

TIDINGS



Banstead United Reformed Church
Autumn 2026



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Our minister's message

Dear friends,

Over the August bank holiday weekend, I went with my family to the Greenbelt Festival. Greenbelt is a gathering of arts, faith, and justice; the kind of place where you can move from a Bible study to a ceilidh, to a comedy show, to a conversation with an old friend, all in the space of an afternoon.

One session I attended this year was led by members of the Iona Community and was titled *Could you slide the marmalade down this way?* They spoke about community life around shared tables, and their tradition of sharing breakfast with one another when they gather. They meet when they can, but most of the time Iona community members live their everyday lives elsewhere, staying connected through prayer, commitment, and friendship.

We are a gathered church community usually able to see one another much more often than members of the Iona community, and we too have chosen to live in community with one another. One of the Iona speakers shared that community grows as we come to know one another over time, and just as importantly, as we come to feel known. This reminded me of church because I am so often inspired by the depth of the friendships that sustain us, the conversations over coffee, a lift home, a message or a prayer.

Our Christian faith reminds us that God is not distant but is with us — Emmanuel. Jesus' ministry was full of meals and conversations, friendship and argument, celebration and tears. Our friendships can be places where we meet God, in the ups and downs of life, with and through the people who accompany us, through and in community.

So here we can keep sharing our faith through making room for one another and caring for one another. And perhaps, in these things we do together, we are sliding the marmalade down the table too.

With every blessing, *Siobhán*

From the editors

Welcome to the Autumn 2026 issue of our Church magazine.

As explained in the previous issue of *Tidings*, this will be the last edition of the magazine, at least in the current format. Since the current editorial team took over in 2022, *Tidings* has been produced using Microsoft Publisher, one of the programs in the Microsoft Office 365 suite. Microsoft has decided that Publisher has come to the end of its life and, from 1 October this year, Publisher will no longer be included in Microsoft 365 and subscribers will no longer be able to open or edit Publisher files. According to Microsoft, many common Publisher scenarios are already available in other Microsoft 365 apps such as Word and PowerPoint. The scenarios listed by Microsoft do not include such things as an A5 magazine. For Cliff, getting up to speed with Publisher was no mean feat. It involved hours working through online tutorials and lots of learning on the job. The early editions were very time consuming, although things have speeded up as familiarity with the program increased. Obviously, there are other desktop programs out there, but they won't dovetail as seamlessly with Microsoft programs as Publisher does, and there would be a steep learning curve for a team with limited IT skills. Therefore, there will have to be a hiatus while we debate as a Church how we should move forward. We need to decide whether a Church magazine is valued, and if so, what form it should take.

As this is the final edition on the Microsoft Publisher platform, we are pleased that it is a bumper 48-page edition.

We were pleased to receive a letter from Revd Jennifer Millington, looking back on a sketch of our Church produced at the start of this century and sold as postcards and notelets as a fund raiser. Quite a trip down memory lane. See pages 6 and 7.

Also on a historical note, we were looking back on the history of our Church written by Ivan Brown to celebrate our 50th anniversary in 1990 and noted that in 1985 we had run a poll to

identify our then 10 favourite hymns. We thought it would be a good idea to repeat the idea for this edition of *Tidings* and were pleased to get a good response. The results of the current poll can be found on pages 26 and 27.

Over the time that we have been editing *Tidings* it has been great to receive articles from members to bring variety to the magazine. Two people in particular have regularly supported us in this way and we are very grateful to them both. Firstly, Roy Jordan has been a regular contributor and, in this edition, he has contributed an article commemorating the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi. The other regular contributor is David Skitt, and he has contributed two articles to this issue, one remembering two famous people who died recently who he met during the course of his ministry, and the other telling of a recent visit to Saltaire.

Marion Woodward tells us the amazing story of the discovery of the remains of an iron age cow in her garden. You can read the full details on pages 28 to 30.

In June, Fiona Lynch completed the gruelling Yorkshire three peaks challenge, raising funds for the Manchester Children's Hospital Medi-Centre appeal. We think you will feel exhausted just reading her account which can be found on pages 38 to 41. Well done, Fiona, for successfully completing the challenge.

We continue our series of articles about Churches in the Banstead Five with a history of Banstead Methodist Church – see pages 32 to 34. Our thanks to Linda Lowes and Philip Sandiford for this.

As in previous years, the autumn edition includes the Church Secretary's annual report together with reports from Church committees and Sunday Club.

Finally, whatever the future may hold, we thank you all for your support and interest over the past 5 years.

Fiona, Diana and Cliff

Church family news

Letter from Revd Jennifer Millington



My dear friends

Do any of you remember this sketch of Banstead URC life back in the 'noughties'? It must have been drawn after 2000, because the church has been extended, and before 2006 when I moved away. It was crafted by a very talented German lady, who attended our church for some time before she moved back to live in Germany. To my shame, I cannot remember her name but maybe some of you will. If I remember rightly, she had packs of postcards and notelets printed and then sold them to raise money, presumably for the new extension (now, The Sanctum).

I thought you might enjoy looking at the picture again. Every time I look, I see something I had not noticed before. A child is lighting the Advent Candles, the Vine (remember our 'year of the vine'?) is spreading around the wall, our much-loved Brenda Houghton is at

the piano, surrounded by the children's music group and the adult choir are on the opposite side. The chairs contain a selection of children, young people, one or two bald heads (!) and the late (and also much loved) Hazel Usher in her wheelchair. I am in the pulpit, holding a birthday card in one hand and what the artist has mercifully identified as a teddy bear in the other. I would not want anyone to think it was a child I was holding up by the neck.....

The flowers are beautiful, as they always were, and Jim Davies' amazingly crafted Celtic Cross is on the communion table. Can you identify yourself anywhere in the picture? Or anything else I have missed?

It all paints a very happy picture of our church and, as I recall, it was a happy place to be. There would certainly have been problems, disappointments and even tragedies going on because that is what life and church life are like. But the true happiness depicted would have been what St Paul called 'the fruits of the Spirit', taking deep root in the lives depicted. It would have grown strength, comfort, love, hope and faith in abundance, to see us all through whatever lay ahead. I pray for you all that that happiness may continue to flourish and the Holy Spirit continues to inspire and empower this community of faith.

God bless you, with love to you all,

Jennifer Millington (*Minister at Banstead URC 1993-2006*)

Engagement



Many congratulations to Sam Beard and Molly Padgett who became engaged on 8 August.

In memoriam

Linda Ross



Linda Ross, a member of our Church for the past six years, sadly died on 17 June 2026. The thanksgiving service for her life was held at our Church on 14 July, led by our minister.

Linda was born on 20 September 1945, spending her childhood in Kirkliston, where her father worked as a pharmacist and her mother filled the home with the smell of freshly baked treats. That early love

of baking stayed with Linda throughout her life. Her Scottish shortbread and chocolate fudge cake became legendary in her family, and every birthday brought a new imaginative creation.

Linda had a gift for hospitality. She delighted in preparing delicious three-course meals, welcoming guests with warmth and care. Her home was always a place where people felt looked after, fed and included.

She was a woman of interests — flower arranging, heraldry, reading, puzzles, dancing — always curious, always learning. She was never idle when it came to helping others. Through her churches, she gave her time and energy generously, and at Kingston she founded a mother and toddler group that became a cherished part of the community.

Linda met David in Edinburgh, where she worked as a secretary at the accountancy firm where he was employed. Their partnership began in the everyday rhythms of work, grew into love, and led to their marriage on 2 September 1967. It was the beginning of a long and devoted life together.

Over the decades, Linda and David became seasoned travellers and residents of many places. Their journey took them to Newcastle,

Birmingham, Cornwall, where their son Colin was born, Essex, where their daughter Fiona was born, Surrey, Gibraltar, Spain and eventually back to Surrey once more. Through all these moves, Linda created a home wherever she went — full of warmth, good food, and a sense of belonging.

Together they celebrated 55 years of marriage, a milestone reached shortly before David's passing in December 2022. Their bond, their humour, and their shared resilience carried them through every chapter of their lives.

Not long after returning to Surrey, Linda began her decline with dementia — a difficult and painful journey, but one she faced with quiet strength. She received excellent care at Signature in Banstead.

Linda lived a life that touched many places and many people. And she leaves behind a legacy of kindness, imagination, and care — one that will continue in the memories of everyone who knew her.

Richard Cushnie



It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Richard Cushnie on 7 August. Richard was the much-loved husband to Jane and father to Millie, George and Issie. Our Church was full for his memorial service on 4 September led by Linda Richards. In her address Linda explained how Richard considered Banstead URC to be his Church. It was here that he married Jane in 1990, and it was here that he delighted in seeing his family

take part through Junior Church, in nativity plays, drama and Bible reading. He was also a loyal member of the team from this and other Churches in Banstead that used to do a food run taking soup and sandwiches to the homeless in London. He also enjoyed helping out at our annual Church barbecues.

Richard first met Jane at Nork Park School through a production of 'Half a Sixpence'. After their marriage they built a home rooted in care, respect and devotion. Careerwise, after trying his hand at various jobs, Richard settled to a successful career with BT.

Richard was a proud and loving father to all three of his children, Millie, George and Issy, being the father that each of them needed. He was always there for George when he needed him, bearing every challenge with patience and devotion. He cherished his girls, guiding them, and taking quiet pride in the wonderful people they have become. When their partners came into their lives, he welcomed them with open arms. And when grandchildren came along, he delighted in them completely.

Richard was a popular man with a wide circle of friends who found him to be a kind and generous person and easy to talk to. Aside from being rooted in his family and friends, Richard's interests were many and varied. The biggest passion in life was his motorbikes. He loved the open road and the sense of freedom it gave him. Richard liked following sport—particularly football and rugby. He was a supporter of both Tottenham Hotspur and Harlequins. He also loved music and films. His taste in music was broad, and it was unsurprising that the closing music at his memorial service was 'Thunderstruck' by AC/DC.

So we give thanks for Richard's life, particularly remembering a devoted and loving family man.

Chris Clay

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Chris Clay on 29 August 2026. Chris became a member of our Church in January 2024, having been worshipping with us since her husband John died in 2001. Chris was the subject of our 'Know your Church member' feature in the Summer 2025 edition of *Tidings*. In particular, we learned of her lifelong love of animals. She learned to ride horses as a child, owned two horses over the years and was a long-time supporter of the Diamond Centre for Disabled Riders.



In 2021, she received the Riding for the Disabled Association President's Award from Princess Anne in recognition of her exceptional dedication to the Association over many years.

Chris also owned a total of nine dogs in her lifetime. More recently, Chris started supporting Monkey World, an ape rescue centre in Dorset, and adopted a disabled chimpanzee called Lulu.

We send our condolences to her family and especially her sister-in-law Megan. Chris will be sadly missed by all her Church friends, and most especially the members of Monday Club where she was the Chairman.

New arrival



Paige Sophie Fanner was born on 17 July. Many congratulations to parents Eleanor and Scott Fanner and grandparents Madeline and Richard Cranfield.

Know your Church member

Caroline Beard



Caroline was born in Sutton, going home to Woodmansterne with her parents, Val and Roy and her older sister, Fiona. You could say that Caroline was born into Banstead URC as she has been attending our church since she was a baby, right up to the present day.

Caroline had a happy childhood in Woodmansterne. Although she wasn't keen on the hilly walk home from where the school bus dropped her, it was brilliant for tobogganing if there was snow. Val worked as a Nursing Auxiliary at the former Queen Mary's hospital in Carshalton and Roy was involved in the printing/publishing world. Caroline went to Woodmansterne School, then on to De Burgh. She enjoyed school but enjoyed the social side more than the educational side. A common refrain from her teachers was 'Caroline would do much better if she stopped talking and giggling'.

Although she played hockey at school, Caroline much preferred the little group she and her best friend set up at lunchtime to do different sports with their friends. With great imagination they called themselves 'The Club'! As a child Caroline loved ballet and has always been passionate about athletics – their Mum regularly used to take Fiona and her to watch athletics at Crystal Palace.

Her first job while she was still at school was working on a Saturday at Oaks Park Cafe. One of the more senior church members at the time, Ralph Broughton, was so disgusted when he discovered how much they were paying her for a day's work he

paid her the same amount for doing two hours of cleaning at his house. Her next Saturday job had another church connection. At the time, the Jackson family worshipped at our church and owned Jackson's shoe shop in the village. Her sister Fiona worked there first, followed by Jo Patel, who many of you will remember as a member of our church, and then Caroline.

Caroline has very fond memories of the great times she had as a member of 'Unity Youth' at church. It was a very important part of the lives of many of the young people, and, in her day, it was led by Nick Farnell (one of our former organists) and Dave Phipps. They enjoyed midnight hikes, camps, a trip to Germany and many other activities.

Leaving Reigate College in 1986, Caroline started her nursing training at Epsom District Hospital. She describes her time living in the nurses' home as 'brilliant years' and one can only wonder what they got up to off duty! Her first job as a qualified nurse was on a surgical ward but, after a year, discovered her passion was for community nursing. She became a Community Staff Nurse, before completing her Specialist Practitioner District Nursing course and then becoming a District Nursing Sister in Epsom and Ewell.

When applying for promotions she acknowledged that nursing education had changed and a degree was required, so Caroline completed a three-year degree course while still working and with a 5-year-old son, Sam, to factor in. Despite the difficulties and with childcare help from her Mum, this determined lady graduated with first class honours. For her next promotion, a Masters degree was required, so Caroline completed a qualifying module to demonstrate she could study and work at this level. Caroline is now a Clinical Lead for the District Nursing Community Matrons and Tissue Viability Specialist services which involves the operational management and leadership of these services.

When Caroline was a District Nursing Sister, she was furious how community nursing and end of life care at home were portrayed in the TV programme 'Where The Heart Is', which starred Pam

Ferris. As a result of her complaint, Channel 4 came to film Caroline and some colleagues at work for a day. A very exciting time and her debut as a TV star.

Caroline's son Sam is now 23. He has always loved cars and is now Events Lead at Mercedes Benz World in Weybridge. He is responsible for managing and delivering all track events and earns extra pennies by taking guests out on 4X4 experiences, which Caroline has experienced first-hand! He qualified as a certified racing driver, and Caroline can breathe a sigh of relief that due to the high cost of this hobby he is no longer hurtling around a track. Sam's fiancée Molly (see Church Family news) also works there in the HR team, which is how they met.

Caroline has been nursing for 40 years and is looking forward to the time when she can perhaps go down to three days a week and have more time to do the things she enjoys. Being an 80s girl, she particularly enjoys music of that era and has also been a long-time fan of Queen – she saw Freddy Mercury at Knebworth which was an amazing day to remember. Musical theatre is another favourite. She likes to travel and go on city breaks – in her younger days she visited the Greek Islands and Toronto among other places. She has a group of three very special friends, and they have shared a lot together. Spending time with them is one of Caroline's favourite things to do. Since they were 30 they have put a small amount of money aside each month which has enabled them to have a number of 'treats' including a hot air balloon ride, weekends away, a trip to Barcelona and for their 50th a trip to Italy.

Spending more time in Italy is something that Caroline would like to do. Her family and friends know that this is because she has a secret passion - gelato. The best gelato is in Italy and Caroline loves it all, any flavour, no stopping her! Caroline takes every opportunity to have at least one a day when gelato is available. Caroline is happy to share with you that, as we go to press, the best gelato to be found in England is made by Harris & James, who are based in Suffolk. Other makes are available ...

Fiona Gayner

Church Secretary's report 2025

Our Church secretary presented his annual report at Church Life Sunday, held this year on 12 July and led by Revd David Skitt. We remembered with gratitude those members who had died in the past year and lit a candle for each of them. We remembered:

Olive Worsley who died on 11 October 2025 and Linda Ross who died on 17 June 2026.

Alan reported that two of our members have transferred to new churches during the year - Revd Bridget Banks to Lymington URC in April and Kathleen Bentley to Petersfield and Liss URC in May. We are glad they have found new spiritual homes. Bridget recently married Margot at Crawley URC, the Church where she had previously been the minister.

It was a real blessing that we had two baptisms in the year, in each case one of Diana Parsk's granddaughters; Anastasia Bailey on 19 October and Imogen Franklin on 7 December. Both baptisms were conducted by Revd David Skitt.

Welcoming others

Alan went on to remember the times over the year when we have been able to welcome others:

the VE Day Concert in November so wonderfully organised by Diana Parsk, assisted by Madeline Cranfield and Fiona Lynch;



the Salvation Army Toy Service; joining in worship with our Methodist friends; welcoming people from the Banstead 5 and the other Churches in our pastorate to Siobhan's Lent Workshop; welcoming members of Reigate Park Church to our service on 30 June, and welcoming our German visitors from Dessau Sud at the end of May. This visit included visiting Guildford, and particularly the cathedral, a visit to Arundel Castle, or for the more adventurous a cycle ride around Walton Heath, and two evening get togethers. The visit concluded with an inspiring Sunday service led by Siobhán who was joined by Revd Cristina Cipriani, the Synod Ecumenical Officer.

North Downs Surrey Pastorate

Revd Sue Knight was ordained as a non-stipendiary minister to Reigate Park on 6 September. We were glad to attend Reigate Park for a Christian Aid Service on 17 May which was followed by a bread and soup lunch including, rather unexpectedly, some delicious puddings that Sue had supplied. We were also glad that Sue led worship here on 5 July, with her husband, John, playing the organ.

Within the pastorate, the pulpit supply secretaries meet every 6 months, the worship leaders meet regularly, the pastoral teams meet bi-monthly, the liaison committee meets quarterly and the treasurers keep in regular touch, so you can see that there is much good work going on behind the scenes.

Banstead Five

We are now considering how the future should look regarding the running of the Banstead Five (B5). Recently, as no Chairman had



been found, this role has been shared between the Churches. However, we have recently had an offer to take on the chairmanship, so watch this space. Our joint acts of witness have proceeded as normal with the Walk of Witness on Good Friday and Christmas carols in the Orchard.

After an immense amount of time and effort, Geoff Chant of All Saints' and a few other members of the B5 have been successful in sorting out the B5 bank account. The HSBC account is now closed and the balance of £14,467 has been transferred to a ring-fenced account held by All Saints'. Approximately £7,000 of this total is the result of Praise in the Park fundraising. It should be recognised that Diana Parsk and her Praise in the Park team put a considerable amount of time and effort into this .

Nork with Burgh Heath

Revd Vanessa Banbury has been appointed as the new vicar, with her installation taking place in August 2026.

Pilgrim Pantomime Company

The pantomime company is looking for participants from Year 8 to adult to take part in next year's performance of Rapunzel.

Wider URC



In Southern Synod, we have a new Synod Clerk, Revd Dr. Elaine Colechin, who was inducted on 11 July. Our new moderator, Revd Paul Robinson, will be inducted on 31 October at Petts Wood. We wish them both well.

As a first step for the URC Church Life Fund, the URC Resources Hub and Helpdesk are both now live. The Resources Hub is an exciting new venture for the URC which aims to provide practical guidance and support to help churches thrive and grow.

Pulpit Supply and Revd David Skitt

Madeline Cranfield has continued to bring us wonderful preachers from far and wide who have been so uplifting in the life of this Church. In particular we are grateful to Revd David Skitt for regularly leading our worship. We remember David each Sunday as he continues to share his gifts with many other churches in our

Synod. We remember the series of study groups that David led in the Autumn. We also thank David for his input to the Worship and Faith committee from which he is now standing down.

The Elders and other thanks

We are so fortunate to have a great team of elders, both serving and non-serving, who do so much in leading the work of this Church, including on the pastoral side. Particular thank-yous to Sheila as our lead pastoral elder; to Chris Harris in her safeguarding role and as Secretary of the Worship and Faith committee; to Glenda Chadburn and Sue Dinnage for the work with our young people assisted by many others; to Cliff as our very efficient treasurer who has successfully registered our Church as a charity; to Paul Chadburn, chair of the House Management committee, with all his practical expertise which has recently included planning and obtaining three quotations for new bathroom accommodation; and to Madeline and her Impact team who so ably organised the recent tombola at the Village Fair in aid of Maggies. Many thanks to Fiona Gayner and Ian Catt for all the great work that they have done for the past six years as serving elders. Although they have both now stepped down as serving elders we are grateful for all the work that they will continue to do for our Church.

Looking ahead, the eldership is now reduced from seven to five, putting more pressure on those elders who continue to serve. This means that we will continue to seek to spread the load. I am pleased to report that Diana Parsk, despite her having been unwell, has taken over the preparation of the Sunday morning rotas and she has arranged that none of the welcomers are serving elders. It may be your turn next to be asked to assist with a little piece of work.

We should not, of course, take for granted our many other volunteers: Alison Skitt has taken over appointing the Bible readers after years of good service by Ruth Williams; the stewards;

those providing us with tea and coffee after the service; those providing and displaying the flowers and outside plants.

Tidings

Tidings will see its last issue in September. It has had an auspicious history succeeding the equally auspicious 'Bulletin'. Cliff Houghton succeeded his mother as Editor some 35 years ago and was in turn succeeded for many years by both Linda and Ken Richards. In recent years Cliff has formed part of the editorial team with Diana Parsk and Fiona Gayner. We are grateful to them all for bringing so much pleasure to so many people. The editors of the Newsletter are already in discussion with others as to its possible expansion when required.

And finally to our minister



On behalf of our congregation, I want to express our gratitude to Siobhán for her unwavering support and spiritual guidance of all the four churches in our pastorate making us feel blessed to be part of our church family. She attends all our elders' meetings as well as being the chair of the Worship & Faith committee, always being

prepared to go the extra mile. On the first Saturday in March she led an inspiring Lent Workshop for the pastorate and the Banstead Five entitled 'Through Art, Word and Song' which was appreciated by all who attended.

We thank Siobhán for being a faithful shepherd, a wise teacher, and a compassionate leader for whom it is a privilege to serve. May God continue to bless and guide Siobhán in her ministry to her four churches.

Alan Kirby

Impact report 2026

The small group who meet to plan our fundraising and social activities has been working hard over the past year and continues to utilise a band of helpers who pull out all the stops to help us run events and activities.

In November 2025, we held the amazing VE day event which has been well documented and celebrated previously but worth another mention as it was a great afternoon and lives long in the memory! We were particularly pleased to welcome visitors and guests from across the local churches and neighbourhood and this was with grateful thanks to the extensive network of Diana Parsk. This event raised £3,000 for Maggie's at the Royal Marsden.

Our sale of Tradecraft goods, in November, focused on Christmas in particular and sales were brisk.

We applied for a grant from the B5 Trust to expand our usual donation of chocolates to the Prison Visitor Centre, and with their added support we were able to make a sizeable gift of chocolate for visitors, staff and helpers which was gratefully received.

We sponsored a table at Crisis at Christmas, so 10 people were able to have a good time.

Our Toy Service was enhanced by generous donations from hall users and we were pleased to welcome our good friends from the Salvation Army to receive the donations for their work amongst children, young people and families in South London and Camden.

This year we went to Reigate Park Church for their Christian Aid lunch and enjoyed a social time with some of their congregation as well as a lovely lunch.

In January 2026, we made a donation from the Impact budget to the Tanzania Development Fund which meant that several children were able to take up places at a school for the deaf at the start of the school year. We have invited a speaker from the Fund to contribute to our harvest celebrations on 27 September and

look forward to welcoming them to find out more about their work. Proceeds from our harvest lunch on that date will be donated to this charity.



Our big event of the summer was a bottle stall at Banstead Village Day on 4 July. Bottles were collected from church members and hall users, which meant we had over 100 to utilise. Some key prizes were a bottle of whisky and bottles of prosecco! We had a great time on a sunny day and the

stall stood out, decorated with bunting and table runners bearing the church logo. Thanks to all who helped and donated. We were able to send a further £1,000 to Maggie's at the Royal Marsden.

Madeline Cranfield

Sunday Club report 2026

Sunday Club is led by one of our team on most Sundays, (except in August), and we are always delighted when we have children to be part of the worship life of our church.

As leaders we try to find interesting and fun ways to tell the Bible stories; looking at PowerPoints of the story, doing various craft activities and colouring or doing word searches (Rex's favourite activity). We are sure that the children would be happy to tell you what they have done in Sunday Club at coffee time.

Glenda has led us through the last year calmly and efficiently and the rest of the Sunday Club team, Carrie, Karen, Jane and Chris have been a friendly and enthusiastic presence in the Children's Corner on different Sundays. I am grateful to them all for their help and willingness to be part of the Sunday Club team.

Sue Dinnage

Finance report 2026

The Church's financial position remains satisfactory. In 2025, committed giving, and the related gift aid tax recovered, showed a reduction compared with the prior year. This trend has continued into the current year to date. However, this is compensated for by lettings income which has held up and now accounts for more than half our income. The Church's expenses remain within the budgeted amounts.

During 2026, we have completed registration as a charity. Until now, we have been excepted because our income was under £100,000. Rather we have sat under the umbrella of the URC centrally. Since we now have income over £100,000, including the income from letting the manse, it was necessary for us to register individually as a charity. It is not our church itself which needed to register, but the assets and funds held by the church for charitable purposes. Registration does not apply to our church buildings or the manse because these are vested in The United Reformed Church (Southern Synod) Trust Limited. Therefore, what has been registered is not Banstead URC but rather Banstead URC Charity. The trustees of the charity are the serving elders.

One of the requirements of a charity is to prepare and maintain a reserves policy. This has been done and approved by the trustees at our meeting in June 2026. We determined that we principally hold reserves to:

- protect the continuity of the charity's activities against potential falls in income;
- provide funds to maintain the church buildings;
- to deal with urgent unplanned expenses, and
- to allow the charity to respond to mission opportunities.

Our policy seeks to ensure that we have sufficient reserves to cover all these aspects of our activities. It also aims to demonstrate that we have sufficient reserves in place to deal with planned property maintenance, including the refurbishment of our toilets.

When I took over from Kevin Dinnage as treasurer last year, I stipulated that, for both my and the Church's protection, there should be regular independent review of the Church's accounting records. I would like to thank Kevin for agreeing to take on this role. Kevin performs a detailed review of the Church's accounts on a monthly basis. We are also grateful to Pauline Brittain who continues to deal with the billing for our lettings.

It was a great sadness to us that Michael Taylor, our independent examiner, died in November 2025. We are very grateful that Michael performed this role for us so diligently for over 10 years. Following Michael's death, we are pleased that Robert Collier, the current treasurer of the All Saints' Banstead PCC, readily agreed to take on this role.

Cliff Houghton

House Management report 2026

Over the past year, maintenance work carried out has included various roof repairs, electrical work, the painting of the manse fence and tree pruning works. Other general maintenance work has included adding battens on the outside of the Church to allow banners to be attached.

In 2027, we will be turning our attention to the Fellowship Room where the roof and ceiling will need repair or replacement, following which redecoration will be required. Installation of acoustic panels to the ceiling of the Sanctum is still planned when suitable contractors can be found.

Following approval for the project at the Church meeting in August, it is hoped that the refurbishment of the toilets can be completed during December 2026, subject to permission being granted by Synod.

A big thank you to Chris Brittain for carrying out all those little jobs that regularly come up.

Paul Chadburn

Worship and Faith report 2026

The Worship and Faith committee has continued throughout the past year to support the worshipping life of Banstead URC. We remain grateful for the many visiting worship leaders who contribute to our Sunday services, bringing a rich variety of styles and approaches. Services have been well received, and the committee continues to reflect on how best to ensure worship remains accessible, welcoming, and thoughtfully prepared. Supporting children and families within worship has also been an ongoing focus. We offer particular thanks to Ian, Cliff, and all involved in music and singing and to Fiona and all who have helped decorate the church throughout the year.

We marked Christmas and Easter with a range of services and events. The congregation responded generously to the Toy Service and to the Christmas Eve collection for East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services. We marked Lent with a prayer workshop using images, poetry, and scripture, and a Lent cross was used meaningfully in worship as we journeyed towards Holy Week and Easter.

Last October, the congregation met for an autumn reflection short course based on *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. On Trinity Sunday, we were delighted to welcome our friends from Germany. More widely within the North Downs Surrey Pastorate, Sue Knight and David led a Worship Workshop in June to encourage confidence in participating in worship, and a further workshop will be led by Siobhán in September 2026.

Pulpit supply continues to be managed with care and commitment by Madeline, and we offer our thanks for her ongoing work.

The committee wishes to record its sincere thanks to all who contribute to worship at Banstead URC—those who coordinate scripture readers, decorate the church, read in services, support Sunday Club, and offer welcome to all who join us. Your contributions are deeply appreciated. We also note that David

Skitt has stepped down this year as a member of the Worship and Faith committee, and we thank him warmly for all he has contributed.

Siobhán Antoniou

Mayfield Lavender Café coffee mornings



If you would like to meet with friends from the church for a coffee, please come along on the last Friday of each month at 10.30am.

The Lavender Café is an excellent venue (139, Reigate Road, Epsom. KT17 3DW). There is a large free car park and so parking is never a problem. They sell every possible coffee to suit everyone's tastes - Cappuccino, Latte, Americano, Flat White etc or every single type of tea as well - English Breakfast, Earl Grey, Green, Peppermint etc - plus lots of delicious cakes and biscuits to tempt you! Afterwards there is an excellent gift and plant shop for you to look around should you wish to do so.

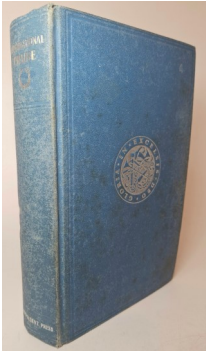
If you have never been before, then please speak to Sheila Costello and she will meet you at the entrance so you won't have to walk in on your own.

It is a great way to meet and chat and to get to know people from the church in a relaxed atmosphere.

Do please give it a try. A very friendly welcome awaits you.

Sheila Costello
Diana Parsk

Favourite hymns



In 1985, our then church organist, Nick Farnell, ran a poll to discover our top ten favourite hymns. At that time our main hymn book was Congregational Praise, since Rejoice and Sing was not published until 1991, although we did use a subsidiary hymnbook titled New Church Praise. In that poll, each person was asked to nominate their top five favourite hymns. There were thirty-five respondents and a total of over 50 hymns featured in each person's top five. Interestingly, all the top ten were from Congregational Praise, and were:

- 1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind
- 2 Make me a channel of your peace
- 3 At the name of Jesus
- 4 Come down, O love divine
- 5 Morning has broken
- 6 The Lord's my shepherd
- 7 Love divine, all loves excelling
- 8= Thine be the glory
- 8= Lord of all hopefulness
- 8= We limit not the truth of God
- 8= Thy hand, O God, has guided.

We thought it would be interesting to repeat the exercise in 2026 and are grateful to all who have sent us a list of their top five hymns. We had 28 responses and 70 different hymns featured in your top fives. All the responses have been collated to produce the current top ten favourite hymns.

Interestingly, only four hymns that were on the 1985 list are on the current list, and one of these is set to a different tune. The current top ten has four hymns that do not feature in Rejoice and Sing. Overall, of the 70 hymns selected, only 44 are in Rejoice and Sing. So maybe its time for a new hymn book!



The current top ten hymns are:

- 1= O Jesus I have promised
- 1= The Lord's my shepherd (Townend)
- 3= Love divine, all loves excelling
- 3= Shine Jesus shine
- 5= Dear Lord and Father of mankind
- 5= Make me a channel of your peace
- 5= One more step along the way
- 8= Be still for the presence of the Lord
- 8= I the Lord of sea and sky
- 8= Praise my soul the King of heaven

The following hymns only narrowly missed the cut:

Amazing grace

Beauty for brokenness

Father, I place into your hands

Lord Jesus Christ

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord

O Holy night

The kingdom of God is justice and joy (Out Skerries)

The love of God is broad like beach and meadow.

Cliff Houghton

Willow Café

If you fancy a coffee and are in Dorking, do pop in to my friend Jennie's new café in West Street (next to the The Star pub). Jennie worked at the Children's Trust for 20 years, managing Willow House, so she decided to call her new venture Willow Café. She offers a breakfast menu, platters, 'specials' and wine at lunchtime and coffee/tea and cakes at anytime! I am very proud of her for taking such a brave step and know that she will make it a great success. Do say that you know me - we have been friends for more than 50 years! You can park for free in Waitrose for 1.5 hours, the café is just round the corner from there.

Jane Cushnie

The Iron Age cow In my garden

Some of you will already have been amazed by this story but I hope those for whom it is new will be equally excited and amazed by what I am about to share with you.

Plateau, the local archaeology group, led by James Crouch, has been carrying out digs around Banstead for some years, initially in Court Road behind All Saints' Church trying to establish the location of Banstead's medieval manor house but more recently attention has been focused on the Fiddicroft Avenue area. In the garden of what used to be the stables of the house called Longcroft the team found evidence of an Iron Age pit which contained 15kg of burnt flint (more than has been found to date in the whole of the rest of Banstead), many sherds of prehistoric pottery probably made locally and some more refined Iron Age to Roman pottery, such as black burnished and micaceous wares that would have been made elsewhere.

Another Fiddicroft garden produced a Roman coin of the time of the Emperor Magnentius (350-353 AD). It began to look as though there could have been some sort of late Iron Age to Roman settlement in the area. I had always had an interest in archaeology and even took part in a couple of digs soon after I left school, so at the end of a Banstead History meeting I found I had volunteered my garden for excavation.

On Saturday 27 June, James arrived promptly at 8.30 am. We walked around my garden and he picked a location that avoided ant hills and possible tree roots. He then proceeded to unload a surprising amount of kit from his relatively small car. Other members of the team began to arrive and worked in shifts. Two gazebos were erected which provided some shade on a hot day. A tarpaulin was laid out to take the spoil and various buckets, trays, etc. were positioned. Turf was cut from a 50 x 50 centimetre square and soil removed in layers. This was then sifted and any fragment of flint, pottery, glass, etc. placed in the tray relevant to its depth.



James had produced a map showing the geology of the area with the gardens on the north side of Fiddicroft, including mine, being on chalk and those on the south being on clay. In fact, I knew there was chalk about 50 centimetres down as, a few years ago, my gardener had dug down that far to bury one of

my cats that, sadly, had been run over. So they expected perhaps to find some flints and small pieces of pottery above the chalk and the hole would then be filled in and they would be on their way by mid-afternoon.

However, sometime in the afternoon at about 35 centimetres depth, there was an exclamation of excitement as bone was revealed, closely followed by teeth ! Further careful excavation revealed a skull and neck vertebrae although part of the skull was missing, almost certainly having been damaged by subsequent ploughing of the land. Maybe it was a horse?

Word went out on Facebook and a stream of people came to have a look. Peter Harp, Nork councillor and fanatical collector of flints, could scarcely tear himself away and we even had a visit from Jon Cotton, one time Senior Curator of Prehistory at the Museum of London.

So, no filling in that evening. All was covered up and James returned on Sunday morning by which time they had decided it was a cow. Megan, who is studying forensic archaeology, was able to confirm from the length of the first vertebrae that it was female and the teeth told her it was aged about 2.5 to 4 years old.



Very careful excavation continued throughout Sunday and various rather special flints were revealed, placed carefully around the skull, including a beautiful echinoid (a sort of sea urchin) made of Bullhead flint. The eye socket had been filled with what was obviously a specially chosen red and cream pebble. All this

suggested to the experts that it was the ritual placement of the cow's head and neck over an Iron Age pit. The pit would initially have been dug out to store grain and later filled with debris and finally capped off. All pretty amazing in itself but the most



extraordinary thing is that James picked that exact spot to carry out the excavation. You can see from the image that the skeleton is positioned perfectly within its half metre square. According to Peter it is the most exciting archaeological find in Banstead in 25 years. James returned on Monday and Tuesday evenings to draw, photograph and take meticulous measurements and

'Ermintrude', as James named her (being of the *Magic Roundabout* generation), was finally covered with a scattering of rose petals and then the pit was filled in and the turf carefully re-laid. If it were not for the relentless hot weather and non-existent rain, it would not be possible to see where they had been.



So, what happens next? A piece of bone has been sent away for radiocarbon dating to establish if it really is Iron Age and the team will return, probably next year, to excavate further, especially to the bottom of the pit which an augur probe indicates is at least a metre deep.

It seems, therefore, that Fiddicroft Avenue sits on the site of a prehistoric settlement. Who knows what may lie beneath Banstead URC's grass carpark ! James and his team would love to find out.

Marion Woodward

Namedropping memories

Two people with public profiles died recently whom I had cause to meet on a couple of occasions in the course of my ministry. They were Penelope Keith and Ed Stourton and both left an impression on me.



Penelope Keith opened a film festival for Redhill YMCA. She spoke well but what most struck me was her diffidence and need for reassurance. You could not have met a more polar-opposite character to 'Margot' from 'The Good Life'. On the second occasion, she was opening a new project for Age Concern

surrounded by many of the clients and at which I had to say a prayer. This time, it was she who (though not recognizing me) went out of her way to reassure me that my words were appropriate.



I was introduced to Ed Stourton when I stood in the producers' room watching Radio 4's Today programme being broadcast. He interviewed Michael Howard in an immaculate way probing but hardly ever interrupting and never inserting himself unhelpfully, being incredibly well researched and briefed. Afterwards we talked

about his presentation of the Sunday programme relating to his sincere Catholic faith. His only grouse being that it was made in Manchester! Years later, Alison and I heard him compere a male voice choir concert in aid of a homelessness charity, a cause very close to his heart. His input was witty, hugely informed and informing, and demonstrated a humanity that this world much needs.

I am grateful to have met both these people, not because of their celebrity but for these impressions.

David Skitt

Banstead Methodist Church



By the 1930's, Banstead was rapidly growing as a village but there was no Wesleyan chapel. Wesleyans in Nork used to walk to Burgh Heath, where there was a chapel which during the week was used as a school.

The church at Burgh Heath had a missionary outlook and helped raise funds over the next few years, not only for the erection of a church at Banstead but also a church at Cheam. Meanwhile, the fledgling church began to hold services in the front room of a house in Green Curve, but when that became too small, they moved to a room above the Hillcrest Tea Rooms in Eastgate, Nork.

The present church site in The Drive had been bought in 1926 for the sum of £450 by the London Mission and Extension Committee of the Wesleyan Church.

In 1934, after the union of the Wesleyan and other Methodist Churches, it was decided to build a Methodist Church. After much fund-raising a stone-laying ceremony was held in September 1934, and the Church was opened on Saturday 9 February 1935 by Lady

Stamp who was presented with a commemorative key.



Amazingly, some 80 years later, this key came up for auction and was purchased by

the Banstead history webmaster who has had a lifetime interest in locks and keys.

The stone laying ceremony for the original church took place in September 1934 on one of the wettest days that Banstead had experienced. The church was finally opened on 9 February 1935 by Lady Stamp. The preacher at the opening service was Rev. Dr. Scott Lidgett.

The stone laying ceremony for the existing 'old hall and kitchen' took place on 22 September by Alan Dingwall and Frank William Ashmole.

An additional new Reema hall (known as The Vallins Hall) was opened on 15th April 1964 by Mrs. M J Vallins. The main hall is large enough for a badminton court and has a good-sized stage together with three additional smaller meeting rooms.

Unfortunately, due to structural problems, the original church building had to be demolished in 1970 and was replaced by the present Pyramid-shaped building in 1972. This building was featured in one of the Ladybird series of books.

Incidentally two of our current church members (Maureen and Philip Sandiford) were the last couple to be married in the original church building on 5 July 1969.

At the rear of the church is the headquarters of the 7th Banstead Scout Group which is sponsored by the church. Due to the extensive premises at The Drive, it was an ideal venue for the very popular Banstead 5 Churches Holiday Fun Week which ran for many years offering children morning bible stories and activities, and afternoon sports, crafts and fun.

The Drive has also hosted a Badminton Club, Pyramid Players Theatre group, Youth Club and Men's Drivers Group.

During the 1950's, 60's and 70's Mr. Rob Lennard initiated and ran a very active Church Sports Club which was open to all and, at its peak, provided badminton, table tennis, 3 football teams and a cricket team to the youth of the church and from the local areas.

The Scout Group is an extremely active group of 66 members comprising Beavers, Cubs and Scouts enjoying sleepovers, camps, activity days, fundraising events in addition to regular weekly meetings and working for badges – all thanks to the extremely hardworking and dedicated team of leaders.

Open House is a weekly tea and cakes get together which is extremely well attended and appreciated by all.

The premises at The Drive are constantly in use for dance groups, exercise groups and private gatherings – serving as a welcoming venue for the local wider community. Banstead Methodist Church continues to this day worshipping God together in a close and caring community despite being much reduced in numbers.

Linda Lowes and Philip Sandiford

A smile



A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive, without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it, and none is so poor but that he cannot be made rich by it.

A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business, and is the countersign of friendship. It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and is nature's best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that is of no value until it is given away.

Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.

When the saints go marching in



In western culture, probably one of the most well-known and popular Saints is the man who was baptised Giovanni de Pedro di Bernardone by his mother, an aristocratic French woman, in Italy in about 1182. His father, a rich and successful silk and cloth merchant, was away on business at the time and, on his return, he changed his son's name to Francesco, because he liked the association with France. In October 2026, we mark the 800th anniversary of this son's death, who is widely known as St Francis of Assisi.

There was little in his early years which indicated how his life would change. Francesco was popular and high-spirited amongst his well-off social circle. He learnt to read and write Latin and also spoke fairly good French. At the age of 20 he fought in a battle between Assisi and a neighbouring town Perugia, in which he was taken prisoner for almost a year. Whilst he was imprisoned, he reviewed and reassessed his life and thought about God. On his release Francesco was weak and fell ill but, after his recovery, he decided to join the Papal forces fighting against Emperor Frederick the Second. So, in 1205 he set off, but on his way there he had a vision telling him to turn back to Assisi, where he meditated and prayed waiting for God's call.

One day, Francesco heard a voice from a crucifix telling him to 'repair my house'. He took this literally and next spent some time repairing the damaged local church and a few others as well. He had previously fallen out with his father because he had taken some cloth from his father's shop and ridden to a neighbouring town, where he sold it along with the horse. When he arrived back in Assisi, he offered the money to his priest to help the poor, but this was declined as it had come from 'stolen' goods. Francesco's father tried to change his son's behaviour by keeping him at home and then taking him to court before the local authorities. However,

Francesco did not accept the summons. So, instead, he was taken to the Bishop of Assisi in front of whom he removed all his clothes and said in future he would serve my 'father who art in heaven'.

In 1208, Francesco was attending Mass and heard the reading from Matthew 10: verses 7-11 telling of Jesus commissioning his disciples to go out and preach and he realised that this was a call from God. He found some followers and a year later he established a rule for them 'to follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to walk in his footsteps'. To avoid any accusation of heresy, he led a group of twelve disciples to Rome to seek the Pope's approval of his mission to serve the poor and also to show acceptance of Papal authority. After some days of hesitation, the Pope had a dream which told him to agree.

In 1210, Francesco founded the Franciscan Order, whose participants were to be street preachers, embracing poverty without any personal possessions and living with a denial of self. They wore a simple robe and Francesco had a rope around his waist with three knots indicating poverty, chastity and obedience. He was later ordained as a deacon but not as a priest. In 1212, he established the Order of Poor Clares for women, under the leadership of a noblewoman, Clare of Assisi. Subsequently, Francesco founded the third Order of Brothers and Sisters of Penance for laity or clergy, who wanted to follow his example but could not leave their current way of life or responsibilities.

In 1219, Francesco made a significant visit to Egypt to attempt to convert the Muslim Sultan and end the Crusaders' 5th war. He impressed the Sultan, who gave him permission to visit the sacred sites in the Holy land. Francesco's efforts to reconcile Christianity with Islam resulted in the Franciscan Order remaining in the Holy Land, representing the Roman Catholic Church.

Francesco believed 'Your God is of your flesh and God lives in your nearest neighbour and in every man'. One example of this belief in action is when he overcame his fear of leprosy and established a mission for lepers. He also considered that nature was the mirror of God and should therefore be respected and conserved. One day,

walking through a wood, he noticed many birds and started to preach to them. He called all animals his brothers and sisters. He is credited with arranging the first Nativity scene with live animals and on his annual feast day, pets and animals are often brought to church for a blessing on what is designated World Animal Day.

Francesco felt strongly through his religious life the importance of the eucharist and of the life and crucifixion of Jesus. Several miracles are attributed to him, including his receiving the stigmata – the wounds of the crucified Jesus in his hands, feet and side. He is also said to have obtained water from a rock to give to a thirsty donkey driver and to have persuaded a wolf to stop attacking some villagers when it was searching for food.

Francesco's health deteriorated and he became almost blind from an eye disease as well as suffering from malaria and intestinal problems. He died on 3 October 1226 at the age of 44. He was canonised soon after in July 1228. He became a joint Patron Saint of Italy with Saint Catherine of Siena and in 1979 was appointed the Patron Saint of Ecology and Animals. In 2013, Cardinal Bergoglio took Francis as his Papal name because of his mission to the poor. Pope Leo proclaimed 2026 as the year of St Francis and his life is remembered for his humility, embracing of poverty, miracles and holiness.

Roy Jordan

Poem to the spell checker on PC

Eye have a great spell chequer it came with my pea sea.
It plainly marques four my revue mistakes I cannot sea.
Eye strike a quay and type a word and weight for it to say
whether eye am write or wrong. It shows me straight a weigh.
Whenever a mistake is maid. it shows bee four too long
and eye can put the error write, it's almost never wrong.
Eye ran this poem through it and I'm sure you're pleased to no
it's letter perfect all the weigh - my chequer tolled me sew.

Sauce unknown.

Yorkshire Three Peaks challenge



On Saturday 13 June 2026, my husband Brian and I, together with 65 of my colleagues from Aspens, a school meal catering specialist, took on the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge. This challenge was on behalf of Manchester Children's Hospital's Medi-Cinema appeal.

The Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge is one of the UK's toughest endurance events. It's 24 gruelling miles, with 5,200ft of vertical ascent, conquering Pen-y-Ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough peaks in under 12 hours.

All funds raised by the Aspens team went directly to the MediCinema Appeal. The hospital's vision is to build a state-of-the-art cinema complex situated inside the hospital. This facility is designed specifically to accommodate patients with complex needs, including those in hospital beds, wheelchairs, and on life-support equipment.

Why this project is vital:

Accessibility: Ensures that even the most unwell children do not miss out on the magic of cinema.

Escapism: Provides a much-needed break from the reality of wards, medical procedures, and isolation.

Wellbeing: Gives patients and their families a sense of normality during difficult times.

Once we had committed to this challenge, Brian and I knew we would need to do some serious training and to ensure we had the right clothing and equipment ready for the walk.

Brian took on the role of motivator and navigator, researching challenging walks in the area for our training and planning the

7am starts each weekend. Box Hill was the obvious choice, especially the steps, which certainly gave us some cardio workouts. We built up our weekly training whilst breaking in our walking boots.

We started our training in December 2025 and one of the most enjoyable aspects of the training was being up early to hear the morning chorus of birdsong and see the changing of the seasons. The first snowdrops and crocuses hinted that spring was on its way. The spring daffodils in the hedgerows danced in the spring sunshine and the carpet of bluebells in the woodland on one of our favourite training walks, between Denbies and Polesden Lacy, was breathtaking.

In May 2026 we had a weekend away in Jersey. This was when we realised that our training was paying off. Our hotel was at the top of the cliff, 20 minutes' walk from St Helier. We realised that we were completing this steep walk without being out of breath, and over the weekend we walked over forty miles, adding endurance to our training plan.

Eventually the weekend arrived to travel to Yorkshire. We left the heat and the sun of Surrey behind us and as we travelled further north, the temperature fell and the skies darkened.

As we arrived in the village of Ingleton, the peaks around us were shrouded in mist and the wind was making its presence known. Armed with advice from seasoned hikers, such as wearing two pairs of socks to prevent blisters, taking spare laces, as no-one wants to be stuck up a mountain with a broken boot lace, taking more water than you think (this was very good advice) and having a hat with earflaps.

At 4.30am on Saturday 13 June we set off up the hill to our meeting point ready for a 5am start. The guides checked our kit to ensure we had the appropriate footwear, waterproofs, water, and warm clothing. We soon realised that hiking is not a glamorous look!

Ingleborough was the first peak. We set off in groups of twelve, each with a guide. Within 20 minutes of walking the wind was

whipping around us and it was hard to keep your balance. The rain was horizontal, which made putting on our waterproofs a challenge in itself.



As we neared the top of the peak the track was steep and slippery, and you could only see 6ft in front of you. At the top of Ingleborough visibility was so bad you could only see people wearing fluorescent clothing. At one point the guides became concerned that with poor visibility we had lost two of our party. The wind was so strong that calling their names was futile. Thankfully, they were there, just a few feet away, but the weather was so bad we

couldn't see or hear them. This made everyone realise the power and danger of nature. Thankful to have reached the top, the descent was deceptively steep and tricky, especially in the wind and driving rain. As we reached the village of Horton-in-Ribblesdale, and the only public toilet on the journey, we stopped for a well-earned break.

Pen-y-Ghent was our next peak, and by this time, four hours in, we were feeling tired. This peak was steeper than the last and lulled you into a false sense of security as the last 200-meter climb had four false peaks, luring you into thinking you were at



the top, where in reality, there was still more climbing to do. The rocks at the top were muddy and slippery and with all our gear, which was now very wet, the going was tough. At the final climb we had to keep 6ft apart as the rocks were so muddy, you had to leave space in case someone fell. The wind and rain were making it hard to stay upright and with a fear of heights, I was too scared to look up or down, so I just ploughed on hoping I wouldn't lose my footing! Finally, we arrived at the top and had just a few minutes to catch our breath and take on refreshments before the guides were moving us on again.

Whernside was the final peak and by this time fatigue was setting in and we'd lost some of the party to injury and exhaustion. The walk between the final two peaks was an eight-mile trek across wild, bleak, and windy moors, which seemed endless.

Halfway we passed the police, mountain rescue and the Heli-med Helicopter treating an injured walker. A stark reminder of how unforgiving this landscape can be.



Eventually we reached the Ribbleshead Viaduct and began our ascent to Whernside peak. With the fatigue and aching joints, we all had to dig deep to conquer this final leg of the challenge. Keeping up morale was left to whoever had the most energy and silence fell among the group. The final peak was brutal with the descent the steepest of the day and physically demanding.

What kept us going was thinking about the children the MediCinema would help, how our sponsorship was going to make a difference and the strong bonds that had been forged between us during the day.



Finally, with weak shafts of sunshine breaking through the clouds, and the rain stopping, we saw the end in sight. With a final push we made it to the finish line within the twelve-hour deadline.

Together, we raised £25,000 towards the MediCinema and on 28 October we're visiting the hospital to present the cheque and see the cinema in action.

Thank you so much to all the church family who sponsored us for this challenge, your generosity kept us going during the hardest parts of the challenge.

Fiona Lynch

Recipe corner

Over the years, Monday Club has produced a couple of recipe books. We include two recipes that are taken from those books. First a good supper dish taken from the first book contributed by Peggy Houghton.

Chicken Crunch



Ingredients:

Flesh of 1 cooked chicken
2-4 oz breadcrumbs
2 tins concentrated mushroom soup
2 tins of milk (using the empty soup tins)
2-4 oz grated cheese
1 bag frozen broccoli
1 bag frozen carrots
2 tins tomatoes

Method:

Cook frozen vegetables
Layer up chicken and vegetables in an ovenproof dish
Pour soup, milk and tomatoes over layered ingredients
Top with fresh breadcrumbs and cheese mixed
Cook for 40 mins at 180 deg. C

And now a recipe from the second book for some mouth-watering biscuits, contributed by Olive Sarson:

Coffee Kisses



Ingredients:

6 oz self-raising flour
3 oz butter or margarine
2 oz caster sugar
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon coffee essence

For butter cream icing:

$\frac{3}{4}$ oz butter
2 oz sieved icing sugar
1 teaspoon hot milk
1 teaspoon coffee essence

Method:

Sieve the flour, rub in the fat, stir in the sugar. Mix to a stiff paste with the egg yolk and coffee essence mixed together. A little water may be added if required. Bind well with the hand. Divide the mixture into 24, roll each piece in a ball and place a little apart on a greased baking sheet.

Bake for 12-15 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 190 deg.C./Gas Mark 5. Cool on a cake rack. When cold, sandwich two together with coffee butter cream icing. Dust with icing sugar.

For coffee butter cream icing:

Cream the butter until soft, beat in half the icing sugar.

Add the coffee essence to the hot milk and add to the mixture with the rest of the icing sugar. Beat until smooth.

Saltaire visit



On a cold dark January evening in early 1944, the minister of the local Congregational church, a strange basilica of a building, sent his daughter to open the halls for a social/dance, the like of which he held every weekend during the Second World War for soldiers barracked nearby. The door would not unlock and the daughter was floundering until the first soldier, whom she had never met before, turned up. He helped her, they chatted and the door eventually yielded.

The door opened to more than a dance that evening because, three months later, the couple were married in the same church on 10th April 1944, eight weeks before the Normandy landings, in which the soldier took part. They honeymooned in nearby Ilkley, though whether the soldier wore his hat or not is unknown.

The couple were my parents. The minister was my grandfather. The venue was Saltaire, a model village south of the River Aire and in the suburbs of Bradford. This village was constructed for his workers by the owner of an alpaca woollen mill named Sir Titus Salt between the years 1851 and 1871 (I think it was the second of the model villages built by this country's industrial entrepreneurs). The housing was superb ('des res' now and certainly better than the squalor of the slums in the city centre then), the educational infrastructure was multiple and contained variety (school, library, institute etc) and there were plenty of shops and recreational facilities, including the lovely Roberts Park. Even today there is an air and atmosphere about the place both calming and refreshing. It was made a UNESCO World Heritage

Site in 2001.

My mid-September visit this year coincided with the church holding an art exhibition (in the sanctuary itself) and an ongoing lecture was being given as we browsed. So Titus Salt's endeavour to lead people into an elevated quality of life, in heart and mind as well as body, was being continued.

This chimed well with the reason for our visit. Alison and I were part of a group, exploring all the cultural places brought about by the effect of the Industrial Revolution in the Leeds area, including possibly the first ever moving pictures (of scenes in Leeds) by Louis Le Prince leading to cinema, the sculptures of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth (contained in their own Galleries and dotted magnificently about the Leeds University Campus), the paintings of Atkinson Grimshaw and the glories of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (not to mention their contribution to retail with M&S and Burtons plus others).

The whole tour saturated us with an inundation of a cultural region overspilling with industry and art, reflected in the colourful and tree-filled Leeds city centre. So perhaps it is not surprising that the closure of manufacturing at Salt's mills led to the buildings becoming huge galleries of the painting of local artist, David Hockney. In addition are wonderful art outlets on the premises plus bookshops, wonderful examples of Industrial Revolution machines and a Peace Museum (closed temporarily) – a very appropriate addition as these mills, that once deafened with noise, now lift the spirit with their relaxing tranquillity. The Saltaire village was also the set for the 2026 film 'The Choral'.

The mutual exchange between industry and art lingers in Saltaire to this day, making the whole village well worth a visit and a very special place indeed. I was glad to visit it and feel that, though I am a lad from Blackpool, this Lancastrian is thrilled to have roots in this jewel of a location. It is just a pity that it is in Yorkshire!

David Skitt

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening



Whose woods these are I think I know,
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
And miles to go before I sleep.

Robert Frost



Service Details

Our morning worship at 10:30am on Sundays is held in the Church building and on Zoom.

The Zoom link for services is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9922047878?pwd=SmxXY0lKckkvcFhJdFM1UTFHYjR0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 992 204 7878

Passcode: 126600

Recordings of the services are available on our website

www.bansteadurc.org.uk

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TIDINGS - Autumn 2026