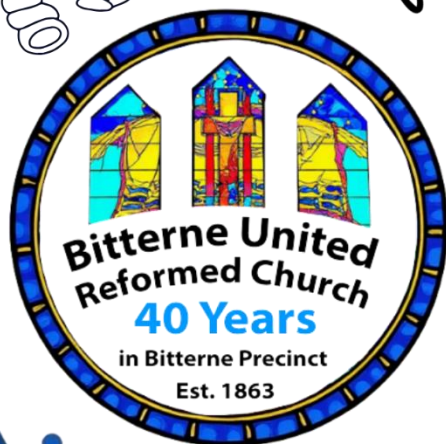




Bitterne United Reformed Church



Part of the
Southern
Fellowship



of United
Reformed
Churches

OUTLOOK

July/August 2026

This magazine has cost approximately 50 pence to produce and a contribution towards its cost would be much appreciated

Church Diary

JULY

Wed 1 st	11:30am	Wednesday Worship
Thu 2 nd	12noon	Community Lunch
	2pm	Senior Citizens – Draw
Sun 5 th	10:30am	Morning service led by James Lemanis
Thu 9 th	9am	Senior Citizens – Outing to Weymouth
Sun 12 th	10:30am	Sea Sunday service with with Frans Sahetapy from the Sailors Society
	6:30pm	Summer Praise Service
Wed 15 th	7:30pm	Elders' meeting
Thu 16 th	2pm	Senior Citizens - Geoff Watts – Stories of Southampton
Sat 18 th	10am	Summer Fair – 40th Anniversary events
Sun 19 th	10:30am	Morning service led by Revd. Bernie Collins with Holy Communion
Tue 21 st	7:30pm	Worship group
Wed 22 nd	7:30pm	Bible Study
Thu 23 rd	2pm	Senior Citizens - Hoy
25 th – 29 th		Girls Brigade Camp - Swanage
Thu 30 th	2pm	Senior Citizens - Cream Tea
Sun 26 th	10:30am	Morning service led by Revd. Mike Perrott
	11:45am	Church Meeting

AUGUST

Sat 1 st	2pm	WAVE Mixed Ability Social – all welcome!
Sun 2 nd	10:30am	Morning Service led by Liz Lloyd
		No Wednesday worship in August
Thu 6 th	2pm	Senior Citizens - Tea/Coffee & chat
Sat 8 th	3pm	Four Charities Tea
Sun 9 th	10:30am	Morning Service led by Pam Humphries
Thu 13 th	TBA	Senior Citizens – Outing/boat trip
Sat 15 th	12pm	Picnic on the Common – Southern Fellowship
Sun 16 th	10:30am	Morning Service led by David Childs with Holy Communion
Thu 20 th	2pm	Senior Citizens – Tea/coffee & chat
Sun 23 rd	10:30am	Morning Service led by Kate Powell (Port Chaplain)
Thu 27 th	2pm	Senior Citizens – Tea/coffee & chat
Sun 30 th	10:30am	Morning Service led by Jan Adamson

Looking Ahead

Wed 2 nd Sept	11:30am	Wednesday Worship
Thu 3 rd Sept	12 noon	Community Lunch
	2pm	Senior Citizens - Draw
Tue 8 th Sept	2pm	WAVE Mixed Ability Worship – all welcome!
Sat 26 th Sept	7:30pm	Saxophony Concert - 40th Anniversary events

MISSION STATEMENT

Bitterne United Reformed Church exists to praise and worship God, to reach out into the community in love and service so the joy of Christ Jesus may be shared.

A Message from an Elder

Dear Friends,

As we move toward the summer months, many of us will find our routines shifting. Some will travel, some will rest, some

will spend more time with family, and some will simply enjoy the slower rhythm that the warmer days bring. Summer has a way of opening our lives a little—I like nothing more than having the windows open wide, (no good if you have hayfever!) doors ajar, longer days, and



hearts more ready to notice the world around us.

With that openness often comes the gift of meeting new people. Strangers at church services, visitors passing through Southampton, families exploring the area, or neighbours we've not spoken to before. Each encounter is an opportunity—quiet, gentle, and full of possibility.

Scripture reminds us, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Welcoming others is not simply good manners; it is a way of living out the Gospel. It is a way of saying, with our actions as much as our words, that God's love is wide enough for everyone.



So as summer approaches, may we continue to be a congregation that notices the unfamiliar face, that offers a

smile, that makes room alongside us, that says, “You are welcome here.”

We look forward to our evening Summer Praise Service on 12 July 2026, when we welcome friends from near and far and our Southern Fellowship picnic on Southampton Common on Saturday 15 August 2026. May we be people who carry the warmth of Christ into every conversation, every shared moment, every unexpected meeting.



And may we also remember to enjoy the season ourselves—to rest, to laugh, to breathe deeply, to delight in God’s creation. Joy is not a luxury; it is a gift from God, and embracing it renews us for the work we are called to do.

Whether you are travelling or staying close to home, may this summer be a time of blessing for you. May you find refreshment, may you encounter

kindness, and may you be a bearer of kindness to others. In Christian love

Anne

CHURCH FAMILY PRAYER

Dear Lord,

We give thanks for those who are home from hospital and for the success of recent operations and ask for God’s blessing on all who continue to face long-term illness and difficulties. May they be granted patience, strength, and the understanding support of those around them. We think of all those awaiting exam results and pray they be rewarded with the desired grades, knowing they did their best. We are also mindful of those who carry the burden of worry and anxiety in their lives, may they feel able to speak to you knowing the love and comfort that are waiting for them in your arms. Amen



As many of you may know, we're coming up to the end of term, and you can really feel everyone starting to wind down a bit. It's been a full year for so many in our community, and the summer break is very nearly here.



To our brilliant teachers and youth leaders: **thank you** for all the energy, care, and encouragement you've poured into our young people this year. It means more than you know.

And to all our amazing young people: **well done** for everything you've achieved. Enjoy the rest, the sunshine, and the freedom of summer — you've earned every bit of it.

Community Lunch— First Thursday of the month
This month: **Thursday 2nd July at 12.00 midday.**
The cost is £6 for a main course and dessert.
Everyone is welcome.



No Lunch in August. The next one will be one on 3rd September. Look forward to seeing you!

Summer Praise Service

Come to our summer praise service on **Sunday**

12th July

6.30pm Tea and Cake

7.00pm Service



Everyone Welcome to Our
Four Charities Tea
3.00pm

Saturday 8th August 2026
105 Bursledon Road, Bitterne
Southampton SO19 7LY

Jill and Ian



FREE
ENTRY

JOIN US FOR OUR

SUMMER FAIR

SATURDAY
18TH JULY
10AM TO 2PM



Bitterne
United
Reformed
Church

Join us for our first ever Summer Fair,
celebrating our **40th anniversary** year with a
joyful day for all ages.

**Enjoy family fun, games, local stalls, and
outdoor activities** led by our community groups
on the patio. A warm, welcoming community day
with something for everyone.

for more info check our website

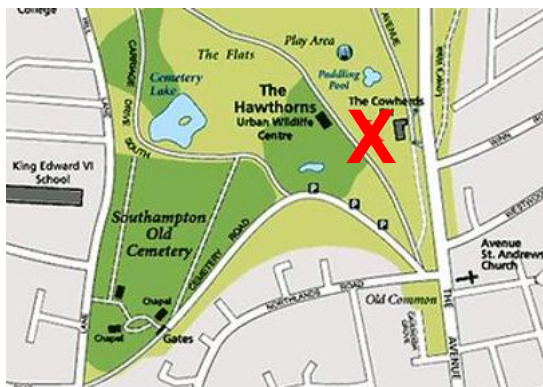


**Come celebrate
summer with
us!**



Future events with the Southern Fellowship of United Reformed Churches

15 August 12 – 2pm
Picnic on the Common
open to all churches in
SFG, area to congregate
between Hawthorns and
Cowherds – please see
red X on the map here



Bitterne

Please see our Church diary list of events on page 1!

Braishfield

- 18 and 19 July Braishfield Flower Festival

Bitterne Park

- 18 July and 15 August 10.00 am coffee mornings

Avenue St Andrews

- 18 July 10.30 am – 12.00 noon Coffee and Cake.
- 22 and 23 August 12.00 noon – 5.00 pm Open Studios Art Exhibition.

Romsey

- 4-19 July Romsey Festival events throughout the town - church open throughout with a display of Linus Quilts and variety of other activities including;
- 4 July 11.00 am - 3.00 pm Drawing Music Art Workshop in the church,
- 5 July 10.30 am Thanksgiving Service
- 5 July 2.30 pm Storytelling Sundays
- 7 July 10am meet at the church for a meditative walk around Romsey Town,
- 7 July 12.30 pm Trillium Lunchtime concert of Summer Music for Soprano, flute and piano,
- 11 July Beggars Fair events in church and hall 11.00 - 16.45 and throughout the town,

- 13 July 7 pm Sols Classical Guitar Recital by Nina Ridout,
- 14 July 12.30 pm Rum's Eg Summer Concert
- 15 July 1.00 pm Cello and Piano Lunchtime concert with Tom Jesty,
- 16 July 7.00 pm The Great and Terrible Tragedy of the Swing Riots Musical,
- 17 July 1.00 pm Lunchtime recital with Tom Jesty on piano and Vanessa White on violin,
- 19 July 2.30 pm Sing into Summer with Romsey Ladies Choir.

A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips 2026 Calendar

JULY - It's Plastic Free July and this year we're thinking about laundry, a top source of microplastic pollution. Fibres from synthetic clothes (polyester, nylon, and acrylic for example) shed tiny fibres during washing and drying. These enter the sewage systems and are hard to filter out. Use a microfibre bag or ball to catch the fibres. Learn more about reducing plastic pollution in the laundry process at www.plasticfreejuly.org/get-involved/what-you-can-do/plastic-free-laundry/ and more about this year's campaign at plasticfreejuly.org.



AUGUST - Looking after wildlife in the heat. Times of drought and dryness can be dangerous for wildlife. Provide water for birds and insects - put a dish of water out to help wildlife stay hydrated. Insects, small mammals, birds, and even badgers, foxes, and deer could benefit. A stone in a plant saucer helps bees to perch and drink without drowning. These small actions make a big difference and are just some of the ways we can live out our calling to care for God's creation. See our blog on looking after wildlife in the heat for more warm weather eco tips: www.arocha.org.uk/looking-after-wildlife-in-the-heat/





Unity Mass

Join us to celebrate mass
at Christ the King & St Colman

Sunday 5th July, 11am

followed by bring and share cake and
sweet treats in the church hall

Women's Group - Hearing Dogs for the Deaf

At our last Women's Group meeting we had a rather beautiful, cute and very bouncy visitor, Richie. He's a 15 month old cocker spaniel being trained by our guest speaker, Malcolm Board, who has been a volunteer with Hearing Dogs for the Deaf for 12 years.

It was a very informative and interesting session, and great fun watching Richie, who could hardly keep still for a few seconds! We learned that the charity uses spaniels, cockapoos, poodles and labradors who live with volunteer trainers when they are old enough to leave their mothers. They are taught by a reward system to respond to noise, and to lay down after alerting the person when there is danger, eg a smoke alarm.

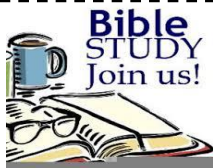


Once trained, they are matched with a profoundly deaf person and become their ears by responding to the door bell, smoke alarm, etc. They wake the person up in the morning when they hear the alarm clock. Many people who are profoundly deaf have mental health problems as being deaf can be extremely isolating and difficult. The dog gives the person a new confidence and a new social network as the dog needs to be walked.

The dog wears a purple vest so it is easily noticeable that the person is deaf. The charity also provides practical and emotional services, transforming the lives of those affected. Please have a look at their website to see testimonials from deaf people who have been given a new life by having one of these clever dogs.

Some facts about hearing loss

- 1 in 6 of the UK adult population is affected by hearing loss. 8 million of these are aged 60 and over.
 - 6.7 million could benefit from hearing aids but only about 2 million people use them.
 - People take around 7 years to admit they are hard of hearing and seek a hearing test.
 - About 900,000 people are severely or profoundly deaf.
 - About 12,000 people in the UK use cochlear implants.
 - Many people with hearing loss also have tinnitus which affects 1 in 10 adults. They may also have balance difficulties.
- Maria Boys



Our next Bible Study meeting is being held on Wednesday 22nd July 2026, 7:30pm at the church.

Girls' Brigade Camp - Swanage

Saturday 25th July – Wednesday 29th July

This July, our Girls' Brigade will be off to Swanage for a fun-filled summer camp, joining friends from Totton, Eastleigh and Chandlers Ford. Fireworks, crazy golf, midnight feasts, crafts, fellowship and beach trips - it's set to be a wonderful adventure!



To add a little treat to their beach day, we're inviting **Bible Aunties and Uncles to donate the price of an ice cream** for their girls. You are also welcome to send a postcard while they're away, please speak to Rosie for the camp address. If you'd like to become a Bible Auntie or Uncle - or you're already one and would like to be added to the **WhatsApp update group** - please contact **Rosie on 07766 146993**.

Raise funds for us for FREE

with  easyfundraising

8,000+ retailers will donate to us whenever you shop with them



Girls' Brigade Fundraising

We're raising money for The Girls' Brigade England and Wales (the national charity) as well as our own company. All charities rely on fundraising and donations. The money we raise will help the Girls' Brigade continue making a difference to the lives of women and girls, as it has done for more than 130 years.

One way to do this is without it costing anything is by using Easyfundraising when you shop online. We can get £1 for new supporters that sign up before 17th July. (Up to £25 for 25). You don't even have to use it in that time (or at all) but if you do raise a donation in the first 2 weeks that also generates extra money. The money raised can be shared between GBEW and our company. Scan the QR code here or email margaretwhale34@gmail.com for the link to find out more and hopefully to sign up.



Easyfundraising
refer a friend link



Just Giving link

If you don't shop online or just prefer to make a donation to The Girls' Brigade England and Wales, we now have a Justgiving page where you can donate easily and additionally if you are a taxpayer you can gift aid which means the charity gets an extra 25%. Again, scan the QR code or email me for the link.

Thank you for your support. *Margaret Whale*

The Leprosy Mission

Back in April we had a church service led by Philippa Matthews who is our representative for the Christian charity, The Leprosy Mission. In 2026,



leprosy is still widespread across the world in low-income countries, with someone being diagnosed every 2 minutes. It is curable if caught early, and in Bangladesh, they are researching a new finger prick test that could diagnose leprosy in the very early stages. This would revolutionise treatment, as the earlier leprosy is diagnosed, the better the outcome. This test is still years away from being ready. The aim is it will be fully transportable to remote communities and conflict zones.

Our guest speaker, Isaac, spoke of the Karuna Project (Karuna means compassion) in the slums of Mumbai. An LM ambulance with trained health workers and medical supplies travels around the slums, welcoming and caring for those with leprosy. These people can't get help anywhere else because of poverty and stigma. They also raise awareness of leprosy so people can recognise the signs and get treatment earlier. This also reduces the fear and discrimination suffered. Wives are often abandoned, children are ostracised, so LM are also working with human rights organisations to change discriminatory laws.

Self-care is taught to prevent infection, and the ambulance visits every fortnight to provide medicine and dressings. This is important because leprosy affects nerve endings and can result in amputations and blindness. LM have set up free tailoring classes to enable sufferers to earn a living. So far, 40 tailoring graduates have become successfully self-employed.

This all has been funded with help from our donations. Please pray for the Leprosy Mission and those affected by leprosy, that they get the help they need.

Maria Boys

BIG CLEAR OUT

Has anyone seen the hoarding programme with Stacey Solomon? She goes into homes where people have a lot of items and then take all the items to a hall and lay them

out. The person then has to sort out what they need to keep, give to a charity shop and throw away.

The church over the past 40 years has accumulated a lot of items, many of which have seen better days and items that have not been used for years and have been forgotten about. I suggest that we empty ALL the cupboards including the loft and put all the items in the hall (including the Girls Brigade and the Boys Brigade cupboards) and then have a big sort out. The cupboards could then be reallocated to where people need them, close to where they meet.

Any items unwanted could then be sold, donated or thrown away and we would have items to where they need to be to make it easy for people.

This could be done when the hall is not being used for a few days and everyone could be involved.

Date to be given out later.



"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." *Psalms 118:24*

Jigsaws

Come and join us **every Wednesday** to have coffee and help make a jigsaw ready for our **Jigsaw Puzzle Festival in October**. Don't forget to take a jigsaw and board home to complete. Thank you.

Our friends at **St James Church, East Cowes** will be holding their festival from **10th to 15th August**.



Thank You A heartfelt thank you to everyone who volunteers, prays, gives, tidies, sings, serves, welcomes, brews tea, or quietly supports our church family. You make such a difference.



Would you like the opportunity to read from the Bible during the service on a Sunday? Please make Dave aware and he will pop you on the rota as a reader. With thanks.



Summer Fair – Volunteers and Draw Prizes

We're getting ready for our first **Summer Fair on Saturday 18th July**, and we'd love to involve as many of our church family as possible.



If you can help on the day — even just for an hour — **please have a chat with Ian**. We're also collecting draw prizes for the raffle, **so any donations are very welcome**.

Thank you for all the ways you support our church and community. It's shaping up to be a lovely day.

Care and Connect Café – Starting January 2027

We're excited to announce a new **dementia-friendly carers café in association with Caraway** in the new year, offering a warm, relaxed space for unpaid carers to enjoy conversation, activities, refreshments and gentle listening support.



If you would like to join our team of friendly volunteers, you would be more than welcome! No experience needed — just patience, compassion and a willingness to learn. Sessions will run once or twice a month on Tuesday mornings or Friday afternoons, **with roles shared on a rota and full training provided**.

If you'd like to help, even occasionally, we'd love to hear from you. Contact Nikki for more information.



Care and Connect
— CAFE —

ART FOR ART'S SAKE

Art and Photography
Exhibition. Craft Market

Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 August 2026

12noon - 5pm

@ Avenue St. Andrew's Church
Southampton SO17 1XQ

Refreshments available



Please contact Christine and Martin Benning for further
information on hraopenstudios@gmail.com

HIGHFIELD
Residents Association
@50

 HAMPSHIRE
open studios
22-31 August 2026



Saxophony

CONCERT



Bitterne
United
Reformed
Church

26TH
SEPTEMBER
7:30PM

Please reserve your
tickets by emailing:
ianbitterne@gmail.com
or phone us on
023 8042 1844

For more info please visit
our website:
<https://bitterneurc.org.uk/40-years-in-bitterne-precinct/>



<u>Flower Rota</u>			<u>In Memory of</u>
July	5 th	Janet Gotham	
	12 th	Jill Abrahams	Jill's Mum, Olga Olive
	19 th	Celia Mayo	
	26 th	Doreen Hampson	Doreen's father, Frank Harris
August	2 nd	Jane Byrnell	Jane's father, Don Wheeler
	9 th	Mary & Chris Abraham	Mary & Chris' son, Phil
	16 th	Janet Gotham	
	23 rd	Lyn Kinchenton	
	30 th	Maria Boys	
September	6 th	Janet Gotham	



Thank you to those who have arranged flowers for Sundays when there have been no special requests and for those who continue to arrange the flowers in memory of loved ones, it is much appreciated.

If you would like to be included on the Flower Rota from time to time or maybe in memory of a special person or occasion, please let me know.

If you would like to help occasionally with arranging the flowers and with distributing the flowers, please contact me.

Janet Gotham

BITTERNE URC DIRECTORY

e-mail address	bitterneurc_sec@yahoo.co.uk	
Web site address	Bitterneurc.org.uk	
Church Post Code	SO18 5EF	
Church Telephone Number		023 80421844
Minister	Revd Dr Sarah Hall	023 80768004
Minister	Revd Mike Perrott	01794 512163
Church Secretary	Anne Wood	023 80333810
Assistant Church Secretary	Janet Gotham	07790207962
Boys Brigade Contact	Maria Boys	07817154062
Catering Co-ordinator	Jill Abrahams	023 80431067
Choir Leader	David White	07491865120
Christian Aid Representative	Ian Abrahams	023 80431067
Churches Together in Bitterne	Ian Abrahams	023 80431067
Coffee Morning/Steward Rotas	Janet Gotham	023 80329719
Copyright Officer	Helen Fisher	023 80397192
Fire Safety Officer		
Flower Rota	Janet Gotham	07790207962
Girls' Brigade Captain	Rosie Mabey	07766146993
Health & Safety Advisor		
IBRA Secretary	Maria Boys	07817154062
IT Co-ordinator	Tim Fisher	07971363376
Junior Church Leader	Margaret Whale	023 80455100
Lettings Officer	Ian Abrahams	023 80431067
Mercy Collective Coordinator	Anthony Boys	07561185898
Organist	Dave White	07491865120
OUTLOOK Editor		
Outreach Community Worker	Nikki Fisher	07411975937
Property Maintenance Coordinator	Tim Fisher	07971363376
Publicity Officer	Nikki Fisher	07411975937
Safeguarding Officer	Gail Jupp	07435563776
Senior Citizens Contact	Diane Murphy	023 80431727
Synod Representative	Janet Gotham	023 80329719
Website Administrator	Nikki Fisher	07411975937
Holy Saviour Office		023 80685560
Christ the King & St Colman Priest	Father Elijah	023 80449088
Bitterne Park URC contact	Bridget Colwill	023 80477706
Peartree Green URC contact	Eileen Flanagan	07933394310

SERVICES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES AT BITTERNE URC

		<u>Times</u>
<u>SUNDAY</u>	Family Worship & Junior Church	10.30am
	Family Worship and Sacrament of Holy Communion & Junior Church (3 rd Sunday Monthly)	10.30am
	Boys & Girls Brigades	10.30am
	Parade/Mosaic Service (as announced)	
	JAFFA Puppet Team (as announced)	
<u>MONDAY</u>	Girls' Brigade	6.15pm - 7.45pm
	Boys' Brigade	6.15pm - 7.45pm
<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	Community Café & Jigsaw Drop In	10.00am - 11.30am
	Wednesday Worship (1 st Wednesday monthly)	11.30am - 12noon
	Elders Meeting (3 rd Wednesday monthly)	7.30pm
	Bible Study House Group (monthly as announced)	7.30pm
<u>THURSDAY</u>	Senior Citizens	2.00pm - 3.00pm
	Badminton	from 6.30pm
<u>FRIDAY</u>	Choir Practice	7.00pm
<u>SATURDAY</u>	Community Cafe	10.00am - 11.30am
	Women's Group (3 rd Saturday monthly)	11.30am

Items for September OUTLOOK need to be emailed to Nikki Fisher at BURC_CommunityOutreach@outlook.com by Sunday 16 August 2026. OUTLOOK to be photocopied Saturday 29 August 2026.