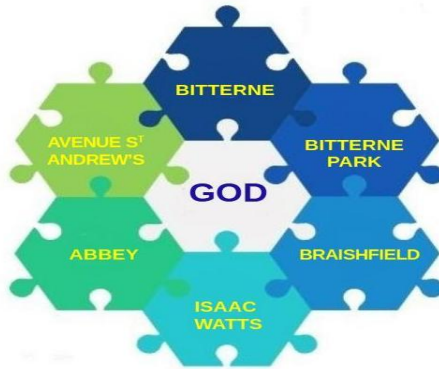


Southern Fellowship of United Reformed Churches



Bitterne
United
Reformed
Church



L E N T

OUTLOOK MARCH 2026

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

CHURCH DIARY

MARCH

Sun 1 st	10.30am	Inclusive Service to be led by Revd Dr Sarah Hall and Nikki Fisher assisted by Gail and Chloe
Wed 4 th	11.30am	Wednesday Worship
Thurs 5 th	12noon	Community Lunch
	2.00pm	Senior Citizens – Draw
Sun 8 th	10.30am	Rob Ainslie
Wed 11 th	7.30pm	Bible Study House Group to be held at the home of Anne Wood
Thurs 12 th	2.00pm	Senior Citizens – Tea/Coffee/Cake & Chat
Sun 15 th	10.30am	Penny Moore will be leading the service which will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion presided over by Dave White
Wed 18 th	7.30pm	ELDERS MEETING
Thurs 19 th	2.00pm	Senior Citizens - Quiz
Sun 22 nd	10.30am	40 th Anniversary Reunion Service
	12.30pm	40 th Anniversary Roast Lunch
Thurs 26 th	2.00pm	Senior Citizens Group – Chair Exercises
Sat 28 th	11.30am	Women's Group
PALM SUNDAY		
Sun 29 th	10.30am	Meg Cook will be leading the service
	11.45am	AGM and CHURCH MEETING

APRIL

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thurs 2 nd	12noon	Community Lunch
	2.00pm	Senior Citizens – Draw
	7.30pm	Dave White - Service of Holy Communion

GOOD FRIDAY

Fri 3 rd	11am	Churches Together Walk of Witness Starting from Holy Saviour Church
	7.30pm	Tenebrae Service to be led by Dave White

EASTER SUNDAY

Sun 5 th	8am	Dave White - Service of Holy Communion
	8.30am	Easter Breakfast
	10.30am	Jill Abrahams - Family Service

**The AGM and Church Meeting will be held on Palm Sunday
29th March. Please make every effort to attend.**

Items for April OUTLOOK need to be emailed to Nikki Fisher at
BURC_CommunityOutreach@outlook.com by Sunday 15 March 2026.
OUTLOOK to be photocopied Saturday 28 March 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,

We are already two months into 2026, where does the time go? I have a feeling that this year will fly by very quickly because of all the anniversary events we have planned. We are already busier than we have been in previous years what with the Bible study group having started and the women's group. Both groups are well attended and I find the bible study very helpful and uplifting. It is a good problem to have, but there is so much going on now that some of us have difficulty finding gaps in our diaries to put meetings in. I have not yet had to choose one meeting over another, but have not yet made it to a board games evening.

Easter is fast approaching, and I am looking forward to that. I am again organising a Tenebrae service for Good Friday and I have already sent out messages inviting people from the other churches in the Southern Fellowship to take part in the readings. I have already received positive replies so if you wish to read at that service, I would advise that to avoid being disappointed you book your place soon before all the readings are taken up.

Thank you for all you do here at Bitterne and thank you for all the help and support given to me,

Yours in Christian love, Dave.

BITTERNE PARK URC Saturday 28 March, 11.00 am – 2.00 pm Easter Market, including refreshments, lunch.
Friday 8 May, 6.30 pm Beetle Drive, including Bangers and mash.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Lord, we lift before you all in our church family who are walking through difficult times. We remember those living with long-term illness, those in hospital separated from loved ones, and those who are grieving. May they sense your nearness in every moment and find strength beyond their own.

We give thanks for those standing on the threshold of new opportunities, especially in employment. Grant them confidence, clarity, and the tools they need to step forward with courage.

Lord, make your presence known in each of their lives. Surround them with comfort, steady their hearts, and let them feel held in your unfailing care. Amen



AWAY DAY! - 2 MAY 2026,

PETERSFIELD URC Dear Friends, We'd love you to consider joining us on an away day. The date is a few months away, which gives you time to consider, plan and sign up. Feel free to suggest a theme for

the day and let us know beforehand. This is a time for everyone to have fun and fellowship in a relaxed environment. We are hoping to provide transport.

LENT SERVICES ON ZOOM

A reminder that Reverend Mike Perrott is holding a Zoom Lent Bible Study for 6.30 pm on the Sunday evenings of Lent, including Palm Sunday which anyone from the Fellowship is welcome to join. They are well worth attending. Just to confirm the dates which are left:

Lent 3, 8 March

Lent 4, 15 March

Lent 5, 22 March

Lent 6, 29 March (Palm Sunday)

Anyone who is interested can email Mike revd.mike13@gmail.com the week before each session and he will send notes including the Passcode and ID.

Ideas for Keeping Lent Holy by Nadia Bolz-Weber *Part 2*

How did you get on with part 1 in February's Outlook? Please let me know if you joined in with this. Here are the rest of the ideas:- (Sundays have no action)

Day 29: Write a thank you note to your favourite teacher

Day 30: Invest in canvas shopping bags - and use them!

Day 31: Buy a fairly traded product you've not tried before

Day 32: Donate art supplies to your local primary school

Day 33: Read John 8:1-11

Day 34: Worship at a friend's mosque, synagogue or church and look for the beauty

(Sunday)

Day 35: Confess a secret

Day 36: No sugar day – where else is there sweetness in your life?

Day 37: Give £5 to a local social enterprise

Day 38: Educate yourself about a saint www.catholic.org/saints

Day 39: Pray for peace

Day 40: Pray for your enemies (you probably have new ones by now) then decide which of these exercises you'll keep for good.

DONATIONS TO SCM BASICS BANK:

As always, please use the donation drop-off point at church.

They have shared that there is an urgent need for:

- Tinned Meat and fish
- Toilet rolls
- Noodles
- Soup
- Cook-in sauces
- Coffee, sugar, tea bags
- Jams & spreads
- Dog & Cat food
- UHT milk
- Large nappies sizes 4-6
- Tinned vegetables & fruit esp tomatoes
- All toiletries, esp deodorants

Alternatively, if you would rather, they can accept monetary donations

via their website <http://southamptoncitymission.co.uk/give>



COME AND SHARE IN THE JOY OF EASTER

MAUNDY THURSDAY	7.30pm	Communion led by Dave
GOOD FRIDAY	11.00	Walk of Witness around Bitterne, followed by tea and coffee and hot cross buns in our church.
GOOD FRIDAY EVENING	7.30pm	TENEBRAE SERVICE led by Dave
EVERYONE WELCOME	8.00am	EASTER SUNDAY
MORNING		Easter Communion led by Dave.

Breakfast will be served at 9.00am with fellowship and fun and a full English breakfast. Please put your name on the list in the corridor.

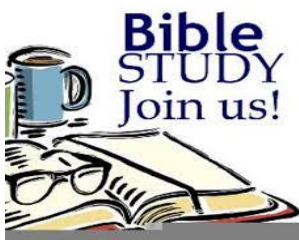
EASTER SUNDAY 10.30am. Come and share the joy of Easter



FIRST THURSDAY LUNCH will be on Thursday 5th March at 12.00 midday. The cost is £6 for a main course and dessert.



Everyone welcome.



Our next Bible Study meeting is being held on **Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 7.30 pm** at Anne's house. All are welcome!

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.



HELP! Is there a budding editor inside of you just bursting to come out? If you would like to try your hand at editing our monthly Outlook magazine, please come forward and let me, or Maria know. Perhaps you would like to be a guest editor and try it for a

couple of editions, and see if the role suits you?

THANK YOU

We give thanks to our editor Maria who has been looking after the Outlook magazine for approaching 20 years! We appreciate the articles you have found us, the time and effort expended and the patience and understanding you have shown towards those of us who unintentionally extend the deadline. Thank you.

Editors Page.

After almost 20 years, I have decided to give up editing Outlook. Last year, I bought a new computer from Jamies Computers in Northam, which has windows 11. Ever since my introduction to this awful operating system, I have suffered so much frustration. It takes me longer to format the magazine than it does to write it as my version appears not to be compatible with other contributors. Nikki is going to take on Editing for April, then we are hoping and praying for a new volunteer. Perhaps your computer will be cooperative and do a nice easy job of putting it all together. I'm happy to continue to write articles, and help the new volunteer settle into the role.

I would also like to concentrate my spare time on Boys Brigade and green matters, along with Churches Together In Bitterne and this year's 40th Anniversary Committee.

Chocolate – this is very topical at Easter time. Hasn't the price of chocolate become ridiculous? Have you also noticed that Cadbury's (now owned by American company Mondelez) and some other brands are now substituting fabulous tasty dairy milk for unsavoury and environmentally damaging palm oil, and their cocoa content has dropped? Please look at the labels before you buy. Lidl's and Aldi's are using milk and have a high cocoa content.

We are led to believe that the price of chocolate has risen because of a world shortage. But, according to Reuters, Ivorian cocoa farmers are being forced to store unsold cocoa beans in their homes and accept low prices for their crops while global markets pretend there is a cocoa shortage and keep consumer prices artificially high. 700,000 tons of chocolate is sitting in warehouses rotting as multinational buyers/exporters have stopped buying, and are refusing to pay growers the government farmsafe price set by the regulator. The farmers have no means to sell to anyone else, so access to trade is a real problem and is causing poverty. The only way to break this is for countries to manufacture the chocolate themselves and sell it on the world market as a finished product, as Ghana (one of the world's largest cocoa producers) has started doing. So, for example, instead of exporting cocoa beans for \$2k per ton, it will export finished chocolate for \$10k+ per ton. It will be interesting to see how this develops. Maria Boys

You are invited

**40th Anniversary Reunion
Service & Lunch**

Sunday 22 March
10:30 AM start • Lunch at 12:30 PM
Bitterne United Reformed Church

Join us for a special 40th Anniversary reunion at Bitterne URC — a morning to reconnect, remember, and celebrate our church family.

**Gather at 10:30 AM, with a roast lunch
at 12:30 PM (dietary alternatives
available).**

Please RSVP to

ianbitterne@gmail.com

For more info
please visit our
website



<u>Flower Rota</u>			<u>In Memory of</u>
March	1 st	Maria Boys	
	8 th	Janet Gotham	
Mothering Sunday	15 th	Janet Gotham	
	22 nd	Janet Gotham	Janet's Dad
Palm Sunday	29 th	Eileen Batchelor	Eileen's husband, George
Easter Sunday April	5 th	Kathy Forder	Kathy's husband, Ron



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

Thank you's -Following the delivery of flowers to a friend of our church after her Mum's fall and admission to hospital, I received a Thank You for the kind thought. She was even more touched when she realised that Ian Abrahams had purchased and arranged the flowers in memory of Lilian Wadsley, our previous organist, as Lilian had been her Elder when she attended our church. Our ministry of flowers is a good outreach to those who receive them, in bad times and good times. Thank you.

Following our appeal and the kind donation of plastic sweet and chocolate tubs, I am pleased to announce that Teddy, the young boy from Hamble, has exceeded his target and collected 11,233 tubs, which are now saved from landfill. Thank you, all, and especially Margaret Whale, who delivered them.

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
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Property Maintenance Coordinator	Tim Fisher	07971363376
Safeguarding Officer	Gail Jupp	07435563776
Senior Citizens Contact	Diane Murphy	023 80431727
Synod Representative	Janet Gotham	023 80329719
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 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