

Furrough Cross
United Reformed Church

October/November
2025



“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.” (James 3:18)

Website: furroughcross.org

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/furroughcross](https://www.facebook.com/furroughcross)

Email: furroughx@gmail.com



Minister: Vacant

Church Secretary: Vacant

Church Treasurer: Mrs Jenny Marshall

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Messy Church Leader: Miss Shirley Leaman

Magazine Editor: Mariana Wilson

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REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Sunday Services: Sundays at 10.30 am. Communion on the first Sunday of each month.

Midweek Worship: Wednesdays at 2.30 pm.

Messy Church: 2nd Friday of each month (not August) 4 to 6 pm.

Opinions and views expressed in this magazine may be personal and not necessarily accord with those of the Minister and Elders of Furrough Cross United Reformed Church. Care is taken over the accuracy of the information presented but the Church and Elders cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. The Editor reserves the right to edit or omit material submitted.

When you live in a world full of clocks, calendars, alarms, and reminders, waiting can feel like the hardest job of all. We like things to happen quickly: the kettle to boil, the traffic lights to change, the sermon to finish in time for lunch! But sometimes God asks us to slow down and trust His timing—especially in the life of a church.



As you know, our minister has now retired, and it may be some time before a new minister is appointed. It's natural to feel a little uncertain or even impatient. We wonder, "When will someone new come? Who will it be? Will they understand us?" These questions are normal—but in the middle of them we have the opportunity to learn something precious: how to trust God's perfect timing.

The Bible reminds us: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). This season without a minister is not wasted time. It is a time to pray, to support one another, and to step forward where we can. It's a chance to discover hidden gifts among us, to encourage each other, and to realise that the church is not built on one person, but on Christ Himself.

Of course, this doesn't mean it will always be easy. Some Sundays may feel different. Some jobs may feel heavier. But remember: God is never late. His plans may not run by our wristwatches, but they always run perfectly on His clock.

In the meantime, let's keep doing what we can: welcoming warmly, serving cheerfully, and praying faithfully for the one God will send to shepherd this flock in the next season. And let's encourage each other with this truth: while ministers may come and go, God never retires.



October: Alice Hilton; Margaret Denbow; Anne Tozer

November: James Banks



Val Elms

BIRTHDAY MUSINGS

When I was a young girl, I was told not to ask the age of any of my aunts or uncles because it was thought to be cheeky... indeed, bad manners. Many preferred to keep such information private.



Attitude seems to have changed. Birthday cards often announce, 'You're 50 today!!!' or 30 or 60 or 90, or whatever it happens to be. Outside a Torquay restaurant, or even on traffic signs, I've seen flags or a banner or a bunch of balloons let the world know whose special day they are celebrating... not at all shy or coy, it would seem.

In the Old Testament we learn that Joseph and Joshua were 110... Sarah was 127 ... and Abraham reached to 175 years. BUT Noah's grandfather, according to Genesis, was 969!!!

The psalmist reminded us that 70 years or possibly 80 years is all we can expect ... so perhaps he was in a gloomy mood that day!

One thing is for sure - we don't know how much time we have ... so let's spend our time wisely and just get on with it.

Pardon? How old am I? I'm shy ... I'm not telling you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✓ Harvest Festival Service – Sunday 5th October
- ✓ Next Church Meeting – Sunday 19th October following the service.
- ✓ Clocks go back – Sunday, 26th October
- ✓ Remembrance Service – Sunday 9th November
- ✓ Maintenance Morning – 29th November



SUNDAY SERVICES

Date	Preacher	Reader
05 October	Rev Derek Hill	Mariana Wilson
12 October	Monty Wills	Janet Dart
19 October	Fr Paul Jones	Jenny Webber
26 October	Rev Jerry Cook	Paul Madge
02 November	Miss Catherine Harris	Janet Dart
09 November	Monty Wills	Isabelle Taggart
16 November	Fr Paul Jones	Mariana Wilson
23 November	Rev Dick Gray	Clare Smith
30 November	Mr Jim Collins	Janet Dart



Thank you so much for all of your kind words and cards of sympathy after the loss of my dear husband John. To see the church so full of support at John's funeral was lovely and has helped in a big way for both me and my family to process everything that has happened. Once again, my love, gratitude and best wishes to you all.

Gill Earwood

TO ALL OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Linda Hall

I just want to say thank you for all your kind words and cards, and also a big thank you for coming to Lesley's service and for wearing pink in Lesley's memory. Lesley wouldn't have believed how many people came to her service.

Lesley was kind to so many people and would never forget birthdays, anniversaries and other such special occasions. There were so many people who mentioned the cards she would send to them and how thoughtful she was.



I would also like to say thank you to Heather for the lovely, thoughtful service she did. It meant so much to me.

I would also like to say thank you to Mariana for streaming the service online for friends who couldn't get there in person. They were so grateful.

I would also like to say thank you to Janet for the work she had done with Mariana.

There's a special thank you to Tracey for all the flowers she did for Lesley, and how lovely that they came from Lesley's garden! Lesley would have loved that.

What a lovely surprise from Tracey with the little dogs in the basket — Benji and Bobby. It was so very thoughtful because Lesley loved her boys.

Also thank you to Kevin Lack and his staff — they were all so kind.



A MESSAGE OF THANKS

After over 30 years, Ann Close has stepped down as Elder at Furrough Cross. She has modestly and conscientiously carried so many roles for our church. Ann's husband, Mike, carried out an enormous amount of regular maintenance. Their work was given readily and cost free to Furrough Cross and recently her son and daughter-in-law have also so helped behind the scenes.



We sincerely thank you for your unwavering support and help on so many occasions - all the catering, ensuring property maintenance and repairs are carried out, arranging cleaners and make sure everything runs smoothly and correctly for hall renters.



Beryl Navarro wishes to thank you all with all her heart for the overwhelming love and support she has received during her illness — whether through food, cards, visits, the most beautiful flowers, prayers, lifts, shopping, and so much more.

Her illness was the result of an accepted medical mistake in withdrawing vital medication, which led to a psychotic episode that made her appear like someone high on drugs and not responsible for their actions.

Although what happened cannot be undone, Beryl firmly believes in absolute forgiveness. As Scripture reminds us: *"Forgetting what is behind, we press on toward the goal of pleasing Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Summer is always a little sad for us in the pre-school, as we say good-bye to our older children who leave us for big school.

This year we took the children to Dawlish – we love this park. We had a lovely picnic. It was such a perfect little day. It is such a privilege for us to help them take their first step into the world, it made me think of this song:



*One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go,
From the old things to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you.*

Dear Friends,

Thank you to the Focus team. The August magazine arrived through my door. I am sure I and many more like myself will be appreciating all that many of you will be doing to keep Furrough Cross going for us.

Myself & my family will try to help in any way we are able.

God bless you all.

Alice Hilton & family

A NEW CHAPTER

Heather and Roy have made the move successfully from the Manse to their new home on the northern outskirts of Plymouth. They spent the first couple of weeks working out where everything would fit in, and, in doing so, discovered they still had a lot of 'stuff' they hadn't used in years, so the local charity shops were kept busy. When they got round to putting up the pictures on the walls, they felt really 'at home'. The lounge was decorated with so many 'happy retirement' and 'new home' cards, for which they express their heartfelt 'thank you'.



Their garden is about 1/3 of the size of the manse's, with a small stream running along the bottom and a wooded nature reserve on the other side. They renovated a nice tall bird feeder left by the previous owners, which encouraged a lot of winged visitors such as great tits, robins, wrens, blackbirds, magpies, pigeons and even parakeets!

Heather and Roy are missing so much about life at Furrough Cross, but have received a very warm welcome at a local church 15 minute walk through the woods or a 5 minute drive away. They are already involved in several of the church activities.



They are now 20 minutes away from their son and his family, and Josh especially loves coming there and playing with the wooden trains. Sam helped clear the vegetation by the stream and managed to fall in! They are even further away from their daughter's family in Essex, but are looking forward to visiting them at the end of September and taking Teddy on his first steam train ride (to see the Gruffalo!).

Our next Maintenance Morning, will be our Church Christmas Preparation Morning, to be held on Saturday 29th November from 9.30 a.m. I am looking for lots of willing workers to help prepare our Church for the festive season. The more volunteers we get, the quicker and easier it will be.



We need to get items out of the lockers in the hall and the Christmas shed. The candle arches need screwing to the windowsills. The candle crowns also need screwing into position on the end of the back pews, the candle beams put up between the side aisle pillars – no screwing required. Then candles need to be installed into these items. The Nativity stable and characters need to be displayed on the font, together with its internal light. The Advent ring, candle globes, lanterns, and candle star need putting up and the red column candles need displaying, three on each tray, either side of the candle arches. We will also require the camels being put together. There will also, no doubt, be other jobs that require attention. So, as you can see, quite a lot needs to be done, but if we have enough volunteers, it will be easier for all of us. If you cannot commit to a full morning, you are still welcome, for however long you can stay.

We usually start the morning with tea/coffee whilst we all gather, and decide who is going to do what. We also stop mid-morning for refreshments and a mince pie and enjoy a time of fellowship together. So please join us. There will be a sign-up sheet on the side aisle table. You won't be asked to do anything you are uncomfortable or uncertain about doing.

Our Messy Church team decided a Sunday lunch out would be just the thing to recover from all our hard work in the preceding months. So during August we enjoyed a nice meal and each other's company at The Old Engine House.



Much laughter and chatting ensued and we were so glad that our American volunteer, Tanya, was able to join with us. We don't waste any time recruiting new people to Messy Church that's for sure! It was very nice to just sit back, relax and have fun!





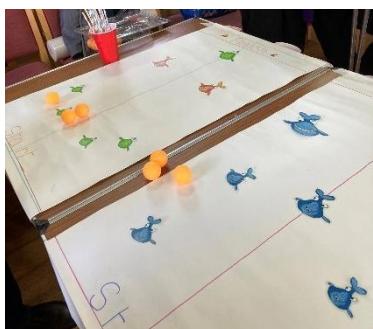
SEPTEMBER MESSY CHURCH

Shirley Leaman

Messy Church returned on Friday 12th September after our summer holidays. We were thrown into the deep end right away when families kept streaming in. It was amazing.

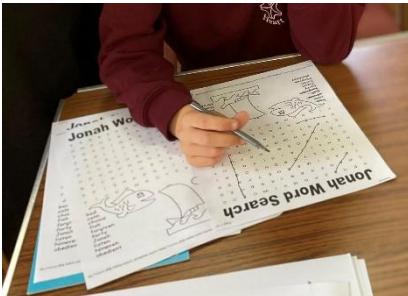
Our story and activities were all about Jonah and the whale. We watched a video and heard all about how God wanted Jonah to go and tell the people of Nineveh how bad they'd been. Jonah wasn't very keen

to do that and decided to run away from God.



We have an amazing MC team who did amazing activities with the children. They played fish ping pong - blowing ping pong balls into the whale's mouth, iced biscuits with a fizzy fish and a jelly baby Jonah, wrote prayers, put them into a plastic

bottle and threw them into the whale's mouth, made a moving fish with card and a balloon, created fish from old cd's and helped with two big whale pictures. The first showed Jonah in the whale's tummy (when asked what it might be like inside a fish's stomach we decided it would be quite smelly with all sorts of things floating around - heart, lungs, brain (!) and probably other fish.). On the second whale we stuck all sorts of plastics which ended up in the sea and harmed the fish and other wildlife.



During our worship time we heard how Jonah boarded a ship to try to run from God. But God sent a storm and the ship's crew ended up throwing Jonah overboard where he was swallowed by a giant fish. After three days and after Jonah had said sorry to God for disobeying him, the fish spat Jonah onto dry land. Jonah told the people of Nineveh how bad they'd been and how they too must say sorry to God. They listened really hard to Jonah and said they were sorry. God



was pleased to hear that. It doesn't matter what we do, if we tell God we're sorry he will always forgive us. We then had a little game of throwing beanbags into a yes and no bucket. Should we tidy our rooms? Yes! Should we do our homework? Some beanbags thrown into the "no" bucket. Ahem!

We prayed then for two of our MC members who weren't very well and asked God to take care of them.

Everyone enjoyed macaroni cheese or lasagne, followed by caramel Vienetta. No calorie counting at Messy Church!

A huge thank you to our catering/washing up team. I don't know how they do it!

God blessed our afternoon with so many happy faces, such noise and such a mess. But it was worth it.

Come and check us out at our next MC on the 10th October.

HERBIE'S POETRY CORNER



HE WALKS THROUGH US

God speaks to us
in so many ways
Through all the tears
Through all the pain
Through doctors, nurses
and our friends
His love and guidance
never ends!

Written by Herbert J B Doney.

REPENTANCE

Lord why do you
walk beside me?
A sinner such as I
What is it that you see in me for there's wrongs
I can't deny
I'd love to walk this road with you and make a
brand new start
So help me Lord along the way and ease this
troubled heart

Written by Herbert J B Doney.



HE'LL BE YOUR FRIEND

There is someone who is always
ready to take charge of our life
Someone who's so close to us it is a
pure delight!
He'll be there to give a helping hand
if you will let him in
Someone who will guide our feet
when the pathways dark and grim!

Written by Herbert J B Doney.

I found 'The Doctor and the dog' many years ago. I am very moved by this but do not know who wrote it.



A doctor was called out on a visit to a very ill patient on the moors.

He took his dog with him in the back of the land rover. The doctor did what he could to ease the man's pain and make him comfortable. He was on the point of leaving when the man said,

"Doctor, I'm afraid to die. I know you're a Christian man. Can you tell me what lies on the other side of death?"

The doctor replied, "I don't know... but I'll show you something."

The doctor went over to the back door. On the other side came a sound of scratching and whining. As the door opened his dog sprang into the room all excited and wagging his tail.

Turning to his patient the doctor said,

"Did you see that? My dog's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was on the other side of the door. He didn't know what was in this room. He knew nothing ...except that his master was here ... and when the door opened... he sprang inside without fear. I can't tell you what's on the other side of death... but... yes... I have a strong faith... I know that my master is there and that's enough for me."

A SHORT HISTORY OF CLOCKS

Have you ever noticed how we're all ruled by time? Sunday service at 10:30am. Lunch at 1pm. Cup of tea at 3:30pm. Bed by... well, let's not admit to the late-night TV hours. But where did all this "timekeeping" business begin? After all, Adam and Eve didn't check their watches before their evening stroll with God in the garden!



The earliest "clocks" weren't really clocks at all. People simply watched the sun. A stick in the ground—what we call a sundial—would cast a shadow to show the hour. Very clever... unless it was raining, or cloudy, or night-time. (Try explaining to your boss: "Sorry I'm late, the sun wasn't out.")

Then came water clocks. People filled bowls with water that dripped steadily into another container. When the bowl was empty, an hour had passed. Ingenious, but if you were thirsty in the middle of the night, you risked drinking tomorrow away.



By the Middle Ages, another invention appeared: the hourglass. Nobody knows exactly who first came up with it, but by the 1300s pictures of them show up in artwork. It was simple—sand trickling from one bulb to another—and surprisingly reliable. Sailors especially loved them, since unlike water clocks, they didn't slosh around on stormy seas.

Meanwhile, monks in medieval monasteries needed to know when to pray, even in the dark. So, they developed mechanical clocks with weights and gears. These early contraptions were large, noisy, and not terribly accurate, but they did the job. (Imagine a monk

hurrying to morning prayers, muttering, “Either the bell is early, or Brother Thomas has been fiddling with the weights again.”)



By the 17th century, the pendulum clock arrived—so accurate that suddenly people could time things down to the minute. This was both marvellous and slightly stressful. Now, not only could you be late for service, you could be exactly seven minutes late!

Fast forward to today, and we've got atomic clocks that are accurate to within a billionth of a second. Handy if you're launching rockets, but a bit unnecessary if you're just trying to get to church on time.

Through it all, one truth remains: clocks may tell us the time, but they can't tell us how to use it. The Psalmist puts it best: “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (*Psalm 90:12*).



So, whether you wear a wristwatch, glance at your phone, or still squint at the church hall's slightly wobbly wall clock—remember, time is God's gift. Let's spend it well... and maybe even arrive on time for service this Sunday.

WHY DO THE CLOCKS GO BACK IN AUTUMN?

The whole idea is called Daylight Saving Time. It was introduced in the early 1900s to help people make better use of the daylight. In spring we “spring forward” an hour, giving us lighter evenings, and in autumn we “fall back” an hour, giving us brighter mornings. The plan was to save money on candles, gas lamps, and later electricity. These days most of us just grumble about the hour we lose in March, enjoy the extra hour in bed in October, and spend the next week trying to remember what time it really is!

THE SEA GLASS JOURNEY



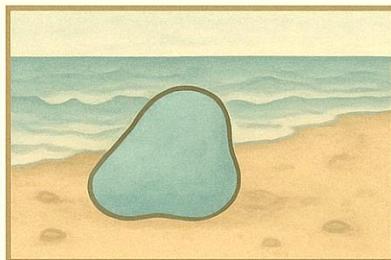
Once I was a treasured,
proud possession.



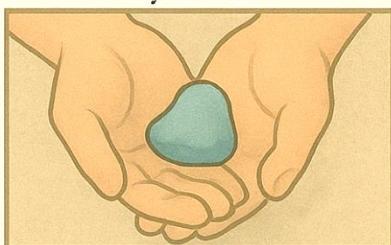
Then one day, I shattered
and was swept out to sea.



The sea was merciless,
tossing me around, the
salty water burning into
my surface.



One day, the tide carried
me in, and I was
washed ashore



Tender hands found
me and picked me up



Now I am treasured and
beautiful again.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

The Synod sometimes in conjunction with the national church organises foundation, intermediate and advanced training.

Who needs to do training?

Foundation training:

The URC suggests that it would be beneficial for all church members to take this course which is available online. The intermediate and advance training build on this course and it is a requirement that you have done this course before continuing.



Intermediate training:

The following are amongst those who need to have it: Elders, Ministers, Worship leaders and anyone providing craft activities for children e.g. for Messy Church. You will need to have completed this course before taking the advanced course.

Advanced training:

Church Safeguarding Coordinators, Ministers.

We have been advised that the following training opportunities are available. **Foundation training** Available on line any time from the URC learning hub <https://www.urclearninghub.org.uk/> scroll down to the course and log in using Guest access. Takes around an hour.

Intermediate training – Zoom

Wednesday 1st October 6:30-9pm

Thursday 20th November 1pm-3:30

Please make sure that you have completed a Foundation course before booking this.

Advanced training – Zoom

Thursdays 9th and 16th October 2025 at 6:30pm - both dates must be attended

The next course will be in March 2026

To book a place on either the Intermediate or advanced course please email: secretary@urcsouthwest.org.uk and give your name, church and role.

A zoom link will be sent out about a week before the course is due to start.

ELECTION TIME

Val Ebrey

When I was about 7 years old a general election was in full swing.

One day, when the family were all sat down for a meal, I asked my parents who they were voting for, to which they replied, “Oh we don’t talk about that”.

My dad said, “Why do you want to know?”

“Well,” I replied, “I hope it’s Labour.”

Again they asked why.

“Because Jesus said ‘all ye that labour shall come unto me’” (I was going to Sunday School).

My dad couldn’t stop laughing and said, “I must send this to the paper”. I never knew if he did or not.



LEISURE

by WH Davies (1871-1940)



*WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?*

*No time to stand beneath the boughs,
And stare as long as sheep and cows:*

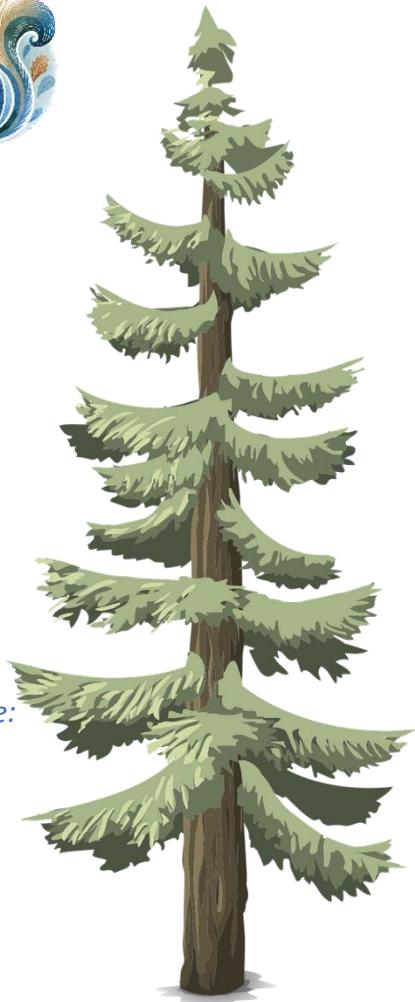
*No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass:*

*No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night:*

*No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance:*

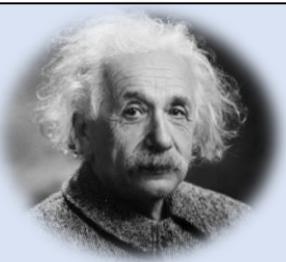
*No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began?*

*A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.*



*“Strive not to be
a success, but rather
to be of value.”*

(Albert Einstein)



ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUIZ

1. C) Strawberry
2. C) Tomato
3. C) Pineapple
4. B) Pineapple (contains bromelain)
5. B) Beta-carotene
6. A) Grapefruit
7. C) It smells terrible
8. C) Vitamin A
9. D) All of the above
10. C) It forms a natural fractal pattern (Nature's own little geometry lesson!)



Romanesco cauliflower

LI(F)E CLOCKS

A man died & went to Heaven. As he stood in front of The Pearly Gates, he saw a huge wall of clocks behind St. Peter.

He asked: "What are all those clocks?"

St. Peter replied: "They are lie clocks. Everyone on earth has one. Every time you lie, the hands on your clock move."

The man: "Oh, interesting. Whose clock is that?" he asked, pointing.

St. Peter: "THAT belongs to Mother Theresa. The hands have NEVER moved."

The man: "Incredible, and whose is that one?" pointing at another.

St. Peter: "THAT one, belongs to Abraham Lincoln. The hands have moved ONLY TWICE."

The man: "Where's Donald Trump's clock?"

St. Peter: Oh, THAT one? It's in Jesus' office, he uses it as a ceiling fan!"

TONGUE TWISTER

If Stu chews shoes, should
Stu choose the shoes he
chews?





WOMEN IN THE BIBLE QUIZ (ANSWERS IN NEXT EDITION)

1. Who was the first woman created, according to the Bible?

- A) Sarah B) Miriam C) Eve D) Deborah

2. Who laughed when she overheard that she would have a baby in her old age?

- A) Rebekah B) Elizabeth C) Sarah D) Hannah

3. Which woman hid the Israelite spies on her rooftop in Jericho?

- A) Naomi B) Rahab C) Tamar D) Lydia

4. Who was the mother of Samuel, the prophet?

- A) Hannah B) Esther C) Bathsheba D) Ruth

5. Which brave queen saved her people by approaching the king uninvited?

- A) Jezebel B) Esther C) Vashti D) Deborah

6. Who sat at Jesus' feet and listened while her sister was busy serving?

- A) Joanna B) Mary Magdalene C) Martha D) Mary of Bethany

7. Which woman in the New Testament was known for her hospitality and made purple cloth?

- A) Dorcas B) Priscilla C) Lydia D) Phoebe

8. Who was turned into a pillar of salt for looking back at Sodom?

- A) Lot's wife B) Ruth C) Delilah D) Dinah

9. Who anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume and wiped them with her hair?

- A) Salome B) Mary Magdalene C) The woman at the well D) Mary of Bethany

10. Which Moabite woman showed loyalty to her mother-in-law and became an ancestor of Jesus?

- A) Hagar B) Rahab C) Ruth D) Tamar

YOUR MAGAZINE NEEDS YOU



Got a story to share? A poem? A testimony? A word of encouragement? A funny moment that made you laugh?

We'd love to hear from you!

Our church magazine is a reflection of you—your faith, your journey, your voice.

Your contribution can bless and inspire others in ways you may never imagine.

No professional writing skills needed—just a willing heart and a few words (or pictures!) from the soul.

Please share your contribution for the next magazine

by Sunday, 23rd November

 *In person to Mariana Wilson*

 [*By email to furroughx@gmail.com*](mailto:furroughx@gmail.com)

 *By Facebook Messenger to*
<https://www.facebook.com/furroughcross>