

Mar-Apr 2026

**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

# Record

Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts., EN5 1RH

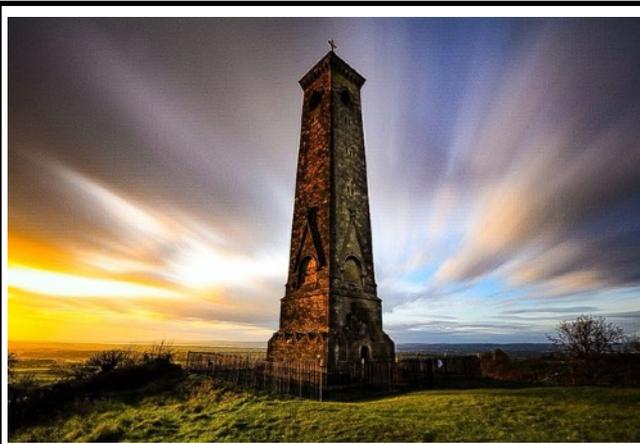
## A Clear and True Voice Rings Out

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2026 marks the 500th anniversary of William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament into English

**O**ur knowledge of Tyndale's early life is slight. He studied at Oxford, mastering Latin and Greek, then Cambridge, and was ordained two years later, returning to Gloucestershire in 1522 as tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh. Already a man of strong religious views, he regularly walked the 15 miles to Bristol to preach on the green.

In Europe, the first flames of the Reformation had ignited. The Latin Vulgate Bible had been in use for a thousand years. Many priests were so poorly educated they could not read the Latin version. Many indeed could not repeat the ten commandments or even say the Lord's Prayer.



One of the most prominent man-made landmarks that stands against the sky on a south-western spur of the Cotswolds is a slender memorial. From a distance, it looks like an obelisk or a pillar, but upon closer inspection, it is seen to be a slim, square tower surmounted by a cross. The building is a monument to William Tyndale, martyred in Belgium on 6 October 1536.

So Tyndale conceived his burning ambition of translating the original Greek New Testament into English, even though this was banned by official edict. "If God spares my life," he is said to have told a Catholic bishop, "ere many years I will take care that a ploughboy shall know more of the scriptures than thou dost." 🖱️

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### Trusting God by:

- Walking the way of Jesus
- Putting faith into practice
- Valuing all people equally

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Tyndale could find no-one in England to sponsor his work so, in April 1524, he sailed for Germany. In Wittenburg – a stronghold of the Reformation – Tyndale found the security he needed. In not much more than a year, his translation was complete. Printing began in Cologne, and the secret operation was going well until suddenly it was betrayed by a Catholic agent. With his secretary, William Roye, Tyndale fled to Worms, and managed to complete his first edition there.

The earliest copies reached England in 1526, hidden in bales of cloth and barrels of flour. They caused such hostility among the bishops, who sensed their loss of power and authority once ordinary people could read the Bible for themselves, that they denounced the translation as heretical. At St Paul's Cross in London, they burnt the copies they had been able to seize. Of an original print run of 3000, only one complete copy survives. This now belongs to the British Library.

Tyndale never returned to England. Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, accused him of wilful mistranslation, when he had done no more than translate the Greek into English, and so had revealed to ordinary people what the Gospels and the Epistles said.

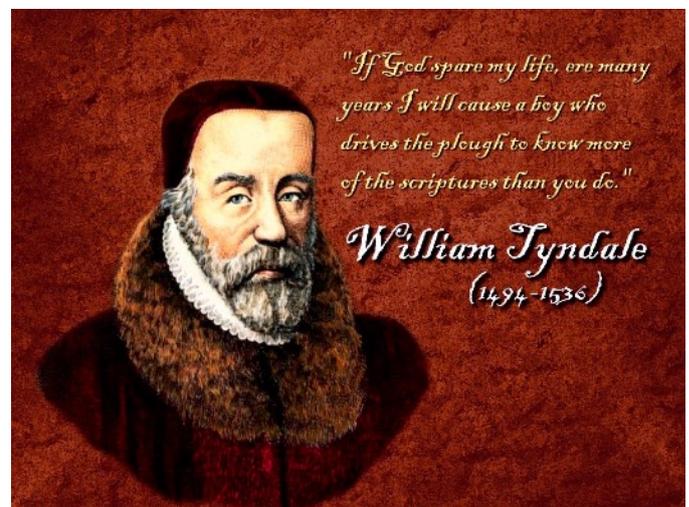
Henry VIII had offered him safe conduct home but later decided to treat him as a traitor. Tyndale, as resourceful as he was talented, managed to evade capture until 1535. Finally, he was betrayed by a fellow graduate of Oxford, Henry Phillips, and imprisoned in Vilvorde Castle, near Brussels. There, after 16 months, he was burnt at the stake. His final words, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes" were spoken with fervent zeal and a loud voice.

By strangling him before they burnt him, his executioners no doubt hoped to silence him forever. They were too late. Such was the vitality and resonance of his translation that its influence in English literature has been incalculable.

In spite of the suppression of Tyndale's work, most of his words were adopted for the Authorised Version of the Bible, produced at the behest of James I of England in 1611. Many of his renderings have passed into everyday language. There is simplicity and potency in such phrases as: "in him we live and move and have our being", "the salt of the earth", "a law unto themselves" and "the powers that be". By such a lively, vigorous, poetic and earthy English, Tyndale has shaped our language.

What kind of man was William Tyndale? One of his most bitter opponents, Sir Thomas More, called him "a man of a right good living, studious and well learned in scripture." As well as being a scholar, Tyndale was a Pastor. When exiled in Antwerp, he would spend two days each week visiting the sick and needy. At the end, in prison in Vilvorde Castle, he brought the gaoler and his family to the Christian faith. He was a deeply spiritual man. His devotion and humility sustained him to the end.

Today let us thank God for this spare, scholarly man of outstanding courage and integrity, whose translation of the Word of God has gone out during the past 500 years to the uttermost ends of the earth.



From a sermon preached by Revd Roger Orme

If you would like to watch and listen to the whole sermon click this link: [A True and Clear Voice Rings Out](#) or paste this address into your browser: [https://youtu.be/\\_K49L0f7aUk](https://youtu.be/_K49L0f7aUk)

Image credits: Tyndale Monument – [www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com)

William Tyndale – Dr David S Steele

# Candles for Ukraine Appeal

Thank you to everyone who supported our appeal for new and used candles to support the people of Ukraine. We have recently received the following thank you from our local contacts, Stepan and Joanna Pasicznyk:

*Dear Clergy, helpers, and parishioners  
of all the churches involved,*

*On behalf of myself, Joanna, the local Ukrainian community,  
and the Middle England branch of the Rotarians, whose  
initiative it was, I wish to thank you for your generosity  
regarding the Candles for Ukraine Appeal for 2026.*

*We have been informed that this weekend just gone (7/8  
February) the national collection has now been brought  
together and loaded up ready for departure to Ukraine.*

*It will be for civilians who have no electricity in their homes  
due to ongoing missile strikes on their energy infrastructure  
and for making trench candles.*

*I am sure their prayers of gratitude will be with you.*

*I attach a photo of collection day on 31st January from our  
Ukrainian community centre in Waltham Cross serving the  
North London area.*

*Best wishes to you all and thanking you.*

*Stepan and Joanna*



## Sunshine and Showers

These Bible study sessions looking at paradoxes in the Bible, or 'the Bible's beautiful strangeness' as the study material describes it, were attended by about twenty four people - a mixture of members from St John's and Holy Trinity churches. The three sessions were led by the vicar of Holy Trinity, Revd Jenny Robinson, and our Church Secretary, Alison Bond. We watched an introductory video each week and some short interviews from other Christians on the subject in hand, then divided into four groups for discussion. The course is very thought provoking and we found it helpful to talk over matters of one's faith with other Christians. I say 'is' because it is only halfway through. After Easter we will be having the final three sessions, so do consider coming along if you haven't already been. These will take place on Monday afternoons, 3-4.30pm:

- 13 April           Is the Bible clear?
- 20 April           Is it a rule book?
- 27 April           Is it relevant today?



Editors

## All Are Welcome

We all want our churches to be welcoming places. Coventry Cathedral has the following message displayed at its entrance; if you haven't seen it before, do read it and see what you think. Is it easy to be this inclusive? Which groups challenge you the most?

*We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down-at-heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers.*

*We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're just browsing, just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury or haven't been to church since Christmas 10 years ago.*

*We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit moms, football dads, starving artists, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like organised religion. We're not that keen on it either.*

*We offer welcome to those who think the Earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because Granny is visiting and wanted to come to the cathedral. We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both or neither. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throats as kids or got lost on the Ring Road and wound up here by mistake.*

*We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters and you.*



Editors



## FROM LENT TO EASTER



This season of Lent, on Thursday afternoons, together with friends from Holy Trinity Church we are following Hilary Brand's Lent Study 'The Mystery of Everything' based on the award winning film 'The Theory of Everything' about the life of Stephen Hawking. This course explores ways in which the mysteries of the universe and of everyday life - and the acceptance that we have more questions than answers - can reinvigorate our faith and spiritual journey. At the time of publication of this Church Record you can still attend the last three sessions if you wish.

Thursdays at 3pm: 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March.

On **Palm Sunday** our service will be led by Helen Snider.

During Holy Week there is a united service with Barnet URC, Wood Street and St Andrew's, Chesterfield Road URC on **Maundy Thursday** evening at 7:30 pm at Chesterfield Road URC. Revd Cindy Kent will be leading the service. Many of you will know her from the radio and heard her talk about her Desert Island Discs when Roz Douglas interviewed her for the Fellowship. If you need a lift to this service please speak to an Elder.

On **Good Friday** there will be a service at St John's URC from 2 to 3pm. This will be led by Revd Jenny Robinson, the vicar of Holy Trinity Church. It will be a service of reflection with hymns.

Our **Easter Sunday** service will be a Communion service led by Sarah Beaumont.

Brother Alois succeeded the late Brother Roger as Prior of the Taizé Community in 2005. The following passage is from a meditation written by him for the daily newspaper La Croix:

*Lent first directs our thoughts to the image of the desert, the one in which Jesus spent forty days of solitude, or the one that God's people crossed by walking for forty years. Yet when these weeks before Easter returned, Brother Roger liked to recall that it was not a time for austerity or sorrow, or a period to cultivate guilt, but rather a season to sing the joy of forgiveness. He saw Lent as forty days to prepare to rediscover little springtimes in our lives.*

*At the beginning of the Gospel of St Matthew, when John the Baptist proclaims 'Repent!' he means: "Turn to God!" Yes, during Lent, we wish to look towards God in order to receive forgiveness. Christ has conquered evil and his constant forgiveness allows us to renew an inner life. We are invited to a conversion: not to turn towards ourselves in introspection or individual perfectionism, but to seek communion with God and also communion with others.*

# Incredible Edible Barnet Seed Swap

## Growing the Circular Economy and Saving the Planet One Cake at a Time



On Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup>, to celebrate the start of the community gardening year, Incredible Edible Barnet ran the annual Seed Swap at St John's United Reformed Church in Somerset Road.

This year around 80 people, from Barnet and beyond, came along to swap seeds, plants, pots, and tools; share growing tips and have a catch up.

Families played "seed swap snakes and ladders" and visited the garden, lots of people talked about the different types of seeds available to take home, and some talked about the bigger sustainability issues we need to address.

One conversation was about the "Dig for Victory" effort in the Second World War that encouraged people to turn gardens and public spaces into places to grow food to counter food shortages caused by German blockades of imports, and how today we may again need a national effort to address the challenges of food security and affordability. As the recent National Security Assessment highlights "the UK relies on imports for a proportion of both food and fertiliser and cannot currently produce enough food to feed its population based on current diets".

The seed swap and community gardening are examples of locally based activities that help us shift from a linear economy based on a "make, use and waste" approach, to a circular economy that enables us to live sustainably, within planetary boundaries. Other circular economy examples people mentioned included community run repair cafes, work on food waste reduction and on encouraging people to make changes to diets by eating more beans.

The great turn out served as a reminder that across the country there are community gardeners playing their part to support biodiversity in our green spaces, growing wonderful food and inspiring others to get their hands dirty.

If you are not yet a gardener, why not have a go at growing some of your own food (even if it is just a few salad leaves on your windowsill) or find a local community garden and get involved.

Maybe it is time for another "Dig for Victory" style campaign that gets people growing food to save money and save the planet. And, of course, gets people together for a cuppa and a cake!

Dave McCormick



# News from Svitavy

**T**he care home in Vendolí, Czech Republic, that Filip and Kveta's church were helping to build and which will house twenty seniors opened on 20 January this year. The following report is edited from the Newsroom of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



A new elderly care home in Vendolí, Czech Republic, opened on January 20, 2026, serving 20 seniors who need professional care. The facility was initiated by the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) in Svitavy and developed through ECCB Diaconia, with support from regional authorities and multiple donors—including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

From their private rooms, residents can access common areas where they meet and take part in leisure activities. The home also includes a prayer room, space for family visits, and a quiet setting close to nature.

"[This project] is proof that when you have energy and vision, a group of friends, and God's guidance, you can succeed in anything," said Radka Renzová, a presbyter of the ECCB in Svitavy.

"I thank [Latter-day Saints] for the trust they placed in this project and for their generous support," said Květa Kellerová, director of the home.

"We were united by a desire to be there for others and to serve them," said Filip Keller, pastor of the ECCB in Svitavy. His wife added that many of the experiences and encounters that made the completion of the home possible felt like small miracles.

The home will also rely on volunteers to organize leisure activities for residents.

[Filip] described cooperation between churches and the public sector as essential. "Churches bring a spiritual dimension and values that emphasize dignity and humanity," he added.

The home provides a place where what matters most takes place — caring for individuals with respect and love.



Květa Kellerová, Director of the Svitavy (Vendolí) Centre of the ECCB Diaconia in Vendolí speaking at the opening of the new care home.

Filip and Kveta in the common area of the new care home.

# Anne Askew – the English Martyr



**A**nne Askew was born in Lincolnshire in 1523 as the fourth of five children. Little is known of her mother, Elizabeth, but her father, Sir William Askew, was a prominent member of society and a JP. He was one of the few who were invited to accompany King Henry VIII to the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. His second son, Edward, was a page in Thomas Cranmer's household and later held a highly prestigious place as a member of the Gentlemen Pensioners, Henry's ceremonial guard. The eldest son, Christopher, was a gentleman of the privy council until his death in 1543. Sir William arranged the marriage of Anne's elder sister, Martha, to Thomas Klyne, a fenland farmer. Klyne was a brutal man and this marriage ended prematurely with the death of his very unhappy wife. The other child of Sir William's marriage to Elizabeth was Jane.

On 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at St John's Revd Roger Orme presented a fascinating account of the development by William Tyndale of the first English Bible, although some parts of the existing Bible in Latin were not completed by his death. In the 1520s and '30s translations of the English Bible were condemned and banned in England by the Catholic authorities. In particular almost all copies of his first (1526) New Testament, which authorities regarded as particularly flawed, were ordered to be bought up and burned. Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor of king Henry VIII, claimed that Tyndale had purposely mistranslated the ancient texts in order to promote heretical views. In particular he cited the terms "church", "priest", "do penance" and "charity", which became in the Tyndale translation "congregation", "senior" (changed to "elder" in the revised edition of 1534), "repent" and "love", challenging key doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

Back to the Askews. Thomas Klyne was a staunch Catholic traditionalist, as were Sir William and most "knowledgeable" people in the Lincolnshire community. The five children had all been taught to read and write, and had an elementary knowledge of Latin. Anne, however, initially with her limited knowledge of Latin, soon began to suspect that the poorly educated priests in the local churches were falsely and misleadingly interpreting the Latin script in their sermons, and determined to improve her knowledge of Latin.

By the late 1530s, however, Henry had started to regret some of his earlier reforms.

He held on to many of the old Catholic beliefs – and questioning them was dangerous. In 1539, the law of the Six Articles set out what people should believe – and those who disagreed could be accused of heresy.

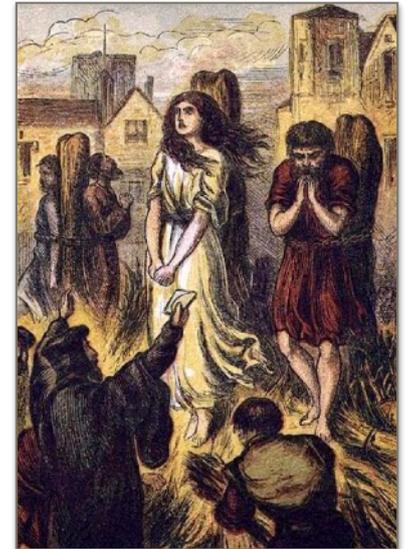
Catholics always believed that when the priest blessed the bread at the communion, it physically became the body of Christ, but Protestants, more widely, were doubting and challenging it, saying Jesus just meant it as a symbol. For Anne, it all came down to one question: does the bread become the body of Christ once the priest has blessed it?

And her response to that was, *"let's lock it in the cupboard for a few months and see what it's like after that. Will it still be the body of Christ? No, it will remain bread."*

She also denounced as evil the practice of priests of "offering" a quick and comfortable passage of a newly deceased person from death to heaven via a convenient money-spinning intermediate state called purgatory – the richer you were the more you had to pay on behalf of your husband / son / mother to get them quickly to heaven . . . . .

This is when Anne got into trouble. She had become known for preaching in the streets, but she also preached to others privately, including groups of women. Her father had earlier married her off (at the age of 15) to the dreadful Thomas Klyne by whom she had two children. It's thought they died in infancy. Klyne, the devout Catholic, ordered her to stop her preaching but she refused, so he threw her out; to her this was a happy release from her marriage. She travelled to London and met up with other fellow believers. Eventually Klyne denounced her, and it led to her arrest. In June 1546, she was convicted of heresy and condemned to death.

She was interrogated at the Tower of London but refused to denounce her beliefs. They tried to force her to name fellow believers, particularly the queen, Catharine Parr – but she refused until the very end, not via “no comment” but through carefully structured arguments based on the New Testament that won every argument. The torture culminated with racking, resulting in broken bones, and every one of her knee, elbow and hip joints were dislocated. She was then taken to be burnt at the stake at Smithfield. She was supposed to be stood upright and tied to the stake, but of course could not. Some reports say that she was carried from the Tower to Smithfield in a large wicker basket. That day saw the killing of the last English Protestant martyrs. What a woman! What a Protestant martyr!



.. — \* — ..

Why is Anne Askew of particular interest to me? As a landowner Sir William owned and controlled a number of village and parish churches, one in the village of Stallingborough. In 2013 our daughter Ju-Li was admitted to a wonderful happy and loving care home in Stallingborough. The care home, one of eleven in Lincolnshire, was created and built by the owners, the de Savary family, the group is named HomeFromHomeCare Limited. The first of these homes was built to accommodate their own disabled daughter at the Old Vicarage. They created a purpose-built three bedroom bungalow in the grounds of the Old Vicarage, specifically for Ju-Li and another young girl called Robyn, and then later for a young lad, Dan. Each had their own spacious bedroom, a bathroom and a ‘study’ room to store wheel chairs, etc. there is a large shared kitchen/lounge. At that time there were around eight others living in the Old Vicarage, the idea being that they had broadly similar levels of disability and were roughly the same age, and would grow old together – with enjoyable activities every single day. The Vicarage is probably about fifty yards from the church itself but around two hundred yards by footpath. However, there is a tunnel linking the two, which was a useful smuggling route many years ago when the church was close to the water front. Now it is a mile or more from the coast. The almost three years that Ju-Li lived in Vicarage Lodge were the happiest of her life, and the first time she had a real friend, Robyn. Incidentally, many of the service staff refuse to visit a specific couple of rooms in the Old Vicarage because they are haunted.

Footnote. Because of her broken body when she was taken to the stake, many people believe that this is the origin of the phrase “all askew”.

A good – and very detailed - book on The Reformation is “A Brief History of the English Reformation”, by Derek Wilson, published by Robinson, though here are very many alternatives. There are also excellent summaries of Anne Askew’s life on Wikipedia; on BBC online, News, Lincolnshire; <https://thehistoryofengland.co.uk/resource/anne-askew-martyr-and-author>; and <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/people/anne-askew.html>

Alan Pryor, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2026

# Calendar of Events

## MARCH

Sunday 8	11:00am	Worship led by Alison Bond
Tuesday 10	7:30pm	Elders' Meeting
Thursday 12	9:30am	Mainly Music
	3:00pm	Lent Study: 'The Mystery of Everything'
Saturday 14	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 15	11:00am	<b>Mothering Sunday</b> Worship led by Andrew Mills
Thursday 19	9:30am	Mainly Music
	3:00pm	Lent Study: 'The Mystery of Everything'
Sunday 22	11:00am	Worship led by Jean Davies with the URC sermon, followed by the Annual Church Meeting
Thursday 26	9:30am	Mainly Music
	3:00pm	Lent Study: 'The Mystery of Everything'
Saturday 28	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 29	1:00am	Clocks go forward one hour 
	11:00am	<b>Palm Sunday</b> Worship led by Helen Snider
Tuesday 31	11:00am	Women's Group: venue to be advised

## APRIL

Thursday 2	7:30pm	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> Service at St Andrew's Chesterfield Road URC
Friday 3	2:00pm	<b>Good Friday</b> Service at St John's URC, followed by refreshments with hot cross buns
Sunday 5	11:00am	<b>Easter Sunday</b> Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Sarah Beaumont
Saturday 11	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 12	11:00am	Worship led by David Paul and Richard Harvey
Monday 13	3:00pm	Sunshine & Showers Bible Course
Saturday 18	10:00am	Elders' Morning, refreshments beforehand
Sunday 19	11:00am	Worship led by Paul Elsdon
Monday 20	3:00pm	Sunshine & Showers Bible Course
Tuesday 21	7:00pm	Men's/Women's Joint Meet-up at <i>The Railway Bell</i> , New Barnet
Thursday 23	9:30am	Mainly Music

## APRIL contd.

Saturday 25	10:00am	Community Garden
Sunday 26	11:00am	Worship led by Revd Roger Orme
Monday 27	11:00am	Women's Group: venue to be advised
	3:00pm	Sunshine & Showers Bible Course
Thursday 30	9:30am	Mainly Music

## MAY

Sunday 3	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Andrew and Valerie Mills
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Thanks for flowers: Dorothy Peryer 15 February

Copy for the May/June edition of Church Record to be with the editors  
by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April.

[churchrecord2023@gmail.com](mailto:churchrecord2023@gmail.com)

## Wedding of Beth Aitken to Alan Cooper

It was my privilege to attend the Wedding of a former Elder of St. John's URC - Beth Aiken, to her long term partner Alan Cooper. The wedding took place in the New Lanark Mill Hotel on the 16th February and I was joined by my sister Kay for the celebration.

Beth and Alan previously lived in Lytton Road in Barnet, then moved to Glasgow and then to York where they are now based.

Alison Cousins



### STOP PRESS

Congratulations to Wendy Alcock of Incredible Edible Barnet on winning the 'Environment and Sustainability' category 'InspirationAll Award' presented by the previous Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Alison Moore ahead of International Women's Day 2026 on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

# IN THESE DAYS FILLED WITH WAR

The URC offers the following prayer for personal and public use as we reflect on and pray for all caught up in the escalating violence in the Middle East.

Eternal One,  
 we remember before You  
 the people of Iran, Israel, Abu Dhabi, Oman, and Bahrain  
 and those sailing through the Strait of Hormuz:  
 all places of pain and division where the nations rage furiously together,  
 where drones and missiles fly overhead, children cry in bunkers,  
 and the bodies of the dead await funerals.  
 We remember the Earth, herself,  
 longing for redemption from humanity's cruelty,  
 where every drone and missile wreak havoc and fear  
 even as they further despoil the earth  
 and add to the climate change which brings yet more death  
 and destruction.  
 We grieve a world where there is neither peace nor justice,  
 where divisions are made into weapons  
 and where ideology is used to maim.  
 We bitterly regret the failure of diplomacy,  
 and wonder if it was designed to fail.

Guide now, Prince of Peace,  
 those who dare to work for peace,  
 those tending the injured,  
 those seeking to change our world,  
 those working for democracy and human rights,  
 and those who advise our political leaders;  
 that Your wisdom may shine through,  
 Your compassion be a watchword,  
 that consequences of our actions may be acknowledged,  
 and the cries of the children may ring in their ears.

Most Holy Spirit,  
 breathe Your peace to our troubled world,  
 comfort the parents of the girls killed at the primary school in  
 Minab,  
 the relatives of those killed in Beit Shemesh,  
 and all who mourn in these days filled with war.  
 Inspire Iranians longing for a free and fair society,  
 and those who must now lead and guide its future.  
 Inspire, too, Israelis working for peace and justice,  
 longing for security and the chance to finally turn  
 swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks.

Eternal Trinity of Love,  
 Source, Guide, and Goal,  
 help us to work for peace even in a world at war. Amen

*The Revd Andy Braunston  
 Minister for Digital Worship*



"Let Us Beat Our Swords into Ploughshares",  
 a gift to the United Nations from the Soviet Union.  
 Created by the Soviet sculptor Evgeniy Vuchetich,  
 the bronze statue was installed in 1959  
 in the north garden of the United Nations.