



Hertford

Cowbridge SG14 1PG

JOY TO THE WORLD



DECEMBER 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

We aim to be an active Christian Church open to all, meeting together for worship, teaching and prayer and offering loving care and support to all. We work alongside other Christian

Dear Friends

It is no secret that this time of year can be complicated for many of us for a variety of reasons. For some, the glow of Christmas lights seems to mock the dimness of personal struggles. The hustle of festivities can feel overwhelming, burying us under expectations we cannot meet.

While we will be celebrating the season because of the profound significance of Jesus' birth, this will be a very different Christmas for me and my family. Recovering from surgery during this season brings uncertainty and we are leaning on God's Grace through this time. Around the world, many Christians will spend this season displaced from their homes, some in dangerous situations, and others grieving the recent loss of loved ones and more.

Yet, in all of this, we can take heart, for the first Christmas was anything but easy. It came to a family displaced, a people oppressed, and a world crying out for rescue. And God showed up – unexpected, vulnerable, and unrelenting in love.

We are a people of hope, but hope is not naïve. It does not pretend that all is well. Hope is what burned in the shepherds when the sky overflowed with angels, proclaiming that God was near. Hope is what stirred in Simeon and Anna as they watched and waited for a Saviour who would heal what was broken. And hope is what Christ offers us today: not an escape, but a presence that sustains us in all circumstances.

The story of Christmas assures us that light will not be overcome. It reminds us that God does not merely visit the earth; God dwells with us – Emmanuel.

So let us be courageous this Christmas. Courageous in our joy, knowing it is not an escape but a declaration of trust in God's promises. Courageous in our generosity. Even when resources are thin, because love shared multiplies. Courageous in our lament, because naming our grief allows light to enter the cracks. And courageous in our faith, because God's presence is real and active, even now.

With blessings of peace and courage.
Mark

DROP IN ART GROUP

Tuesday 17th December, at Broxbourne URC

2 pm – 3.30 pm.

Drop in and explore creativity

Jill

PRAYERS

Continue to pray for Bob, Fran and their family.

Continue to pray for Jan Carter

Continue to pray for Pam Hollis in Westgate Nursing Home

Continue to pray for Shirley Sloan

Continue to pray for Phoebe and her family

Continue to pray for Ruth and Bernard

Pray for Mark as he undertakes his surgeries this month.

Pray for Janet and Trevor Williams' daughter, Jo, as she continues her fight against cancer.

Pray for people known to you that they may know God's love and strength

MILL MEAD SCHOOL

Having met with Mill Mead School, they are keen to work with the URC and have offered the opportunity to take a Crib Service in school with KS1 pupils. This will be led by John Ellis on Wednesday 4th December.

It is greatly encouraging to be working with them and they are excited to be participating in the Carol Service on the 15th December.

We will keep you updated on future events.

Heather.

SERVICE on 29th December

Our Church service on Sunday 29th December, to be led by John Ellis, will acknowledge the work of the Foodbank and will thank volunteers. Regular donors will be invited along, together with agencies, Community Champions, Trustees, Committee members and, of course, volunteers.

Please come along to support this service.

NEW – SHORT-MAT BOWLS SESSIONS IN COWBRIDGE HALL
ALL WELCOME – even if you have never bowled before.
MONDAY MORNING 10 – 12 and THURSDAY EVENINGS 7 – 9.30



You've probably seen bowls on television or at a local outdoor club although you may not have seen the short-match version of the game. Short mat bowls is played indoors on a 45 foot long by 6 foot wide mat and has basically the same rules as other formats except that there is a pesky wooden block across the centre of the mat to prevent "straight down the middle" firing shots.


Short mat is to bowls what 20Twenty is to cricket. It's a shorter version of the game, not just in the playing surface but also in the number of ends played. Games typically consist of 8 to 12 ends. Because a lot of bowls can finish close to the jack, a wide variety of shots are played and the results can be quite spectacular.



Is this an 'Old Man's Game'? Definitely not. It is a game that can be played equally by all ages and both sexes. It is ideal for people looking for a great social environment where they can meet new and old friends while taking part in a dynamic sport. Most competitions and matches are mixed (any combination of men and women). For the younger bowlers there is an England Under-21 side to aspire to and the ESMBA run a National Under-18 Championship.

Is this a 'Mickey-Mouse' Game? This tired old comment is often heard from bowlers of the more traditional formats who think its just a bit of fun and a way to while away the out of season months. Of course you can play just for fun, but if you like your sport a bit more competitive, there are plenty of opportunities to test yourself. There are competitions at club, county, national and international level right up to a World Championship held every couple of years. There is also a thriving open tournament programme run by the Short Mat Players Tour.

Equipment – If you are an indoor or outdoor bowls player you already have all the equipment you will need. The game is played with standard bowls and footwear. The one thing you won't need is your waterproofs. If you have never played there is a selection of bowls already purchased or given to us for use, so just come along if you have some bowls shoes or indoor shoes with flat soles – all the better to protect the mat, but this is not essential to see what it is all about.

I do hope you will be able to support this new venture that at last hopes to get off the ground and is a way of inviting new people to get to know us at Hertford URC.



 The Mimram Singers 
and SAVoce present:

Out of Darkness we have Light

*a concert of music and poetry
for Christmas and Epiphany*

On Sunday 5th January, 2025 at 3.00pm

**at the United Reformed Church,
Cowbridge, Hertford.**

Light Refreshments
Retiring Collection in aid of the Isabel Hospice

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT,
ROUND YON VIRGIN MOTHER AND CHILD,
HOLY INFANT SO TENDER AND MILD,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.

DECEMBER 2024

Sun	1	10.30 am	No Morning Worship today at HURC
Wed	4	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
Thurs	5	10.00 am	Open House Coffee morning
Sun	8	10.30	Morning Worship- led by Rev David Ronco, Baptist Church
Wed	11	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
Thurs	12	10.00 am	Open House Coffee morning – followed by Hot Potato lunch – all are welcome
Sun	15	10.30 am	Family Carol Service, welcoming the Mill Mead School Choir. Service led by John Ellis. Refreshments will be served after the Service.
Wed	18	8.00 pm	On-line Prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
Thurs	21	10.00 am	Open House Coffee morning
Sun	22	10.30 am	Morning Worship – led by the Elders
Sun	29	10.30 am	Morning Worship – led by John Ellis.

***Foodbank opens on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings 10 – 11 am and on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 10.30 – 11.30 am at the Priory, Ware.
Enquiries 07851 708470***

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