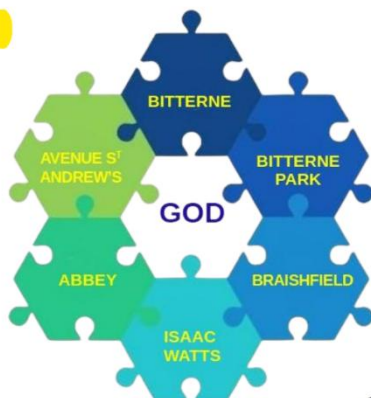


Southern Fellowship of United Reformed Churches



Bitterne
United
Reformed
Church



OUTLOOK

MAY 2026

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

Church Diary

MAY

Sat 2 nd	9:30am	Church Away Day
Sun 3 rd	10:30am	Morning Service led by Adrian Stephens
Wed 6 th	11:30am	Wednesday Worship
Thu 7 th	12noon	Community Lunch
	2pm	Senior Citizens - Draw
Sun 10 th	10:30am	Morning Service led by Christel Langdon-Griffiths from Christian Aid
Wed 13 th		Christian Aid Stall in the precinct with Wednesday Market
Thu 14 th		Senior Citizens - Outing to Oxford
Sat 16 th	11:30am	Women's group – Hearing Dogs for the Deaf
Sat 16 th	7:30pm	Quiz Night in Support of Christian Aid - 40th Anniversary events
Sun 17 th	10:30am	Morning service led by Brian Parfitt with Holy communion
Mon 18 th	6:30pm	Summer Tea Party with Girls Brigade
Wed 20 th	7:30pm	Elders Meeting
Thu 21 st	2pm	Senior Citizens - Tea/coffee, cake and chat
Sat 23 rd	7:30pm	Board Games Evening
Sun 24 th	10:30am	Morning Service led by Mike Perrott
		Bible Study?
Thu 28 th	2pm	Senior Citizens - Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
Sun 31 st	11:45am	Church Meeting

JUNE

Thu 4 th	12noon	Community Lunch
	2pm	Senior Citizens - Draw
Sun 7 th	10:30am	Green Mosaic Service
Sun 14 th	10:30am	Morning service led by Revd. Dr. Sarah Hall
Sun 21 st	10:30am	Morning service led by Chris Noyce with Holy communion (Father's Day)
Sun 28 th	10:30am	Morning service led by Mike Perrott

Items for April OUTLOOK need to be emailed to Nikki Fisher at BURC_CommunityOutreach@outlook.com by Sunday 19 April 2026. OUTLOOK to be photocopied Saturday 2 May 2026.

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,

I must begin by saying a big thank you to all who led our Easter services, providing breakfast and help with the Great Bitterne Bake Off, we had a lovely weekend celebrating our risen Lord and eating together. I am reminded of a recent service led by our minister Sarah when the theme was Jesus eating with folk, something which happened on many occasions not least the supper on Maundy Thursday and indeed early on Easter day when we celebrate Holy Communion as we remember our Lord rising from the dead, a very special service. We read in the bible that Jesus enjoyed the hospitality of many different folk during His ministry and welcomed all when he provided it Himself, even feeding five thousand on one occasion!

We as a church offer hospitality in several different ways, not least our community café on Wednesday and Saturday (more help always needed for Saturdays) and our monthly lunch which regularly serves a cooked meal to thirty plus friends. We also offer 'hospitality' to those in need by donating food to the local Basics Bank, thank you to those who regularly pop items into the box provided in the corridor and to Dave and Sue who pass it on to the distribution point at Bitterne Park.

The Bible teaches that food is both a physical necessity and a spiritual blessing, emphasizing gratitude and sharing.

We pray that God will continue to guide us into new ways of providing hospitality to the people of Bitterne and beyond.

God bless,

Ian

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

We think of all our Church family who are currently unwell, or who have relatives that are poorly and somehow feel helpless about their situation. We think of those who are grieving and offer our prayers for the family of Barry Downer who passed away on 16 April, reunited with his loving wife Audrey, who first became a member of Bitterne URC in November 1955. Our prayers are with Barry's sons Michael and Kevin Downer and family. May they feel comfort and strength from knowing God's love.

A Prayer for the Unwell and the Grieving

May comfort surround our friends and relatives who are unwell. May strength find them in moments when their bodies or spirits feel tired. May they feel supported, cared for, and never alone in what they're facing.

For those who are grieving, may peace come softly. May memories bring warmth rather than pain, and may love hold them steady as they navigate loss.

And may all who suffer—whether in body, mind, or heart—receive healing, hope, and the reassurance that brighter days can still come.

We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.



AWAY DAY – SATURDAY 2 MAY 2026

It's not too late to sign up for our Away Day at Petersfield URC, promising a day of fun and fellowship with lunch provided and a beautiful garden. Ruth White, our Synod Childrens' Youth and Development Officer is offering a good programme for the day. We hope to leave Bitterne at approximately 9.30 am and start our return journey no later than 3.30 pm. If you need transport please let us know as we will have a minibus and driver at our disposal.

SOUTHERN FELLOWSHIP ANNIVERSARY SERVICE SATURDAY 9 MAY 2026 – 2.00 pm BRAISHFIELD URC

Dear Friends

Please make every effort to join in our Southern Fellowship anniversary service at Braishfield URC. The Reverend Mike Perrott will be leading worship with the Reverend Stephen Thornton as guest speaker. The service commences at 2.00 pm with refreshments available at Braishfield Village Hall, which is opposite the Church. Car parking is available either outside the Church or in the grounds of the Village Hall as you are using their facilities. If you're willing to help with the service please let Mike know.



Thank you to everyone working and serving throughout the Church. To all those who have offered to continue in their roles and take up new positions at our Annual General Meeting and those who have stepped down from roles, you have all made a difference.

You are the fabric of our community, and the way you honour God through your dedication is greatly appreciated.

In Christian love
Anne

The Great Bitterne Bake Off – Winners!

Churches Together in Bitterne were delighted to host the first ever **Great Bitterne Bake Off** on Easter Saturday at Bitterne URC. The event brought together bakers, families, volunteers, and visitors from across our churches and neighbourhood for a joyful afternoon of creativity, connection, and (of course) cake!

We were thrilled to receive **17 bakes** from across the churches — a fantastic display of imagination, skill, and Easter spirit. After a morning of anonymous judging, the winners were announced:

- **Best Decorated Cake** - Michelle (Holy Saviour)
- **Best Tasting Bake** - Riya (Christ the King St Colman)
- **Best Youth Bake (Under 16)** - Isaac (Holy Saviour)
- **Best Cookie/Traybake** - Susan (Cornerstone)
- **Best Showstopper** - Natalie (Bitterne URC)
- **Best Easter-Themed Bake** - Gail (Bitterne URC)

Thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended, we raised **£157.50 in total donations** to support future CTiB community events.

A heartfelt thank-you to **everyone who baked, judged, volunteered, visited, or supported** the day. Your enthusiasm helped make the Bake Off a warm and memorable celebration for our community. We look forward to many more opportunities to gather, create, and share fellowship together.



Million Acts of Hope

News reports and social media can often make us feel that the UK is more divided than ever.

The voices of those who spread hate or seek to pull communities apart can be loud, but the voices of hope, care and kindness are louder.

Across Wales, Scotland and England, United Reformed Church congregations, community groups and local projects show up for people in their neighbourhoods every day. As part of the national **A Million Acts of Hope** week of action (13–20 May), the URC is inviting you to help celebrate these everyday acts of connection by sharing your photos and short videos.

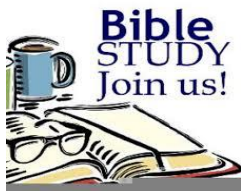
More URC information to follow. Meanwhile, resources, including a "how to" pack, poster and social media images, are available at millionactsofhope.org/community-hub

COMMUNITY LUNCH – First Thursday of the month

This month: **Thursday 7th May at 12.00 midday.**

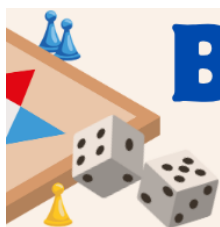
The cost is £6 for a main course and dessert.

Everyone is welcome.



**Bible
STUDY**
Join us!

Our next Bible Study meeting is being held on 27th May, 7:30pm



Board Games Evening

- Classic and modern board games
- Great family fun!
- Free entry

23rd May 7:30 pm



Bring your friends and family, roll the dice, and let the fun begin!

Summer Tea party - 18th May, 6:30pm

Bible Aunties and Uncles - and those thinking of becoming one - we'd love you to join us for a special evening hosted by the girls themselves. Expect **crafts, tea, cake and plenty of laughter** as we celebrate the completion of their summer badge.



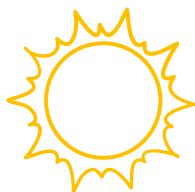
Could You Be a Bible Auntie or Uncle?

We're looking for a few caring adults to support the girls moving up into our n:gage group (7–11). Bible Aunties and Uncles play a simple but meaningful role — offering encouragement, prayer and a friendly church-family connection as the girls grow in faith.



You'll be paired with one girl, keep her in your prayers, and present her with her first Bible at our awards ceremony as she takes this next step.

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**. It's a small commitment with a big impact, and a lovely way to bless the next generation.



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.

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.



Could You Be Our Next Editor? We're looking for someone who might enjoy taking on the role of editor for our monthly *Outlook* magazine. If you're curious about what's involved, you'd be very welcome to chat with Maria or

Janet. You might even like to try being a guest editor for a couple of editions to see whether it's a good fit. It's a lovely way to contribute creatively and help shape how we share our church's life with the community.



THESE DAYS WE DO NOT NEED HYMN BOOKS
AS ALL OF THE WORDS TO THE SONGS
CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET

Volunteers Needed

We are starting a **Care and Connect Cafe: a dementia- friendly carers café** and are looking for warm, friendly volunteers.

The café will offer a welcoming space for unpaid carers who support people living with dementia - with conversation, activities, refreshments and listening support.

No experience needed - just kindness, patience and a willingness to learn. Sessions will run once or twice a month on Tuesday mornings or Friday afternoons.

Roles are shared and on a rota basis, training is provided. If you're interested in helping, even occasionally, we'd love to hear from you! Contact Nikki for more information.



A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips 2026 Calendar - May

Support pollinators.

Nothing says Spring like the buzz of a bee! But these precious pollinators are declining due to habitat loss, climate change and agricultural intensification. **Wednesday 20 May is World Bee Day**, so look around to see how you can improve habitats for bees and other pollinators.

Read more about bees, butterflies and habitats that support them in our Target 25 resources at www.arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/target-25. Sow a pollinator friendly seed mix, make or buy a bee hotel, let some wildflowers grow in your garden, and don't use pesticides. Pray that our pollinator populations will increase. For more about World Bee Day visit:

www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/world-bee-day/



2026 EVENTS

Bitterne United Reformed Church are celebrating 40 years in the precinct! We've planned a special programme of events in 2026, and we'd be delighted if you can join us!

MARCH 1 – 2:00 PM



Christian Musicals Sing-Along

MARCH 22 – 10:30 AM

Reunion Service & Lunch



APRIL 24 – 7:30 PM

Solent Fellowship Band (Salvation Army) Concert — Ticketed



MAY 16 – 7:00 PM

Quiz Night in Support of Christian Aid



JULY 18 – 10:00 AM–1:00 PM

Summer Fair on the Patio



SEPTEMBER 26 – 7:30 PM

Saxophony Concert — Ticketed



OCTOBER 27–31

Jigsaw Puzzle Festival



NOVEMBER 20 – 7:00 PM

Barn Dance — Ticketed



DECEMBER



Christmas Tree Festival

For the latest updates, please visit our website



Important Information:

Dates and details may be subject to change.
Everyone is welcome — bring friends, family, and neighbours

or follow us on social media.





CHARITY QUIZ *Night*



Saturday 16th May, 7pm

with Ploughman's supper

at Bitterne United Reformed Church

Entry is free!

Donations welcome to support the incredible work of
Christian Aid.

Please reserve your space by emailing:

ianbitterne@gmail.com

For more
info please
visit our
website



<u>Flower Rota</u>			<u>In Memory of</u>
May	3 rd	The Snow Family	Kay Snow
	10 th	Ian Abrahams	Lilian Wadsley
	17 th	Doreen Hampson	Doreen's husband Peter
	24 th	Janet Gotham	
	31 st	Janet Gotham	
June	7 th	Janet Gotham	Janet's Mum, Pauline



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

Take this Moment

(Hymn sang at the end of Wednesday Worship 1st April
service, chosen by Jan Adamson)

Take this moment, sign and space;
Take my friends around;
Here among us make the place
where your love is found.

Take the time to call my name,
Take the time to mend
Who I am and what I've been,
All I've failed to tend.

Take the tiredness of my days,
Take my past regret,
letting your forgiveness touch
all I can't forget

Take the little child in me,
scared of growing old;
help me here to find my worth
Made in Christ's own mould.

Take my talents, take my skills,
Take what's yet to be;
Let my life be yours, and yet,
Let it still be me.

© *John Bell (b1949) Words and Music*
Graham Maule (1958-2024) Words

BITTERNE URC DIRECTORY

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Web site address	Bitterneurc.org.uk	
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Minister	Revd Mike Perrott	01794 512163
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Assistant Church Secretary	Janet Gotham	07790207962
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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
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Health & Safety Advisor		
IBRA Secretary	Maria Boys	07817154062
IT Co-ordinator	Tim Fisher	07971363376
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Lettings Officer	Ian Abrahams	023 80431067
Mercy Collective Coordinator	Anthony Boys	07561185898
Organist	Dave White	07491865120
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Coordinator		
Publicity Officer	Nikki Fisher	
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Senior Citizens Contact	Diane Murphy	023 80431727
Synod Representative	Janet Gotham	023 80329719
Website Administrator	Nikki Fisher	
Holy Saviour Office		023 80685560
Christ the King & St Colman	Father Elijah	023 80449088
Priest		
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 Badminton	2.00pm -	3.00pm from 6.30pm
<u>FRIDAY</u>	Choir Practice		7.00pm
<u>SATURDAY</u>	Community Cafe	10.00am -	11.30am
	Women's Group (monthly as announced)		11.30am