

Proclaiming the Gospel. Growing in Faith
Reaching out in Service



CONNECT NEWSLETTER for Abbey Lane URC *incorporating* Saffron Walden Methodist Church



March 2025

From Phil Nevard -

Dear Friends,

The last time I led worship with you, I had planned to use my “magic” lightbulb that would magically light up whenever I needed it to. Unfortunately, me not being the most highly organised person, I arrived without the lightbulb! What could have been an awkward moment instead turned into something much more fun: together, we simply imagined the lightbulb shining. Each time I gestured to the empty box, you saw the light that wasn’t physically there—but in your minds, it shone all the same.

That moment has stayed with me, and lately, I’ve found myself reflecting on the power of imagination—not just as a tool for filling gaps in a sermon illustration, but as a way of fixing our eyes on hope even in difficult times.

We live in days when the news is filled with stories of conflict, suffering, and uncertainty. The world can seem very dark. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed, as if the light of hope has gone out. But scripture calls us to look beyond what we see with our physical eyes and instead to hold onto the promises of God. Hebrews 11:1 reminds us:

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Faith invites us to imagine a different future—to see, not with our eyes, but with our hearts. It is the ability to believe in light even when all we can see is shadow.

This isn’t wishful thinking; it is a way of living in the certainty that God’s love is at work, even when we can’t yet see its fullness. Just as that imaginary lightbulb “shone” when we willed it to, so too can our hope shine when we choose to fix our eyes on God’s promises.

Continued

From Phil Nevard
Continued

So what does it mean to live as people of hope? It means daring to believe in peace when war fills the headlines. It means continuing to act in love when the world seems consumed by division. It means trusting in God's faithfulness when our own strength feels small.

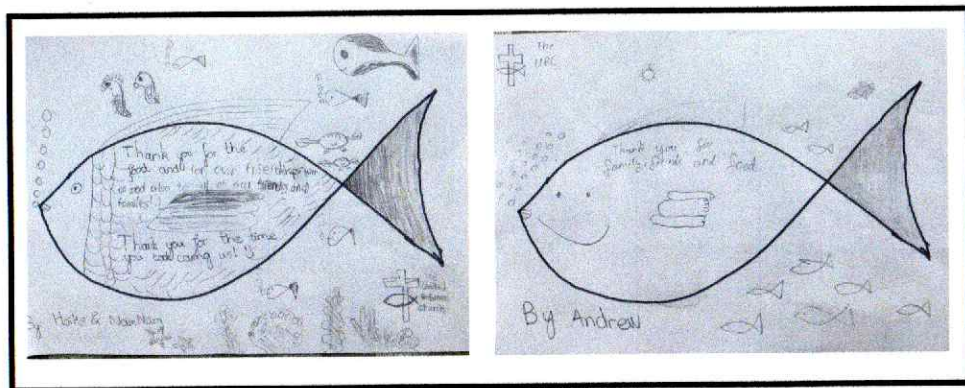
Like that lightbulb, hope is sometimes unseen, but that doesn't mean it isn't real. May we hold fast to the light of Christ, knowing that even in the darkest times, the dawn will come.

Let us pray:

God of light and life,
When the world feels dark, help us to see with the eyes of faith.
When hope seems far away, remind us that your promises never fail.
Strengthen us to be people of light, shining with your love in all we do.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

With every blessing,

Phil



Continuing

'The Peacock at Home'

Last month we got as far as the Peacock sending out invitations to his 'At Home'.

The poem continues :

The Taylor-Bird offer'd to make up new clothes,
For all the young birdlings who wish'd to be beaux;
He made for the Robin a doublet of red,
And a new velvet cap for the Goldfinch's head.
He added a plume to the Wren's golden crest,
And spangled with silver the guinea fowl's breast.
While the Halcyon bent over the streamlet to view,
How pretty she looked in her boddice of blue.
Thus equipp'd they set off for the Peacock's abode,
With the guide Indicator who shew'd them the road.



From all points of the
compass flock'd birds
of all feather,

And the Parrot can tell
who and who were
together.

To be continued ...



March Calendar

Sat. 1st March	Coffee Morning for Ukraine in the Abbey Lane Hall	10.30-12 noon
Sun. 2nd	Morning Worship led by Alison, with Scout Parade	10.30a.m.
Sun. 2nd	Messy Church Planning Meeting in the Vestry	4.00p.m.
Wed. 5th	Book Group in the Vestry	2.30-4.00p.m.
Fri. 7th	World Day of Prayer Service at Abbey Lane	2.00p.m.
Sat. 8th	Digibox demonstration	9.30a.m.
Sun. 9th	Morning worship with Communion, led by Rev. Dr. Janet Tollington. The service will be followed by Extraordinary Church Meeting to discuss Digibox.	10.30a.m.
Mon. 10th	Bible Study in Vestry	10.00a.m.
Sun. 16th	Morning Worship at Abbey Lane, led by Elders. The Service will be followed by Church Meeting.	10.30a.m.

March Calendar

Mon. 17th	Knit & Natter in Abbey Lane Hall	2-4.00p.m.
Thurs. 20th	Newsletter deadline: CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT!	
Sun. 23rd	Morning Worship at Abbey Lane, led by Rev. Michael Lovegrove	10.30a.m.
Sun. 23rd	Messy Church: Messy Lent at Abbey Lane	4.00-5.30p.m.
Sat. 29th	CHANGE THE CLOCKS	
Sun. 30th <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	Morning worship at Abbey Lane, led by Mark Hayes	10.30a.m.
Sun. 30th	Iona style Lent Service in the Salvation Army Hall	6.30p.m.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

at Abbey Lane
2.00p.m.
Friday, 7th March

The Service has been prepared by the
Christian Women of the Cook Islands.
Refreshments to follow,

 All are welcome! 

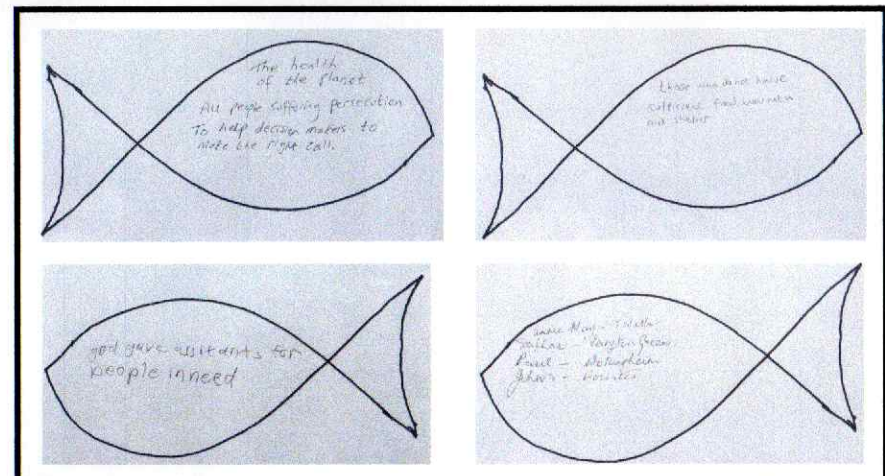
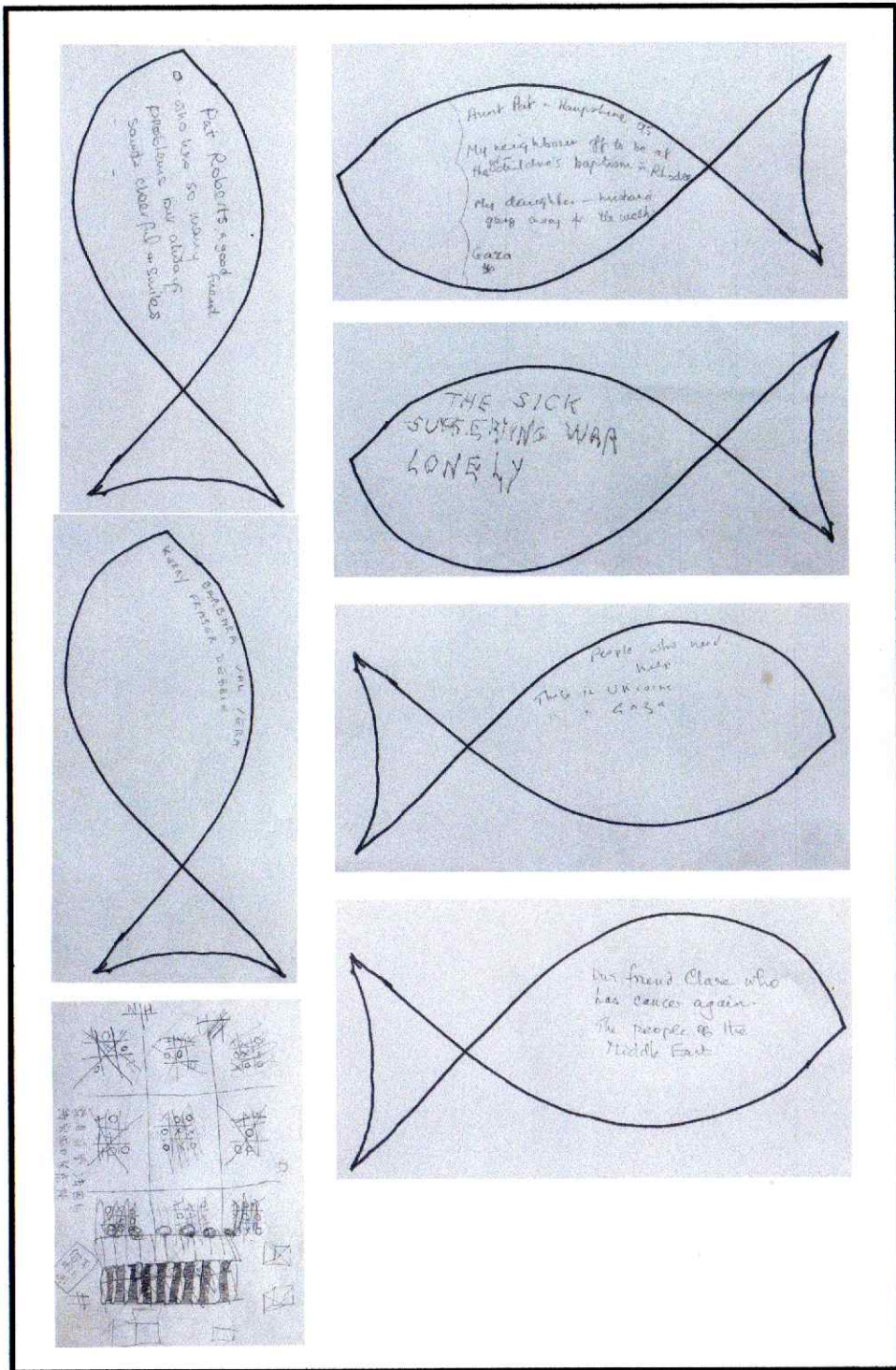
Jigsaws and Board Games

**Sunday 27th April
2.30pm-5.00pm**

**Abbey Lane Church Hall
Abbey Lane
CB10 1AG**

**Want to play some board games or work
with other to complete a jigsaw?
Then come along to this fun afternoon**

**drop in session, suitable for all ages
refreshments available**



**Bible Study at Abbey Lane
10th and 24th March
10.00a.m. in the Vestry**

All are welcome, as we continue to study
the New Testament letter to Titus.



Iona Lent Service

**Sunday 30th March
6.30pm**

**Salvation Army Hall
Abbey Lane
CB10 1AG**

informal act of worship
inspired by and using material
from the Iona Community
followed by refreshments



**ABBEY LANE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**
incorporating
SAFFRON WALDEN METHODIST CHURCH

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