



The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Tavistock U.R.C.

Russell Street, Tavistock PL19 8BD

Founded 1652

Loving God,

Encouraging Questions, Welcoming all.

CONTACT

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Synod website: www.urcsouthwest.org.uk

Church Website: www.tavistockurc.org.uk

March 2026

Our Church is open for worship on Sundays at 10.30am.
Some services of Worship are available on the Church Website(above)

1st March Service is led by Revd Elizabeth Kemp with Holy Communion

8th March Service is led by Kit Harbottle

15th March Service is led by Revd Robert Weston

22nd March Service is led by Suzy Weston

29th March Service is led by Revd Elizabeth Kemp

Happy Mother's Day to all mothers everywhere....



Dates for your Diary:

6th March 2pm World Day of Prayer at St Andrew's Church Whitchurch

15th March, Church AGM after the service

28th March, 1 - 2pm, Organ Recital at Tavistock URC by Joshua Hughes

25th April, 1 - 2pm, Organ Recital at Tavistock URC by Bernadette Bishop

For details of other organ recitals you can visit the website: organrecitals.uk/location/devon

Letter from our Minister

Dear Friends

Lent arrives quietly. There is no fanfare, no carols or candles, no bursting colour. Instead, it slips into our lives like the early spring mist on Dartmoor – gentle, a little uncomfortable, and impossible to ignore if we stop long enough to notice it.

For the United Reformed Church, Lent is not about ticking spiritual boxes or proving how disciplined we can be. It is about relationship: with God, with one another, and with the world God so loves. It is a season that invites honesty. Where have we drifted? What have we clung to that no longer gives life? And where might God be calling us to turn, again, towards grace?

The landscape of Devon helps us understand this well. Walk the coast path in late winter and you see the beauty and the barrenness side by side. The hedgerows are still stripped back, the fields look bare, yet there are signs everywhere of what is coming – daffodils pushing through the soil, lambs testing unsteady legs, the slow lengthening of days. Lent sits in that same in-between place. It does not deny the brokenness of the world, but it refuses to believe that brokenness has the final word.

Traditionally, Lent is associated with giving things up. That can be helpful, but only if it makes space for something deeper. Fasting, prayer, and generosity are not spiritual challenges for their own sake; they are ways of clearing the clutter so that we can listen. In a culture that tells us to consume more, scroll more, hurry more, Lent gently suggests the opposite: pause, notice, repent, return.

Across our church, Lent is lived out in very ordinary ways: Lower deck cafe serving food, while our food bank provides food parcels each Friday. A Bible study group that dares to ask difficult questions. A decision to walk with a neighbour who is lonely, or to speak up for justice when silence would be easier. These small, faithful acts matter. They are signs of God's kingdom taking root in local soil.

As a Reformed tradition, we are shaped by the belief that God is always reforming the Church. Lent gives us permission to take that seriously. What might need to change – not just in our personal lives, but in our shared life as churches? Where do we need courage to let go, and faith to step into something new?

Lent does not end in the wilderness. It leads us, slowly and surely, towards Easter. The journey may feel long, and the questions may not have easy answers, but we do not walk alone. Christ walks with us, through temptation and doubt, through service and sacrifice, towards resurrection hope.

May this Lent be a time when we walk the way honestly, prayerfully, and together – trusting that God is already at work, even in the quiet places.

God bless

Rob

Prayer and Stillness services at the St Eustachius' Parish Hall

Reminder that Prayer and Stillness services, led by Bob and Patti Owens, run on Wednesdays from 2.30 - 3.30pm in the St Eustachius' Parish Centre, Plymouth Road, Tavistock. Followed by tea/coffee afterwards.

11 March; 8 April; 13 May; 10 June; 8 July; 12 Aug; 9 Sept; 11 Nov; 9 Dec.

Bob and Patti Owens

Organ Recital News

Saturday 28th March 2026, 1 - 2pm, with Joshua Hughes of the Tamar Valley

Saturday 25th April 2026, 1 - 2pm, with Bernadette Bishop of Tavistock

My thanks to Jenny Summerfield and Elizabeth Kemp who have been a great help with stewarding of our recitals/concerts. Please let Rob Weston or Elizabeth Kemp know if you can help also out with an occasional recital.

You can find all our recitals on the website: www.organrecitals.uk

Premises news

The noticeboard has been taken down and the issue with water getting in the rear has been identified. Having dried it out, we will try to install it with some spacers to keep it away from the wall. This should allow for the rain to run behind the board, rather than gathering on the ledge of the frame at the rear.

Hugh and I have checked the drains and all are flowing well, which means the flooding of the ladies toilets will not be repeated - even in these days of continuous rain!

Plans are in place to allow us to project a live video of the organ console when we are holding the organ recitals - this will allow us to see the hands of the organists as they dance across the keys.

Snowdrop planting at Tinhay Retreats

On the first two Saturdays of February, Robert and Suzy were delighted to welcome friends from all over Devon for their two snowdrop planting days at their retreat centre, Tinhay Retreats in Lifton. Thank you to all who came out even though it was a case of dodge the rain clouds!

The snowdrops looked stunning once again, along the lane and around the garden, with another 500 planted.

This year's charity is **Perennial**, the UK's only charity dedicated to helping people in horticulture facing every day or life-changing challenges. Perennial began in 1839 and has expert services to support with physical and mental wellbeing, financial support and career development & training.

Donations received at the Snowdrop Planting days have raised £200, all of which will go to Perennial.

From Jackie, Tavistock Methodist Church

JOB VACANCY – MARY TAVY/PETER TAVY - Tavistock Methodist Circuit

Tavistock Methodist Circuit is seeking a part-time Missional and Community Worker (lay or ordained), to exercise a ministry of missional outreach. The successful candidate will have the responsibility of working with the Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy communities.

Car owner and driver essential, as is an approachable and warm personality, ability to work with people of all ages and willingness to actively engage with the local communities.

20 hours per week, initially for two years to include a six month probationary period, commencing September 2026 or soon after.

Salary: Commensurate with the Methodist Church's policies, depending on experience and qualifications.

Please email info@tmc.me.uk for an application form. Completed applications to be returned by 12 noon on Monday 23rd March.

From Revd Rob Weston:

A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips

March

Take part in a local litter pick or beach clean during The Great British Spring Clean (Friday 13-Sunday 29 March), the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Litter picking benefits the environment by removing rubbish that can be hazardous for wildlife and helps bring people together. See if there's a litter pick in your local area or consider organising your own - after church on Sunday or with a youth group for example. Pray for your local area as you do the litter pick and ask God for opportunities to share why you are doing it. Find out more and pledge to pick up a bag at keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean

Sunday Morning Rota for March: do organise swaps if necessary.

Date	Preacher	Organist	Elder	Welcoming Steward	Reader	Refreshments
1 st March	Revd Elizabeth Kemp	Roger	Anne	Stella	Anne	Stella
8 th	Kit Harbottle	Jenny	Bob	Elizabeth	Bob	Elizabeth
15 th	Revd Robert Weston	Jenny	Suzy	Jo	Suzy	Jo
22 nd	Suzy Weston	?	Sabrina	Malcolm	Malcolm	Anne
29 th	Revd Elizabeth Kemp	Jenny	Stella	Anne	Anne	Stella

From **Jenny Dennis:**

World Day of Prayer Friday March 6th 2pm at St Andrew's Church, Whitchurch
This year the title of the service is " I will give you rest, Come" and has been prepared by the women of Nigeria.
This service is open to everyone so please come and support it and learn about and pray for Nigeria.

From **Maureen Tulloch:**

We will be collecting filled shoe boxes and knitted hats, gloves, scarves and blankets again this October for Link To Hope charity, so, please, get your wool and knitting needles out and start as soon as you can! Many thanks, in anticipation.

From **Mike Dennis:**

The Church AGM will be on 15th March. At the AGM, Jenny and Sabrina will be required by the constitution to stand down, therefore it is time to consider any replacement Elders. It would be good to have any suggestions sent to me by the time of the February Elders' meeting.
All those who are required to provide reports for the AGM could start completing their reports for the 2025 calendar year so that they can be sent to be for collation and distribution by 3rd March.

We think of, and pray for, our members who have not been able to get to church recently – Geoff, John, Garth and Dorothy. May God bless them and keep them all.

As a Gold Award Eco Church, we email out copies of our magazine and use recycled paper for our printed copies.

CONTACT items for April– please email them to me (maureen.tulloch@homecall.co.uk) by the 25th March. Many thanks.