



HERTFORD, Cowbridge, SG14 1PG



**MARCH 2026**

## **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 Churches reaching out into the Community with love.**

---

**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

---

## **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?

---

## PASTORATE UPDATE

### Romans 15:13:

*“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,

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 involved 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!

### **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.

### **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.

## PRAYERS

Continue to pray for Bob, Fran and their family.

Continue to pray for Jan Carter

Continue to pray for Phoebe who is still seriously ill.

Continue to pray for Shirley's grandson, Michael, and her Great Grandson, Vinney, currently awaiting an operation. .

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

Pray for Kim as she recovers from surgery.

Pray for Jant Dummett as she recovers from hip surgery.

Pray for Margaret as she recovers from her hip operation

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

---

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**  
A service for everyone!

**Friday 6 March**

*I will give you rest, come*

**Nigeria 2026**

2.00 pm

St. Andrew's Church

Hertford



**INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION**

24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led  
[wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk) Registered Charity Number 233242

**Please come along to join with all the other Churches in Hertford and  
surrounding Villages - all welcome  
Mill Mead School**

On Monday 16th March I will be taking an Easter assembly at the school, Heather is helping me with it. The whole school will be attending and please pray for all the children and staff of the school. We are hopeful that before the end of the summer term the choir will be returning to the church to sing for us.

**Easter Sunday**

This is a special Sunday in the year of the church, as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. This is a great opportunity to invite , friends, family and people we know who have links with our church to join us on that Sunday.

**Church Anniversary**

A date for our diary, Sunday 24th May, when we will be holding our Church Anniversary Service, as we celebrate the life and witness of our church for over 350 years. We had an enjoyable service when we rededicated the organ last year and members of the congregation chose their favourite hymns. This service is another good opportunity for the congregation to chose the hymns. If you have a hymn that you would like us to sing at that service, please can you tell me or one of the Elders.

John

---

**St. Andrews School**

Hertford URC will now also be hosting children from St. Andrew's School for them to experience how the United Reformed Church celebrate Easter. You are welcome to come along to help on Thursday morning 26<sup>th</sup> March

**DROP IN ART GROUP**

Drop in Art Group – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026  
-2.00 – 3.30 pm  
Broxbourne URC Lounge

*From*

## **All Saints Church**

On Sunday 8th March 2026 as part of our #FestivalofFaith we hold the first of our evening talks following Evensong which begins at 6.30pm.

The theme of these talks is 'Faith in...' and our speakers will focus on why we should place our faith; our hope; our trust and reliance on their topic.

Our first speaker is Professor Russell Cowburn, Canon Scientist at St Albans Cathedral.

The title of the first talk is: The God of Small Things.

If we look at the night sky through a telescope we see beauty and complexity which makes us ask questions about meaning, value and purpose. But what if we look down a microscope at the atomic-scale world? In this talk, Prof Cowburn takes us on a nanotechnologist's journey through the atoms and electrons of creation and explores big ideas and questions about life and faith.

The talk should begin at 7.30pm and the evening should conclude around 9pm.

Over the following two weeks we welcome:

15/3 Josh Dean MP

22/3 Mark Russell OBE

---

**USED POSTAGE STAMPS** – If you have any used postage stamps, could you please put them in the container at the side of the Church. Shirley is collecting these for the Isobel Hospice.

---

### **Church Directory**

An updated Church Directory is being produced and a Draft Version is on the back table – please alter it if you see an error. This will be ready in the next week or so.

**Ending hunger  
together**

 Hertford & District  
**Foodbank**  
Together with Trussell

# Easter Egg Appeal

**Help our food bank provide Easter eggs in the parcels we'll  
be giving out this Easter to those in crisis.**

**Please bring all chocolates and Easter eggs to the  
Hertford, Ware & District Foodbank  
by Friday 4th April.**

**Thank you!**

**Donations can be dropped to:  
Hertford United Reform Church  
Mon/Wed/Fri 10–11am  
or  
The Foodbank at the Priory, Ware  
Tues/Thurs 10.30–11.30**

Registered Charity Number:1157028 - Registered in England & Wales

***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 70847***

# coffee morning

**SATURDAY 7TH MARCH**  
**10.30am - 12.30pm**

**ST ANDREW'S CHURCH**  
**HERTFORD SG14 1HZ**

- \* Easter Egg Tombola
- \* Second-hand books
- \* Local crafts
- \* Live music

**Fairtrade coffee &  
home-baked cakes**

12.30-1.00pm  
Stay on for a  
joyous informal  
performance by  
**TAKE NOTE CHOIR**

**RAISING FUNDS FOR UK-AID (FOR UKRAINE)**  
**AND ST ANDREW'S CHURCH**

**[www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk](http://www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk)**

## DIARY MARCH 2026

1 Mar	10.30	Morning Service Led by John Ellis, including the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
2 Mar	10.15-12.15	Short Mat Bowls
4 Mar	8.00 pm	On-line prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
5 Mar	10.00 am 7-10 pm	Open House Coffee Morning Young Life in Cowbridge Hall
6 Mar	2.00 pm	H&D Churches Together World Day of Prayer Service at St. Andrews' Church
8 Mar	10.30 7.30 pm	Morning Service – Led by our Minister, Revd. Mark Robinson Mimram Choir rehearse in Church
9 Mar	10.15-12.15	Short Mat Bowls
11 Mar	8.00 pm	On-line prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
12 Mar	10.00 am 1.30 pm	Open House Coffee Morning, followed by Hot Potato Lunch. Elders Meet in the Vestry
15 Mar	10.30	Morning Service – Led by David Ronco (Mothers' Day)
16 Mar	10.15-12.15	Short Mat Bowls
18 Mar	8.00	On-line prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt Churches
19 Mar	10.00 am 7 -10 pm	Open House Coffee Meeting , Young Life Meet in Cowbridge Hall
20 Mar	4.00 - 8.00	East Herts Youth Orchestra – Afternoon Concert in Church
21 Mar	All day	Synod meet in London and on-line
22 Mar	10.30 7.30 pm	Morning Service – Led by Ian Matthews Mimram Choir rehearse in Church
23 Mar	10.15-12.15	Short Mat Bowls
25 Mar	8.00 pm	On-line prayer meeting with Broxbourne and Cheshunt churches
26 Mar	am	St. Andrew's School Visit to Church
29 Mar	10.30	Morning Service – Led by Chris Hall, Ponders End
30 Mar	10.15-12.15	Short Mat Bowls

07510782031 [revdmarkr@gmail.com](mailto:revdmarkr@gmail.com)

Church Administrator: Stepanka Moysey [urcnlvg@gmail.com](mailto:urcnlvg@gmail.com)

**MINISTER: REVD. MARK ROBINSON**, 6 Tudor Rise, Broxbourne, EN10 7HB

Editor: Fran Spence 01992 586585 [franjspence@gmail.com](mailto:franjspence@gmail.com) Website: [www.hertford.urc.org.uk](http://www.hertford.urc.org.uk)