years, which ended this May. I have now signed up for a further 3 years.

Apart from Anna Chaplains there are what are called 'Anna Friends', who support the work of an Anna Chaplain.

I am privileged to say that Teresa McLeod was commissioned this Sunday as an 'Anna Friend'. Teresa is very active in helping folks enjoy Vintage Fun.

Every Blessing to you all.

For enquires please contact:

Anna Chaplain: Pamela Email: pamdaw@inbox.com

Anna Friend: Teresa Email: treesmcleod@gmail.com

Pamela Gilbert

And did those Feet ..?

So begins England's National Song – at least if you are at an international cricket match! But I am sure we have all sung Blake's poem, set to Parry's music, at some time in our lives - but have you ever wondered what on earth it is all about?

The story begins with a verse in John's gospel chapter 19, verse 38.

'After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and removed his body.'

It was the custom for the oldest relative of a crucified man to be responsible for removing his body. As Jesus' father was no longer living, the tradition grew up that Joseph of Arimathea was Jesus' uncle. We are told he was a wealthy man and some sources outside the Bible suggest that his wealth came from trading in Cornish tin. This is where the legend starts – that on one of Joseph's trading journeys to England he took Jesus, then a teenager, with him.

*And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen!*



Of course, the most popular legend about Joseph of Arimathea is the one centred on Glastonbury. After Jesus' resurrection, Joseph travelled to Britain to spread the news about Jesus. After all, Paul planned to go to Spain, so why not go a bit further to a land that he already knew from his

commercial activities. He climbed the hill at Glastonbury and stuck his staff in the ground – like Aaron’s rod it grew into a bush and blossomed. Known as the Glastonbury Thorn or Holy Thorn it bore flowers twice a year – at Christmas and at Easter.

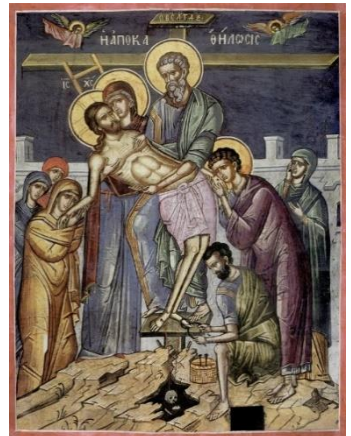
In the seventeenth century, under the Puritan reformation, it was cut down and destroyed because it was seen as encouraging superstition and idolatry. However, many local people had taken bits of the bush to grow in their own gardens, so it was replaced and still grows in Glastonbury today, famously in St John’s Churchyard, located in the town centre. Every year a sprig of blossom is sent to the reigning monarch to form part of the Christmas table decorations.

Each Glastonbury Thorn only lives for around 100 years and its descendants have lived on through the centuries, even surviving the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century when Glastonbury Abbey was reduced to ruins. Hawthorn bushes are very common in England but, intriguingly, the Glastonbury bush is not a native British Hawthorn, it originates from the Middle East and will not grow from seeds or cuttings, it can only be grafted.

Is there an element of truth in the legend?

Joseph of Arimathea is venerated as the first saint to bring the gospel to England and is remembered by the Anglican Communion on 1 August, the Catholic Church on 31 August, and by the Eastern Orthodox Church on 31 July.

This is an illustration from an Eastern Orthodox icon depicting Joseph of Arimathea taking Jesus down from the cross.



Other important paintings include –

'Dead Christ with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus' by Pietro Perugino (c. 1494–98): the Clark Art Gallery

'Christ with Joseph of Arimathea' by Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo (16th Century): the Cleveland Museum of Art

'Joseph of Arimathea Among the Rocks of Albion' by William Blake (c. 1793–96): a print illustrating the legend that Joseph brought Christianity to Britain: the British Museum and the Blake Archive.

Joseph of Arimathea Series by James Tissot (c. 1894): the Brooklyn Museum

Dorothy Lusmore

Enchanted Musical Journeys

At our Enchanted Musical Journeys evening on 25 April at the United Church, we raised £450 in donations for the Steinway Grand Piano Fund.

Mike and I would like to thank everyone who contributed, especially our four guest pianists and singer, Annie Shi, Liliya and Ava Solomonova for such a professional performance.

Also thank you to the Piano Fund Team for providing refreshments and supplying flowers, Janet for collecting donations, Jane for helping with the Golden Note keyboard, and Steve Barber with the church technical equipment. Also Liliya's husband for his sound equipment.

Thanks especially, of course, to Tony who initiated the event, none of which would have taken place had it not been for him.

Finally, a big Thank You to all of you who came to support our special musical evening, which we feel was enjoyed and appreciated with the wonderful talent we shared.

Hilary Holt

Summer Picnic and Labyrinth – Sunday 23 August

Everyone is invited to a 'bring your own' summer picnic in Alison and Clive Wood's lovely garden in Itchen Stoke, after our church service on 23 August (from 12.00 pm).

You will be able to visit the lovely church of St Mary's nearby and walk the labyrinth there (as shown in the May edition of *Yours*). There will also be a short, guided riverside walk for the energetic or a chance to just sit and enjoy the garden whilst chatting. Parking and car sharing will be organised, and we aim to finish no later than 3.30 pm.

More information will be available later but for now please **'save the date'** and look for a 'sign-up sheet' in the Hall. Any questions please see Alison Wood or Tim Clifford.



Saying Yes to Peace

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.' He calls us to be people of peace and reconciliation. For those living under Roman oppression, this must have been hard to hear. Many were simply trying to survive—paying taxes, raising families, working, and worshipping—while waiting for the Messiah to come and overthrow Rome.

They must have been confused hearing these words of peace coming from Jesus. They must have been thinking, 'Why, if this man is the Messiah, is he talking about peace and making peace?' 'Why is he telling us to love our enemies?'

We live in an age of war and conflict, and in our churches we pray for peace and for all who suffer its effects. How do we say yes to peace in daily life?

I think it begins by finding peace within our own hearts. For me, that happens in my garden—pottering about in my shed, or among the flowers and plants. It is my haven: a place of joy, prayer, reading the Bible, and deep peace.

The passage in Ephesians speaks of Christ being our peace and that he has broken down the dividing wall and the hostility between us. It is Christ, our Prince of Peace, who proclaimed peace to those of us near and far. We should always say yes to peace because Christ not only commanded it, but he *IS* our peace.

Let's start with ourselves and trust Christ to guide our prayers for peace in our communities and the world. We can also act – campaigning, showing solidarity, and supporting groups that promote peace and reconciliation. As children of Christ, let's say yes to peace.

Sophia Jones



Sophia Jones is currently Interim Director of Communications Engagement and Fundraising at the Anglican Mission agency USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel).

A Special Memory

In 1966 John and I were living near my parents in the North East of England. We had bought an old bungalow and spent most of our spare time renovating it. It was hard work and we began to feel in need of a holiday, so we booked two weeks in Ibiza, flying from Gatwick at 3 am on Sunday the 31 July. We continued working on the bungalow and by the end of March we felt that we had made a lovely home and that all the hard work was worth it.

Life doesn't always go to plan. Two weeks later John was offered promotion, but it involved a move to Hampshire. We thought long and hard about it, but it was such a good offer we couldn't really turn it down. We put the bungalow on the market, and it sold immediately. John went off to stay in a hotel in Southampton, and I stayed behind and packed everything up and arranged for it to go into storage. I then went to live with my parents until the end of the summer term.

We had made a simple plan for getting to the airport. I would travel by train to London and John would meet me at Kings Cross. We would put our cases in the left luggage store, have a good meal, perhaps see a show, then make our way to Gatwick.

Once again life doesn't always go to plan. When we booked our holiday, we were unaware of the World Cup and certainly had no idea that England would be playing in the final, but my train journey was fantastic.

Life was very different then – no mobile phones, no internet, just a few transistor radios. People gathered round them and news was passed along the carriages. Germany scored – groans. England scored – Cheers. England scored again – more cheers. 89 minutes Germany scored again – terrible groans. As extra time was called the dining steward announced afternoon tea was served so I went along to the dining car and heard the cheers for Geoff Hurst's goals. Finally came the cry 'We've won! We've won!' and people jumped for joy. The old Durham miner sitting next to me reached

for his hip flask and topped up our teacups with whisky and we toasted the team with rather alcoholic tea! What a trip. The best rail journey of my life.

John met me at the station and we dumped our luggage and wandered off into the city. I can't remember if we had anything to eat, I just remember the amazing atmosphere. Everyone was happy. You could really feel the joy. We saw a few people jumping in the fountains in Trafalgar Square, but it was good humoured and everyone seemed well behaved. The police were walking around laughing and smiling, enjoying the evening just as much as everyone else.

Sixty years ago, and I still remember the amazing feeling of happiness. It really was one of the best days of my life. I'll remember it forever.

P.S. The holiday was a bit of an anticlimax.

Margaret Fields

(Do you have special memories of the World Cup Final in 1966 too? Share them with our readers yours@ucw.org.uk. (Ed.)



Final Cruise Diary Snippet

Saturday



Got up early to go and get a ticket for an additional tour laid on due to our change of port. I had been to Lisbon twice before and seen the historic port so decided to go for the organised coach trip which began through Lisbon. We drove through the elegant Liberty Avenue then stopped at the top of Eduardo VII Park for sweeping views across the skyline. I was also sweeping my eyes for a public convenience as it would be another hour before we reached the coastal destination of Cascais. My only option was to rush up three sets of stone steps to a restaurant perched on top of the grass hill in the park. I had only a second or two to photograph the incredible scene below us as the driver was waving us on but there was a huge queue for the loo at Cascais, so I had certainly made the right decision. I was able to dash on, leaving many of my fellow passengers having to take their places.

This town was truly charming. The streets were paved with grey square tiles edged in black borders between high buildings with glassed-in shop fronts. Tempting displays of high fashion and sparkling jewellery lined the route down to the waterfront. The paving there was wavy lines like the sea, and it did make me feel a bit off balance. I headed for a cafe for a cappuccino and cranberry muffin before strolling along the seafront.





Back at the square I took a photo of the statue of Dom Pedro, the 19th Century King of Portugal before heading uphill to the coach park. I hadn't realised when charging down that there were three similar streets. I soon realised I had gone up an unfamiliar one and retraced my steps to the Quay. To my relief I noticed the black clad figure of our guide striding up the middle one. I followed half-way up before she swung her head round and revealed a stranger's face! Panic set in as time was speeding past. I asked for help

from a girl who led me to her shop and called her boss who spoke English. Luckily, I had taken a photo of a bright Carousel below the park which, when shown, told the shopkeeper exactly where I should go. A steep cobbled street which was dangerously wet cut across to the third street and brought me to a remembered corner. Round that was the coach park. We were too late back for the six o'clock dinner but had ours just before a Balmoral Company Country and Western Show. Joining in the line dancing made me glad I had gone to the classes and was a fun end to the day.



The next two days were onboard and winding down with thoughts returning to life at home. Slept most of the taxi ride and was happy to be back in my own space.

Rosemary MacMullen

Christian Aid Week 2026



This year we did not undertake the usual house-to-house delivery of Christian Aid Week envelopes. Instead, we concentrated on other fundraising activities. We did still

have envelopes available in church, but the donations made for the Easter Breakfast were also allocated to Christian Aid. In addition, Jo Pellatt ran a very enjoyable quiz evening. On a different tack, Pat Fry devised an ingenious Christian Aid-themed quiz sheet for completion at home. Many thanks to both Jo and Pat for the work they put into their respective projects. I think some of us learned a lot from the quizzes! In total we have managed to raise £876.96 (which is more than last year's total).

Thank you to everyone for supporting Christian Aid. I hope that from this beginning we can really get into the swing of fundraising in different ways in future years.

Helen McTiffin

News of the Wider Church



A priest to the family of Henry Nowak has told *Premier Christian News* that the teenager had a Bible verse about the resurrection as his phone screensaver. Nowak, a student in Southampton, died in December after being stabbed five times.

His murderer falsely accused him of racism. Distressing bodycam footage of Nowak's final moments showed police ignoring his cries for help. 'Henry had as his screensaver before he died a scripture about the resurrection,' said Fr Paschal Uche, an Essex priest who has been giving pastoral support to the family since Henry's death. 'That seems incredibly hopeful for somebody who died so tragically, reminding us that we can have hope even in these difficult times.'

Statement: The Southampton District of the Methodist Church stands with the family of Henry Nowak in their grief and prays for them following the conviction of his murderer. The grace and dignity his family have demonstrated is humbling and inspirational, making it clear that this tragedy must not lead to further violence. They want what happened to their son to lead to changes for the better, to make our streets safer for everyone, regardless of race or religion, and not to be used to create division or hatred. We will seek to support the work to accomplish the wishes of Henry's family.

While the circumstances around the murder and its aftermath may raise questions for some, these must be addressed with dignity and respect, not with anger or rage. We pray for those directly working towards bringing about justice and peace and commit to praying for Henry's family and friends and for our communities at this time.

Revd Dr Mark Cheetham

Assistant Chair of the Southampton Methodist District



The Bishop of Chelmsford (See June Yours) 'cautiously optimistic' over US/Iran peace agreement. But the conflict was 'wholly unnecessary and should never have started' she says. In a statement to the *Church Times* following the announcement of a ceasefire agreement between the United

States and Iran designed to bring an end to the conflict, Dr Francis-Dehqani said that, while 'we can be cautiously optimistic' over the deal, the war had 'inflicted serious economic damage far beyond the region'.

Dr Francis-Dehqani said: 'While the final details of the deal between Iran and the US are not yet known, we can be cautiously optimistic that it will bring an end to the threat of further bombing

and help ease some of the global economic pressures the war has caused.'

She continued: 'At the same time, this conflict was wholly unnecessary and should never have started. It has done nothing to advance the cause of ordinary people in Iran, who continue to live under a brutal regime, and it has inflicted serious economic damage far beyond the region. The focus must now turn to securing a peaceful and just outcome for the people of Iran, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and the wider Middle East.'

At the beginning of the recent conflict, she said: (*Church Times March 2026*) 'While the regime in Iran has done profound harm and is deeply unpopular, and while there will be some renewed hope for change, it is not at all clear where military intervention from the US and Israel will ultimately lead.'



Players from Germany and Curacao refused to be divided by a 7-1 result on Sunday, 14 June as they joined in prayer on the World Cup pitch. Victorious Germany, a favourite to win the tournament, were a Goliath to Curacao's David, who were attending for the first time.

But what Curacao lacks in World Cup acclaim, it makes up for in faith. Players from the Caribbean island nation, which is a territory of the Netherlands, held a 'baptism' for their plane, with friends and family singing praises as they headed to the World Cup. For many Curacao fans, their single first-half goal was an answer to prayer in itself. 'We can still be proud,' said coach Dick Advocaat, who was visibly emotional. '[My tears] are related to the joy of the Curacao people ... the joy is fantastic.'

German goal scorer Felix Nmecha honoured his faith in the game with his signature goal celebration, where he acts out the motion of laying an invisible 'crown' at the feet of the cross. Speaking about the post-match prayer, he told *ESPN*: 'During the game we're opponents, but after the game we're Christians, so we're brothers. We want to see Jesus glorified through the game.'



God's blessing: A sudden downpour that helped save Kyiv's ancient Cathedral, one of Ukraine's most sacred sites, from destruction has been described as a miracle by Bishop Avamiy who

witnessed the aftermath of a Russian attack on Kyiv.

The Dormition Cathedral at the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site dating back to the 11th century, was set ablaze during one of the heaviest Russian air attacks on the Ukrainian capital in two weeks early on 15 June. Ten people were killed across the nation, according to authorities. *The Times* reports that Bishop Avramiy, the Bishop of Boryspil and vicar of the cathedral, had been asleep in the ancient monastery when the attack began. Around 20 fire engines rushed to the site as monks ran into the burning cathedral to rescue ancient icons and artefacts.

The leader of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the UK has condemned the strike. In a statement, Bishop Kenneth Nowakowsk, the Eparchial Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of London said the attack was 'an affront not only to people of faith but to global human civilisation itself'. He added, 'The devastating overnight strike on the Kyiv-

Pechersk Lavra, which set the historic 11th-century Dormition Cathedral ablaze, represents a direct assault on the spiritual soul and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people, not only for the Orthodox World but for Ukrainians throughout the world.’ He called on the international community to condemn the attacks and asked British believers in particular to stand with them.

‘This iconic church is not just bricks and mortar – it is a place that carries the memory, identity and soul of the Ukrainian people, connecting generations through faith and shared history.’ The Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra or ‘Monastery of the Caves’ as it is known, is one of the most sacred sites in all of Eastern Christianity, and the Dormition Cathedral is its centrepiece. The complex grew out of caves dug into the hillside above the Dnipro river in the 1050s.



Christians are being urged to speak out if they spot the signs of domestic abuse during this year’s World Cup, as incidents rise around major football tournaments. The charity Women’s Aid has warned that incidents of domestic abuse increase by

more than a third (38%) when England lose in major football tournaments. There is an uptick of 26% when England win.

The charity’s new campaign, ‘The Other Kick Off’, says 11. 37 pm, when abusive partners return home after a match, is the estimated time that domestic abuse rises and marks the estimated point that many women and children dread after the football ends. Sally Hope, who is a Christian writer specialising in faith, feminism and domestic abuse, told *Premier Christian News* that while football itself does not directly cause domestic abuse, heightened emotions and alcohol consumption can exacerbate abuse where it already exists. People are being encouraged to watch out for behavioural

'red flags' among neighbours, such as sudden changes in behaviour. Sally Hope said churches can play an important role by encouraging conversations around the issue. 'Domestic abuse thrives in a culture of silence and stigma and shame, so when we remove those things, we let women know that it's safe to talk about domestic abuse, and it's safe to disclose domestic abuse'. The campaign is being displayed across digital billboards, mobile vans, and fly posters near major fan zones and football hotspots in London.



Lionel Messi has thanked God after leading Argentina to a 3-0 win over Algeria in their opening match of the 2026 World Cup. The 38-year-old scored a hat-trick as the defending champions began their tournament campaign, with Messi netting in the 17th minute, again just after the hour

mark, and completing his treble with around 15 minutes remaining. It was another landmark night for the Argentina captain, who continues to write records at the highest level, including becoming the first player of his age to score a World Cup hat-trick.

Speaking to *DSPORTS Argentina* after the match, he said: 'I can't ask for anything more than everything I've already received. As I've said many times, God has truly spoiled me. Everything that comes now is about enjoying it. I'm not focused on being first, second, third...'. Messi added that being considered among the greatest players in football history was 'an incredible compliment', saying he felt grateful for everything he has achieved in the game.



The Church of England has shared a prayer for the World Cup to be an event to bring nations and peoples together. It includes prayer for us to 'see and celebrate the hand of God' in the players' creativity -

a possible reference to Diego Maradona's infamous handball goal that knocked England out of the 1986 tournament. The prayer was released as the first match kicked off in Mexico City.

God of glory

As the world gathers to celebrate the beautiful game, we pray for a harmonious and joyful World Cup.

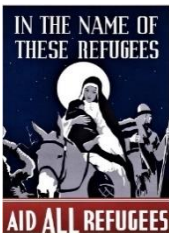
Bring safety and security for players and officials on the pitch, fans in the stands, and spectators at home.

May we see and celebrate the hand of God in the creativity of every curling free kick, silky pass or impossible save.

May we have compassion and perspective on the miskicks, missed penalties and muddled VARs.

Every winning team needs a losing team - even if it were the better team. Let the journey to World Cup glory be not only for the nation that wins.

May we see something more of the world you want us to be: a gathering of every nation and people who share your glory. Amen



United Reformed Church members have learned how a growing national network is helping congregations welcome refugees and asylum seekers through practical support, friendship and belonging. During a webinar held on Wednesday (10 June) and hosted by the United Reformed Church Public Issues Team, the Revd Samuel Luak, Church Engagement Manager for Welcome Churches, explained how the initiative began as a small grassroots response in Derby, where local volunteers recognised the needs of newly arrived refugees. 'What makes Welcome Churches unique is that it began as a local church ministry,' he said. 'Ordinary people saw a need and asked, "What can we do?" That spirit continues today.'

The network has since grown significantly and now includes more than 1,400 churches across the UK, working together to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers can find a friendly church

community close to where they live. Samuel also highlighted the complex challenges faced by those arriving in the UK seeking safety, including isolation.

Dorothy Lusmore

Volunteer Opportunity

Do you like people? Are you able to listen to them, draw out more details, and write clear summaries of what you are hearing? Are you willing to help people who are looking for work by offering 2 hours of your time on a Wednesday morning?

The LINK (based in Winchester Baptist Church on City Road) is looking for volunteers to help in the Job Seekers drop-in on Wednesdays 10.30-12.00, term-times only. The role involves helping people look online for jobs, filling in forms, and writing CVs (don't worry if you aren't used to this, we use a simple template). It also involves chatting to people who may need a bit of encouragement, and maybe helping some people prepare for interviews, for which we also have resources. The ability to make a cup of tea or coffee may prove useful!

Some weeks we are busy, some weeks we have no callers at all, so you need to be able to cope with either situation.

Are you interested in finding out more? If so, please contact Gordon Lockhart on jobseekers@thelinkwinchester.org.uk or come in and meet us on a Wednesday morning, 10.30-12 noon. Our front door is next to the Job Centre.

JOB SEEKERS COMMUNITY SUPPORT ZONE

@ The LINK Winchester



Lunch Club Entertainment Schedule S/A 2026

**United Church Hall, entertainment starts
11.30am, lunch 12.30pm**

19/06/26 - Photography Presentation

03/07/26 - Archaeology: An Introduction talk

17/07/26 - Hannah Spires Music

31/07/26 - Hampshire Community Heritage

14/08/26 - History of the Dogs Trust

28/08/26 - SUMMER CLOSURE

11/09/26 - Sarah Hobbs Music

25/09/26 - Celebrity Bingo

09/10/26 - Hampshire Fire & Rescue home safety

23/10/26 - Amanda Parsons Singer

06/11/26 - Dale Delvis, Elvis tribute

****If you would like to join us a suggested donation of £6, including lunch. Let the team know at least 48hrs before if you'd like to join in.***

Contact Mandie on 07732823248 or email
HampshireCentral@mha.org.uk

* Anna
Chaplaincy
for older people



Vintage Fun

All welcome!



Games

Monday 13th July

2 - 4 pm

at the

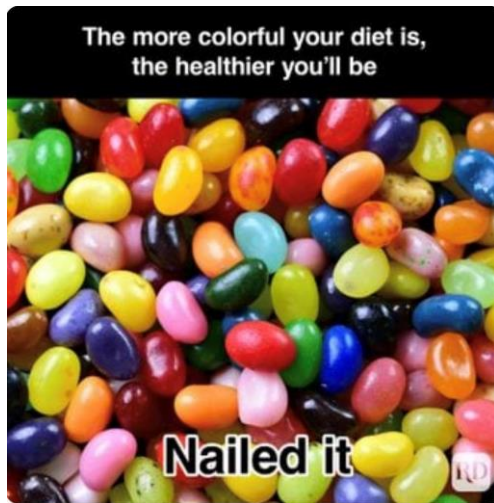
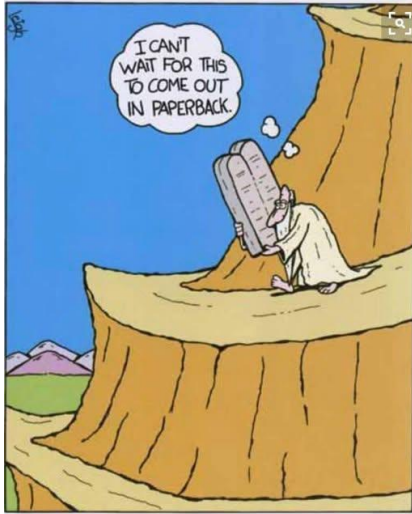
United Church

Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ

Vintage Fun is a monthly afternoon of friendship over a cup of tea. Each afternoon will offer a variety of activities, with tea and cake.

Caraway
seed

Comedy Corner



The deadline for September *Yours* is **Monday 17 August**.
All contributions welcome. Send to yours@ucw.org.uk.



Services for July 2026

In-person and live-streamed

5 JULY

10.30 am **Morning Worship (HC)** Revd Howard Mellor

12 JULY

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Margaret Axford

19 JULY

9.00 am **Holy Communion** Revd Andrew de Ville

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Pat Fry and Andrew La Follette

26 JULY

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd Howard Sharp

HC: Holy Communion

UCW website: ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/

YouTube: tinyurl.com/ucw-services





Services for August 2026

In-person and live-streamed

2 AUGUST

10.30 am **Morning Worship (HC)** Revd Adrian Bulley

9 AUGUST

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd Neil Messer

16 AUGUST

9.00 am **Holy Communion** Revd Peter Rayson

10.30 am **Morning Worship** St Cross House Group

23 AUGUST

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Revd Robert Kitching

30 AUGUST

10.30 am **Morning Worship** Tom Belshaw

HC: Holy Communion

UCW website: ucw.org.uk/streamed-services/

YouTube: tinyurl.com/ucw-services

