

focus



**Furrouh Cross
United Reformed Church**

April/May 2026



**"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said."
(Matthew 28:6)**

Website: furroughcross.org

Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/furroughcross

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Church Secretary: Vacant

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Messy Church Leader: Miss Shirley Leaman

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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.

Olives are one of those foods many people have to try twice before they learn to like them. The first taste can be surprising—sharp, salty, and unlike anything else. Yet with time, something changes. What once seemed strange becomes rich and satisfying, and many people eventually come to enjoy them greatly.



Interestingly, the olive’s story begins with an even stronger bitterness. A freshly picked olive from the tree is almost impossible to eat. The fruit of the olive tree contains a natural compound that makes it intensely bitter. Before olives can be enjoyed, they must go through a long process of curing—soaking in salt water or being packed in salt for weeks or months. Slowly, the bitterness fades and a deep, complex flavour emerges.

This transformation offers a meaningful picture for Easter.



The heart of the Easter story begins with bitterness. The suffering of the cross, the pain, the humiliation, and the grief of that Friday seemed unbearable to those who witnessed it. To the disciples, it must have felt like the end of everything they had hoped for.

Yet the cross was not the final chapter.

Just as the bitterness of the olive is not the end of its story, the suffering of Good Friday was not the end of Christ’s story.

Through the cross came resurrection, and through suffering came life. What first appeared bitter became the source of hope and salvation.

Even the olive tree itself quietly echoes the story of Easter. In the Bible, the olive branch is a symbol of peace. After the flood, a dove returned to Noah carrying an olive leaf, a sign that the storm had passed and that new life had begun.

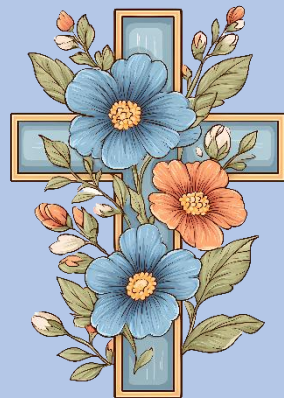


Easter reminds us that God can bring something life-giving even out of what seems bitter and painful. The cross stands at the centre of that promise: that suffering is not the end, and that new life can grow where we least expect it.

Perhaps the next time we taste an olive, we might remember its journey—from bitterness to richness—and the deeper truth that Easter proclaims: that through the cross, God brings life out of what once seemed unbearable.

THE CROSS

*The stone was moved,
the grave laid bare,
No death could hold
the Saviour there.
The cross once crowned
with grief and pain
Now sings of life
and hope again.*



It was a great privilege to host this year's World Day of Prayer service here at Furrough Cross on Friday 6th March. The service was well attended, representing 13 churches around the Bay. It is a women-led, global, ecumenical movement, which was



prepared this year by Christian women from Nigeria, written in response to the theme 'I will give you rest, come!'.

The service shared stories of four Nigerian women who inspire us to work towards a world without injustice, insecurity, marginalisation, religious persecution, poverty and despair, and we pray that their stories will encourage and inspire women throughout the world to unite as one people in both prayer and action.

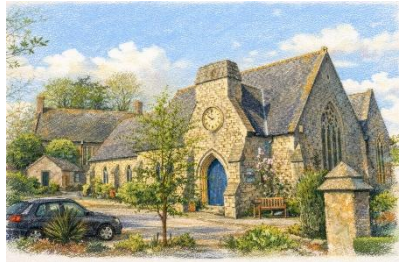
The service began with us singing a traditional Igbo song. Colourful African fabrics were displayed on the table at the front of the church, representing the resilience and creativity of Nigerian women. Rocks and stones represent the heavy burdens people carry.



After the service, as we talked together, refreshments were served, along with delicious homemade Nigerian biscuits.

My friends,

What I want to share comes from a place of care for our Church and for one another. I believe this is a good moment for us, as a congregation, to pause and reflect, honestly, on where we are and how we move forward together.



Many of us will have made New Year resolutions. Did you consider including one for the Church? As you know, we are currently without a Minister, and recent changes to Synod rules mean that our Interim Moderator's role is limited to guiding us through the process of calling a new Minister only. This leaves much of the day-to-day running of the Church in our own hands, during this period of interregnum.

We are also aware that our congregation is ageing, with relatively few new or younger members joining us. Many of those who are still considered "younger" have been involved in Church life for decades. At the same time, many of us are finding that we no longer have the same energy or health we once did, and it is becoming harder for a small number of people to continue carrying a large share of the work.

This became particularly clear in the lead-up to Christmas. While some help was offered with decorating the Church, there was far less support when it came time to take everything down and store it properly. As a result, tasks were left unfinished, and this placed a strain on those who were already doing a great deal. This is not sustainable in the long term.

The Carols by Candlelight service is another example. It requires a significant amount of planning and practical effort, often concentrated among very few people. On the night itself, it was noticeable how little help was offered with simple tasks, even as the service was about to

begin. This year, the congregation numbered 32. That raises a difficult but necessary question: is the level of work involved still manageable or justified without broader support?

So, I would like us, as a Church, to reflect together on this. Do we want to continue with a Carols by Candlelight service in the future? And if so, how can we ensure that the responsibility for organising and running it is shared more widely?

These questions are not asked in criticism, but in the hope that we can find a way forward that is fair, realistic, and rooted in mutual care. Our Church can only continue if we support one another, not by a few doing everything, but by many each doing a little.



EARLY PRAYER MORNING

Shirley Leaman

At 6 a.m. on a chilly March morning 31 people met at Furrough Cross for their weekly prayer meeting. Bill Becher had invited them to meet at our Church. This group has been meeting weekly in different Churches for the last 30 years. A sincere and happy group of all different ages and backgrounds



who prayed for an hour on many different topics. They enjoyed tea, biscuits and a warm welcome. Their prayer always covers the Church in which they meet and they prayed for the future of Furrough Cross and what God had in store for us all. Then off they went to enjoy breakfast together at a local cafe.

Wednesday Worship - Easter Special

Wednesday 1st April

2:30 pm

Jesus said:

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:25–26

Join us as we remember and celebrate the hope of Easter together.

The service will include special Easter features followed by Easter refreshments.

All are very welcome.



Bill Becher participated in the '**Wonderful Wellswood Walk for Rowcroft**' on **Sunday 22nd March**.

Furrough Cross Church raised a total of **£190**, including Bill's own initial sponsorship donation of **£20** to join the walk.

The total raised on the day was in excess of **£2000**.

A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED



April: Avril Lakin; Julie Backholer; Margaret Casselden; Doris Spencer

May: Peter (Moses) Wyles; Mariana Wilson



SUNDAY SERVICES

Date	Preacher	Reader
05 April (Easter)	Rev Heather Cadoux	Mariana Wilson
12 April	Rev Robert Jennings	Janet Dart
19 April	Fr Paul Jones	Jenny Webber
26 April	Mrs Tanya Ansley	Malcolm Henshaw
03 May (Comm.)	Rev Valerie Price	Bill Becher
10 May	Rev Dick Gray	Isabelle Taggart
17 May	Miss Catherine Harris	Paul Madge
24 May	Rev Jerry Cook	Jenny Webber
31 May	Wed. Worship Group	Wed. Worship Group

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Good Friday Walk of Witness** – 3rd April, starting at 10am in St. Marychurch
- **Easter Sunday Service** – 5th April
- **April Messy Church** - Friday, 10th April, 3:45 PM-6 PM
- **May Messy Church** – Friday, 8th May, 3:45 PM-6 PM
- **Church Meeting** - TBC

WELCOME TO THE NEW FURROUGH CROSS ELDERS

THANK YOU FOR STEPPING IN!

SHIRLEY



JANET



JENNY



GERALDINE



ADRIAN



SHIRLEY

AGNES

On behalf of Furrough Cross, we would like to say a big, heartfelt 'thank you' to **JENNY**, for all her hard work as a treasurer and help in all church matters, and also to the elders who are stepping down:

LINDA, ANN, MARILYN, AND HERBIE

Thank you for everything you have done for Furrough Cross!



HERBIE'S POETRY CORNER



THANK YOU

The springtime is dawning
How lovely to see!
The birds singing chorus
up in the high trees!
The flowers in their beauty
Happy squirrels at play
Thank you dear maker
for giving this day!

Written by Herbert J B Doney.



SO NEAR

There's one who stands beside you
who can make your darkness light
He knows your every problem
although he's out of sight
For however far you wander or
wherever you may roam
He'll always be there for you
He will guide you home!

Written by Herbert J B Doney.



OUR CONSTANT GUIDE

Lord you're always with us where
ever we may be
In danger or in good times
he guides our wandering feet!
and yet we sometimes doubt him
when our lives at times feel bleak
But he will never fail us even
though our faith is weak!

Written by Herbert J B Doney.



At February's Messy Church there were more hearts than you could shake a stick at! Our theme of God loving each one of us was reflected in all we did. Starting with a video of the Prodigal Son, we saw how he spent all the money his dad gave him until he had no friends and no food. Sitting with the pigs he decided to go home and ask his dad for forgiveness. When he was near his home his dad came running down the road to meet him, to forgive him and to throw a party for him. And God is like that, if we're sorry for the things we do wrong He forgives us right away.



Our activities reflected the theme of love. The children decorated wooden hearts, made "God loves you" magnets, and beautiful butterflies. The heart shaped bottles, adorned with stickers and filled with sweets, were to give to someone we love (not sure that many made it that far, but!). The hit of the afternoon were the edible pig

styes and pigs. What you can do with chocolate mud, shreddy fences and pink icing to make into pigs is nothing short of amazing. Finally there were two big hearts - one asking "What makes God sad?" and the other "What makes God happy?" The children and adults thought of answers to





MARCH MESSY CHURCH

Shirley Leaman

With several new families the children kept pouring in to March's Easter Messy Church! Because of the way Easter falls this year it meant we did our Easter MC very early. But did the children mind - not a bit. We started the afternoon by watching a video showing the many things that Jesus did, including giving His life for us. Then, with Eddie as Jesus riding our life size donkey, we paraded around the Church waving our palm leaves and singing and shouting "Hosanna". For the next part of the story, the children heard how the crowd turned against Jesus and shouted "Crucify Him" and how He died on the cross.



Our craft activities reflected the theme of Easter. The children made Easter gardens in a foil tray, zip lined eggs, made chocolate Easter nests (the eating crafts are nearly always the most popular!) coloured in pictures to put up on their windows, had their faces painted, helped with a big picture of the Easter story and made and planted a big Easter garden. So much to do!

In our worship time Tanya showed the children 12 plastic eggs. Inside each was something that reminded us of the Easter story - pieces of silver, bread, a cup of wine, a cross and so on. The children were so good and listened intently.



After a yummy supper we had our Easter egg hunt around the Church grounds. A smaller, separate area for the littlies and a larger area for the older children. Never have so many eggs been found in such a short space of time. At the end of an unintentionally longer Messy Church we all staggered home - holy moly Messy Church is hard work! But what a team we have. Loving the children and their families is how we all show our love for God in the way that we serve Him.

Our next Messy Church is on Friday 10th April from 3.45 pm to 6 pm. Come and check us out.



A WELCOME DOOR

Val Elms

I love country cottages and used to take photographs of unusual and unique doors. Church doors are often also very interesting. Attractive villages on TV series such as Miss Marple and Midsummer Murders show many picturesque cottages. I'm sure that many of you have also noticed and admired them. Some doors have very important people living beyond them.

We or our friends may have a boring door, but that doesn't matter. The door of whatever design or colour is not important. The importance is that the door opens with a smile and a welcome.



A famous painting is called "The Light of the World" by William Holman Hunt. It is a painting which shows Jesus standing to knock at an old and long unopened door. There's no handle on the outside. You can only open the door if you're wanting to open it yourself to meet with Jesus.

Jesus won't press you, but He longs to give His love to us all. Jesus knocked at the door of my heart for many years, but I was in my late thirties before I committed to the Lord. It's never too late. Praise God!

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

Revelation 3:20



WOUNDED FOR ME

Margaret B.

“Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey.” Zechariah 9 v 9



A few days before Good Friday Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. He would have looked more kingly if He had been on a spirited horse. The crowds thought of freedom from the Romans and cried “Hosanna in the highest!” However, a few days later the shouts became “Crucify Him!” Christ rode into Jerusalem knowing full well the shameful, painful death He would suffer there.

A man who was very troubled by his sins had a vivid dream in which he saw Jesus being savagely beaten by a soldier. The onlooker shuddered as he saw the terrible wounds on Christ’s bleeding, swollen body. When the soldier raised his arm to strike the Lord again, the man who was having the dream rushed forward to stop him: as he did so the soldier turned, and the dreamer was startled to see his own face. He awoke in a cold sweat, conscious that his sin had inflicted this dreadful punishment upon the Saviour. He remembered these words in Isaiah 53 v5: *“He was wounded for our transgressions”*. *“All we like sheep have gone astray”*, but praise God, *“The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all”*. Isaiah 53 v 6

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died to redeem a sinful and lost world!

In one sense, Good Friday was the darkest day in human history, but because of Jesus sacrifice, the cross was the greatest victory of all the ages!

Having paid the price for our sin, He is highly exalted at God's right hand and will come again as King of kings and Lord of lords.



If we want to be part of His heavenly kingdom we must trust Him as our Saviour.

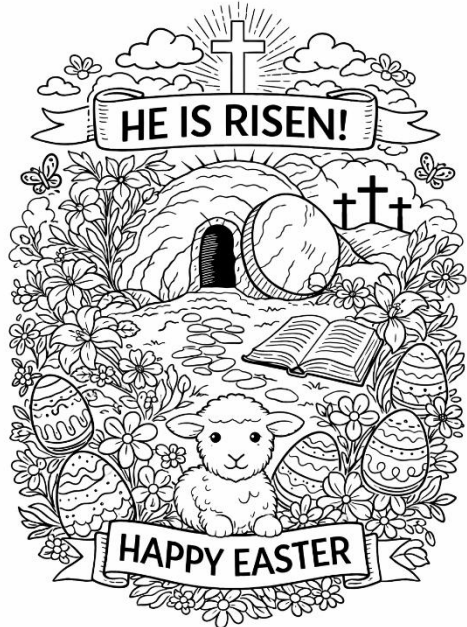


Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross He was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.

EASTER COLOURING CHALLENGE

Bring this Easter scene to life with colours! Use as many colours as you can—bright spring colours for the flowers, gentle tones for the lamb, and your own creative ideas for the rest.

When you've finished, write in one word or short sentence underneath what Easter means to you:



WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Albert B. Simpson c.1905

Jesus is standing in Pilate's hall -
Friendless, forsaken, betrayed by all!
Hearken! what meaneth the sudden call!
What will you do with Jesus?

Jesus is standing on trial still,
You can be false to Him if you will,
You can be faithful thro' good or ill:
What will you do with Jesus?

Will you evade Him as Pilate tried?
Or will you choose Him, whate'er betide?
Vainly you struggle from Him to hide:
What will you do with Jesus?



Will you, like Peter, your Lord deny?
Or will you scorn from His foes to fly,
Daring for Jesus to live or die?
What will you do with Jesus?

What will you do with Jesus?
Neutral you cannot be;
Someday your heart will be asking,
"What will He do with me?"

"Jesus, I give Thee my heart to-day!
Jesus, I'll follow Thee all the way,
Gladly obeying Thee!" will you say:
"This will I do with Jesus!"





Furrough Cross Church is relatively close to many old buildings in the area. In St. Marychurch we have the Abbey School, built in the 1820s as a manor house called “Hampton House”. It was built after the style of Hampton Court, and the front gates have the initials HC on them in the wrought

iron work.

The first occupier was Charles Kane Sivewright, who invited his friend Edward Vivian to stay at Hampton House in 1829.

Vivian was to become a benefactor of the poor, and his mission was to persuade the local people who were poor to move to Lancashire and take employment in the cotton mills.

Charles Sivewright married Edward Vivian’s sister, Lucy, and moved to Scotland, but Edward Vivian himself was to become important in the development of Torquay and was the founder member of the Torquay Natural History Society. He lived in the area for the rest of his life.

In 1851 the house was purchased by Charles Tayleur. He had made a fortune building locomotives in his Vulcan Foundry in Warrington and exporting them around the world. His son, William Tayleur, inherited the mansion, and in turn his son Charles Tayleur moved into Hampton House with his family of five children. It was their happy family home until his death in 1912.

References have been found to a tunnel linking the well in Hampton House to the top of the cliff, suggesting that residents could have been involved in smuggling. The gentry, of course, did obtain their fine wines and brandies from little boats that had sneaked over from France without paying any duties.

In 1913, Hampton House and estate was sold to a local solicitor, Theodore Foster for £9000. It had a large hall, five reception rooms, eighteen bedrooms and dressing rooms, together with stabling, garages, cottages and a farm.

The First World War came and Hampton House became a convalescent home for New Zealand soldiers.

(To be continued)



MEET TESS, OUR FOUR-LEGGED CHAMPION

Karen MacFarlane

Tess is a four-legged member of Furrough Cross Church, she used to attend Messy Church when we first got her as she loves children but she hasn't been for a while as mum has to focus on the children and she keeps wriggling out of her lead.

She is a regular on the South West Agility circuit and on the 21st February at KST agility competition she walked off with two first rosettes (and a trophy).



She started her life off in Romania, we are not sure if she was picked up off the streets or found in a shelter but she came to the UK aged roughly about 10 to 11 months through Furry Paws Rescue in Okehampton and she hasn't looked back since, she is coming up to 4 in September.

Her favourite hobbies are doing agility and waking mum up at every morning at 6am, and getting the squeak out of her squeaky toys. In agility she loves the dog walk, and the see saw, the higher the better whereas most dogs are frightened or slightly hesitant of these two contacts and she is doing so well with her weaves (this is where they have to weave through 12 upright poles)

She is currently a grade 3 agility dog, and has a agility win and a jumping win towards her grade 4, she needs 1 more agility win to get to grade 4, we will keep you updated.

A LITTLE NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Tess also gets our prize for being such a good girl in church, always so well behaved when she joins her Mummy in attending the services at Furrough Cross.



ANSWERS TO LAST EDITION'S QUIZ

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. B — Photosynthesis | 6. A — Arctic tern |
| 2. C — Carbon dioxide | 7. B — Stratosphere |
| 3. C — Blue whale | 8. C — Omnivores |
| 4. D — Roots | 9. D — Oak |
| 5. C — Marine ecosystem | 10. C — Pack |

ANSWERS TO DINGBATS

1 Fingers crossed. 2 Haunted house. 3 High five. 4 Apple Pie. 5 Double Trouble. 6 Hot shot. 7 Broken record. 8 Jack in the Box. 9 Snowman. 10 First Aid. 11 Broken link 12 iPhone. 13 Somewhere over the rainbow. 14 Dr Dolittle 15 Lemonade 16 Earrings 17 Raining cats and dogs. 18 A drop in the ocean. 19 Bad blood. 20 Under fire

WHAT DID HE DRINK? Answer: MILK

✝ EASTER QUIZ ✝

(Answers in the next edition)

1. Which Gospel records the resurrection story in the shortest form, ending abruptly with the women fleeing the tomb?
A) Matthew; B) Mark; C) Luke; D) John
2. What inscription did Pontius Pilate place above Jesus on the cross?
A) King of the Jews; B) Son of God; C) Savior of Israel; D) Messiah of Nazareth
3. Who asked Pontius Pilate for permission to bury Jesus?
A) Nicodemus; B) Joseph of Arimathea; C) Peter; D) John
4. What happened in the temple at the moment Jesus died?
A) The altar broke; B) The doors opened by themselves; C) The lamps went out; D) The curtain of the temple was torn in two
5. How many angels were seen at the empty tomb according to Luke's Gospel?
A) One; B) Two; C) Three; D) Four
6. According to Matthew, what natural event occurred at the resurrection?
A) A great storm; B) A solar eclipse; C) An earthquake; D) A flood
7. What did the guards say had happened to Jesus' body?
A) Angels had taken it; B) The disciples stole it; C) It disappeared; D) It was moved by Pilate
8. What village were two disciples travelling to when Jesus appeared to them after His resurrection?
A) Emmaus; B) Nazareth; C) Bethany; D) Jericho
9. What happened when Jesus broke bread with the disciples at Emmaus?
A) They remembered His teaching; B) Their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; C) He vanished before them; D) Both B and C
10. How many days passed between Jesus' resurrection and His ascension?
A) 7 days; B) 12 days; C) 30 days; D) 40 days

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, 24th May***

 *In person to Mariana Wilson*

 *By email to furroughx@gmail.com*

 *By Facebook Messenger to*

<https://www.facebook.com/furroughcross>