The HEATH

News, Views & Comment from the

United Reformed Church, Chadwell Heath

50p

Dear Friends,

I don't know about all of you, but January feels like it's lasted about six weeks! Lots going on with church and family activities picking up again after a break in December, and the cold, wet weather of late hasn't been helping either.

But spring is on the way. And as we turn the pages in our calendars from January, we find one of the surest signs—Ash Wednesday is on the 18th of February. And from there, six short weeks leading up to Easter, and the promise of warmer and sunnier weather!

But, of course, there's so much more to the season of Lent than counting the days until we don't have to wear our winter coats. Lent is a time of reflection and meditation on the life and teachings of Jesus, and especially the events that led to his sacrifice on the cross on Good Friday.

A long-standing practice in the church tradition I grew up in was to "give something up for Lent" (maybe you've done this, too). The idea is to give up something that you enjoy (i.e., chocolate, alcohol, watching telly, etc.) so that you share in the sacrificial nature of Jesus' death on the cross. And, for many folks, that practice helps them to focus their thoughts on the spiritual significance of the Lenten season.

But, when you stop to think about it, Jesus' teachings are very rarely ever about giving things up, but instead are usually about taking things on: start treating your neighbours like yourself…show love to people who are different than you…act with love and mercy...make the world a better place to live.

So this year, I encourage you to consider taking something on for your Lenten practice. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Spend time in solitude each day.
Read a book for inner growth.
Read twice through the Gospel of Luke.
Begin to keep a journal of prayer concerns, questions, and reading.
Focus on thanksgiving, rather than on asking, in prayer.
Give yourself a gift of three hours to do something you always say you don't have time to do.
Give up a grudge or a rehearsal of a past event.
Forgive someone who has hurt you.

There's any number of productive and Christ-inspired things we can do make this year's season of Lent one that changes each of our lives, and maybe someone else's life, too.

Blessings on your Lenten journeys,
Brian

Church Diary February

1st February 11:15	Morning Worship & Holy Communion.	Led by Rev. Brian Buschkill
8th February 11:15	Morning Worship	Led by Rev. Brian Buschkill
15th February 11:15	Morning Worship	Led by Diana Baker
22nd February 11:15	Morning Worship	Led by Rev. Brian Buschkill

Worship Themes

February

Church will use the themes listed below

Sunday, February 1
Micah 6:1–8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18–31
Matthew 5:1–12

Sunday, February 8
Isaiah 58:1–9a [9b–12]
Psalm 112:1–9 [10]
1 Corinthians 2:1–12 [13–16]
Matthew 5:13–20

February 15
Transfiguration of the Lord
Exodus 24:12–18
Psalm 2 *or* Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:16–21
Matthew 17:1–9

February 22
First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12–19
Matthew 4:1–11

The United Reformed Church

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Heath & Havering Churches

Chadwell Heath URC
Nelmes URC
Trinity (Upminster) URC
Western Road URC

Lenten 2026 Bible Study

Abraham's Family Grows: Genesis 23-38

All sessions to be held on Tuesday mornings at 9:45 am in Roope Hall, Trinity URC
(Sessions will be recorded and posted on our YouTube channel:
search "heath and havering urc")

3 March—Issac & Rebekah
Read: Genesis 23-26

10 March—Sibling Troubles
Read: Genesis 27-30

17 March—Jacob on the run
Read: Genesis 31-34

24 March—Jacob and his family
Read: Genesis 35-38

The United Reformed Church

Our minister, Brian, will be spending some of his office time in our local cafes and coffee shops in the coming months. You are welcome to stop by to say 'hello,' stay for a chat, or just share some light conversation over a refreshing beverage.

All sessions will take place from 9:30 to 11 am

Chadwell Heath

(1st Wednesday of the month)

Bon Appetit café

(next to Sainsbury's)

7 January

4 February

1 April

6 May

3 June

1 July

Introducing Dame Sarah Mullally - the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE officially became Archbishop of Canterbury on 28th January 2026, when she was legally confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral.

Most people know that she had been Bishop of London for several years, and that she is the first woman to ever become Archbishop of Canterbury. But what else do you know about her?

1. She was born in Woking in 1962, and is one of four children, with two sisters and one brother.

2. She attended Winston Churchill Comprehensive School and Woking Sixth Form College. She went on to South Bank Polytechnic and Heythrop College, University of London

3. She worked as a nurse in the National Health Service, which she has described as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God". She specialised as a cancer nurse and became a ward sister at Westminster Hospital, before being made Director of Nursing at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

4. In 1999, at the age of 37, she was appointed the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England in the Department of Health. She was the youngest person ever to be appointed to the post. Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2005 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing.

5. She had become a Christian at the age of 16. While working as the Chief Nursing Officer for England, she discerned a call to ordination and entered training ministry at the South East Institute for Theological Education.

6. She was ordained in 2001 and served her curacy in St Saviour's Battersea Fields, initially as a self-supporting minister, before leaving her government post in 2004, which she has described at the time as "the biggest decision I have ever made".

7. In 2012 she was installed as Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral and three years later took the role as Suffragan Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter, the fourth woman to become a Bishop in the Church of England.

8. On 12th May 2018, Bishop Sarah was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral, the first woman to hold the role.

9. Bishop Sarah sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spirituals, having been introduced on 24th May 2018. Her maiden speech paid tribute to the NHS on its 70th anniversary, telling the Lords: "I am the Bishop I am today because of that first vocation to nursing, and compassion and healing are constants at the heart of who I am."

10. She was sworn in as a member of the Privy Council in March 2018 and became Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal in July 2019.

11. As Bishop of London, she led the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process from 2020 to 2023. This included the formative stages of discernment and decision making which saw the introduction of the Prayers of Love and Faith for same-sex couples.

12. She has served on the Church's National Safeguarding Steering Group and is also Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care issues.

13. As a Lord Spiritual, she has drawn from both her pastoral experience and her background in nursing and healthcare and has played a key role in the ongoing debates on assisted dying.

14. This year, she chaired the Triennium Funding Working Group that developed the Church of England's three-year spending plan that led to significant investments in local churches and parish clergy.

15. Archbishop Sarah is married to Eamonn, an Irish-born IT and Enterprise Architect who enjoys beekeeping and volunteering as a London tourist guide.

16. The couple have two grown-up children, Liam and Grace.

17. Archbishop Sarah has continued her interest in the health service having been a non-executive director at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.

18. She is Chair of Christian Aid.

19. She has spoken openly about her dyslexia, describing her difficulties with writing and reading.

20. In her spare time, she loves cooking, walking and pottery.

Winnie the Pooh and Lent 2026

Remember the Winnie the Pooh stories? And Kanga's insistence on Baby Roo's taking his Strengthening Medicine? It's 'really quite a nice taste when you get used to it', she explained, although I'm not convinced Baby Roo always agreed.

It can be helpful to think of Lent as a sort of medicine; an opportunity to strengthen us in the things that are good, rein in other facets of our personality, and reset the compass to the true North of following Jesus. A Spring-clean of the soul, if you like.

Baby Roo (and Piglet on the one occasion he was subject to it) found Strengthening Medicine not to their liking, and we may groan inwardly at the thought of 'giving up something for Lent'. Think of what lies behind this 'giving up'. It's so that we may be strengthened, our character refined, our prejudices examined, our junk thrown overboard, and we may come to Passiontide and Easter more fit to walk the way of the Cross, and rise in new life with Jesus at His Resurrection.

Nor is Lent just a case of giving up chocolate. One year I gave up Facebook for Lent, having spent far too much time scrolling through it each day. It freed me to do other, more constructive things. And instead of giving up, why not take up something you've been meaning to do but never got round to; something life-affirming, something good for God.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 18th February. Many Christians go public with their intention to keep a good Lent by being 'ashed'- the sign of the Cross made on the forehead in a mixture of ash and holy oil at a special service that day. The ash is usually the burnt remains of the palm crosses from last year. Having been ashed, the intention of the 40 days of Lent is to maintain a steady course closer to God, symbolised by the giving up of something - like chocolate - which has a hold on us. We walk with Jesus on the way to the Cross, mindful of the 'riches of God's kindness, forbearance and patience' as St Paul has it, and mindful too of Jesus' choice of the Cross as a way for us to enter those riches more fully.

And to face the immensity of that sacrifice, and the immensity of God's riches made available to us in Jesus, we need all the Strengthening Medicine we can get!

Modomnoc and the bees of Ireland

Legend tells us that it was St Modomnoc who first brought bees to Ireland, in the early 540s AD.

Although it's more likely that the bees had drifted over from Britain after the last Ice Age all by themselves, certainly Modomnoc did his bit to help them.

Modomnoc was a 6th century abbot, probably one of the royal O'Neill family of Ireland. When he sailed over to Wales to study under St David in his Pembrokeshire monastery of Menevia, he was given the duty of caring for the bees of the monastery.

This he did so well that the bees must have grown very fond of him, because when he was setting sail to return to Ireland, a swarm of his bees settled on his ship and went back with him. Thus apiculture – and hopefully lots of honey – was introduced to Ireland.

Even the Martyrology of Oegus the Culdee (c800) records that it was "in a little boat from the east over the pure-coloured sea my Domnoc brought … the gifted race of Ireland's bees."

In time, Modomnoc, and presumably his bees, settled in Tibberaghny (Co. Kilkenny). Today, there are about 3,500 – 4,000 beekeepers in Ireland.

14th February – Valentine's Day Mystery

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century – one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14th February – the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February. One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love – Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Day – 9th February

It's odd, really, to think that that confessing one's sins to God should be linked to making pancakes. And yet the beginning of Lent brings us both – Shrove Tuesday is Pancake Day, and is followed by Ash Wednesday, and so Lent begins.

In centuries gone by, the pancakes were made to use up the milk and eggs before the fasting of Lent. More recently, many readers will have childhood memories of the wonder of watching our mothers break an egg, mix it with milk and flour – and out of that gooey mess, to produce a light and delicious pancake.

These days, more of us buy pancake mix, or even ready-made pancakes. It seems we prefer the certainty of ending up with pancakes - to the risk of having made nothing BUT a mess of the kitchen.

In many parishes they used to hold pancake races on the day. Why anyone would want to run around a field while holding a pancake is not clear, but in Olney, Bucks, they have held a pancake race almost every year since 1445.

Can you get across the pedestrian crossing in time?

Have you ever had to hurry to make it to safely across the street because the pedestrian crossing light is about to turn red again?

If so, you are not alone. A recent study has found that pedestrian crossing timings are simply too brief for many elderly people and especially those with mobility problems.

The length of time given at crossing points usually assumes a walking speed of 1.2m per second. But the study found that the average speed of adults aged over 65 is only 0.77m per second.

So more than half of older people need to increase their normal walking speed by about 50 per cent, just to reach the other curb safely.

One of the researchers said: "This isn't just a safety issue – it's potentially a barrier to independence, physical activity, and social connection, all of which often decline in later life."

Another said: "Allowing enough time to cross the road can boost confidence, support independence, and help them remain engaged in their communities, all key to a better quality of life."

The study was published in the journal *Age and Ageing.*

Come reign in me

Oh God, who made the world so fair,
And formed the earth, the sky, the sea;
Who gave us ears, and eyes, and minds,
To hear, to see, to know all love is thee.

Oh God, who in the Lord Jesus,
Gave us a light to light our way;
Let our life's lamp be lit by Him
Whose strength will see us safely through each day.

Oh God, whose Spirit gave us birth,
And holds all life secure, e'en mine;
Take all I am, and all I have, less and redeem them for they both are Thine.

Oh God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One;
Blessed be Thy name, come reign in me,
And in me let Thy will be done.

By Sam Doubtfire

The Gift

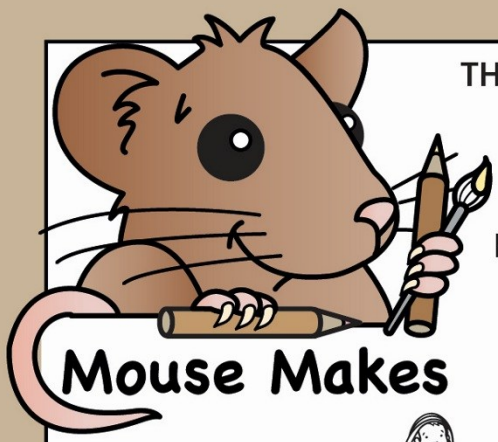
Saved by grace lest any should boast
Such is His gift obtained at great cost,
God's Son was given to set men free,
Redemption made ours as He hung on the tree.

In wonder the angels saw Him go
From the glories of heaven to our world below,
This earth once fair now corrupt from the fall,
Fellowship broken and lost to all.

Bought back with a price that we could not pay
The taint of our sin by His blood washed away,
Reconciled to the Father, all this we have gained
Salvation His gift if we call on His Name.

By Megan Carter

The United Reformed Church



Mouse Makes

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Read the story in *Luke 4:1-13*

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:
"***Man shall not live on bread alone***."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:
Read the Bible
Learn God's word.

SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:
"***Worship the Lord your God* and serve only Him**."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:
Put God **first**
Worship *only* Him.

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JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

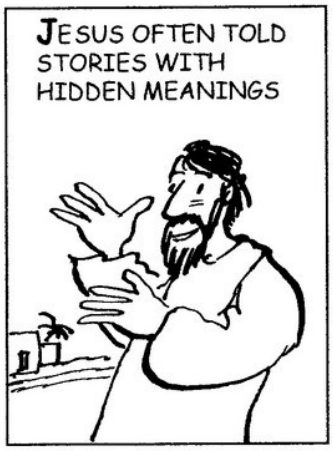
JESUS REPLIED:
"***Do not put the Lord your God to the test***."

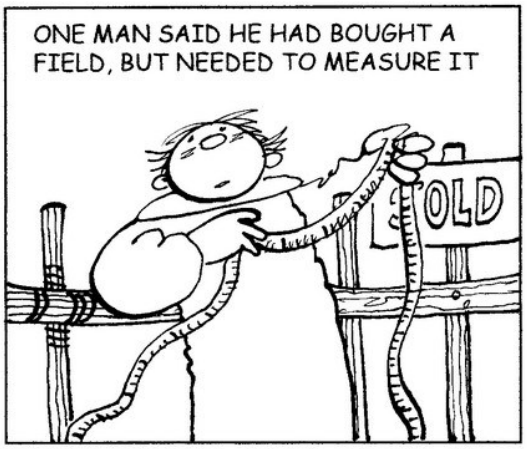
Read Deuteronomy 6:16

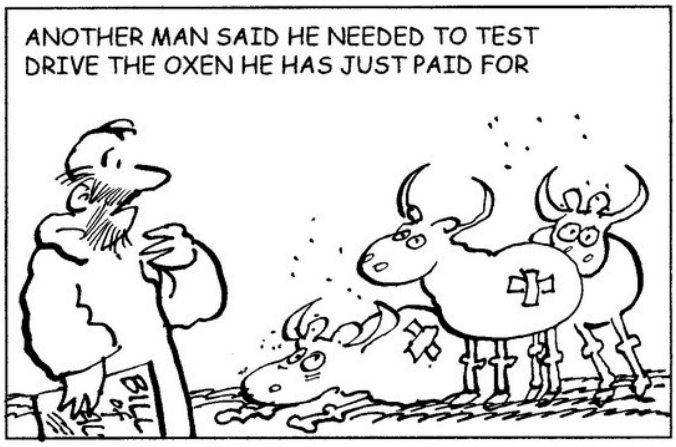
WE LEARN:
God cares, **trust**
Him do not test Him.

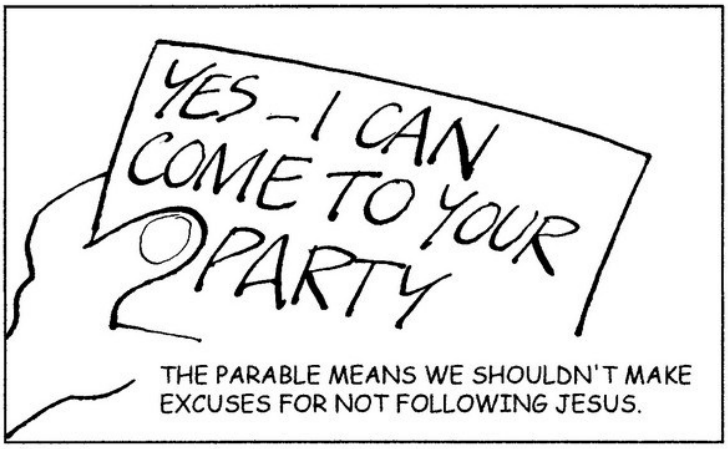
The United Reformed Church

The Big Bash!









Diary/Noticeboard:

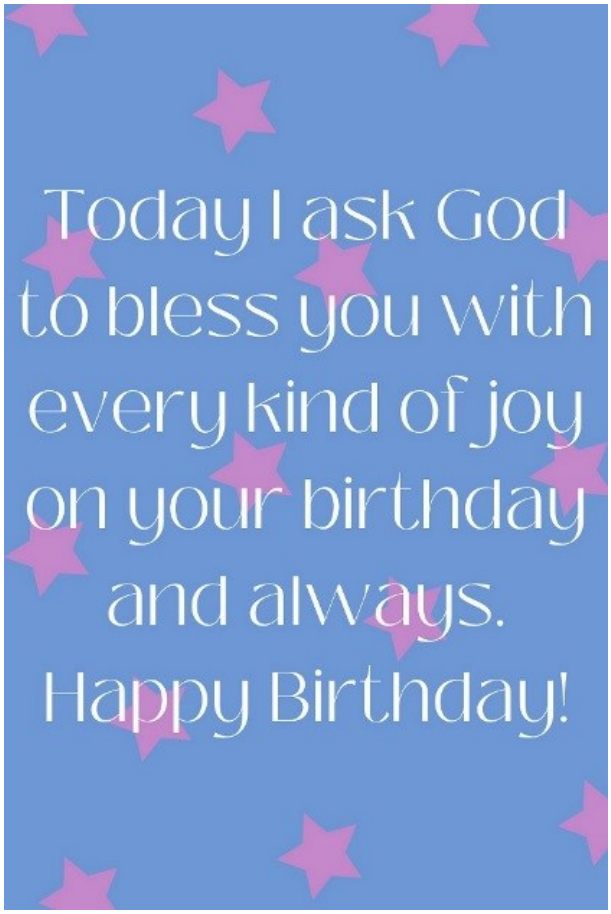
Chadwell Heath + Heath & Havering Group of Churches

Foodbank:

Thank you for your continued support.

We are currently short of Washing up liquid, Washing detergent, Toilet rolls, Hand wash, Creams, Custard/Rice pudding, UHT Milk (whole), Tinned Corned Beef, Cereals, Drinking Chocolate and Cooking Oil.

We are very grateful to receive any non-perishable food items, as well as general items e.g. washing powder/liquid, washing up liquid, tin openers – plus all important personal/ female/toiletries including soap, toothbrush-es & toothpaste/toilet rolls & baby nappies, sizes 5/6.



Happy Birthday's In February

Tim Marshall 29th

The United Reformed Church

WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES
Foodbank, Tuesday & Thursday 10:00am - 12 noon.

Web site: http://www.heathandhaveringurc.co.uk/chadwellheath.html
Chadwell Heath URC is part of the Heath and Havering Group

Inclusive Church

The United Reformed Church

Our Minister's contact details are: **Revd. Brian Buschkill 216 Corbets Tey Road, Upminster, RM14 2BL**

01708 784701 07548 447067

buschkill@gmail.com

H&H Communion Service at Nelmes

H&H Communion Service at Nelmes URC every 2nd Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm starting 14th January 2026.

Please send any news, information or an article for the Heath to Dianne Crisp. Email ChadwellheathURC@gmail.com The deadline is Monday 23rd February for the March & April Edition.

Thank you