

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

May 2017



The Magazine of the
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

SUNDAY SERVICES

at 10.30am (every Sunday) & 6.30pm (1st Sunday)
with Holy Communion on 1st Sunday evening
and on 3rd Sunday morning of each month

Monthly Midweek Service
at 10.30am on 4th Thursday of each month

PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAY 2017

Sun 7 th May	10.30am	Morning Service	Mr John Amos
	6.30pm	Evening Service with Holy Communion	Mr Jim Clubb with Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 14 th May	10.30am	Morning Service	Mrs Hetty Sabayinda
Sun 21 st May	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Mr Wilf Tyler
Thu 25 th May	10.30am	Midweek Service	Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 28 th May	10.30am	Morning Service	Major Geoff Ashdown

SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR MAY 2017

	ELDER	STEWARD	REFRESHMENTS
Sun 7 th May	Jean Reeve	Marion Fidell	Marion Fidell
Sun 14 th May	Heather Brown	Ann Purkiss	Kay Watson
Sun 21 st May	Malcolm Brown [Holy Communion]	Janet Wimbleton	Janet Wimbleton
Sun 28 th May	Jean Reeve	Malcolm Brown	Marion Fidell

FLOWER ROTA FOR MAY 2017

Sun 7 th May	
Sun 14 th May	
Sun 21 st May	June Gargrave - birthday
Sun 28 th May	

ELDERS' MEETING

Wed 17th May 7.30pm

CHURCH MEETING

Postponed to Thu 1st June 12.30pm

HADLEIGH URC OFFICERS

Minister:

Vacancy

Hon. Secretary:

Mr Royston Brackin (01702 558862)

Acting Hon. Treasurer:

Mr Royston Brackin

Serving Elders:

Mr Royston Brackin

Mrs Heather Brown (01702 557678)

Mr Malcolm Brown (01702 557678)

Miss Jean Reeve (01702 554907)

Useful information

Address: Church Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, SS7 2DQ

Website: www.hadleighessexurc.org.uk

An invitation

We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship at any of our services where a warm welcome awaits. If you are in need of help that the ministry of the church can supply then be assured of our interest and concern. If you are suffering from ill health, loneliness or bereavement and feel that we could help, or if you would like to ask for a prayer or personal visit then please let our Minister or any of the other church officers know. All such requests are treated in the strictest confidence.

Meeting Jesus

On Sunday 30th April, Rev. Celia Whitman led our morning worship and we had a wonderful sermon about the meaning of Easter, how Jesus's disciples and others met him after his resurrection and ways in which we can meet with him today. I am grateful to Celia for allowing part of her sermon to be used as a pastoral letter.

In Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, he says, "I delivered to you of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins." Christ didn't die from some disease, some accident or a miscarriage of justice. He died for us, for our sins, because though God had tried through that long salvation history to save the world, he'd been unsuccessful and the last resort was to send Jesus. And, by sending Jesus, God gave the clearest message possible that he wished to set aside our sins and reconcile us to himself.

The life of Jesus, the whole life of Jesus, actually brings everything together. Jesus came to prove the height and depth and width and length of God's love for us. In the Cross and resurrection, God's purpose for us is accomplished, so much so that we can say with Isaiah, "God will swallow death for ever and will remove the reproach of his people," and with Paul, "O death where is thy victory, O death, where is thy sting."

We ourselves can accept the promises of Jesus, like Paul did, and we can believe also that He will take us where He is for in his Father's house are many mansions, or dwelling places, where we, too, will be able to dwell with Him. Easter releases us because, through Easter, all things are made new. It offers new life and an indescribable joy that we never know without it.

We can't meet Jesus in the same way as the disciples did but we can still meet Him in our lives in other ways. We can meet Him in our prayers, our worship, our hymns and praises, in the words that come to us, sometimes from unexpected quarters. We can meet Him in baptisms, weddings and funerals. We can meet Him in Creation and the wonderment of Creation. We can meet Him in love and warmth and laughter. And we can meet Him in a hand held out towards us or our hand held out towards another.

We can remember the words of Jesus on his third resurrection appearance when He appeared to Thomas, the disciple who doubted, and who said, "I will not believe unless I can feel the wounds in Jesus's hands and feet". And we can remember that in response to that, when Jesus did meet Thomas, He said, "Thomas because you have seen, you have believed, but blessed are they who have not seen but believe.

"Blessed are they who have not seen but believe" – what encouraging words these are for us because, when Jesus speaks these words, he could be talking to you and to me, and to everyone who claims today that Jesus Christ is risen and alive for evermore.

Rev. Celia Whitman



From the Bible

Then they gathered round him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?'

He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 'Men of Galilee,' they said, 'why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.'

Acts 1:6-11 (NIV)

Editor's note: Ascension Day falls on Thursday 25th May, which is the date of our Midweek Service in May. The service will be led by Heather Brown.

From the Editor

Welcome to the May 2017 edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

This is yet another late edition for which I apologise but there has been quite a lot to write about in this magazine. It has also been a busy time of late with our Minister's farewell, two funerals including the service for David Cotton, more trips to the Echo archive with my son Andrew and a technical hiccup in that my mobile phone ceased to function.

The report of Jack's farewell lunch and the obituary for David both ended up longer than I originally anticipated but hopefully they do justice to two men who served the Lord well.

The Echo archive in Basildon is now virtually cleared and the pile of boxes and bags in Hadleigh Gardening Association's store is quite daunting. It will take some months to sort through the rescued photos and cuttings but at least we now have the chance to do so.

I also went to Rayleigh Museum one afternoon to help sort through some photos previously put into storage. The pile of photos that I came away with included a lovely photo of Joyce Bardell on her retirement from The Crown pub, an interesting photo of one of the Thomas brothers inside his shop as it was closing down and a photo of son Andrew and three other boys from Westwood

Primary School when the school was raising money to help Romania!

Despite the best efforts of Andrew, it proved impossible to resurrect my mobile phone. The problem arose when I forgot to recharge the battery when it was getting low. The phone eventually discharged completely and switched itself off. When I attempted to switch it back on without having recharged the battery, it attempted to start but got stuck during the process. It is very annoying because I have looked after the phone since I received it as a birthday present two and a half years ago. Be warned!

May is always a busy month because of Christian Aid Week, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. I am beginning to think that this might be my last year of doing the house-to-house collection in Hadleigh. Such collections seem to have declined considerably in recent years and fundraising events for Christian Aid have become more popular. There is some information about local events later in the magazine.

In May, the Synod Moderator, Rev. Paul Whittle, will attend the Elders' Meeting to tell us what can be done in terms of future church leadership. Please remember to include the future of the church in your prayers.

Malcolm Brown



Cat heaven

A cat dies and goes to Heaven. God meets him at the gate and says, "You have been a good cat all of these years. Anything you desire is yours, all you have to do is ask."

The cat says, "Well, I lived all my life with a poor family on a farm and had to sleep on hard floor."


God says, "Say no more." And instantly, a fluffy pillow appears.

A few days later, six mice are killed in a tragic accident and they go to Heaven. God meets them at the gate with the same offer that He made the cat. The mice said, "All our lives we've had to run. Cats, dogs and even women with brooms have chased us. If we could only have a pair of roller skates, we wouldn't have to run anymore."

God says, "Say no more." And instantly, each mouse is fitted with a beautiful pair of tiny roller skates.

About a week later, God decides to check and see how the cat is doing. The cat is sound asleep on his new pillow. God gently wakes him and asks, "How are you doing? Are you happy here?"

The cat yawns and stretches and says, "Oh, I've never been happier in my life. And those Meals on Wheels you've been sending over are the best!"



Answer to last month's Bible Incomplete puzzle: "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." – Proverbs 15:16-17

Wives' Fellowship Programme for May & June 2017

Date	Time	Meeting
Tue 9 th May	2.30pm	Talk on 'My Adventures in the Middle East' by Mrs Kathy McCullough
Tue 6 th June	2.30pm	Illustrated Talk on 'Water Aid' by Mrs June Leggett

Meetings are held in the Small Hall with refreshments served at the end.

Entrance £2.00 - first time free

Small coins collected for Rayleigh, Rochford & Castle Point
Talking Newspapers for the Blind

Christian Aid Week 2017



This year Christian Aid Week runs from Saturday 14th May to Sunday 20th May. It is the 60th anniversary so a brief history may be of interest. In 1945, British and Irish churches set up 'Christian Reconstruction in Europe' to help resettle refugees in Europe after World War II. This organisation then changed its name to 'Department of Inter-church Aid and Refugee Service'. In 1957, the Department decided to hold a 'Christian Aid Week' to raise awareness and raise money. This became an annual event and,

because of its success, in 1964, the Department changed its name to Christian Aid. Refugees were still the main focus of work, but over the years Christian Aid started to work with poor communities around the world. In the 1960s, Christian Aid began to educate its supporters on the causes of poverty as well as asking for donations. Christian Aid also started campaigning and working with governments to change aid, trade and debt policies. They helped set up the Fairtrade Foundation.

Christian Aid now works with more than 700 overseas partners in around 50 countries. Its focus changes with the issues that the world faces but the refugee crisis, climate change, tax dodging, gender inequality, HIV/AIDS and malaria eradication are some of the current areas of work. It continues to campaign, fundraise and work on long-term projects, as well as providing emergency aid for people affected by the increasing number of natural disasters. The focus of this year's Christian Aid Week is supporting those who are seeking safety and solace, particularly refugees fleeing conflict and disaster. If you have Internet access, please watch the video entitled *Theodor: The refugee who never forgot* on YouTube. It is one of the most moving videos I have ever seen.

As usual there will be only a limited house-to-house collection in Hadleigh. If you would like to donate but don't receive an envelope then I will gladly deliver one if you phone me on 01702 557678. The fundraising for Christian Aid Week does not formally end until mid-July so if you would like to organise an event there is still time. My monthly bric-a-brac stall for Christian Aid at the coffee morning on the third Thursday of the month happens to fall in Christian Aid Week so I am turning it into a bumper event. As well as bric-a-brac, there will be a lot of books, the vast majority of which have come from the estate of David Cotton and I am very grateful to Peter Cotton for providing them.

There are a number of other events locally in aid of Christian Aid Week:

Fri 19th May – 'Quiz Aid' event at Crowstone St George's URC, Westcliff.

Sat 3rd June – 'Big Brekkie' event at Crowstone St George's URC, Westcliff.

Sat 3rd June – Strawberry Cream Teas at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath.

Our Men's Breakfast on 3rd June has been cancelled so that we can support the Big Brekkie event and the ladies who provide our breakfast will be coming with us.

Malcolm Brown

WHAT'S ON

A round-up of future events in the area

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- Mon 15 May 2017 - CAVS Ways To Wellness drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Aims to improve your health and wellbeing by linking you to community activities and opportunities. No appointment necessary.
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- Wed 17 May 2017 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church Community Room, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. (Every Wednesday.)
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- Thu 18 May 2017 - Bric-a-brac & Book Sale for Christian Aid at the church from 10.30am to 12 noon. Refreshments available.
- ditto - Poetry Reading Group Meeting at Hadleigh Library from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. This month's subject - Walter de la Mare. Meetings held on the 3rd Thursday of each month. All welcome.
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- Fri 19 May 2017 - Quiz Night organised by Hadleigh Voices Community Choir at St Thomas More Church Hall, 14-18 High Street, Hadleigh. Starts at 7.15pm. Tickets £5.00 - to book tickets or for more info, phone Linda on 07427 917469. Max 6 people per table. BYO drinks and nibbles.
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- Sat 20 May 2017 - Hadleigh Heritage Centre Talk with the theme of 'Battles' at St James the Less Church. From 10.30am - 12 noon. Free event.
- ditto - 2 in 1 Concert with The Daisy Bowlers & Young Musicians Of The Salvation Army at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.00pm. Donation tickets £9 (conc. £7, U14s £5) from Temple reception or pay on the night. In aid of improvements to the Fishermen's Chapel, Leigh-on-Sea.
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- Mon 22 May 2017 - NHS Blood Donation Sessions at Runnymede Hall, Kiln Road, Thundersley. From 1.20pm to 4.00pm and 5.00pm to 5.45pm.
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- Thu 1 Jun 2017 - Churches Together In Hadleigh Prayer Meeting at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 2.00pm. All welcome
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- Sat 3 Jun 2017 - Strawberry Cream Teas in aid of Christian Aid at St Michael's Church, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.
- ditto - Handicraft Sale - venue & time as above - in aid of St Peter's and St Michael's Churches. Craft items & large stock of knitting wool for sale.
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- Sat 3 Jun to Sat 10 Jun 2017 - Plant Swap at Hadleigh Library from 11.00am to 5.00pm each day (except Sunday & Wednesday). Bring along your excess plants and seedlings. Swap them for another plant for your vegetable patch or garden. Amateur gardeners only. No money will change hands.
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- Wed 7 Jun & Thu 8 Jun 2017 - Hadleigh Dig based at the church where members of AGES AHA will be digging a test pit in the front lawn. Local schoolchildren will be digging test pits in gardens around Hadleigh as part of Cambridge University's Independent Learning Archaeology Field School programme. Finds from day 1 will be on display in the church hall on Thursday 8 June from 10.00am until 2.00pm. Refreshments will be available until 12 noon.
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- Sat 10 Jun 2017 - Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, from 10.00am to 12 noon.
- ditto - Southend Symphony Orchestra Concert at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £9.00. More info on 01268 755005.
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More events listed on the HELIX website at <http://www.hadleighsex.info>.

Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth

Editor's note: I came across this poem on the Highlands Methodist Church website. 'Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth' is a rousing call to tired soldiers to keep up the good fight and was used by Churchill in a wartime radio broadcast. The poem also has a spiritual theme in that it reminds us that during spiritual struggles, such as the one described by St. Paul, it is important to "faint not" even though results may not be immediately apparent. The first stanza echoes Galatians 6:9: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

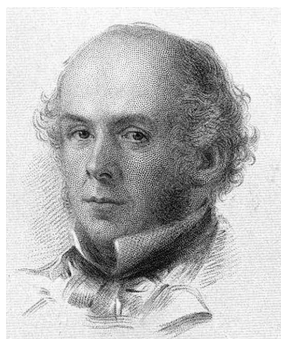
Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861)



Arthur Clough was born in Liverpool to James Butler Clough, a cotton merchant of Welsh descent, and Anne Perfect, from Pontefract in Yorkshire. In 1822, the family moved to the United States, and Clough's early childhood was spent mainly in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1828, Clough and his older brother Charles returned to England to attend school in Chester and, in 1829, Clough began attending Rugby School, then under Thomas Arnold. In 1837, he won a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford. Matthew Arnold, four years his junior, arrived the term after Clough had graduated. Clough and Arnold enjoyed an intense friendship in Oxford.

Clough surprised everyone by graduating from Oxford with only Second Class Honours, but won a fellowship with a tutorship at Oriel College. He became unwilling to teach the doctrines of the Church of England, as his tutorship required of him, and in 1848, he resigned the position. In the autumn of 1849, he became principal of University Hall, a hostel for Unitarian students at University College, London, but found its ideology as oppressive as that which he had left behind in Oxford.

A prospect of a post in Sydney led him to engage himself to Blanche Mary Shore Smith, daughter of Samuel Smith and Mary Shore (a cousin of Florence Nightingale) but when that failed to materialise, he travelled in 1852 to Cambridge, Massachusetts, encouraged by Ralph Waldo Emerson. There he remained several months, lecturing and editing Plutarch for the booksellers, until in 1853 the offer of an examinership in the Education Office brought him to London once more. He married Miss Shore Smith and pursued a steady official career.

In 1860, his health began to fail. From April 1861, he travelled strenuously in Greece, Turkey and France, where he met up with the Tennyson family. His wife joined him on a voyage from Switzerland to Italy, where he contracted malaria. He died in Florence on 13 November 1861 and is buried in the English Cemetery there. Matthew Arnold wrote the elegy of Thyrsis to his memory. His youngest child was Blanche Athena Clough (1861–1960), who devoted her life to Newnham College, Cambridge, where her aunt (his sister Anne) was principal.

News from the South Essex Area Partnership

The latest meeting of the South Essex Area Partnership took place at Christ Church Wickford LEP on Tuesday 25th April 2017. The meeting was chaired by Rev. Trevor Williams on behalf of the host church

Attendance

The South Essex Area Partnership (SEAP) was formed by the merger of the South East Essex Area Partnership and the South West Essex Area Partnership. This was the first SEAP meeting to be held in the former South West area and twelve churches were represented. I attended on behalf of our church.

Opening devotions

Rev Samuel Cyuma opened the meeting in worship. There were two worship songs, a reading from John 1 about the raising of Lazarus, and a prayer.

News from the Synod

- Monica Penny (Wickford) will take over as the Pastoral Advocate for SEAP from January 2018. She is currently shadowing Jean Hall.
- Janette Stevens (Wickford) has achieved Synod-accredited Lay Preacher status. Janette has preached a couple of times at Hadleigh and came with her husband and son to Jack's last service and farewell lunch.

News from the churches

Prayers were said for each church after its news was reported.

Basildon URC – The church has been without a minister for over a year but has been well-supported by ministers from local churches coming to preach.

Billericay URC – Rev. Ruth Mitchell was absent for almost six months during cancer treatment but returned on a phased basis on 1st March. Sadly, Rev. John Hickmore passed away on 18th February. Stalwarts Robin and Margaret Derbyshire will be moving away later in the year to be near family. On a happier note, four people, including two teenagers, wish to become members.

Brentwood URC – The church is part of Rev. Ruth Mitchell's pastorate so they are grateful for her return. An upgrade to the church audio system is being considered as the two organists are moving away soon.

Grays URC – The church is being supported by Rev. David Rees from Christ Church Rayleigh. A website has finally been launched using the facility offered by the Windermere Centre and iChurch and a Facebook page also.

Hadleigh URC – I reported that Jack had conducted his last service as Minister on 23rd April and that we had a farewell lunch. I mentioned uncertainty over the continuation of some activities.

Bramerton Road Community Church (Hockley) – Some new people and families have attended regularly but there have been some deaths and ten people have moved away to other parts of Essex or Suffolk where housing is cheaper. All three leaders of the Junior Church retired at Easter so morning worship has changed radically with two consecutive services at 10,00am and 11.00am. The 10.00am service is aimed at children and parents and the 11.00am service at adults.

Hutton & Shenfield Union Church (URC/Baptist LEP) – A new minister, Rev. Paul Ellis, from Witham URC, was inducted on 3rd September 2016. There have been a number of services of infant dedication services recently and two more are planned. Monthly midweek services on a Tuesday morning have recently been instigated.

Ingatestone URC – This church is also part of Rev. Ruth Mitchell's pastorate and is please to welcome her back.

Christ Church Rayleigh URC – The organ was refurbished at the end of 2016. Sadly, the organist (Peter) was not able to play for a service because of poor health and he later passed away. The church has been awarded 'Eco-congregation' status.

At the Turning on of Rayleigh Lights on 24th November, the church presented a 'Living Tableau' of Mary, Joseph sitting on hay bales with Baby Jesus in the manger plus a shepherd or two, and gave out over 500 Bible Society booklets entitled Good News of Christmas. Photos of the tableau appeared in four local newspapers.

The Bridgwater Drive Church (URC/Anglican LEP) – Plans to re-develop St Cedd's building as a Worship and Community hub are again on the table. The Ecumenical Church Council and the Congregational Meeting have agreed that mission will be best served in this way. The church is now working under the 'Lifestreams' umbrella with St. Peter's and St. Stephen's churches, sharing human resources and working together.

Crowstone St George's URC – A Soul Breakfast is held once a month where people can drop in and have tea/coffee and a slice of toast. Sunday Cinema is held on the first Sunday evening of the month. A recent screening of 'I Daniel Blake' attracted 200 people. The church is looking to take on a second night for the cubs as they have a waiting list. The Guides are at full capacity too.

The Cornerstone URC – the Sunday soup kitchen which the church supported for many years ceased to operate in January so there is now a weekly collection for HARP. Messy Church and Pilots continue to grow but there is a need to find new activities for children of senior school age. The church is embarking on employing a Children and Families Worker.

Southchurch Park URC – Numbers are down to about eight people on Sunday mornings. A prayer meeting is held on Monday mornings in a member's home but there are no other church activities apart from occasional coffee mornings to raise funds for a new boiler.

Westcliff URC – A monthly mid week communion is held with Crowstone St George's. A meeting is to be held shortly to discuss the way forward.

Wickford Christ Church (URC/Methodist LEP) – The church is well attended but there are no regular children. Gateway, an ecumenical Food Bank is run at the Salvation Army every Thursday. Since last year, in addition to the participation in the Wickford Carnival, the church has decided to have more special events as means of fresh expressions, including Picnic Praises and Puppet Ministry. A Puppet Ministry on Easter Sunday was very inspiring worship. Planning is under way for further events such as Back to Church Sunday, Flower Festival, Talents scheme, etc.

Ministry & Mission

Ian Miller reported that, although the 19th April deadline had past, several churches accounts had not been received, which makes the allocation of M&M difficult. He informed the meeting that having been in post for 10/11 years he will be

standing down at the end of 2018. He is grateful that the Partnership churches fulfil their promises to the M&M and hopes that the certificates of thanks from Synod have been received. He reminded the meeting that the Michael Benham fund has much grant money to donate to young people aged 10-16 for travel to Youth Assembly or for outside courses which promote the deepening of their faith. Rev Trevor Williams thanked and prayed for Ian Miller and Jean Hall and their long service to the wider church.

Budiriro, Zimbabwe

After we had stood to sing a worship song, Robert Dart presented photographs taken on his visit to the church at Budiriro. Christ Church Rayleigh's connection began in 2010 and the church provides much financial support enabling Budiriro to pay off rent arrears, monthly rental fees and some of the minister's outstanding stipend. Robert will be pleased to speak about Budiriro at any church if requested.

Synod Resources Committee

Richard Pryor (Rayleigh) gave a brief description of the responsibility of the committee. Financial oversight, review of grant applications and the Manse scheme form the major areas of work.

Future events

Synod Big Day Out – 10th June at Ipswich.

Crowstone St George's events:

- **Quiz Night** – 17th May.

- **CA Big Brekkie** – Saturday 3rd June.

- **Multicultural Celebration** – Saturday 23rd September.

Dates of future meetings

The next Area Partnership meeting will be held on Thursday 28th September at 7.30pm at Christ Church, Rayleigh. Mr Alan Yates, Moderator of General Assembly will be attending.

The next meeting of the SEAP Pastoral Group (Eastern part) will be held on Tuesday 31st October at 8.00pm at The Cornerstone.

Malcolm Brown

Riddles

- What is greater than God and more evil than the devil, the poor have it, the rich need it, and if you eat it you'll die?
- What always runs but never walks, often murmurs but never talks, has a bed but never sleeps, has a mouth but never eats?
- I am the beginning of the end, and the end of time and space. I am essential to creation, and I surround every place. What am I?

Farewell to Jack

On Sunday 23rd April 2017, we said farewell to our Minister, Rev. Jack Roche, when he led the morning service for the last time in his official capacity. Jack was inducted as our Minister on 1st October 2006, taking over the reins from Beryl Hunt, who had been Interim Moderator since 2002. In preparing this article, I discovered an unpublished article about his induction and past history and, in view of Jack's departure, the following information from that article may be of interest.

The Presiding Minister at Jack's induction was Rev. Richard Church, then the Training and Development Officer for Eastern Synod and now the URC Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship). The sermon was preached by Rev. Martin Kitchener, Minister of Basildon URC, who retired after 24 years in that position in December 2016.

Jack was a late entrant to the ministry having decided to answer God's call in 1980. At the time he was working as a technician for ICL Computers in Winsford, Cheshire. After training at the Congregational College in Manchester (formerly known as the Northern College), Jack was eventually appointed as Minister of South Ockendon URC in March 1985. At the service for Jack's ordination and induction, the Presiding Officer was Ken Woods (Southend District Chair) and the sermon was preached by a minister friend from Darwen, Lancashire.

In 2000, Jack moved back to his native Lancashire to become minister of a pastorate comprising Hope URC, Denton, and Bridge Street URC, Audenshaw. The two churches were less than two miles apart in the URC's North East Manchester District. For his induction service held at Denton, Jack had invited Rev. Martin Kitchener to travel north to preach the sermon. However, Martin experienced problems at Euston Station and after switching to St. Pancras found he would be unable to get there in time. Jack was able to persuade the then Moderator of North West Synod, Rev. Keith Forcast, to step in at the last minute. Fortunately, Martin encountered no problems when travelling from Basildon for Jack's induction here at Hadleigh.

After retiring from the ministry in 2004, Jack moved back down to Essex, to live in Shotgate, Wickford. It was not long before he discovered that there is no such thing as retirement for

former ministers. He graciously agreed to become the (last) President of Southend District Council and was assisting various churches including Billericay, Brentwood and Ingatestone URCs, a joint pastorate who, like us, were without a minister. After those three churches had issued a call to Rev. Trevor Jamison, it was suggested that there might be a role for Jack at Hadleigh. Having preached here several times already, we knew better than most churches what we would be getting when we issued, and Jack kindly accepted, the call to be our Minister. Jack's induction at Hadleigh took place on the day after Trevor's induction.

Having taken part in the induction of Rev. Trevor Jamison on Saturday afternoon, and having attended the Harvest Supper at Hadleigh on Saturday evening, Jack preached at Hadleigh's Harvest Festival Service on Sunday morning before attending his own induction on Sunday evening. And the rest, as they say, is history!

After Jack's final service on 23rd April, there was a farewell lunch in the Small Hall, at the end of which our Church Secretary, Royston Brackin, thanked Jack's for his years of service at Hadleigh:

"Whilst he has been with us, Jack has conducted bible study regularly, initially continuing the evening study, originally run by Ron Mallinson, and later continuing with the LifeBuilders group, which is a monthly group following the Thursday coffee morning. He also inspired the Men's' Breakfast, which six to eight men – some with no connection with the church – attend, so that has been a form of outreach.

His pastoral letter has been in each edition of the church magazine and it might not surprise you to know that, as an acting treasurer being involved with numbers, I have played with the numbers and found that there were over a hundred pastoral letters; very thoughtful letters which I have always found to make interesting reading. As our Minister, he has chaired over a hundred Elders' Meetings and around fifty Church Meetings and has conducted more than two hundred and fifty services. He has also most regularly attended the Churches Together in Hadleigh meetings and participated in its leadership. I have listed all these things so that it may become clear to all of us the extent of the work that he has done for the church in Christ's name.

Jack brought with him a most unusual depth of knowledge of the Roman Empire and how it operated, which has been most instructional and was tremendously helpful in giving us a deeper understanding of the world in which our Lord lived. He regularly spends his holidays on archaeological explorations and has shared his experiences with us on his return. On two occasions he gave a talk which was illustrated through the digital projector to present a very large number of colour photographs showing many, most interesting Roman remains, which most of us had never seen before.

I have frequently raised questions with Jack on biblical issues that have arisen in my own personal bible reading. I have never once found

him unable to throw light and enlightenment on the particular passage which was the subject of my query. His knowledge in that respect is also clearly evident in his sermons, and the topics he has chosen have always seemed to be fresh and different from each other. He has said that he will be willing to take services at our church so we will still see him from time to time.

I do understand his decision to move on with his life. He has reviewed his own position and has realised that there are other things that he wishes to achieve that require more of his time. So with that understanding, and on your behalf, I thank him for what he has done at our church and wish him continued good health and every success in all that he intends to undertake in the future."

Photos from the farewell lunch



Mary Milne, Ann Lowes, Jean Reeve, Heather Brown, Margaret Irribarren, Doreen, Kay Watson, Peggy Hughes



Paul Reed, Pamela George, Jean Imbush, Vera Knapton, Mary Hawthorne, Fred Lawrence



Gillian Thomson, Jack Roche, Terry Kerr, Master Stevens, Janette & Andy Stevens, Jean Hall



Royston Brackin, Marion Fidell, Jim & Irene Webb, Keith & June Gargrave, Jim Clubb, Dave Bigmore

There were a good number of guests at the farewell lunch, some of whom will be familiar to readers, whilst a few may not be. It was lovely to have old friends Jim and Irene Webb from Witham with us. Christ Church Wickford, where Jack is a member, was represented by Terry Kerr (Jack's pastoral Elder), the Stevens family and Gillian Thomson. Janette (Stevens) is a newly trained lay preacher who was introduced to our church by Jack, and Gillian rushed back from preaching at Upminster to attend! We also welcomed Jean Hall, from Christ Church Rayleigh, who is the Pastoral Advocate for the South Essex Area Partnership. Judging by the noise emanating from the tables, the food and fellowship were greatly enjoyed. Our well-deserved thanks go to all those involved in preparing the lunch.

Malcolm Brown

David Cotton (1940 – 2017)

Sadly, David passed away suddenly on 3rd April 2017 at the age of 76 after suffering a massive stroke whilst in his garden at Mount Zion in Hadleigh. His funeral took place at Pitsea Crematorium on 28th April 2017 and was led by Rev. Peter Brewer. A Service of Thanksgiving for David's life was held at Battlesbridge Free Church on the following day and was led by Peter Cotton, David's brother. I am grateful to Peter for his assistance with this obituary.



David was born on 29th July 1940 in Atherstone, Warwickshire, the first son of Albert and Trudy Cotton. Before the outbreak of WW2, David's parents had lived on Jersey, where Albert worked in an antique store in St Helier, Jersey. It was there that he developed a lifelong love and knowledge of antiques.

During the war, Albert was drafted as a 'Bevin Boy' to work in the coal mines, a job that he hated because of his fear of confined spaces. Later, he became an ambulance driver in Coventry during the years of the blitz, in which Coventry suffered massive damage. The end of the war saw the family return to Jersey, where second son, Peter, was born on 2nd January 1946.

In 1948, the family returned to the mainland to live in Trudy's home town of Folkestone, Kent. Able to turn his hand to almost anything, Albert took whatever work was available to support the family. In 1954, the family moved to Leicester, where the boys completed their education. David attended Lansdowne Secondary Modern School.

On leaving school, David trained as a teacher at King Alfred's College, Winchester, and after completing his training in 1961, he taught at a primary school in Dymchurch, Kent. Meanwhile, Peter became an Outward Bound Instructor. Both brothers were committed Salvationists and they became two of the first volunteers to be appointed to overseas service in Africa. In 1964, David was posted to Mazowe High School, a secondary boarding school for African boys, in Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia, where he taught maths and physics. Peter volunteered a year later and was posted to the same location.

David met his future wife, Captain Angela Smith, in 1968. Angela had been commissioned in 1965 and was serving at Usher Institute, a secondary boarding school for African girls, in Matabeleland. They met when Angela travelled 300 miles to visit a friend from college who was also at Mazowe. After one evening together, David realised he had found his soulmate and wrote to Angela to express his feelings. They fell in love but could not marry until David had completed his Salvation Army officer's training.

David came home to study for a year at the International Training College (ITC) at the end of which Angela returned and the couple were married at Pratts Bottom on 8th July 1969. They were immediately posted back to Mazowe where Angela set up an art department. This was a time of political unrest with the government having made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence in November 1965.

David then studied for four years for a degree in Physics and Geology at Rhodesia University in Salisbury. He travelled from Mazowe every day but was still involved at the school. Towards the end of his degree, Angela became ill and had a spell in Bulawayo Hospital, which necessitated David driving a thousand miles every weekend to see her. For the last six months of his appointment, David served at a men's home for white down-and-outs in Salisbury. In mid-1974, on completion of his degree and their term of appointment, he and Angela returned to England. Although they wanted to return to Africa, David and Angela were instead asked to write parts of the Salvation Army's Sunday School manuals and Corps Cadet's guides. They were able to live at Hadleigh during this period.

In mid-1975, after a year in England, they were both pleased to be posted to Usher Institute at the girls' boarding school. Angela oversaw the building of a church and designed and had built an Art Room. David designed changes to the laboratories. Although there was still some political unrest, it was a very happy school initially. However, the situation deteriorated as two factions led by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo sought to overthrow the government and eventually a national curfew was imposed.

On 7th June 1978, terrorists arrived at the school. After some initial dialogue, they suddenly opened fire with AK47 rifles and David ended up severely wounded. Two female teachers were killed in the attack. When David left hospital, he and Angela returned to England and began a new challenge, lecturing at the ITC. Angela taught a CRK (Theology) London University qualification and David taught Old and New Testament and pastoral studies.

After two years lecturing at the ITC, David and Angela asked for leave of absence and applied for posts at Nairobi Academy in Kenya to set up an arts department and a science department under a two-year contract. They left at the start of 1981 and returned at the end of 1982 to resume their SA officership.

David was then appointed to manage Charles Court, a new sheltered housing complex with 17 rooms for retired SA officers in Tunbridge Wells. This was adjacent to Sunset Lodge, a sheltered home for retired SA officers needing medical care, where Angela worked. After five months, the housing complex was up and running successfully with all the rooms occupied. However, Angela became ill again and came to Hadleigh to stay with David's parents. The seriousness of Angela's deteriorating health made it necessary for her to give up her life in the Salvation Army and David therefore also resigned and came to Hadleigh.

After some temporary teaching posts, David became a Physics teacher at Southend High School for Girls whilst Angela did supply teaching for a time in local schools, including Belfairs High School. They began worshipping at Westcliff URC where, in 1992, Angela began her Art Ministry activities and, whilst there, she decided to train as a minister within the URC. She was ordained in 1993 and given approval to pursue her ministry through art on an official basis within the URC Southend District. The opportunity arose to base this work at Hadleigh URC and Angela organised art and craft activities for people of all ages with a wide variety of needs. David was a great support in this work.

David left Southend High School for Girls after ten years. He later trained to become a reflexologist but after a couple of years returned to the field of education, becoming a part-time maths tutor at Southend Adult Education College. He also offered private tuition in maths, science and music. David was a patient tutor who helped many people with their education, as testified in tributes paid after his death.

David loved mechanical things, particularly motorbikes. He and Angela enjoyed many touring holidays, on motorbike and on scooter, in Britain and Europe. Crossing the Alps and the Pyrenees were two highlights of their time spent abroad. David also loved music, especially band music, and enjoyed playing the trombone. He will also be fondly remembered for his sense of humour – particularly his corny jokes!

In 2000, David became the Pastor of Battlesbridge Free Church, following the retirement of Rev. Peter Brewer. However, life became more difficult in 2004 when Angela was diagnosed with kidney failure, caused by long-term use of lithium medication. From then on she needed regular dialysis at Southend Hospital. In July 2010, she suffered a broken hip and was in a wheelchair for eighteen months after the initial replacement joint had to be removed because of infection.

In 2012, Angela resigned from the Art Ministry to join David as a pastor at Battlesbridge Free Church. At Battlesbridge, Angela continued to use her creative abilities for the benefit of the community by running a class for members and friends of the church. Sadly, in September 2016, she suffered a perforated colon and, despite an emergency operation, passed away on 14th September. David was devastated by the loss of his soul-mate and wife of 47 years. Although they had no children of their own, David and Angela were very close to some of their former pupils. Two girls from Usher, Conti and Rollicah, who had moved to England, were present at Angela's funeral. David regarded them as his children, such was his love for them.

Following Angela's death, David suffered severe depression, particularly over the Christmas and New Year period. The situation was exacerbated by the loss of his driving licence following an accident a few months earlier. He resigned as Pastor at Battlesbridge before Christmas but, on the day before his death, he had attended a special service there to celebrate his sixteen years of ministry.

In recent weeks, David had begun to recover and was finally coming to terms with the loss of Angela. He had bought an electric bike to get about and had begun to play his trombone again with 'The Tuesday Players', an informal band at the SA Hadleigh Temple, whose fellowship he greatly enjoyed. However, David did admit that he had prayed that God would reunite him and Angela "sooner rather than later". His sudden death from an unexpected stroke may have been an answer to his prayers.

We give thanks for David's life of service and his great desire to help others. He touched many people's lives through his work for the Lord and his teaching skills. We pray for all those who mourn his passing, particularly his brother Peter. May they find comfort in knowing that David is now reunited with Angela in God's eternal care.

Malcolm Brown



"We don't know what the future holds but we know who holds the future!" – a quote used by David

A message from Jack

Dear Friends at Hadleigh, I wanted to write something (nothing like a pastoral letter!) to thank you all for the kind and generous 'send-off' that you gave me on Sunday 23rd April. It did not have the inevitable sadness of a final and complete departure because I shall still be around with the AGES AHA connection as well as, no doubt, on other occasions.

It isn't as if I feel the lifting of a burden as my responsibility felt worthwhile and my efforts have been appreciated, even if not all of them produced the most encouraging results. The challenges that we have met and the experiences that we have shared have been a privilege and a stimulation to someone like me, who does not believe in retirement and prefers doing anything to doing nothing. So I have decided to spend your generous parting gift on some large stone pots to decorate a section of fencing alongside the patio and these will require a lot of effort to fill them!

On a final note, I look forward to keeping in touch and I will be thinking of and praying for you as you enter into discussions regarding future ministry at Hadleigh.

Again, with love and good wishes and many, many thanks,

Jack



Most of the congregation after Jack's last service

From the Moderator's Blog

'Contemporary Shrine and Temporary Church'

On our visit to South Wales last week we were privileged to visit exciting churches. The first is built next to a Medieval shrine, and the second is a coming together of two traditional denominations by the seaside! Neither is what you would expect!

Llanfair Uniting Church, Penrhys

Here is Penrhys, supposedly a visionary estate designed to lift the mining community out of the Rhondda valley-bottom up onto the hilltop. It may have given the residents amazing views but it also created terrible housing problems and social isolation.



Is it coincidental that it is on the Holy site of pilgrimage to Mother Mary, considered in Medieval times as one of the great shrines? For it has been the Church which took up the vision of building the Kingdom of God. Set up as an eight denomination LEP, its ethos is in its strapline – 'A Church for everyone'.

The local primary children come each week to the church. Over the years its ministers and people have built a chapel 'Llanfair' ('Church of Mary'), developed a couple of derelict flats for community use, with second-hand boutique, laundry, homework club, craft sessions and much more, all despite huge battles over funding, and sadly with some really-needed facilities having to close. But for me this is Church at its best, giving dignity and hope to all – at present with no minister, though with ministerial support, the local people are training to be accredited worship leaders.

A former minister of the church, John Morgans, took many groups to Caldy Island for Bible study weekends. I remember the abbot there saying that all the thousands who go to the island looking for God will find God, but God made in their own image. If they want to meet the real God, then they must go home and into their community and God will be there.

God is certainly in Penrhys – it is a contemporary shrine!

Barry Waterfront Centre

Yes, it is just a portacabin and a garden plot – but when you go there you are walking into the Kingdom of God.



Two churches of different denominations, Methodist and United Reformed came together for more effective outreach, first meeting in one of their buildings but then, like the early church, unpitched their tent and moved their site to a piece of waste ground! But this ground is in a newly developed estate, and on a path between a retail park and a medical centre.

As you can imagine, it has been a long journey of grappling finances and planning, and denominational structures. What did they start first? They constructed the community garden, complete with raised beds for cultivation and a pond and hedgerow for conservation. Only then came the cabin as the church.

With inspirational leadership from Phil and Carole Challis (married couple, joint superintendents – not something you meet everyday!) they are hoping for a new multipurpose building, but I warned them not to lose what is so special here. I have rarely met a group of people so ready, accepting, even expectant of change to serve the Kingdom.

Everyone whom I have met, who has led worship in their cramped room, told me what a special time it is – everyone engaging, sharing together, open and honest with each other, but open for others to come and share with them. A great adventure goes on!

Barry Waterfront Centre have discovered all our church life is but temporary!

Rev. Kevin Watson

Posted on 2nd May 2017

CHURCH DIARY FOR MAY 2017

DAY	TIME	EVENT
Monday 1 st	No session - bank hol	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 2 nd	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 4 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 7 th	10.30am	Morning Service - Mr John Amos
Monday 8 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 9 th	9.30am - 11.00am 2.30pm	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots Wives' Fellowship - 'Adventures in the Middle East' by Mrs Kathy McCullough
Thursday 11 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 14 th	10.30am	Morning Service - Mrs Hetty Sabayinda
Monday 15 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 16 th	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Wednesday 17 th	7.30pm	ELDERS' MEETING with Synod Moderator
Thursday 18 th	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning with Bric-a-brac & Book Sale for Christian Aid
Sunday 21 st	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion - Mr Wilf Tyler
Monday 22 nd	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 23 rd	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 25 th	10.30am	Monthly Midweek Service - Mrs Heather Brown
Sunday 28 th	10.30am	Morning Service - Major Geoff Ashdown
Monday 29 th	8.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 30 th	No session - half term	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 1 st	12 noon (TBC)	CHURCH MEETING (postponed from 18 th May)

May

"I cannot tell you how it was,
 But this I know: it came to pass
 Upon a bright and sunny day
 When May was young; ah, pleasant May!
 As yet the poppies were not born
 Between the blades of tender corn;
 The last egg had not hatched as yet,
 Nor any bird foregone its mate.

I cannot tell you what it was,
 But this I know: it did but pass.
 It passed away with sunny May,
 Like all sweet things it passed away,
 And left me old, and cold, and grey."

Christina Georgina Rossetti