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March 2026

It's the Swedes who've done it! No doubt we all hoped Scotland would win the mixed curling as it's what they are famous for. But the Swedes Isabella and Rasmus Wrana are the gold medallists—siblings as are the USA figure skaters. We hear much of sibling rivalry—especially in the Bible—but how refreshing to see what skill and training can achieve within a family. How proud must those parents be! But in the medals table as a country there was initially disappointment for us. We have needed to look beyond winning to feel the pleasure and excitement of participating in the ultimate winter sports competition. The athletes are thrown together in a village full of the best and most dedicated competitors from around the world. What great opportunities for them to share some thoughts about and awareness of each other's countries, cultures and religions.

Dear Friends,

March carries us into Lent.

We step into Lent with ashes. It is like a burning away of the old and turning to what God is making new. Lent calls the church to remember who we are and whose we are.

For Reformed people, Lent is not theatre. It is formation. We do not enter these forty days to perform sorrow, we enter to tell the truth before God. We confess because grace has already claimed us. We repent because mercy has already found us. We fast, pray, and give because we trust that God is shaping us into a people who live for more than ourselves.

The Reformers spoke of the Christian life as continual turning. Not a single dramatic moment, but a steady re-orientation of heart and mind toward God. Lent gives us space for that turning. It invites us to examine what directs our desires, what forms our habits, and what quietly governs our loyalties.

In a season of amalgamation, this matters deeply.

As we move toward resurrection and newness of life, Lent asks us: what do we need to release? What needs to be forgiven? What needs to be strengthened? Unity does not grow through efficiency alone. It grows through

shared repentance, shared prayer, shared hope.

We are learning again that the church belongs to Christ. Not to memory. Not to preference. Not to fear. Christ is the head of the church, and we are members of one another. That truth steadies us.

Lent should deepen our faith and help us to make space so that love becomes more deliberate, justice more courageous, mercy more instinctive. It is about allowing God to search us and lead us into wider life.

We walk toward the cross.

We walk trusting grace.

We walk together.

May this season give us clarity.

May it give us honesty.

May it give us courage.

And may God form in us a community shaped by truth, humility, and hope.

With faith and steady trust,

Mark

Please remember to visit the Commitment for Life web-page to see who we can be supporting and praying for—at the moment people in Zimbabwe. Remember to drink Fair Trade tea!

STOP PRESS

ART DROP-IN March 24th in the Broxbourne Lounge with Jill. Materials provided.

CONVERSATIONAL BIBLE STUDY Laurence says: we will be meeting every other Wednesday commencing **4th**

March until the 9th December. All welcome. We will be starting with the subject of "GLORY".

Lent Lectures

Photo by Nik Shulajin on Unsplash

We invite you to our Lent Lectures 2026 - St Augustine's Church, Parish of Broxbourne with Wormley



Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull
Tuesday 3rd March, 7.30pm

Artificial Intelligence – “In the beginning God Created the heaven and the Earth”

The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull is an Anglican Priest based at St Albans Cathedral and working as the Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) for the diocese of St Albans. Through serving in evangelical city-centre and traditional rural parishes, as an Anglo-Catholic cathedral, and in a range of diocesan roles, Tim has been shaped by the full spectrum of the church. He has been a member of the Lee Abbey Community, a country vicar, a chartered software engineer, and a university lecturer in computer science.

Within the Church, he has taught in the areas of preaching, leadership and Christian ethics. He has degrees from Oxford and Cambridge Universities in mathematics and theology, respectively. He gained a PhD from Durham University in software engineering and a second PhD from King's College London in theology and genetics. He is a member of the Society of Ordained Scientists and a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts.

He has served on the Church of England's General Synod since 2010 and more recently as a member of the Mission and Public Affairs Council. He heads up *Enabling Leaders* which is the Church's national leadership development programme for disabled and neurodivergent clergy and laity.

His interests include faith responses to fake news and disinformation, and the interface between theology and Artificial Intelligence – a topic on which he has spoken widely. He is a founder member of the AI Christian Partnership.



Julia Pascoe
Tuesday 24th March, 7.30pm
The Last Supper

London born and bred, Julia Pascoe first worked with Jews for Jesus as a volunteer.

Julia grew up knowing three things: she was Jewish, there was someone called God, and her family didn't believe in Jesus. The sudden death of Julia's mother caused her to question God's existence. She went to psychics and mediums but found no peace.

In her late 20s, Julia met a Christian who told her that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. She was challenged to read messianic prophecies found in the Tanach (Torah) that point to Jesus. She discovered that Jesus had all the credentials that the prophets said the Messiah would have. In 1998, Julia accepted Jesus as her Messiah! She finally found the shalom she'd been searching for.

Julia joined Jews for Jesus in 2004, serving in their UK branch, and has since then led many outreaches including music group Blue Mosaic, and the UK branch from 2013–2019. Today, she helps Jewish people make up their own minds about who Jesus is. Her greatest passion is supporting new Jewish believers in Jesus, offering one-to-one Bible studies, and helping each new believer find their identity in Messiah and their place within the body of Messiah.

Suggested Donation £10 per person, per lecture to help towards Parish funds

Invitation to Lent lectures at St Augustine's Broxbourne

Tuesday 3 March 7.30pm Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull – Artificial Intelligence. 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'

Tuesday 24 March 7.30pm Julia Pascoe 'The Last Supper'

See poster above.

David Davies sent this message from Churches Together:

Dear All

You will be aware that we as Churches Together run a 6-week Bereavement course (in partnership with Isabel Hospice) called Grief Encounters, which is proving very helpful for those who are bereaved. We currently run this course twice a year (Feb/Mar and Sept/Oct) on a Friday afternoon in St Catherine and St Paul's Church, Hoddesdon. This was being run by one of our Hear4U Listeners, but she now has her own caring responsibilities for her aging mother, so I am currently running the courses. I am happy to do this for the time being, but I think it would be wise to train up one or two other people to run this course.

It would be helpful to have someone who is used to leading group discussions and who is a good listener. If there is anyone in your congregations who might be interested, I would suggest that they attend some of the sessions of the next course (Friday afternoons in February and March) to see what they think. If they are still interested, they could then attend the one in Sept/Oct as part of their training, and start running the course themselves in the Spring or Autumn of 2027.

If you know of anyone in your congregation who might be interested, please ask them to contact me. I would be grateful for your prayers that we find people who can take this forwards. This is such a helpful course for people.

With best wishes

Diana

Worship this month

March 1st 10.30 am	Brox URC	John Danso
8th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Martin Legg Communion
15th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Kathleen Lang Mothering Sunday
22nd 10.30 am	Brox URC	Jackie Hall
22nd 3.00pm	Cheshunt Free Church	Thanksgiving Service at Cheshunt. Moderator—George Watt Revd Mark Robinson
29th 10.30am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson Receive Marion Smith into membership
APRIL 5th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Easter Sunday Revd Mark Robinson Welcome Service to celebrate the amalgamation of Cheshunt Free Church with Broxbourne URC.

REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR DIARY

COMET Please come along if you enjoy togetherness - that is meeting friends over a cuppa in the church hall and having a chat and possibly a game of Rummikub. There are occasionally special sessions such as fish and chips. It is on Mondays, 2-4pm, in the church hall and continuing during the summer.

SHORT MAT BOWLS Every Thursday evening in the church hall. Please speak to Alan Earl if you would like to join.

AFTER EIGHTS is now open to gentlemen as well as ladies. A programme of interesting talks in the church hall on the first Tuesday of each month from 2pm-4pm. If you are interested in attending a meeting please speak to Brenda McAuliffe or Marion Hall - or just go along at 2.00pm.

PRAYER GATHERING every Wednesday at 8pm via Zoom for approximately 45 minutes. All are welcome to come and pray silently or aloud, or to be still and enjoy an oasis of peace - please contact Rosemary Woodall for further information email rosemary.woodall@ntlworld.com or to be included in the circulation list.

BIBLE STUDY Generally fortnightly in the Oasis Room at 2pm on Wednesdays. Speak to Laurence Sinden. Tea/coffee and biscuits.

Rosemary writes:

Our lovely cleaner, Dom, is retiring in April after many years with us and we are actively seeking a suitably experienced cleaner take over from him and to continue his good work. If this is not of interest to you personally, please have a think whether you know of anyone that might be interested, pass this on to them and encourage them to consider applying. Thank you



PART-TIME CLEANER

Broxbourne URC, Mill Lane.EN10 7BQ

We're looking for a reliable, friendly cleaner to help keep our church clean and welcoming for worshippers and community groups. You should be able to work independently, be physically able to carry out cleaning tasks, and be respectful of a church environment. Cleaning experience is helpful but not essential.

Hours:

Monday–Friday, 6:30–8:30am (2 hours daily), with occasional extra hours.

Duties:

General cleaning of toilets, hall, meeting rooms and worship space, emptying bins, and restocking supplies.

Pay:

Hourly rate based on experience (paid monthly).

Apply / Enquiries:

Email: hallssec@hotmail.com

Phone: 07707 180296

References: Two required (at least one professional).

Deadline: Noon, Monday 23 March 2026

Interviews: Week beginning 30 March 2026

Start date: Monday 13 April 2026 (with shadowing the week before).

IN OUR CHURCH HALL— MARCH

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| 3rd | 2.00pm After Eights Lindsey Barrell introduction to Sign Language |
| 14th | 7.30pm Hoddesdon Music Club Maxim Calver Cello |
| 17th | 7.30 pm for coffee before 7.50 start, Lowood Society Rye House An Unexpected Victorian Resort |
| 31st | 7.45 for 8PM SE Herts RSPB Natural History Secretary David Utting Discovering where the wild things are. |



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday 6th March 2026

What are Nigeria's concerns and hopes for 2026?

'I will give you rest, come' Matthew 11 v28 - 30

Methodist Church, Middlefield Rd, Hoddesdon,
EN11 9ED

11am followed by coffee & lunch.

Again at Wormley Community Centre,
Fairfield Drive, EN10 6DX

7:30pm followed by refreshments

Contact at Broxbourne URC: Natasha Appiah

Your are warmly invited
to join us for a

Service of Thanksgiving

SUNDAY 22 MARCH AT 3 PM
CHESHUNT FREE CHURCH
27 HIGH STREET, EN8 0BS

*as we gather for the final act of worship in this
building before our forthcoming amalgamation
with United Reformed Church Broxbourne*



GRAPEVINE

Our perfect but tiny granddaughter Millie Abbie (second name in memory of her little sister) was born 7 weeks early to Suzanne and Daniel Flowers at the Rosie Maternity Cambridge.

She weighed just 4lbs 2oz, but was able to breathe by herself. Feeding was more of a problem and for the first 2 weeks of her life she had to be tube fed. Millie stayed in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for 4 days and was doing so well she was taken in an incubator by special paediatric ambulance to Lister Hospital Stevenage, where she was placed in an open cot in their NICU.

Then miraculously she was allowed home, still with the feeding tube in place, at the age of just 9 days old. She is gaining weight now 4lbs 8ozs and is more alert, especially at between 1am and 5am!! We thank God for this extremely precious gift as well as all the medical staff at both hospitals.

Mary and Chris Bite



Broxbourne Food Bank Please remember to bring donations to the foodbank as our communion offering.

Monday 4th May 2026

Broxbourne URC

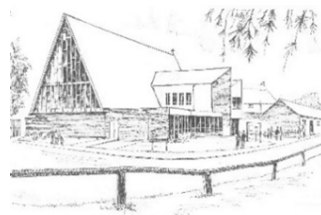
May CRAFT & PLANT Market

Lots of help needed!

setting up beforehand, selling
from 1.30pm to 4.30pm and
clearing up afterwards.

**We need YOU! Can you
help?**

**Or come & sell – for tables
ring 07707 180296**



March to the May Market



Here we are again in winter, heading towards Spring.

So, you all know that this is the month when we begin to advertise our May Market.

As usual this will take place on the first May Bank Holiday Monday, which this year is Monday 4th May.

The change of plan from last year seemed to suit many folk so we have decided to go with it once again this year.

Times are **1.30-4.30pm** so afternoon with a Cream Tea, Plant stall etc.

Lots of help required please for our Church stalls, and provision of home produce, vintage and toys, the latter of which we hope our Junior Church youngsters will help us with.

We will be inviting more outside stall holders to fill the gaps, our Hall and the Upper Room this year. We are looking to use the lounge for more seating space for teas.

Please offer your help, even for a couple of hours.

Watch this space for more information in next month's magazine.

The Bites and Woodalls.

Hot off the press is news that we have already sold 2 tables within 24 hours of the emails to previous stallholders being sent out!

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Dear all, Romans 15 v 13

Across the pastorate, this month has spoken of a church that continues to live at the meeting point of past, present, and future. We give thanks for healing, for new beginnings, for testimony, and for the faithful witness entrusted to us.

From Stepanka

I attended the **Synod Resources Day** on Saturday 31 January where important updates for Church Secretaries, Treasurers, Administrators and Property Managers were shared. The Resource Day Materials were issued by the Synod yesterday and I will be distributing the information to relevant people within the pastorate shortly.

Last month was particularly busy with **safeguarding**. The Annual Safeguarding Returns have now been submitted for all three churches. I have also been involved in dealing with several safeguarding issues and concerns.

Unfortunately, I found that my safeguarding duties became increasingly harder for me to execute due to a number of obstacles. As a result, I have **decided to step down from the Pastorate Safeguarding Coordinator role** and have informed the Elders of my decision **on 5 February**. Please note that this role was not part of my job description, so my admin duties will not become reduced. My grateful thanks to many of you who continue to keep everyone safe within the churches!

Reminder that a special **Joint service with Catriona Wheeler** (Moderator of the General Assembly) is taking place this Sunday 22 February at Trinity Church in Enfield EN2 6AN. The service will start at 10:30 am and will be followed by tea/coffee and cake. Please see the attached Order of Service for more details.

From Mark

February has been a month marked by encounter. Encounter with God in healing and prayer, encounter with testimony and new life, and encounter with the living story of the church through its memory and history. I don't use names in my updates because I am not always able to ask permission to identify folks by name.

At **Hertford**, we gathered for a Rededication and Communion service centred on healing and prayer. The service held a sense of sacred space. As in each service we came carrying burdens, hopes, questions, and gratitude. Through prayer, song and engagement and the sharing of bread and wine, we were reminded that God meets people in every place of life, in strength and in fragility, in certainty and in searching. It was a service shaped by commitment, compassion, and the steady presence of God among God's people.

At **Broxbourne**, we shared in a moving All-Age Adult Baptism and Communion service. The presence and participation of children gave the service a sense of honesty and openness. The baptism testimony was deep, spoken with clarity and courage, reminding us that faith journeys are living stories still being written. As we gathered around the Communion table together — children, young people, and adults — there was a deep sense of shared belonging and shared calling as one body in Christ.

At **Cheshunt**, as part of our ongoing amalgamation journey, we have begun the careful and respectful work of gathering historical items for deposit in local archives, alongside our Broxbourne archives. This work feels deeply significant. It is about honouring those who came before us while also preparing to carry their witness forward into a new shared future.

During this process, through determination and wit, we opened a long-locked cabinet and discovered six **historic volumes**. Among them was a handwritten book that appears to date from the 1800s, connected to records linked to the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. The Countess founded the ministerial training college that later became established at Cheshunt as Cheshunt College, which formed part of the wider story of Reformed ministerial formation in this country. Holding these materials was a powerful reminder that we are part of a long and faithful story; one shaped by courage, conviction, and a deep desire to see lives and communities transformed through the gospel.

Following Stepanka stepping down from the Safeguarding Coordinator role, we are currently in conversation with Synod to ensure appropriate safeguarding and DBS verification arrangements are in place across the pastorate. Safeguarding oversight continues, and further updates will be shared as we progress.

Thank you for the many ways you continue to live out faith, hope, justice, mercy, and love in this shared life together.

Mark writes:

Prayer

Living God,
You walk with your people through every season of life.
You meet us in healing and in celebration,
in memory and in new beginnings.

Where there is weariness, breathe renewal.
Where there is uncertainty, plant hope.
Where there is change, grow courage and trust.

As we hold the stories of those who came before us,
shape us into people who will leave faithful stories behind us.

Form our worship.
Guide our decisions.
Strengthen our shared life.
Lead us into the future you are bringing into being.

Through Christ, who calls us into life together ~ Amen.

Next to the lift on the first floor there is a small library, If you look at the display you may be the first to find and, if you choose to, borrow, the novel 'A Measure of Breath' by Revd

Mark Richard Robinson.



We already knew that Mark has a talent for drawing but from a reading of his novel it is clear that he is also an imaginative wielder of words. The narrator is on a literal journey which provides him with time to reflect on his role as a minister as he faces a difficult ruling about a colleague so it is also a spiritual journey. As he prepares to reach his destination, the narrator's thoughts range over many issues and questions about the nature of faith. The book is rewarding and surprising,

Other Meetings and events

Thursday 5th March 9am Prayer Fellowship - Zoom

Friday 6th March World Day of Prayer (see invitation)

Monday 9th March 6.30pm by Zoom tbc Amalgamation Delivery Team

Sunday 22 March 3pm Service of Thanksgiving at Cheshunt Free Church

Future Dates

Easter Sunday 5th 10.30am Welcome service with Cheshunt Free Church

Tuesday 28th April-7pm Joint Elders' Meeting in the Lounge, Broxbourne URC

David Davies has forwarded this message from Ben Quant of Churches Together:

I thought I should send out a quick email to keep you up to date as regards where we're at in regards to the management of the foodbank. As you should be aware from our last meeting, Jeremy Pearce and Elaine Batten are standing down from managing/coordinating the foodbank on Maundy Thursday. This means we need to put in place new leadership to take the foodbank forwards in their absence.

We recognise that it is highly unlikely that we will be able to identify volunteers who like Jeremy and Elaine will in effect work full time for us (incidentally, I should say that we are extremely grateful for their service, and will be holding an event in due course to mark this - I'll pass on details once they have been finalised), and so instead, we are looking to pull together a management team who between them coordinate the daily running of the foodbank at the warehouse. This will mainly revolve around tasks such as taking referrals from agencies, dealing with other organisations and overseeing the warehouse volunteers. We are hoping to pull together a team of people who are willing to give 1 or 2 days a week towards this.

Can you help us identify this team? We have potentially three volunteers in place, another 1 or 2 would be fantastic. Point them in my direction (ben.quant@gmail.com or 07913 331196). They can also have a look at this article I put on our church website with a little more information: <https://wormleyfreechurch.org.uk/2026/01/23/needed-volunteers-for-broxbourne-foodbank/>

As trustees of the foodbank, we plan to shadow Jeremy and Elaine over March in order to gain a deeper understanding of what they do, and then with that knowledge, enable a transition to a team management set up that won't break what's already in place, but hopefully will make it able to work with a team in as efficient a way as possible.

Please make this need a matter for urgent prayer in your congregations and advertise this opportunity. I would also appreciate it if you could consider if there is anyone you know who may have the time and appropriate people/management skills for this task. Although the foodbank has a Christian ethos, it is not restricted to simply Christian volunteers, and it maybe you know someone outside the church who might be ideal for the work. Again, let me know or point them in my direction.

Many thanks!

THANK YOU—this is the first magazine I have edited since Debbie stepped back from doing the distribution. I don't know how many years Debbie had undertaken this task but she was a great team-player sending cheery and encouraging messages, Thank you so much Debbie. Covid meant Debbie had to change some of her routine and over time with the introduction of mass emailing her task was reduced but still time consuming. Now Debbie can prioritise her grandchildren. Do stay in touch Debbie and thank you for all your support.

THANK YOU Dorothy for stepping up and keeping the magazine going over the past few months—I'm glad you did it so ably—you never know when your skills might be needed again.



Mark writes:

Trust and a Question Worth Asking

During Lent we often speak about repentance.

Many of us were taught to think of repentance as feeling sorry — a moment of regret, an apology offered to God.

Yet in the New Testament, the word translated as repent means something deeper. It speaks of a change of mind, a turning of direction, a reordering of life.

Repentance is not simply sorrow.

It is reorientation.

John Calvin described the Christian life as continual repentance — not because believers live in constant failure, but because grace continually reshapes us. As God's mercy meets us, our loves are re-ordered. What once governed us loosens its grip. Christ becomes the centre.

This matters.

If repentance is only about guilt, Lent can feel heavy and inward.

If repentance is about reorientation, Lent becomes spacious and hopeful.

It invites questions such as:

What is shaping our instincts?

What governs our decisions?

What story directs our common life?

For a church walking toward newness of life together, this question carries weight.

So here is something worth asking over tea:

When you hear the word repentance, do you think of regret - or of reorientation?

And if God is turning us again toward Christ, what might need to shift in us - personally and together?

EDITOR Julia Davies juliadavies890@btinternet.com