



KINDLE

**Newsletter of the Romford
United Reformed Church at
Western Road**

January 2025

Ruth's Letter

Dear Friends

Well here we are again, just about to start another new adventure, another New Year untouched for each of us to step into. To explore with hope in our hearts and dreams to dream knowing that God walks with us.

Corrie ten Boom wrote: Worrying is carrying tomorrow's load with today's strength - carrying two days at once. It is moving into tomorrow ahead of time. Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows; it empties today of its strength.

It would be wrong to suggest that we don't have worries about what the future holds, there are as the bible says, 'wars and rumours of wars..... famines and earthquakes in various places....' Nor forget that past hurts and sadnesses cling to us and are perhaps even more raw at this time of year.

So how do we start the New Year - perhaps the words from a few Pins (Pinterest) may help us.

*sometimes our
bravest acts are
when we stop
dwelling on the
past or worrying
about the future...
and simply enjoy
the present moment.*

Amy Anderson



It is now 6 years since my Jim died and I had found after Christmas that the New year was even worse than Christmas as it heralded another year without him. Yet Abba Father has been showing me that there is hope and newness in each step I take, because it is done with Him. He is the one who holds my hand and is already ahead of me, already there wherever this journey/ adventure may take me.



Philip Yancey wrote: 'I have learnt that faith means trusting in advance what will make sense **only** in reverse.'

We have a God who loves more than we can even begin to understand, and He wrapped that love up in a tiny baby in a manger born at Bethlehem. 'This is me with skin on', God announced to the world 'Immanuel God with us.'

Love so great that Jesus laid down his life for each of us, overcame death, and lives within by his Holy Spirit. This is why we can walk with confidence and hope even in difficult and sad times, this why we need not fear the future because 'we know who holds it in His hands'.

God isn't asking
you to figure it out.
He's asking you to
trust that He
already has.

Remember you have a solid rock to stand on, to lean on, no matter how chaotic it is, He will never leave you nor let you be swept away by the storm.
Psalm 18.2

Love, hugs and peace filled blessings.

Ruth

Look What's Happening

Whitechapel Mission Collection



The winter collection for Whitechapel Mission will be taken on Monday 20th January. Please bring your donations to the church on SUNDAY 19TH JANUARY on black bin liners and leave them in the small meeting room.

news

Street Carol singing

On Tuesday 10th December, a small group of 13 from Romford URC and friends met at 7pm for Street carol singing along Lodge Avenue and The Ridgeway. Zena and Alec volunteered to be our collectors with all monies raised going to St Francis Hospice.

This is something that the church has organised for over 40 years!!

This year, Lee designed a small flyer telling the residents when we would be singing and then delivered them to every house the day before.

After singing for almost two hours, we returned to the Church for much needed refreshments kindly prepared by Margaret and Sylvia and counted the money collected.

This year we raised an amazing amount of money £401!!!!

A big thank you to everyone who took part.



Western Road Ladies

On Thursday 12th December the Western Road Ladies met for their 'bring and share' Christmas meal, which this year was hosted by Zena.



A good time was had by all - Christine hosted a quiz which was great fun, and we finished the evening with our traditional 'Snatch raffle!'

Western Road Ladies meet at the Church on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm. We do something different every month such as crafts, book review, a cinema night - so if you fancy a cuppa and a chat come along and join us.

Joanne

Boys' Brigade Company and Senior Section Visit to the Houses of Parliament

On Friday 13th December, 7 boys and 2 staff from the Company and Senior sections set off



from Romford station to meet up with Glenn and Ian at Westminster station for a tour of the Houses of Parliament. We were also joined by Glenn's brother, Wayne, and his boys, Adam and Jack, who are over from New Zealand for the holidays. We were met in Westminster Hall personally by the

Serjeant at Arms, Ugbana Oyet, in full court dress (complete with sword!), himself a member



of the Boys' Brigade as he was growing up. (Lee was very impressed that he was greeted with the BB handshake!). Following a brief chat and posing for a photo, we were left in the capable hands of one of the Serjeant's staff for our private tour.

In addition to Westminster Hall, we also visited both the House of Commons and House of Lords. As

guests of the Serjeant, we also had access to some areas that are not normally open to the public, including the terrace with a view across the Thames and looking back towards the London Eye.

After our tour, we took a quick ride on the tube to Bond Street for a walk along Oxford Street, towards Tottenham Court Road, for a look at the Christmas lights, before getting the train back to Romford to finish our evening with pizza and games at the church. We would like to thank Glenn for making this trip possible and to all the boys for coming. They were a real credit to the Company.





Dear Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for your generous giving to our Church over the last 12 months.

In terms of our charitable giving, we have been able this year to send Motor Neuron Disease Association £ 7,127.00 which is phenomenal.

We have also made donations of £236.30 to Christian Aid.

We have sent donations of £2400 to Havering Women's Aid and £401.07 to St Francis Hospice.

The total of our charitable giving this year amounts to £10,165.30.

You have every reason to give yourselves a pat on the back.

Besides all this, I would personally like to thank you for all that you do to keep our church functioning as well as it does. To all the trustees who have tirelessly worked to ensure that our building is safe, warm and inviting. To the Elders for their pastoral care of their groups, and to all those who look after our young people on a Sunday morning. To all those who have made coffee and tea after the services. To those who have provided and arranged flowers. To Lee, who goes above and beyond his duties as caretaker to make sure that our needs are met. I would also like to thank all those who have organised events and those who have attended the events and made them so successful.

I would like to thank all those who have taken services this year, and who have enabled us to worship in a variety of different ways, and all those who faithfully pray for our Church family.

Each one of you is important to the life of this Church, you are part of an incredible family, and you are appreciated.

As we go into 2025 let us approach it with hope, love and a sense of belonging.

No one can do everything, but by doing what you. can you make Romford URC a very special place.

Thank you All.

Fiona

What's a spider's New Year's resolution?

To spend less time on the web.

This article by Peter Patterson was found in the December 1985 issue of Progress, the monthly magazine of the Romford United Reformed Church`

"Glory to God in the highest..." sang the angels heralding the very first Christmas. "Glory, glory, hallelujah!" we sing as we reach the chorus of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. "See you in Glory," we say as we part from Christian friends, we might not see this side of Heaven. But what do we mean by this word GLORY?

In the Old Testament the Hebrew word carried the idea of worthiness. When used of men it spoke of their wealth or splendour. However, the glory of Israel was not in her riches but in her God - Yahweh. His glory was revealed in the cloud which led His people and settled on Mount Sinai (Ex. 16:19 and 24:15).

In the New Testament the Greek word in its secular sense means reputation. However, it is used mainly to describe the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

Reflected in Jesus

"He reflects the brightness of God's glory," says the writer to the Hebrews in chapter one and verse three. The glory of God was to be revealed in many of the events surrounding the earthly ministry of Jesus.

In John's Gospel the hour of Christ's death is called His hour of glory showing that it was no accident but the supreme revelation of God's love and justice at the cross.

The challenge for us is that the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ should still be seen and reflected in the church (2 Cor 4:3f).

The resurrection and ascension are manifestations of the glory of God in Christ but above all it will be revealed in its fullness at the end of time when Christ comes again to take all believers to be with Him. See you in Glory!



Dear God,
at the beginning of this New Year
we remember with thanksgiving.
the ways you have been present with us in the year past –
in times of fun and laughter, as well as tears and sorrow.
And as we look forward to 2025.
not knowing what the future may bring,
we do so in hopeful anticipation
mindful of your promise to be with us always,
in your Son and by your Spirit.
We pray that your ways of peace, justice and love.
may be known on the earth as in Heaven.
May we be witnesses of your love in our lives?
and through the life of the church,
so that the light of hope shines brightly into the darkness of the world.
In Jesus name,
Amen

*Revd David Salsbury
Moderator of the URC National Synod of Wales.*

Do you remember our former Minister?



Congratulations to the Revd Peter Brewer, who was presented with a certificate, by the Eastern Synod Moderator the Revd Lythan Nevard on celebrating 75 years since his ordination. Now 103-years-old, Peter is “still bright and interested in life and a man of deep faith. He is exactly 44 years older than me as we share a birthday,” said Lythan.



Lord, grant me the strength to carry out my resolutions in 2025. May my faith in You be unwavering, and may I rely on Your strength to overcome every challenge. **Philippians 4:13** says, “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” May Your power be at work in me every day.

There are believed to be around 11,000 Christians in Mauritania, making them a tiny minority in the country, where most of its five million people are Muslim. Mauritania is staunchly Islamic, making it very difficult for Christians to express their faith. For converts from Islam, it's almost impossible.

Apostasy (converting away from Islam) is legally punishable by death. There are thankfully no known examples of this in recent years – but the threat remains. Converts risk expulsion from families and loss of livelihood; they may even be forced to leave the country. Baptisms can only be carried out secretly, but many converts are reluctant to do this, fearing the awful consequences of discovery.

Evangelism is strictly forbidden, and it can lead to prosecution, whilst activities are restricted to designated places of worship. Most Christians in Mauritania are immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and they can face discrimination in employment, both because of racial and faith-based discrimination. They face additional economic difficulties due to the government's 'Arabisation' policy, which leaves less room for foreign workers, especially Christian foreign workers.



Although the growth of the internet and social media helps converts to connect with other Christians, this is still fraught with difficulty due to slow technological development in many regions as well as a lack of privacy within families. With Christianity viewed as a negative Western influence in Mauritania, life for believers in the country is extremely difficult, with many forced to keep their faith secret.

According to Mauritania's tribal society, women are subject to the authority of their fathers and husbands, meaning those who convert from Islam are viewed as having disregarded their male authority and thus bringing shame on their family. This can lead to house arrest, bullying, forced marriage or divorce, which can mean poverty and destitution.

Christian men who come from a Muslim background can also face accusations of bringing shame on their families, and the consequences can be severe – including ostracism, expulsion, physical abuse and charges of apostasy. For their own safety and wellbeing, they're likely to have to flee the country.

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