



G r a p e v i n e



From the Editor

In the recent All-Age service, one of the songs we sang was "It's An Adventure":

*It's an adventure following Jesus,
It's an adventure learning of Him,
It's an adventure living for Jesus,
It's an adventure following Him.*

I began thinking of adventures I've had as a Christian. Some of these were the activities like Youth Camps, Beach Missions, Away Days, Days Out and many more. The wonderful thing about joining events and activities is that it takes us out of our routines and familiar places and opens us up to new experiences, discoveries and friendships.

When reading through this edition of Grapevine, you will read of people's personal journeys and encounters with Jesus. You will see some reports of activities, and you will also be reminded of those who have served as missionaries in other places.

As the song continues,

*Let's go where He leads us
Turn away from wrong
For we know we can trust Him
To help us as we go along*

May we also go where He leads us!

Cheryl Schulte

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

Pastor's Page

I often find myself sat for a few minutes in the Meeting Place on a Sunday evening before people start to arrive, or in the Piano Lounge at Parkside, just watching the traffic moving past. I love watching the world race past in those few minutes of silence. I don't know if you're like me and you wonder whether those on the buses are heading to work or home, to the hospital perhaps, or you muse on where the drivers of the cars are going, what their lives are like, are those I'm watching having a good day or a bad one. As is often the case on Main Road, I see ambulances, police cars, the occasional fire engine passing by, often with blue lights on, and I take time to lift up those in the emergency vehicles and the situations they are heading to before God.

Although I'm writing this at the start of Lent where we're encouraged to reflect, set time aside, pause and be open to God's voice, by the time of printing the Grapevine, Easter will be upon us or, by the time you're reading this, it may have already gone. By now we're all probably looking forward to the summer holidays, to pottering in the garden and hopefully some warmer weather. Weeks will have passed and life for many of us may have changed so much.

So where, in the midst of our busy or quiet lives, do we look for God? Are we even looking for Him? Are we alert to His voice or do we just slot Him into the gaps? We make sure we come to church Sunday by Sunday or as often as we can, but so often we can get to the end of our day and realise that we've not really allowed God to be part of it, other than a quick prayer for help when things are difficult perhaps.

If you're anything like me, as I go through winter, I'm only too keen to spot the bulbs coming up, to look out for the buds forming on the trees, watching the birds begin to mate up and build their nests but can I, or you, say the same about our sense of anticipation and expectation of looking for or hearing from God? Does that sense of being open to Him remain buried at the bottom of the pile and as an action on the list of things still to do? Perhaps, like you, it depends on the kind of day that is planned and then what happens instead, and we realise that another day has gone by where we've failed to set time aside for Him, rather than being consistent or ever-alert to those God-incidents that are happening around us. As spring unfolds and summer draws closer can I urge us all not to be so busy that

we miss what God may be saying or wishing to show us because actually, we'll be the ones missing out on the showers of blessing He wants to give to us day by day.

Vikki Bunce
Team Minister (With focus on the older generation)

Brick by Brick

The mass production of bricks is credited to one Henry Clayton in 1855. Whilst bricks have been in production in one form or another for centuries, it was only in the 19th century during the industrial revolution where bricks became the uniform shape we recognise today.



Most of us live in a house made with bricks but I'm sure we don't really pay that much attention to them. These small cuboids of clay just 21.5cm in length hold the strength and structure of our homes, offices and our church building.

Have you ever stopped to think how many bricks are needed to build a standard three bedroomed semi-detached house these days? Around 4000-6000. That's a lot of bricks! Each one linked to the next with a strong mortar bond which will keep it standing for years.

All these thousands of bricks need each other. A single brick doesn't

make a house in the same way as a single flower doesn't make a bouquet, nor a single note could make a song. That's exactly how the church of Christ is structured too. A church cannot (and should not) rely

on one single 'brick' - one person who does everything. We all have our part to play, our skills to bring.

Many times the body of Christ is mentioned in the Bible - 1 Corinthians 12:27 - '*Now you are the body of Christ*' and Romans 12:5 '*many members, one body*'. It seems to me that people often have the idea that, unless they have an amazing and specific skill such as painting, preaching, singing, teaching or playing an instrument, they have little or nothing to offer. But Bible teachings are far away from this misconception. Indeed, in the New Testament, we read about humble fishermen who were called to be Christ's disciples.

Each one of us is called to serve our Lord with whatever skill we have. Admittedly, some people have amazing skills which we might only dream about possessing. But have you thought about those everyday things you do which could also be used for God's glory? Washing up, cleaning, serving tea, making meals, shaking hands with people at the door or helping to sort tins of food? No special qualifications needed – just a heart which wants to serve. God can do amazing things with our everyday offerings of service.

And each of us has a part to play too! Just as the brick wall doesn't get built with a single brick, so the church of God doesn't function with just one person. We are all needed to work together, bringing our willingness, doing whatever we are able to offer. And our mortar? Christ Himself, holding us together in a strong bond. I brought to mind the recent organising of the Food Bank one Monday evening where rooms were repurposed and different items relocated. There must have been between 20-30 people who attended that Monday night. It was simply joyous to see everyone 'mucking in'.

Some drilled and put up shelves, some cleaned, some made tea for the workers, some organised dates on cans, some carried boxes of food, some hoovered, some put things on shelves – and it was all done as one unified and co-ordinated team. The body of Christ in action – just as it should be!

So please don't ever think that you have nothing to offer. When we offer our skills with hearts which want to serve, God will use us and bless us in the process.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving' - Colossians 3 verses 23-24

So let's bring our skills, our hearts and our willingness to serve the One who saved us and build His kingdom brick by brick.



Sarah Jenkin

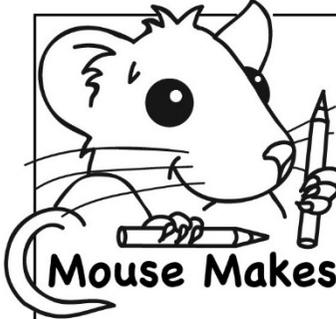


The deadline for the June 2026/July 2026 edition of the Grapevine is Sunday 10 May 2026

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

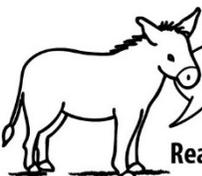
grapevine@romfordbaptist.org.uk





Mouse Makes

EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE



I carried Jesus into Jerusalem
Read Matthew 21:1-11



I handed Jesus over to be crucified
Read Matthew 27:11-26



I nailed Jesus to the cross
Read Mark 15:16-32



We watched Jesus die
Read Mark 15:33-41



I laid his body in my tomb
Read Mark 15:42-47



I guarded the tomb
Read Matthew 27:62-66



We saw the empty tomb
Read Matthew 28:1-10



and spoke to the angel!



Jesus is alive!
He ate a meal with me!
Read Luke 24:13-35

GOOD NEWS
OHOSANNA
DEATHQB
VNCOEUI
UAHNAAR
MIREVS
YU
ALIVETDR
RISENEOK
YOTHORNS
PALMSQKA
RPILATEN
CRUCIFYG
RHIQUAKE
OCJESUSL
STOMBVDY
SRYEMPTY

JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY

Should the Church speak out about Political issues?

To answer this question, we first need to distinguish between issues of primary politics, and secondary politics. Primary politics is the business of having power struggles, e.g. party politics. As far as possible, I think the Church should try to keep out of this sort of issue and not get too much identified with any one party.

Secondary politics concerns any issue about which people are having a power struggle. All sorts of issues can come into this category, and they may change with time and place. For example:

- should the Church of England have bishops or not? It was a major political issue in 17th century Britain, and was one of the causes of the English Civil War, but it is not today – because no one is having power struggles about it now
- should women have the vote? Before the First World War it was very controversial, but was

accepted effectively in 1918 and no one is trying to go back to men-only voting now.

- Who should be king? Very controversial at the time of the Wars of the Roses, but not really an issue now.

Many, although not all, political issues are issues of right and wrong, and the Church will often have something to say about them, based on the Bible. The Church should not accept being told to be quiet when issues of right and wrong are at stake.

If Christians in the 18th and 19th centuries had not campaigned politically against slavery, it might never have been abolished (even if it is making a shocking come-back in our time). If Christians had not got involved in politics, they would not have campaigned against Sunday trading in the 1980s.

Peter Feinson

BMS Birthday Scheme

Birthdays: April 2026



Kathryn Metcalf

Birthdays: May



Elizabeth Callender

BMS Birthday Scheme



Thank you very much to all those who have given a donation to the BMS Birthday Scheme on your birthday during 2025, raising a total of £893.75 including Gift Aid. Additional gifts have also been sent directly to BMS online and all your gifts are greatly appreciated.

For those who are not aware of the Scheme, it is organised by the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) World Mission to support various projects.

Below is a story shared in a recent letter from BMS World Mission, Church Engagement Team.

“Pastor Vincent is passionate about restoring and transforming communities through local churches. He trains people to lead Bible studies that help churches identify needs in their community and solve problems using God-given local resources.

When Pastor Vincent led a Bible study at a church in Omoro District (in Uganda), the members were inspired to work with two other Baptist and Pentecostal churches to change their situation. They realised that there

was a lack of adequate sanitation in their community. Pastor Vincent envisions and equips churches to transform and restore entire communities.

The members raised 56,000 Ugandan Shillings – enough to buy three bags of cement and one bag of sand. They built a toilet that members of the community could use whenever they attended services, prayer meetings and events held at the church.

Pastor Vincent was hugely encouraged by what he saw. After just one Bible study, members of the three churches already knew that they were a great resource in the Kingdom of God! Christians from different denominations were coming together to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.

All those at Romford Baptist Church who have chosen to give life on their birthdays have made this possible. Thank you! And your impact doesn't end with Pastor Vincent and churches in Uganda. You're also helping to share the gospel with people who've never experienced the abundant life that is found in Jesus Christ. You're providing a lifeline for people displaced from their homes because of conflict or disaster. You're helping

women in Afghanistan learn how to spin cotton so they can earn an income and support their families. And you're bringing fullness of life across the globe.

Thank you again for choosing to transform lives."

If anyone is interested in knowing more about the scheme, I will be happy to provide you with further details.

Thank you again on behalf of BMS.

Christine Brown

be forced to stand before kings and governors. They will do all these things to you because you follow me.¹³ But this will give you an opportunity to tell about me.¹⁴ Decide now not to worry about what you will say.¹⁵ I will give you the wisdom to say things that none of your enemies can answer.¹⁶ Even your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends

will turn against you. They will have some of you killed.¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because you follow me.¹⁸ But none of these things can really harm you.¹⁹ You will save yourselves by continuing strong in your faith through all these things.

Rianna Stannard

Conflict in the Middle East

It's fair to say that much of the news has been overtaken this month by the developments of conflict in the Middle East. On top of the conflict, we know that this area of the world has already persecuted Christians for their faith in Jesus and amidst this conflict they are at risk of being targeted even further. I have been reminded of Luke 29:10-19 – somehow, yet of course, it is in the depths of the darkness and brokenness that we see God's love and light breaking through to hearts and nations.

- That local Christians will have courage, protection and perseverance
- That feelings of bitterness and hopelessness would turn the eyes of many towards Jesus
- For leaders and decision-makers worldwide to act justly and to love mercy (Micah 6:8) and speak boldly for freedom of religion and belief

Luke 29

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Nations will fight against other nations. Kingdoms will fight against other kingdoms."¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, sicknesses, and other bad things in many places. In some places there will be no food for the people to eat. Terrible things will happen, and amazing things will come from heaven to warn people.

¹² "But before all these things happen, people will arrest you and do bad things to you. They will judge you in their synagogues and put you in jail. You will



Open Doors have given some suggestions from local believers in how we might pray for them and the situation:

- For comfort for families who have lost loved ones and healing for those injured and traumatised

Baptisms – 7 February 2026

Lorna Bones Testimony

When asked why I turned to God I thought, where do I start?



Well, I am a woman with learning difficulties, bullied and put down my whole life. I sought comfort in mild drugs and alcohol to black out the pain. Then I moved next door to my now very good friend Reema, who told me God cares and forgives all, giving me a Bible to study and showing me how to pray in all times. Now 4 years clean, turning to God, and at all times I am happier and

stronger than ever. Jesus gave me my life back, now I give mine to him.

Lorna Bones

Malaysia Kasa-Vubu Testimony

Hello Church, my name is Malaysia, and I am 9 years old. Today I will be telling you my story and why I would like to get baptised.



I am excited and happy to be getting baptised today because I believe in God and I want to follow Jesus. Baptism is how I show that on the outside.

My Mum got baptised in this church in 2023, and it inspired me to make better choices in my life. This is not just my parents' faith; it is mine too. Following Jesus helps me to remember who I want to be. It is a reminder to be kind, forgive others, love people for who they are, and to ask God for help when things get hard. I know I will not always get it right, but there is no such thing as perfect, and I want to live the way Jesus teaches us to.

God is my saviour and my shield. He loves me no matter what. I can talk to Him when I am feeling scared or upset, and I feel safe when I speak to Him. I know He forgives me when I mess up, and even though I cannot see Him, I know He is always with me. He is loving, kind, and forgiving, and I always talk about His goodness.

I hope that after today God will help me to change my attitude. I feel that I can change, no matter any obstacle in my way, with God's help.

Today, getting baptised is my way of saying yes to Jesus. I promise to keep trying, even when it is hard, and to ask God to help me grow.

I am thankful that I don't have to walk this journey alone, because I have my family, my church, and God walking with me.

I would like to thank my strong family and the people who are with me today for coming here to let me share my beliefs and for supporting me. Thank you, Church. Now I am going to read a short poem.

Poem

*In waves of water, souls are born.
A promise kept, a new life is sworn.
Drips of water, symbol deep,
Washing clean, a new path kept.*

*In faith's embrace, the spirit's freed.
A journey starts; a soul proceeds.
Like rivers ancient, waters flow,
Washing whispers of long ago.*

*A pact with hope, a promise made,
In depths below, a soul's parade.
Emerging drops, like petals light,
A new creation born of night.*

*The water's part, the spirit's cry,
A whispered voice: I am, I try.*

Malaysia Kasa-Vubu

Victoria Tetteh Testimony

For the first half of my life, I had a fairly Christian upbringing, which consisted of family worship and prayers. However, when I entered secondary school, things at home had significantly changed.

During secondary school, I knew God, but I didn't really have a personal relationship with Him.



During COVID-19 when life slowed down, I was able to watch Romford Baptist Church's online services each Sunday and hear God's word. The Easter of 2020 holds a special place in my heart as I truly realised God's love for me and Jesus' ultimate sacrifice for a sinner like me.

From then onwards, I knew my own story with God was starting a new chapter.

Over the last 5-6 years God has been a source of comfort and joy in both my ups and downs.

God's intentionality in my life cannot be fully described. Each and every time a door has closed it's because He has had a different plan for me, a plan better than I could ever imagine.

For instance, during my time at sixth form, it felt that being head girl would surely be part of His plan for me. It wasn't, and that door being closed

allowed me to redirect myself to my academic studies. And by His grace, last July I graduated from the University of Cambridge. An opportunity that I certainly wouldn't have had without His interventions.

At University, my relationship with God grew deeper, He made my burdens lighter, He sustained me with close friendships and gave me strength when I had none. I stepped out in faith, getting involved in different churches and Christian societies, leaning on fellow Christians in my walk with God.

Even now, God is preparing me for new things and showing me His will for my life.

I invite God to continue working through me, all the days of my life.

Victoria Tetteh

Simeon Dennis Testimony

One Wednesday morning, I woke up in a very dark place. I was overwhelmed and in tears, so I rang my sister to talk. She goes to church, and during that conversation she said something that stayed with me. She told me it was time to speak to Jesus Christ — to tell Him how I was feeling and what I was going through.

After that conversation, I felt a pull in my heart to find a church. One

Sunday morning, I found myself



standing at the doors of RBC. I walked in on my own, and during the service I completely broke down in tears. I didn't fully understand it at the time, but I knew something was happening within me.

The second time I came, I spoke to one of the sisters, and she prayed with me. Once again, I broke down in tears. In that moment, I truly felt that this was the Lord working in me — showing me that I was ready to give my life fully to Him and to the church.

That is why I want to be baptised. Because in my darkest times, the Lord met me there. He gave me light when I felt lost, strength when I felt weak, and He showed me the way forward.

Simeon Dennis

BMS World Mission Link – Peter and Louise Lynch



As their time with BMS in Bangladesh finishes in September, we praise God for all of the fruit that has come from their service. We also are thankful for the opportunity that RBC have been given to partner with this work. We now pray for wisdom in how they use the time that remains and for the discussions between BBCS and BMS to discern God's will for the work and how the partnership will look in the future.

This Gamcha has been hanging next to the sanctuary entrance, throughout our partnership with the Lynch's. It serves as our reminder to be praying for them and God's ministry in Bangladesh. So then, let's let it be the interruption to our thoughts, that it intends to be!

Rianna Stannard

Easter of the Troika

I.
Mystery veils the Crown:

So dark this darkest day:
dread of treasured dream
- forlorn its faith, its hope, love -

begotten when night befalls
this hour, this midst of day.

Love laid bare as mystery
splits across trebled trios
of words of endings and beginnings

beyond blatant brokenness.

A curtain tears - holiness becomes.

Is that the Troika, the Trio
of Godliness - the cloth
the crown the cross -
that dwells for days: three,
those days in darkest depths -
soil of sin, of cowards crawling
crying for deliverance
by a Troika trying death?

Is that the Troika that reigns
who takes me, child, who
creates my wordless prayers
exigent to understand
this mystery that veils the Crown
this trilogy of life and death,
of love incomprehensible.

II.
Golgotha

Lo, the Skull does not tower
over Jerusalem, does not cry
from its hollowed eyes, speaks
not from its manmade mouth.
The Skull beholds its carpet
begotten by blood that dripped
from the cross in the middle
of three. The Skull is scolded;
it does not care.

Its hollowed eyes do not see
cherubs' blinding being as the mouth
of Skull Hill opens wide in mystery -
supernal their deity - their words
refrain
in this, the Garden of the Tomb

(are they from Eden or
Gethsemane).

The Skull is blind - beholds not
a woman running, two men
shouting.

Three stating: 'He is not there'.

The Skull engraves smell of death,
feasts hollowed eyes on linen white -
withholds to witness wholeness
as night scatters into light when
the third day breaks on epiphany.
Will this Garden endure his light
as One of Three, walks near?
When shall I, child, be fragments of
light,
when will I find oneness in Three?

III.
Troika triumvirate

Is this the Troika that triumphs
in Trinity - apotheosis above eternity:
who created Paradise with three -
man,
the woman, the serpent sailing -
whose creatures devote to divinity.
The Troika that guards my eden
my gethsemane my garden tomb -
is this He who gave me breath,
instructs triads of fires to carry me?

Yet, the waters of Eden came in four.
Could then we - I - in utmost
assurance
be one in him, this holy Troika
Trinity?

© Christa F. de Vries
Easter

Bible Bite

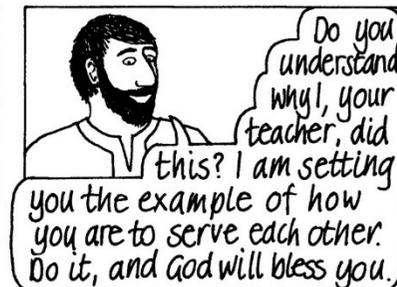
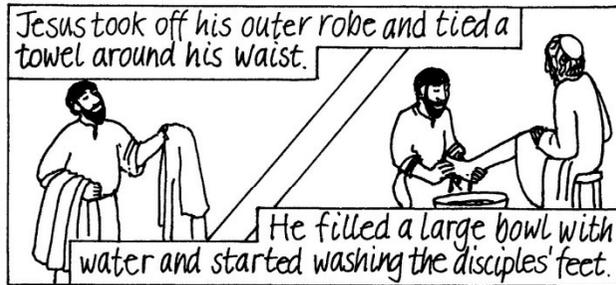
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke 22:24, John 13:3-17

Jesus and his disciples were celebrating the Passover with the special meal. The disciples were bickering again.



There was a reason why no-one wanted to be the least important - the roads were mud and everyone's feet got very dirty.



Celebrating World Book Day

Once upon a time Mr and Mrs Potato Head, the hungry caterpillar, a dragon and the lady with the lamp amongst others arrived to enjoy a book themed Holiday at Home day at the beginning of March. Who said only children can join in with the fun?! Then there were team quizzes with names from characters/book titles including 3 blind mice, the good, the bad and the ugly, the Gruffalo and the 3



musketeers among them. After an exhausting ourselves with how much we did (or didn't) know about books and their authors, Jan and her team fed us all with a wonderful lunch before we set to crafting or colouring our own bookmarks. And we then returned home where we lived happily ever after. The end!

Vikki Bunce



Nikolai and Natalia Hodinitu's 40th Wedding Anniversary - 1st March 2026



Unlock London Walk



The Unlock London Walk to be held on Saturday 18th April 9am to 5pm. The area covered will be Kilburn and Hampstead.

The 2026 Unlock walk will be a hilly one in North London, as we visit Hampstead and Kilburn, with the opportunity for those who wish to explore the open spaces and views from Hampstead Heath, one of the highest points in London. Kilburn lies on ancient (pre-Roman) Watling Street which is now the modern A5, and has a very inner-city feel to it, with large Irish, Afro-Caribbean and Middle Eastern communities. Hampstead is a famously leafy suburb, with West Hampstead and Froggnal somewhere in between. The area is well served by train and bus services, including the London

Overground's Mildmay Line. As I write, we are still finalising the route and the Churches we will be visiting, but as ever there is a fascinating mixture, each with its own story of



God's work to tell.

For more information go to:

www.unlock-urban.org.uk/support/walk/

Hillary and Ian Salisbury will be on the walk and leading the group on 18th April, so speak to them or look out for more information in the weekly news sheet.

Smile Lines

Present

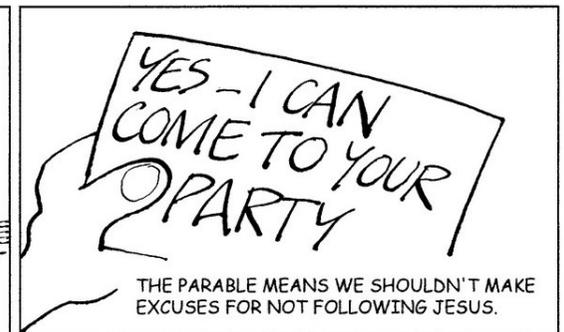
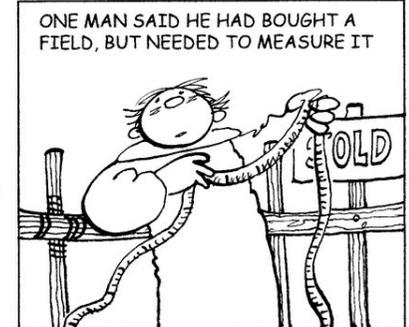
For the elderly minister's 75th birthday, the congregation at St Mary's decided to give him a present of a new suit. He was so

moved by the gift that the following Sunday he stood before everyone and began his homily with a tear in his eye, saying: 'Today I am preaching to you in my birthday suit.'

The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



Current Church Activities

Monday

12:00-2:00pm Foodbank (donations can be dropped off at other times)

Tuesday

10:00am Needlecraft Group
10:30am Amaze Adults
2:00-3.30pm Treasure Times
8:00pm Prayer meeting on Zoom
7:45pm RBC Worship Team meet

Wednesday

10:00-11:30am Parent and Toddlers
12:00-2:00pm Foodbank (donations can be dropped off at other times)
12:45pm Prayer
7:45pm Life Groups

Thursday

10:00am Thursday morning Life Group, alternate Thursdays
(please call church office for dates)
11:00-3:00pm Holiday at Home – for over 65s, usually termly

Friday

10:00am Craft Group in the Meeting Place
7:30-9:00pm Youth Club (Years 7 – 13, term time only)

Sunday

10:00-10:20am Powerhouse prayer
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.

