

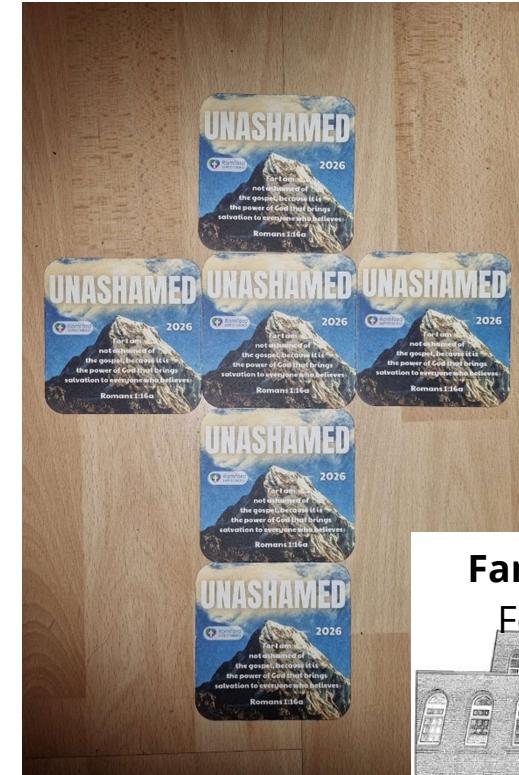


Henry is making a real effort for Lent –  
he's giving up the remote control and  
walking to the TV



Romford  
BAPTIST CHURCH

# Grapevine



Family Magazine  
February 2026  
and  
March 2026  
No. 236



## From the Editor

It's a month into 2026, and we're closer to Valentine's Day than New Year's Day. The Valentine's cards are already in the shops and there is an abundance of pink and red heart-themed merchandise on display.

This got me thinking about LOVE, and different ideas about what love means. I recently came across a quote by Amy Carmichael "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving", which I found quite thought-provoking.

1 Corinthians 13 v4-8 (NIV) gives us some helpful insights into what love is: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

Perhaps this is a good time to be reminded of God's love for us. Not the sentimental kind of love we think of when it's Valentine's Day, but the sacrificial love which cost everything, yet was given freely for us to accept.

**Cheryl Schulte**

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## Current Church Activities

### Monday

9:30am	Amaze support group for parents and carers of children with additional needs (usually 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in the month)
12:00-2:00pm	Foodbank (donations can be dropped off at other times)

### Tuesday

10:00am	Needlecraft Group
2:00-3.30pm	Treasure Times
8:00pm	Prayer meeting on Zoom
7:45pm	RBC Worship Team meet

### Wednesday

10:00-11:15am	Parent and Toddlers
12:45pm	Prayer
7:45pm	Life Groups

### Thursday

10:00am	Thursday morning Life Group, alternate Thursdays (please call church office for dates)
10:00-11:00am	'Come and join us for a chat', 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursdays
11:00-3:00pm	Holiday at Home - for over 65s, usually termly
7:30-9:00pm	Youth Club (alternate weeks)

### Friday

10:00am	Craft Group in the Meeting Place
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### Sunday

10:30am	Morning Worship in the building and online
6:00pm	Evening Worship in the building and online



If you have any regular church activity which you would like to have included, please let the editor know.



**Our purpose is to take the life-changing message of Jesus Christ to all, with the goal that they become his loyal disciples**

# Bible Bite

It can be read in the Bible in  
1 Samuel 2:11-17, 22-25, 3:1-21

## A short story from the Bible

As soon as he was old enough to leave his parents, Samuel went to live at God's temple in Shiloh, with the priest, Eli...

Eli's sons were also priests, but they helped themselves to what people had brought to give to God.



Eli talked to them about it. They ignored him.



But Samuel did all the work he was given well.



One night, after everyone had gone to bed, Samuel heard someone calling him.



He thought it was Eli, so he ran to him.



It happened again.



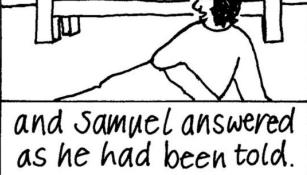
I didn't call. Go back to bed.

The third time, Eli knew it must be God calling Samuel.



You must say, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.'

God called Samuel again,



I told Eli his sons had done bad things, but he has not stopped them. Now, even being sorry will not make up for what has happened.



The next morning, Eli demanded to be told what God had said.



Samuel was afraid, but he told him.

He is God. He will deal with us as is right.



God continued to talk to Samuel. He became known throughout Israel.



## Pastor's Page

### Honestly!

So I tread carefully into the New Year by making a huge statement. That statement is simple! We lie to ourselves and each other!

"What?" you say, "Outrageous." Is it? Well in many cases my accusation is totally true. Before you hit the rage email or whatever, let me explain.

We care for one another with the question 'How are you? Are you ok?' And without thinking the reply is "fine". Of course, often this is because we feel good and life is ok.

Far too many times, however, we use 'fine', hoping that this is the end of the conversation, whereas FINE may actually stand for "Feeling Inadequate, Needing Encouragement", "Feelings Inside Not Expressed," or, in the case of the song FINE by Aerosmith, it had the meaning "Freaked out, Insecure, Neurotic and Emotional," ... well nearly, I had to change the word (and direction) beginning with F for politeness.

I totally understand that there are many people we would choose not to be baring our soul to and so the

answer fine is the one we choose for politeness. However, there does come a time when we need to, with people we trust, say "I am not ok!"

Jesus often had long conversations with people who were just not ok, who started off with the superficial but soon got to the real matters, the woman at the well for example. And in 1 Kings 19 we have the story of Elijah, a celebrated prophet having a breakdown and God ministering to him.

**MYTH Buster: It is not a sin or a lack of faith to not be OK. It is a human state!**

As we enter 2026 and go through the months ahead, let us start by asking ourselves "how am I?" and be really honest with ourselves as we answer. If we are not ok, seek help. Seek help from a trusted friend, a pastor, a doctor or another professional.

My prayer for 2026 is that we are real with ourselves, real with others who we can trust and real with God. When we are not okay, not fine, we seek help and find the start of a road to healing.

In his song "For the joys and for the sorrows" Graham Kendrick helpfully

writes about how we may feel including from sorry to when sleep has fled away and how we have Jesus to help us at these times. This song is worth looking up and allowing the words to become part of our prayers.

I want to finish this odd article by referring to a song by American rapper and singer Jelly Roll, "I am not ok", A Google search will find many recordings of this song, and I have put the lyrics below. But, as you listen, also remember the truth of scriptures, particularly "Exodus 15:26 "I am the Lord who heals you".

Be honest, meet with God today and start the road to recovery where you can see your "I am not OK" becoming "I am fine – really good!"

#### Lyrics

*I am not okay  
I'm barely getting by  
I'm losing track of days  
And losing sleep at night  
I am not okay  
I'm hanging on the rails  
So if I say I'm fine  
Just know I learned to hide it well*

*I know I can't be the only one  
Who's holding on for dear life  
But God knows, I know  
When it's all said and done  
I'm not okay*

*But it's all gonna be alright  
It's not okay  
But we're all gonna be alright*

*I woke up today  
I almost stayed in bed  
Had the devil on my back  
And voices in my head  
Some days, it ain't all bad  
Some days, it all gets worse  
Some days, I swear I'm better off  
Layin' in that dirt*

*I know I can't be the only one  
Who's holding on for dear life  
But God knows, I know  
When it's all said and done  
I'm not okay  
But it's all gonna be alright  
It's not okay  
But we're all gonna be alright*

*Gonna be alright  
Gonna be alright*

*I know one day  
We'll see the other side  
The pain'll wash away  
In a holy water tide  
And we all gonna be alright*

*I know I can't be the only one  
Who's holding on for dear life  
But God knows, I know  
When it's all said and done  
I'm not okay  
But it's all gonna be alright  
It's not okay*

## The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY

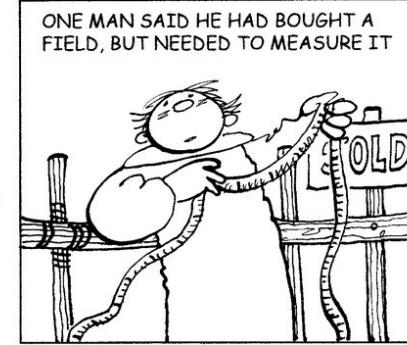


HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS



COME TO MY PARTY

BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES



ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



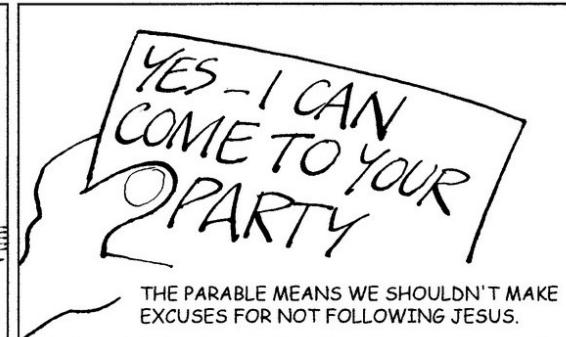
ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!



SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.



*But we're all gonna be alright  
I'm not okay  
But it's all gonna be alright*

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Ashley Glenn Gorley / Casey Brown / Taylor Delmar Phillips / Jason Bradley De Ford

*Rev Ian Bunce  
Minister Team Leader*

## Recycling at RBC

Did you know that some RBC members are organising ways to recycle some of our things?

**Used stamps** are collected by **Iris Hooper** to raise money for St Francis' hospice. For more information speak to Iris.



Clean, flattened **tin foil** is being collected by **Barbara Gatherum**, who sells it and gives the money to St Francis' Hospice. For more information speak to Barbara.

**Old tools** are being collected by **Gordon Palmer** to be passed on to the charity **Tools with a Mission**, which refurbishes them and sends them out to poor countries. For more information, please speak to Gordon.

*Peter Feinson*

**Unwanted books, DVDs and** by **Colin and Susan Young**, who send them on to the charity Books2Africa. For more information, speak to Colin and Susan or visit the



[www.books2africa.org](http://www.books2africa.org).

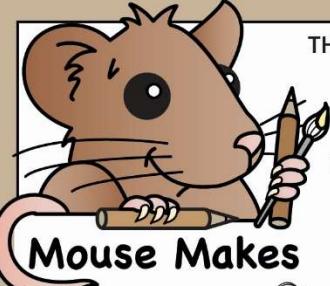


**The deadline for the April 2026/May 2026 edition of the Grapevine is Sunday 8 March 2026**

Please give any items to Cheryl Schulte, or email them to Cheryl at:

[grapevine@romfordbaptist.org.uk](mailto:grapevine@romfordbaptist.org.uk)





**THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS**

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? v3-4

What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? v5-6

What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? v9

What did Jesus say? v9

**WE LEARN:**  
Read the Bible  
Learn God's word.



**Mouse Makes**

Read the story in Luke 4:1-13

**SECOND TEMPTATION**

**THE DEVIL SAID:**  
"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

**JESUS REPLIED:**  
"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

**WE LEARN:**  
Put God first  
Worship only Him.



**FORTY DAYS SON K L O R D N H**

**T D O W N O N W O R S H I P**

**T E S T W O R L D L T U N B**

**L V T E M P T A T I O N G R**

**E I A M J E S U S F N G D E**

**N L K P D E S E R T E R O A**

**T H O L Y S P I R I T Y M D**

**I M J E R U S A L E M F S J**

**W I L D E R N E S S J U M P**

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT



**THIRD TEMPTATION**

**THE DEVIL SAID:**  
"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

**JESUS REPLIED:**  
"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

**WE LEARN:**  
God cares, trust  
Him do not test Him.

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**EBF**  
Europe • Central Asia • Middle East  
75 years together

**TWINNING CERTIFICATE**

TO: Romford Baptist Church

Thank you for supporting  
**HOPE HEATS UKRAINE**

**THE HOUSE OF BREAD CHUCH  
IN BARYSHIVKA**

Baryshivka, Ukraine

Please pray for pastor Pavlo Lychodejov and the ministries of the church this winter.

EBF General Secretary  
**Alan Donaldson**  
December 2025



sacrifice within us, not just for ourselves, but to share with others. "We are vessels so that God can use us and earthen vessels so that we rely on God and not ourselves." (Warren Wiersbe).

The Apostle Paul said, "My power shows up in weak people" (2 Cor 12 v9 – Living Bible). Graham Kendrick has written some wonderful songs. In one it says:

*Though we are weak  
His grace is everything we need –  
we're made of clay,  
but this treasure is within;  
He turns our weaknesses into His  
opportunities  
so that the glory goes to Him.*

Amen? Amen!

*Anne Barnes*



## Congratulation on your Golden Wedding Anniversary



Congratulations to Raymond and Brenda Hughes, who celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2025.

## Smile Lines

### **It hurts**

A little girl told her mother one day before lunch that her stomach was hurting. Her mother replied: "That's because it's empty, you have to put something into it!"

That evening the minister and his wife came for dinner. The minister looked a bit rough and explained that his head was hurting him. The little girl gave him a sweet smile and said encouragingly: "That's because

it's empty, you have to put something into it!"

### **Hymns for Professionals**

Dentist - *Crown Him with many crowns*

Contractors - *The Church's one foundation*

Politicians - *Standing on the promises*

Librarians - *Let all mortal flesh keep silent*

## BMS Birthday Scheme

### Birthdays: February 2026



Becki Swindale  
Margaret Coles

### Birthdays: March 2026



Glynis Brown  
Keith Carter

## Clay Pots



Garden centres seem to be big business these days and I must confess that I enjoy looking round them, especially if they have a good coffee shop!

In most of these centres, they have an area where they keep pots. There's usually a large selection to choose from, different shapes and sizes, some are ornamental, some are glazed, while others are just plain, ordinary clay pots.

I believe these ordinary ones were what the Apostle Paul was referring to when he wrote, "We have this treasure in jars of clay" (2 Cor 4 v7). I understand that in his day, people would sometimes hide valuable items in such pots, hoping that no-one would expect to find anything special in this sort of vessel. However,

what was Paul meaning about 'clay pots' and 'treasure'? Well, the treasure, of course, is the Good News of the Gospel and we are the clay pots.

I don't know whether you have ever thought of yourself as a 'clay pot'. It doesn't sound very flattering, does it? However, if we think about it for a minute or two, I believe that we could find it quite appropriate.

We have said clay pots come in all shapes and sizes and each one has its own use. The same is true of us. We are all so different, but in God's sight each one of us is valuable. He is the Divine Potter who has fashioned us and knew us even before we were born. He made us the way we are so that we can do the things he planned for us. We may not be able to do what someone else can, but our contribution is just as vital for the work of His Kingdom, whether it's 'up front' or 'behind the scenes'.

Forgive me if I give a personal illustration. My daughter was severely physically disabled and died at the age of fourteen. At her Thanksgiving Service, the Rev. Norman Wright preached on the account in the New Testament of the widow who only had a few small coins to put in the Temple Treasury box. The Pharisees criticised her, but Jesus, who was watching, said that her few pennies were worth more than the riches of the wealthy people. She had given all that she could. My daughter was unable to walk or sit unaided, but she saved her pocket money every week towards the purchase of Parkside. She helped her friends with their homework and took part sometimes in the morning worship by reading the Bible passage. She encouraged others by her positive attitude. She did what SHE could. Our Father doesn't expect us to give what we don't have, but to use the gifts He has given us.

If we're like 'clay pots', it could also mean that sometimes we too are fragile and vulnerable. In my greenhouse, I have a tub of broken pieces of pots. These clay pots are often imperfect and easily shattered. I remember going to a local garden centre to buy a pot for a geranium I'd grown from a cutting. I thought it would make a little gift for a friend,

but every one I picked up seemed to have some small imperfection.

Satan sometimes whispers in our ear "you're not good enough to be involved in that service" or "you're not qualified to do that, leave it to someone else".

When God called Jeremiah, he replied, "Sovereign Lord, I don't know how to speak". God answered, "Don't say that, don't be afraid for I am with you". Then God touched Jeremiah's lips and put His words into Jeremiah's mouth.

Many of the great characters in the Bible were far from perfect, but God enabled them to do mighty things with His help and guidance. If we are willing to admit our weaknesses and learn from them, The Devine Potter can remould our 'flawed pots' and make us usable in His service. Hudson Taylor, who founded the China Inland Mission in the nineteenth century, wrote, "All God's Giants have been weak men who did great things because they reckoned on God being with them".

The believer is just a 'jar of clay', imperfect and vulnerable. It is the treasure within which gives the vessel its value. What an amazing privilege it is to have the treasure of the Good News of Jesus and His love and