

# THE MESSENGER

THE MAGAZINE OF PETERSFIELD AND LISS  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



PETERSFIELD AND LISS  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

February 2026 No. 744

## From the Minister ..

A new year has a funny way of arriving with both excitement and exhaustion this is certainly the case with a one month old baby in the house – I'm excited for a new year and all that it has to offer and yet coming back to my laptop and emails and everything else that had been neglected in the recent time off I've enjoyed, was slightly daunting to say the least!



We flip the calendar, sip our coffee, and suddenly feel the pressure to become new people—healthier, more organised, and somehow better at returning emails. But before we get too serious about resolutions, the new year offers us something far more important than a fresh planner - new hope.

In the life of faith, hope isn't about promising ourselves we'll never eat chocolate again or that we will finally clean out that one drawer at home. Hope is about remembering that God specialises in new beginnings. Every year, God gently reminds us, "I'm still here, and I'm still working." That's good news, especially when the previous year felt long, messy, or in need of a re-do button!

Scripture shows us that God meets people right where they are—tired, uncertain, and sometimes wondering what day it is. In Christ, God speaks words of delight and promise, not because everything is perfect, but because **God's love is**. A new year becomes a reminder that we don't walk forward alone, even when we're still carrying leftover worries from last December.

New hope doesn't require us to forget the past year or pretend it was easy. It simply invites us to trust that God can do something good with what we bring—successes, mistakes, and all. Hope gives us permission to laugh at ourselves, to start again when we stumble, and to keep showing up.

As a church family, the new year is a chance to walk together with grace, kindness, and maybe a little patience. With God, every year—no matter how imperfect—comes wrapped in hope, and that's worth celebrating! Have a blessed and healthy new year.

Josh.

## Message from our Church and Community Worker...

I know Christmas seem a long time ago, and you're right. But please enjoy



Some of the pictures from the Children's church Nativity.



For those who missed our two wonderful events, here is a small taste.



Mike and the wonderful Liss band.



## New Year message 2026

Dear Friends,

As the year turns, I want to begin with something simple and sincere: thank you. Thank you for the faithfulness that is so often unseen, for the steadiness that keeps going when enthusiasm is in short supply, and for the care you offer in ways that rarely make headlines or reports. Over the Christmas season especially, many of you carried extra responsibilities with grace, even when energy was limited. Your presence, patience, and quiet perseverance matter more than you may realise.

The arrival of a new year can stir a wide range of emotions. For some, it brings relief; for others, apprehension; for many, a mixture of both. Not every year ends neatly, and not every story reaches a satisfying pause at midnight on 31 December. If the year just past has left you tired, uncertain, or simply glad it is over, you are not alone, and you are not failing. Faithfulness is not always loud or productive. Sometimes it looks like staying, listening, and beginning again gently.

January often arrives carrying expectations it cannot possibly meet, forcing us to feel as if we need to reset, reinvent, and improve ourselves at speed. Yet the gospel offers a different rhythm. We are not required to become someone else in order to be valued by God. We are invited instead to live more truthfully, more attentively, and more kindly, to ourselves as well as to one another.

That is why, as we begin 2026, I want to commend once again the spirit of Gentle January, not as a programme but simply as a permission. Permission to ease into the year rather than rush it. Permission to notice what sustains rather than what exhausts. Permission to set aside unnecessary urgency. Gentleness can take many forms:

- a softer pace,
- a kinder inner voice,
- more spacious expectations,
- time to breathe, pray, and reflect,
- and a renewed attentiveness to the people and places entrusted to our care.

None of this is about doing less for the sake of it. It is about grounding what we do in grace rather than strain, and allowing God's faithfulness, not our own effort, to be the firm ground beneath us.

As this new year unfolds, my hope is that you will know moments of rest, clarity, and quiet joy, and that you will feel encouraged rather than driven. May 2026 be a year in which you are gently held and gently renewed.

With every blessing for 2026,

**Michael Hopkins**

**New Year, 2026**



### **Peaceful mind**

*The Bible tells the story of Jesus and His stressed disciples in a boat in a storm. Like them, we also get hit by storms in life. And like them, we can know that Jesus is also with us. Why not take a moment to ponder these promises:*

Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous be shaken. (Psalm 55:22)

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4: 6-8)

*Why not take a moment to memorise one of these verses?*

## God is our Refuge



Children's Church learned that just as our homes shelter us, so we can turn to God as our refuge.

## **Thoughts to encourage the readers, of love, trust and joy in Jesus**

God (Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) love each of you so much, that there is nothing you can do to make them love you more, and nothing you have done to make you loved less (exception should we blaspheme The Holy Spirit)

We are privileged to know this, yet the majority of the world 8.3 billion persons do not and many who have heard have not taken seriously or have chosen to go their own way.

Our God wants us to engage, worship and invite “Their Presence “into our lives. They want our company now and into eternity.

Whether a young baby fighting to survive in Gaza, elderly grandmother in Africa struggling to feed her daughter’s eight children, rural subsistence farmer in Ukraine or Russia, and a British well-heeled banker, all are loved the same and that love is not dependant on wealth, talent, position or considered importance.

Our God has given us free will, yet He knew we each would fail Him.

Jesus being The Father’s answer to return us to his presence, died to set us free from our sin (failures) and was raised to Life. But forgiving this sin is not automatic, cannot be earned for starters and ultimately to be given Eternal Life is an amazing gift of love.

These gifts according to the Bible await our diligent transformation, and I would like to encourage discussion by articles, home groups and teaching within our fellowship.

**Thank you**

**Tony**

# Community Matters

## FREE DEBT & BENEFIT ADVICE

Are you struggling with your finances?

You don't have to be alone.

"After a horrible experience in my life, I now do..."

### Drop-In

Every Wednesday : 10.30 – 12.30

No appointment necessary

- Repossessions
- Welfare Benefits
- Benefit Appeals

### FREE Debt Advice

Contact us for an appointment.



07919 998 442



[petersfield@frontlinedebtadvice.org.uk](mailto:petersfield@frontlinedebtadvice.org.uk)



[www.frontlinepetersfield.org.uk](http://www.frontlinepetersfield.org.uk)

c/o Life Church Centre,  
1 London House,  
Chapel Street,  
Petersfield.  
GU32 3DR

**Frontline**  
Debt Advice  
Petersfield

Frontline Debt Advice (UK)  
Registered Address: c/o Three Counties Church,  
Haslemere Locality Office Lion Green, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 1LD  
A Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England No. 7136786  
Registered Charity No. 1134908  
Licensed by the FCA to provide Debt Adjusting  
& Counselling No. 694921  
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## Food Bank Updates

Our opening times are: -

**Stock and Donations: Mondays and Wednesdays:  
9.30 am – 11.30 am**

**Distribution: Tuesdays and Fridays:  
9.30 am – 11.30 am**

**At Petersfield Methodist Church**

For more information, please check our website: [Petersfield Food Bank \(pactfoodbank.org.uk\)](http://pactfoodbank.org.uk)



Open every Wednesday from 2pm till 3.30pm at St Mary's. You can meet us, enjoy a cuppa and take away your food bags. Delivery can be arranged for those on foot. Can't get to St. Mary's? Then a

Wednesday delivery can be arranged if a request is made by lunchtime on Monday. Ring 01730 00659/300921 or text 07570792525

The Liss Foodbank is for surrounding villages as well as Liss. It can be accessed for your short-term need without a referral.

Please continue to drop off donations in St. Mary's Rectory porch, 111 Station Road, or bring donations to St. Mary's on a Wednesday afternoon.

## Free Shop Petersfield

The Shop collects food from supermarkets, farms, community gardens and others, that would otherwise go to waste.

Anyone is welcome to come along and take what they need.

It is not part of the Food Bank; the goal is purely to keep good food out of landfill.

The Free Shop is located to the right of Petersfield Station Entrance.

**Opening times: Tuesday 5.30 pm – 6.30 pm**

**Wednesday 1.30 pm – 3 pm**

**Friday & Saturday 10 am – 11.30 am**

For more information contact: [easthampshirerail.co.uk/freeshop-shop](http://easthampshirerail.co.uk/freeshop-shop)

## Petersfield and Liss United Reformed Church

### Update on regular weekday activities



Please note the following updates.

- **Drop in Tea** – Drop-In Tea for February will be on the 10<sup>th</sup>. This is an opportunity for anyone to come to the CFC for a chat and a cuppa and even some cake! Call in any time between 2 and 4pm. Come when you can - go when you must! We look forward to seeing you then.

Julie, Keith and Mary



### Rotas – February 2026

Date	Duty Elders	AV
February 1	Anne Glenn	Roy Knight
February 8	David Barton	Keith Evans
February 15	Wendy Cassar & Tony Phillips	Jonathan Oru
February 22	Julie West	Carolyn Barton

### Welcomers' Rota

Date	Welcomers
February 1	Val Torrance
February 8	Doreen Lewis
February 15	Peter Jolly
February 22	Brian King

- Please arrive 30mins before start of the service
- When all have arrived, count the adults and children, and enter the numbers on the notice board record sheet.
- Carry the offertory box to the Communion Table for the service.
- If your date is not suitable, please adjust with another person as a swap.

**February 2026 Petersfield and Liss Church Calendar -**  
**Please note Services are held at College Street, Petersfield.**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Mary Fair</b>	
Monday	2	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
Tuesday	3	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting	CFC
Thursday	5	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30 pm	Home group	84 Moggs Mead
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>John Piper – Hope Church</b>	
Monday	9	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
Tuesday	10	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		2-4 pm	Drop-in Tea	CFC
		7.30 pm	Women's Fellowship	CFC
Thursday	12	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		7 pm	Home Group	Buckmore Farmhouse
		8 pm	Home Group	12 Geddes Way
Friday	13	10.30 am	Friday Fellowship	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Minister - Communion</b>	
Tuesday	17	2.30 pm	Connie's Handicraft Group	CFC
Thursday	18	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30 pm	Home Group	84 Moggs Mead
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Minister – Café Church</b>	
Monday	23	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
Tuesday	24	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
Thursday	26	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		<b>2-4 pm</b>	<b>Games Afternoon</b>	<b>CFC</b>
		7 pm	Home Group	Buckmore Farmhouse
		8 pm	Home Group	12 Geddes Way
Friday	27	10.30 am	Friday Reflection	Sanctuary

## How to Handle Temptation

*'I can resist everything but temptation'* (Oscar Wilde). During Lent we remember Jesus' experience in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), when *'He was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil.'* (1). Temptation is a test of whether we do things our way or God's way. After 40 days of fasting Jesus was tired, hungry and vulnerable. Like Him, the Devil will attack us at our most vulnerable moments, especially when we are stressed.

***The first temptation was to turn stones into bread:*** Jesus' ministry was not about putting His own needs first, but being nourished by God's word. *'We do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'* (Deuteronomy 8:3). Like Jesus, we need to make God our priority and trust Him completely.

***The second temptation was to put God to the test:*** Jumping off the Temple pinnacle would have been a dramatic way for Jesus to gain popularity, but this was not God's way! *'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'* (Deuteronomy 6:16). We too need to learn this lesson!

***The third temptation was to worship Satan:*** The devil took Jesus up a mountain to offer Him worldly power. In contrast, His calling as Messiah was to be marked by suffering and honouring God. *'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only'* (Deuteronomy 6:13). This is to be our experience of living for God.

Jesus stands with us in our temptations. As we claim the promises of Scripture, like Him, we will find strength in the Spirit's power and the victory of the Cross.

*Consider these verses:*

*'Watch and pray, so that you enter not into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'* (Matthew 26:41)

*'Since Jesus Himself has endured being tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.'* (Hebrews 2:18)

*'Blessed is the man that endures temptation, for when he is tested, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (James 1:12)*

*'If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest!'* (Corrie Ten Boom).

# Mission News

*For your information and prayers, there will be news from one or more Missions each month. If you support a mission that has any information and prayer updates, please send these to the editor so that they can be included*



Thank you very much indeed for your ongoing support of Ukraine Christian Partnership (UCP). We are most grateful for your continuing donations and prayers. We would like to especially thank Connie's handicraft group for further kind donations (£320) which meant the superb total of £1045 was raised during 2025. Thank you to both those who create the wonderful items for sale and those who purchase them. It is much appreciated!

It is a new year and we continue to pray for peace for Ukraine. We pray also for the continued protection, strength and encouragement of Pastor Sergey and his church in Chornobaivka, Kherson, where shelling, drones and missiles are an ever-present danger. As well as drone nets, a concrete shelter is being built for the church (with UCP funding). This should hopefully be finished by the time the Messenger is published.

David Darling, Ukraine Christian Partnership ([www.ukrainecp.org](http://www.ukrainecp.org))



Concrete shelter being built at Pastor Sergey's church in Chornobaivka



Pastor Sergey and church member by the concrete shelter



## Recycling

As Petersfield Infant School is no longer able to accept recycling, we have been asked to share a list of alternative recycling opportunities for those waste streams

- Plastic milk bottle tops - Recycle with milk bottles in your home recycling collection. just leave the bottle tops on the rinsed bottles and place in your black recycling bin
- Batteries - These can be recycled in numerous shops including electrical stores. Robert Dyas. WH Smith and Tesco
- Spectacles - Recycle in-store at all local opticians. Petersfield Lions Club also offer collections at the following locations: Winton House. Swan Surgery and the Community Centre
- Stamps - Nationwide Building Society. 2 Chapel St. Petersfield GU32 3JD. collected for the Salvation Army
- Dishwasher pods and laundry packaging - Plastic wrapping can be recycled with flexible plastic at collection points in local supermarkets including Tesco and Aldi. At Aldi Havant you can recycle dishwasher tablet and washing capsule tubs. Flexible packaging for laundry washing capsules and pods. wipes. and Lenor tumble dryer sheets can be recycled via Terracycle at Rookery Farm Yard. Ramsdean. GU321RU
- Yoghurt pots - Aldi Havant and Portsmouth Road Car Park GU1 4XB
- Pringle tubes - Tetrapak bin at Tesco Car Park. The Causeway
- Crisp packets - Flexible plastic collection points at local supermarkets inc. Tesco and Aldi
- Cheese wrappers - Flexible plastic collection points at local supermarkets
- Toothpaste tubes - Recycle with Health. Beauty & Wellness items at Boots stores

This list is based on items previously recycled through Petersfield Infant School  
We have a recycling directory for Petersfield on our website which includes items not listed here: [www.petersfieldcan.org/projects/petersfield-recycling-directory](http://www.petersfieldcan.org/projects/petersfield-recycling-directory)

Other websites offering useful recycling information:

[www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

[www.terracycle.com/en-GB/collection-programs](http://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/collection-programs)

# For our younger readers ...

## The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

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

HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS

OH! NO!!

BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES

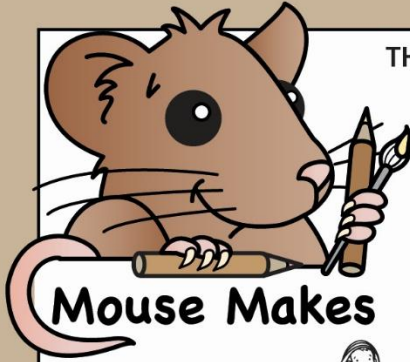
ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT

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

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

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

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



## Mouse Makes

Read the story in  
Luke 4:1-13



### THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

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

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

What did Jesus eat? v2

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

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9



### FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible

Learn God's word.



### SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first  
Worship only Him.



F O R T Y D A Y S S O N K L O R D N H  
 T D O W N O N W O R S H I P  
 T E S T W O R L D L T U N B  
 L V T E M P T A T I O N G R  
 E I A M J E S U S F N G D E  
 N L K P D E S E R T E R O A  
 T H O L Y S P I R I T Y M D  
 I M J E R U S A L E M F S J  
 W I L D E R N E S S J U M P

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

### THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

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

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

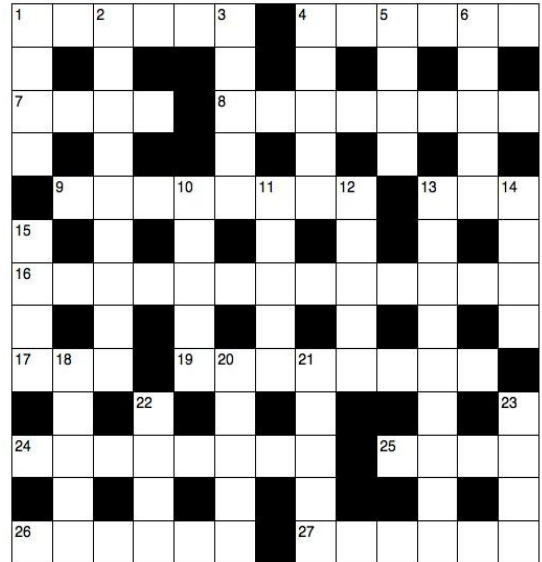
God cares, trust

Him do not test Him.



## Crossword

- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)
- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1–2) (5,3)
- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)
- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)
- Down
- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)



- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of 16 Across, — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)



### Sudoku

1	9					5		8
	2	6		3	8	1		9
8				7		4		
				9				6
3	4		8		6		1	7
2				1				
		4		8				1
7		3	9	2		6	5	
6		2					8	3

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Easy

							7	2
					9	5		3
6	7			3	2	9		
9				1				
4	1	6				7	9	5
				6				1
		3	1	8			4	6
2		7	4					
8	4							

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Medium



## Resolution

Having failed to keep  
A new year's resolution for  
Pretty much ever, this year I resolve to  
Play it safe. The trick is to know  
Your limits. Keep it simple.

Now what I resolve to do is to  
Eschew a poetic form. Abstain from  
Writing an acrostic for a whole

Year. A resolution, I think,  
Easily done. Eminently achievable.  
A piece of cake. Oh,  
Rats.

*Brian Bilston*



## Quick Quotes

- The person who never makes a mistake must get tired of doing nothing.  
- *Anon*
- When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so  
when you die, the world cries and you rejoice. - *Native American saying*

## 14<sup>th</sup> February - Aspects of Romantic Love



God obviously approves of romance – after all, putting Adam and Eve alone together in the Garden of Eden was His idea.

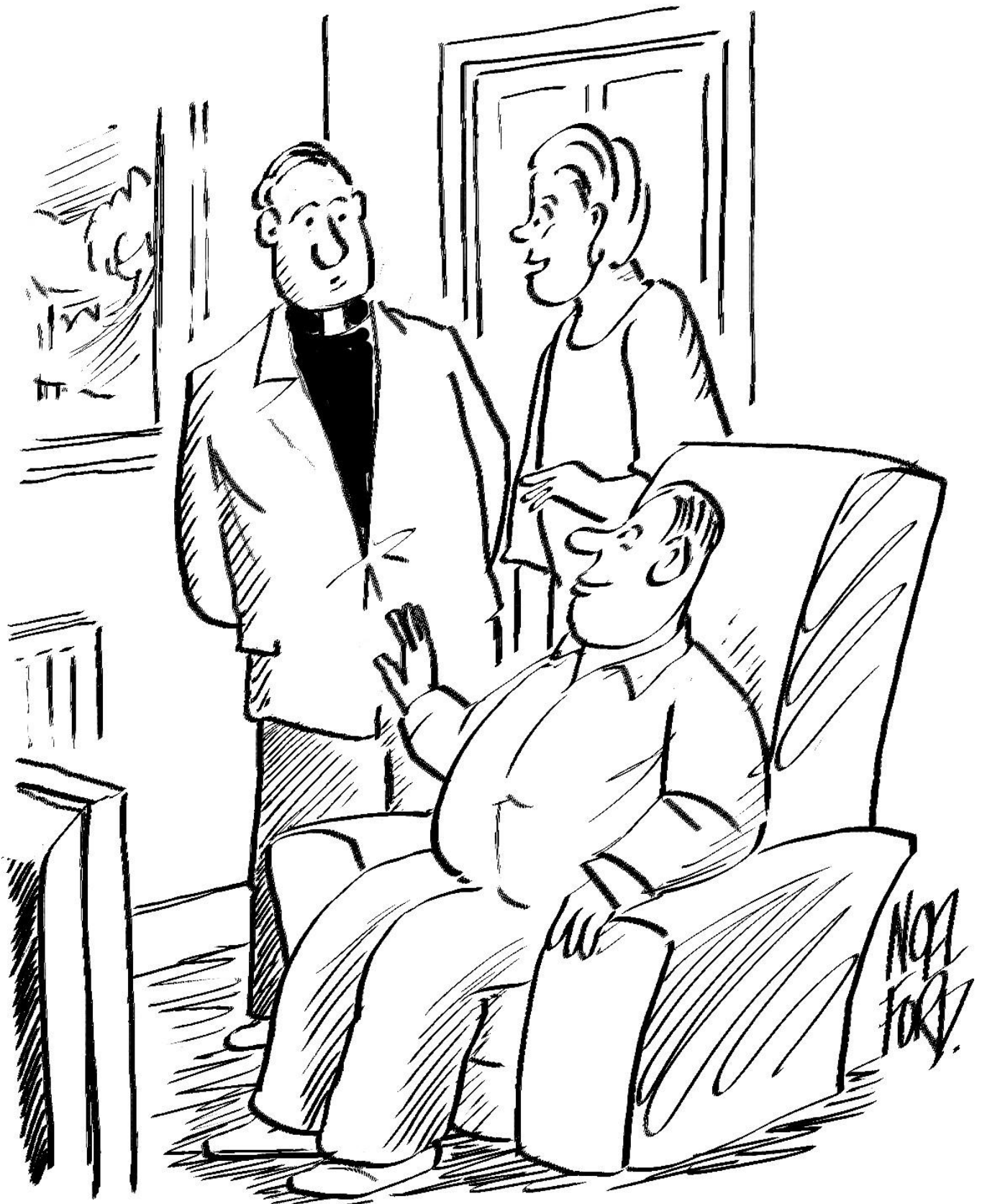
The history of the Israelites began with three great romances: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Rachel. The on-going history of Israel was deeply affected by later romances: Esther and King Xerxes, David's love affair with Bathsheba, and Solomon's marriage to hundreds of foreign wives. There is even an entire book in the Old Testament devoted to the love of a man and woman: the Song of Solomon!

When we reach the New Testament, we find real love between Joseph and Mary (even when Joseph thought Mary had been faithless, he did not want to harm her). St Paul, though himself a bachelor, nevertheless spent a lot of time urging Christians to love and be kind and faithful and considerate to their spouses. He even wrote 1 Corinthians 13 – the great love chapter that is read at millions of weddings worldwide 2000 years later.

Today, romance is still alive and well in Britain – last year we sent about 25 million Valentines to each other.

And what of the future? Well, just as the Bible begins with a love story, so it ends with one. *And you are involved!* For actually the greatest Love Story of all time is that between God and his people.

Christ is described in Revelation as our heavenly Bridegroom, and the Church is His beloved Bride. He has given us the most expensive present of all – Himself. And, just as in all the best romances, the story will end with the bride and groom getting together at last, so at the End of Time, Christ will return for His Bride.



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

## The Rules of Marriage

*Here are the real-life answers from a group of children:*

**Question:** What is the right age to get married?

23 is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then. - Camille, age 10

No age is good to get married at. You got to be a fool to get married. - Freddie, age 6 (very wise for his age)

**Question:** How can a stranger tell if two people are married?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

- Derrick, age 8

**Question:** What do you think your Mum and Dad have in common?

Both don't want any more kids. -Lori, age 8

**Question:** What do most people do on a date?

Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. - Lynnette, age 8

On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date. - Martin, age 10

**Question:** What would you do on a first date that was turning sour?

I'd run home and play dead. The next day I would call all the newspapers and make sure they wrote about me in all the dead columns. - Craig, age 9

**News from the United Reformed Church**  
items from the January 2026 edition of the Synod News



***Save the date – Le Weekend is coming to Basingstoke from 24-26 April 2026***

Our annual chance to get together with friends from the United Protestant Church of France, with activities around the theme of Stories of Hope and Joy.

We hope to have something for all ages on the Saturday with options for a walk in the countryside or sightseeing in Basingstoke itself, traditional English food to share and a game of skittles to test our reflexes!

Our hosts for Le Weekend are London St Basingstoke URC, who are offering B&B accommodation for our French guests.

Everything is translated so no worries over language.

It is always a joyful weekend as we meet and exchange wise words, laughter and faith connecting us all within the world- wide church of Jesus Christ.

So whether this is your first ever time meeting French friends or you have been to le Weekend before, do join us for a day or the whole weekend.

Last year, we were joined by several new participants, one of whom said, “I didn’t expect everyone to be so friendly.” So why not come and find out for yourselves?

We are hoping to have something specially for children and young people as part of our Saturday programme. – more details to follow in the New Year!

Contact Helen Everard [helen.everard158@gmail.com](mailto:helen.everard158@gmail.com) for more information!

**Diary dates 2026 – new**

**Lay Preachers’ Gathering** – Saturday 21 March 2026 at Sarum College.

**Secretaries’ Networking zoom** – Saturday 16 May 2026, 10am – 11.30am.

**Treasurers’ Networking zoom** – Saturday 27 June 2026, 10am – 11.30am.

**Elders’ conference** – Saturday 25 July 2026 at Sarum College.

## Wessex Synod Prayer Calendar February 2026

February	1	Christ Church, Marlow; Abbey URC, Romsey
	8	Racial Justice Sunday ( <a href="https://ctbi.org.uk/racial-justice-Sunday/">https://ctbi.org.uk/racial-justice-Sunday/</a> ); Rowlands Castle
	15	Grange, Reading; Blandford Forum
	22	URC Youth and The URC Youth Assembly; Aston Tirrold Shanklin, Isle of Wight

### February Prayer

from Eco Congregation Scotland

Sustaining and cherishing God,  
as Christ's Body the Church,  
our work and our calling in Christ  
is to make peace with your Creation,  
(who we also are.)

Shine brightly on our friendship  
with Christ, incarnate in the Earth,  
so beloved to you and the Spirit.  
Amen




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### Quick Quote

Happy moments, praise God.  
Difficult moments, seek God.  
Quiet moments, worship God.  
Painful moments, trust God.  
Every moment, thank God.

Anon



## Lectionary Bible Readings for February 2026

February 1	Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12
February 8	Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12); Psalm 112:1-9 (10); 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16); Matthew 5:13-20
February 15	Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9
February 22	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

### Important - Sensitive issues

As the Messenger is included in the Church Website, it is important that all the content is suitable for public exposure. When composing an article, if there is anything at all that you consider should be removed before publishing on the website, please inform the editor, Carolyn Barton.

The articles contained in this magazine do not necessarily represent the views of Petersfield and Liss URC leadership.

The deadline for the **Messenger** is **Sunday 15 February**. Please send articles to Messenger Editor, Carolyn Barton, tel 01730 265884 e-mail carolynbarton.barton6@gmail.com

### Solutions

ACROSS: 1, Credit. 4, Tackle. 7, Cain. 8, Kenaniah. 9, Strength. 13, Beg. 16, Salvation Army. 17, ARC. 19, Every day. 24, Admonish. 25, Dire. 26, Sneeze. 27, Bronze.

DOWN: 1, Cock. 2, Epistolic. 3, Taken. 4, Tenet. 5, Cane. 6, Leave. 10, Erase. 11, Guide. 12, Honey. 13, Barbarian. 14, Guys. 15, Asia. 18, Rod in. 20, Voice. 21, Rahab. 22, Hope. 23, Mene.

3	5	9	6	4	1	8	7	2
1	2	4	8	7	9	5	6	3
6	7	8	5	3	2	9	1	4
9	3	5	7	1	4	6	2	8
4	1	6	3	2	8	7	9	5
7	8	2	9	6	5	4	3	1
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2	6	7	4	5	3	1	8	9
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1	9	7	2	6	4	5	3	8
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8	3	5	1	7	9	4	6	2
5	7	1	3	9	2	8	4	6
3	4	9	8	5	6	2	1	7
2	6	8	4	1	7	3	9	5
9	5	4	6	8	3	7	2	1
7	8	3	9	2	1	6	5	4
6	1	2	7	4	5	9	8	3

## Church Contact Details

<b>Church</b>	<b>Petersfield: College Street, Petersfield GU31 4AG 01730 266475</b>
Minister	Rev Joshua Thomas Tel 07734 254983 <a href="mailto:minister@petersfieldurc.com">minister@petersfieldurc.com</a>
Church Office	Church Centre Manager Mrs Esme Kelly Office Hours 9am-12noon Mondays to Thursdays
Church & Community Worker	Mrs Jo Hopkins 01730 266475 <a href="mailto:communityworker@petersfieldurc.com">communityworker@petersfieldurc.com</a>
Telephone	Church Family Centre 01730 266475
Website	<a href="http://www.petersfieldurc.com"><u>www.petersfieldurc.com</u></a>
E-mail	<a href="mailto:churchcentremanager@petersfieldurc.com">churchcentremanager@petersfieldurc.com</a>
Sunday Services	Mornings at 10.30 am Services will be held at College Street
Secretary	Mrs Carol Tubbs 39 Rotherbank Farm Lane Liss Forest GU33 7BJ Tel 01730 893489 Mobile 07766 412160.
Treasurer	Mr Jim Cleverly, 4 Crundles, Petersfield GU31 4PJ Tel 01730 300558

### ***Petersfield United Reformed Church Mission Statement***

*“As a congregation worshipping God: we seek to reach out with the love of Jesus; to worship God in our daily lives; to draw others into the knowledge and love of Christ; and to make disciples”*