



September

2026

We enjoyed watching the recent eclipse through colenders, via pin-hole cameras and special solar glasses. The plan was to enjoy the spectacle without harming our eyes. The event had been long-predicted as are future eclipses. Was that the case in Biblical times? Did people then stare at the sun and damage their retinas? What we do know is that there are numerous references to solar and lunar eclipses as the list below from Google demonstrates:

Key Verses About Eclipses

- Genesis 1:14 – Celestial bodies as signs for sacred times
- Joel 2:31 – Sun darkened, moon to blood before the Lord's day
- Matthew 24:29 – Sun darkened, moon not giving light, stars falling
- Revelation 6:12 – Sun black, moon red, signaling divine action
- Psalm 19:1 – Heavens declare God's glory
- Isaiah 13:10 – Stars and sun darkened, moon not giving light
- Acts 2:20 – Sun and moon darkened before the great day of the Lord.

In summary, the Bible presents eclipses as **both literal and symbolic phenomena** that reflect God's power, serve as warnings or signs of significant events, and inspire believers to trust in His sovereignty and timing while contemplating His majesty and the beauty of creation

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new church year, I warmly invite you to our annual Commissioning Service on Sunday 6th September 2026 at 10.30 am.

This service marks the beginning of a new year of worship, witness and service in the life of our church. During our worship we will commission those who, at our recent Annual General Meeting, accepted responsibilities within the life of the church, giving thanks for the gifts God has entrusted to them and praying for God's guidance in the year ahead.

This year our worship will also include the Ordination and Induction of Laurence Sinden as an Elder. Following a period of prayer and discernment, Laurence will be ordained as an elder of the United Reformed Church and inducted into the eldership of URC Broxbourne.

The service will conclude with the celebration of Holy Communion, as we gather around Christ's table and commit ourselves afresh to God's work among us. I hope you will be able to share in this service as we begin the new church year together in worship, prayer and thanksgiving.

I look forward to welcoming you on Sunday 6th September at 10.30 am.

With every blessing,

Mark

Revd Mark Robinson

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS....

ART DROP IN will be on Tuesday September 15th
2-3.30 in the Broxbourne Lounge.

October 11th: Harvest festival, communion and lunch

Rosemary writes:

Junior Church – September onwards:

After a more informal summer programme, the new Junior Church year will get off to a strong start with the new academic year and our Commissioning Service on Sunday 6th September. As has become our custom, each young person will be invited to come forward and receive a small gift from the church as an encouragement and in recognition of their belonging to the group.

As has been the situation for some time, the ages of the youngsters cover a wide span – from 3 years to 14 years, so holding their interest can be challenging. Our current way of organising leadership for the children seems to be working well, with Maggie taking the older ones, along with her own boys and our original team being available if needed whether as support, or to cover illness, or to work with the youngest children.

It has been a joy in recent weeks to welcome a delightful new family – Mum and Dad Andrea and Osa and children Amari (4 years) and baby sister Zuriel - making it more usual to have a regular attendance of under 5's. We have continued to outline plan using the 'Faith Adventures for Children Together' materials from the URC. During September we will be developing upon July's focus on Fruits of the Spirit and in October the focus will be on Fantastic Bible Creatures.

There are parallel, age-appropriate suggestions for the littlies too, which Mary hopes to add to when she is back in circulation.

Exciting times!

As always, I am hugely grateful to our stalwart team of Maggie, Brenda, David, Dorothy and Mary. If you would like to join us, you'd be very welcome.



Rosemary Woodall

07740 460118

The Hive will be buzzing!

The Hive is the name for our new Youth Group that will open its doors for the first time on Friday 18th September. Running from 4.30pm – 6.30pm every Friday evening This Photo by it will definitely be the place to be if you are aged between 8 and 15 years (school years 5 – 9), or indeed if you are from 15 – 21 years old and would like to join our Young Leaders' Youth Accreditation Scheme.

This Photo by The Hive will be a place where every young person feels welcomed, valued, safe and encouraged to be themselves. We want to build confidence, friendships, resilience and hope through fun activities, creativity, teamwork and positive role models. We want every young person to feel comfortable and to feel more than members. They will be part of a team where everyone has something to give and something to learn.

Our Christian values shape what we do. A weekly 10 - 15 minute 'Hive & Thrive' slot will encourage the group to discover Christ, grow in faith and live it out. A simple, visual message, with a Bible verse connected to real life, as well as encouragement and optional discussion and prayer, will underpin activities such as games (including pool, table tennis and board games), snacking and chilling, arts and crafts, team challenges and competitions to name but the basics. (The group's imagination

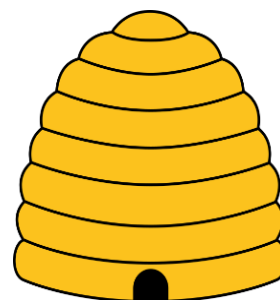
will no doubt provide many more!)

The Hive is the brainchild of our Youth Leader, Maggie. Working closely with Chris House of Broxbourne and Wormley Parish and initially starting with the young people of our Junior Churches and their friends, it is her dream and intention that The Hive will become a safe, encouraging and enjoyable outreach to and for children of the area.

The plan is for Maggie and Chris to be supported by a team of Young Leaders as well as a rota of (somewhat older!) occasional helpers. If you would like to be part of this exciting initiative and join the rota, please speak to Maggie on 07481 940337

or maggieurcyouth@gmail.com

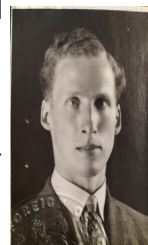
It's going to be buzzing! Rosemary 07740 46011



[This Photo](#) by Unknown



As URC members know, Hoddesdon Music Club owns a splendid 1911/1912 Blüthner Boudoir Grand Piano which the church kindly houses for us. This lovely instrument has an interesting back-story.



Through contact with Alexandra Garden, who lives in Lancashire, we recently discovered more about how HMC came by this beautiful piano. It belonged to Alex's grandparents, Walter and Daisy Grounds who lived at Hillhead,

St Catharine's Road – sadly demolished some time ago to make way for a block of flats. They were members of HMC from 1946 and after their son Tom was de-mobbed in 1946/47 he too became a member in 1949. Not only that, he went along to the Club's AGM and came away as Treasurer – a post he held until becoming Chairman for the 1955/56 season!

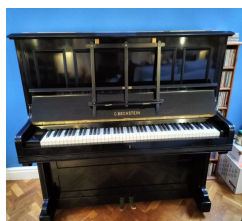
In 1963 when Tom's father, Walter, died, the house had to be sold and as Tom and his family could not accommodate the Blüthner in their own house he negotiated a part exchange with HMC for the club's 1913 upright Bechstein, plus £70 cash. The Bechstein had been purchased after fund-raising by HMC members in 1950 for £105.

In September 1963 the Chairman, Mrs Althea Rodney (daughter of the club's first President, Sir Gerald Wollaston) said, "We are now the proud possessors of a beautiful Grand Piano. It is a Blüthner, in perfect condition and with a lovely tone." This exchange also required considerable fund-raising by members, many of whom gave generous donations. Further voluntary contributions into the Piano Maintenance Fund allowed a substantial cover with leather corners to be purchased from Blüthner in 1974 at a cost of £31.22 – still in use today protecting the beautiful case from dust and damage.

Alex and her husband still own the club's original Bechstein and they have each made the trip back from Lancashire to hear the Blüthner being played – although its action was changed in 1993 so it isn't quite as her family would have known it. Along with occasional repairs and regular tuning the piano is still giving us all lots of pleasure today. Many artists who come to HMC say it is a lovely piano to play and we hope it will go on giving much pleasure to pianists, audiences and the URC congregation for many more years.

With grateful thanks to the minister and elders of Broxbourne URC who house the piano for us and make use of it from time to time in services.

Kathleen Lord
HMC Chairman



Dorothy writes:

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

8 November Service of Remembrance

22 November Hertford URC 3pm – 5pm **November Nightingales** with Hertford Shanty Folk, UKE Troup and more. Free entry!

28 November our **Christmas market** 10.30-2.00 – offers of help preparing, setting up, selling and packing away urgently needed. Contact: Dorothy Blatcher

13th December **Carols café** 10.30 am. **Carols by candlelight** with the Broxbourne Singers and Handbell Ringers 6.30 pm. Rosemary will be delighted if you would like to join our tuneful Singers. Nothing complicated!

Amanda's Eco-hint for September 2026

Two months ago I said we didn't know whether it would be rain or shine. Well, whatever the next month holds, the reservoirs will still be low, and water restrictions are likely to continue. So, my suggestion is to continue with water-saving. (If you have a water meter, your bill will be less anyway.) So, use water from handwashing, washing up and bathwater to flush the loo, water plants, and maybe a milk bottle or two by the front wall in case some idiot throws a hot cigarette onto dry grass.

And put a sticker on your car **"My car is proud to be dirty – it's saving water!"**

Watering plants - water roots not leaves. If you have a **funnel** lying around spare, try digging a hole next to a vulnerable plant; place the funnel in the hole so that the rim is level with the soil surface, and water will go to the roots. Alternatively, if you have a small **plastic bottle**, you could try punching **holes** around the bottom and putting that in the hole to water the roots. However, make sure to put the lid back on, to avoid insects getting trapped in the bottle.

Gardeners World suggest a thick layer of **gravel** (2 cm) on surface of pots. To act as a sun shield, keep the plant roots cool and avoid evaporation.

Wildlife – put a bowl of clean **water** in the shade for **frogs**, newts etc. Use a shallow bowl for **small birds**. If it's too deep, try putting a layer of gravel round the rim. Apparently small birds will avoid it, if the water is too deep, more than 2 cm.

Please don't cut back bushes or ivy just yet, until

end of October. With the warm weather there may be late **nests**, and the foliage gives shelter to **insects**, food for insect eating birds. If ivy is creeping across the ground, by all means pull it out ruthlessly, but if it is mature ivy, in flower, it will produce **berries**, much appreciated by blackbirds and other berry-eating birds.

Hedgehogs will be feeding up ready for hibernation. Meaty dog food is appreciated, but do **not leave milk**, as it will give them upset stomach and could even kill them. A bowl of clean water would be better.

Can you create a hole in your fence to allow **hedgehogs access**? They will repay by eating slugs etc.

Hedgehogs are not swimmers and can **drown** in ponds, so make sure that there is something there to **help** hedgehogs **exit** the pond – stones, branches. Built-in slope.

Rats - when the weather turns colder, rats will be looking for warm shelter. To deter rats from your house – rats do not like **onions**, garlic or any allium. But onions, garlic etc are **poisonous to dogs**. So get a glass jar (rats can chew plastic) with a metal lid. Put chopped up onion/garlic in the jar, punch holes in the metal lid, so the smell can escape, and put the jar of onion by any entry point outside the house/shed.

Remember no bird feeders till cold weather. Scrub/**sterilise** water bowls, food areas



Worship this month



Sept 6th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson Commissioning Service Commissioning and Ordination of Laurence Sinden as Elder Communion
13th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Martin Legg
20th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Revd Mark Robinson Commissioning of Natasha Appiah as a Synod accredited lay-preacher
27th 10.30 am	Brox URC	<i>Tony Davis</i>
Oct 4th 10.30 am	Brox URC	Natasha Appiah and Gary Bentley

11 October Our Harvest Service: Our harvest service will include communion and be followed by a bring and share lunch. All are welcome. There will be a sign up sheet. Offers of help will be gratefully received.

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. Please speak to Diane Price if you are interested. It is on Mondays, 2-4pm, in the church hall. Begins again on September 7th.

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 second Tuesday of each month. If you are interested in attending a meeting please speak to Brenda McAuliffe or Marion Hall - or just go along at 2pm. From 1st September. See next page.

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 rosemary.woodall@ntlworld.com or to be included in the circulation list.

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



On July 5th, Kathleen Cole was welcomed into membership at Broxbourne.

Since then, Kath has been celebrating a special birthday—
Congratulations!!

CONVERSATIONAL BIBLE STUDY 2nd September to 9th December Every other Wednesday between 2 and 4pm in the Oasis

2nd September: Acts 9:1-19. "Conversion: A glorious beginning"

16th September: Revelation 21:1-4 and 9 to 27. "A vision of glory"

30th September: John 17:1-26. "Our glorious hope"

14th October: Matthew 16:24-28, 17:1-9 and 2 Peter 1:12-21 "Transfiguration, then and now?"

28th October: Judges 2:1-5 and 10-23. "Israel after Joshua"

11th November: Judges 3:5-31. "Othniel and Ehud."

25th November: Judges 4:1-24. "Deborah"

9th December: Judges 5:1-23 and 31. "The song of Deborah"

Join us for lively discussion over a cup of tea or coffee in the calm atmosphere of the Oasis. Discussion subjects may be liable to change.

Laurence Sinden

September Meetings in our hall

1st After Eights Glynis Evans on Rye Park 2pm

15th Friends of Lowewood Museum: 'Much Hadham Forge Museum and its collections' Cristina Harrison. Refreshments from 7.30pm – notices

7.50pm – meeting commences at 8pm.

19th Hoddesdon Music Club 7.30 pm Pelleas Ensemble – harp, violin and flute

29 SE Herts RSPB Local Group Paula Moore 'Toucans, Harpys and Ant Things' 7.45 for 8pm. Contact: Dorothy Blatcher

*******IMPORTANT*******

BROXBOURNE URC FIRE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Please read this plan and sign the record sheet to confirm that you have read and understood it, if you have not already done so. Contact: Dorothy Blatcher

If you would like a printed version, or instructions on how to sign the record sheet please see Dorothy. The plan will appear on the back pages of this edition of the magazine.

CAR PARK GATES SAFETY FIRST

Car drivers will have seen that, as you enter the car park, the left hand gate is opened outwards, which allows for an additional parking space, and right one inwards. If you need to open the gates, open the left hand gate outwards. For both gates, please lift the bolts up to sit on the cradles as you move them. The right hand gate bolt drops into a groove by the shed.



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Closing Date
15 SEPTEMBER 2026



Categories

- Adult: wildlife or nature
- Children: open theme

Children need parental permission



Guidelines

- Maximum 3 entries per person, printed on paper (no email entries)
- Maximum size – A5 (21 x 15 cm)
- Do not write on the front of the photo
- Attach the name and contact details (if a child's photo – name and age of child) to the back of the photo



Safeguarding

If any child or adult appears in the photo, you must have the adult's permission.



**FREE ENTRY
FUN EVENT**

Contacts:
Hertford – Cheryl
Broxbourne – Amanda

BROXBOURNE URC FIRE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN Please read this plan and sign the record sheet to confirm that you have read and understood it, if you have not already done so. Contact: Dorothy Blatcher

Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the following emergency procedure.

Important - The doors to the Church should be unlocked and unbolted during the time that the upper room is in use as this allows keyless access to the fire door and escape route at the front of the Church. The doors at the top of the main stairs and at the front of the church should also be unbolted. **ENSURE** however that they are locked and bolted before you leave.

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE

1.Sound the alarm by using one of the small alarm activators situated just inside the main outside doors, by each of the two main hall fire exits or by the toilet entrance in the upper room.

2.Evacuate the premises by using the nearest and safest exit and **assemble all occupants** at the assembly point **away from the premises** on the green across the road under the yew tree off the path next to back wall of the pub.

Do not use the lift. Do not collect personal belongings. Do not take risks.

3. At the same time **Call the fire brigade** using any mobile by dialling '999' or '112'. Give the operator your telephone number and ask for 'Fire'. When the fire brigade replies tell the operator: **FIRE AT: UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, BROXBOURNE, MILL LANE, BROXBOURNE, EN10 7BQ.** Do not end the call until the address has been repeated by the fire brigade.

4. **Meet the fire brigade** on arrival and provide as much relevant information **as possible** to assist the brigade including: the location and nature of the fire. Any persons trapped.

NB Upstairs wheel chair users can be carried down or held at top of stairs in one of the 2 refuge areas until fire brigade arrive. Those with impaired mobility should be held in refuge area and assisted down after the rest of the congregation.

5. Close doors and windows. Only use the **fire extinguishers** if it is safe to do so and you have been trained to use them.

6. No one should re-enter the building until authorised by the fire brigade.

Turn over

Continued from page 8

IF YOU HEAR THE ALARM

On hearing the alarm, it is the duty of all responsible persons to investigate the reason for the alarm. If there is smoke or a smell of fire carry out actions 2, 3, & 4 above.

If it is found that there is no fire and it is a false alarm, there is no need to call the Fire Brigade unless you feel you would prefer to do so.

Carry out the instructions shown on the alarm box in the main entrance.

EMERGENCY FIRE EXITS

From main hall:

1. The main entrance
2. Fire escape door into the car park
3. Via side room to Mill Lane Close

From side rooms or lounge:

Via side room to Mill Lane Close or via lounge to main entrance

From upstairs:

1. Via upper room and stairs to the main entrance.
2. Or, if the main staircase isn't available, from the upper room through the Church Sanctuary, and from the Church Sanctuary through the left-hand doors on the dais and stairs down to the exit to Mill Lane Close.

GRAPEVINE

We're all pleased and thankful for various hospital stays that have reached a good conclusion and former patients now getting around independently. Thus it has been a pleasure to welcome Alan Lodge back to church, likewise Rosemary, Dorothy and Mary Bite who writes the following:

A huge thank you for all the prayers thoughts cards and support from my Church Family during my 11 day stint at RNOH Stanmore.

At present, only came home 14th August, I have mobility though with lots of stitches and 6 weeks worth of strong drugs.

Just been told to rest and recover until 6 week

check mid Sept. Then see what future plans, if any they have,

Just so much appreciate contact from my Church Family.

Much love Mary

