

# THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

October 2018



The Magazine of the  
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

## SUNDAY SERVICES

10.30am every Sunday

with Holy Communion on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

6.30pm (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday)

with Holy Communion

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR OCTOBER 2018

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. Celia Whitman
	6.30pm	Evening Service with Holy Communion	Mr Jim Clubb with Mrs Heather Brown
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	10.30am	Morning Service	Major Geoff Ashdown
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Communion	Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA Mth
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. John Ambrose PGCE (Ox)

## SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR OCTOBER 2018

	ELDER	STEWARD	REFRESHMENTS
Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Malcolm Brown	Malcolm Brown	Jean Reeve
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Jean Reeve	Ann Purkiss	Kay Watson
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Heather Brown [Holy Communion]	Malcolm Brown	Doreen Churchill
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Malcolm Brown	Janet Wimbledon	Janet Wimbledon

## FLOWER ROTA FOR OCTOBER 2018

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Flower Group - in memory of Betty Rice

### ELDERS' MEETING

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Oct 7.30pm

### CHURCH MEETING

No meeting in October

### 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: 1 Church Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, SS7 2DQ

Website: [www.hadleighsexurc.org.uk](http://www.hadleighsexurc.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.

# When We Are Lost

The challenge we all face every day is confronting the things we can change and making the right decisions about those changes. Life comes down to wise or foolish decisions.

Hindsight's a great thing we can all look back and see where we made both good and poor decisions. A wise man learns by the experience of others. An ordinary man learns by his own experience. A fool learns by nobody's experience.

Wisdom is a strange thing. There's the wisdom of the world and a wisdom that comes from God. Which is influencing us today? What's the wisest decision you have made last week? How do you know it was wise?

Wisdom is not always caution or cleverness. It's not even knowledge. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad!! If our faith foundations are solid then to seek and use God's wisdom for every decision is imperative. All we need do is ask: "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking." (James 1:5).

We are living in a world that is awash with knowledge, but thirsty for wisdom. Many people know a great deal. But the wisdom of the world wants nothing to do with God. Yet "fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). There is a benefit to following heavenly wisdom rather than worldly wisdom. It brings a blessing from God and a harvest of righteousness.

We're introduced to King Solomon in 2 Chronicles. Now a king, or any leader for that matter, needs to make wise decisions. Solomon was just 20 years old when he had his coronation. He hasn't sorted anything out yet, made no government appointments, hasn't chosen his furniture and is still riding high on his new position. In verse 7 of Chapter 1 the Lord appears to him, offering him an incredible opportunity: "What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!"

The Good Lord always relates to His people on a personal level and equips them to complete His purpose. Having grown up in the royal court, Solomon was highly educated, his earthly position was rich and powerful, but listen to his

reply: "O Lord God, please continue to keep your promise to David my father, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth! Give me wisdom and knowledge to lead them properly, for who could possibly govern this great people of yours?" (2 Chronicles 1:9-10).

"God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6). Humble dependence upon God is the foundation of wisdom. If God were to put the same question to you, as He did to Solomon, what would you ask for? Long life, wealth, big house, designer clothing and expensive jewellery? Ok so Solomon had these things but the love of money, prestige and power can so easily corrupt. He could also have asked for the death of his enemies. Instead, he asks God for a wise and understanding heart to be a good king for the people.

Solomon went on to become the writer of Proverbs, which is really a letter on how to live a life of wisdom. He advises us to cry out for insight: "For the Lord grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity." (Proverbs 2:6-7).

When we value what God values we are on the path to wisdom. Fools do not seek wisdom because they do not place any value on it. An egotistical person would ask for fame; a materialistic person would ask for wealth; an ambitious person would ask for power; a bitter person would ask for revenge. Often we make bad decisions and cause heartache, stress and worry because we refuse to admit we need to follow the Bible's advice.

Immersing ourselves in God's Word daily is crucial for making wise decisions – it's the daily bread for our soul. Knowing the Bible helps us make decisions that daily impact upon our health and happiness, how we manage our time, how we handle money and how we deal with temptation. So let's seek the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ so that we may live in His wisdom and reap His blessing.

*Rev. Tim Mullings*

Tettenhall Wood & St. Columba's URC,  
Wolverhampton

## From the Editor

Welcome to the October edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

This month's edition is back to the normal size with sixteen pages. I am grateful to Kay Watson for writing about her holiday in Scotland and to Pamela George who has written a piece for the Family News section about the committal service for her husband Colin.

Also in the Family News section is a report on the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Jean Hodges, which I mentioned in last month's magazine. I was glad to be able to celebrate with Jean and also took her sister, Gwen Bentley, with me. Some of you will know Gwen, who worships at Hadleigh Methodist Church, as she has attended events at our church in the past, such as the Maundy Thursday Passover Communion. I have included a couple of photos from the event.

We welcome back two preachers on the first Sunday of October who have both had health problems in recent months. Rev. Celia Whitman from Bridgewater Drive is preaching in the

morning having had a knee operation, the recovery from which has been slower than Celia no doubt hoped.

In the evening we have Jim Clubb with us once again after a break of several months. Jim was very poorly earlier in the year and spent time in hospital and in rehabilitation at the Cumberlege Intermediate Care Centre in Southend. Jim's mobility is not as good as it was and so he has been worshipping with us on Sunday mornings. (He lives in Church Road about 50 yards from the church!) I believe that he is about to take delivery of a mobility scooter which will allow him to travel further in the locality.

On the other three Sundays, we welcome back good friends Major Geoff Ashdown, Rev. Jim Tarrant and Rev. John Ambrose. Although being without a minister is not an ideal situation, we are truly blessed by the willingness and dedication of such experienced preachers to offer their services to our small congregation.

*Malcolm Brown*

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## Café Church @ Costa Coffee

The first meeting of Café Church took place at Costa Coffee on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. It was my first venture inside the Hadleigh Costa Coffee which took over the former Natwest Bank building. I am not sure what café church outside church premises should look like but this first meeting was probably not typical. Quite a long time was spent chatting and then Roger Kingston, leader of Churches Together in Hadleigh, welcomed everyone and gave his testimony and even sang at one point.

Virtually everyone present was a regular churchgoer so there is a real need to invite friends who might be interested in worshipping and sharing fellowship with other Christians in an informal atmosphere. Bringing someone along might encourage them to come when they would be hesitant about turning up on their own.

The next meeting of Cafe Church at Costa Coffee will be held on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October from 5.00pm till 6.30pm. More publicity would be useful so please spread the word and please continue to pray for this new venture.

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At Sunday School they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?"

Little Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Articles for the magazine can be e-mailed to the Editor, Malcolm Brown, at [mgbrownmail@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mgbrownmail@yahoo.co.uk).  
Opinions expressed in any published articles do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editor or the policy of the United Reformed Church, either locally or nationally.

## Tuesday Fellowship Programme for Oct & Nov 2018

Date	Time	Meeting
Tue 9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2.30pm	Exhibition & Illustrated Talk on 'Seven Summits' by Mark Pinnock
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2.30pm	Slideshow on 'Exploring North Island New Zealand' by Margaret Butler

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

Meeting fee £2.00 – first time free

Annual subscription – £3.00

### A change of name

The name of the Wives' Fellowship has been discussed on more than one occasion over recent years. It has been decided that from now on the group will be known as the Tuesday Fellowship. This will hopefully make it clearer that membership is open to all, both men and women (married or not).

*Kay Watson*

## An Afternoon with Vera and Mel

The meeting of the Wives' Fellowship on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September was a social afternoon spent at the home of Vera Knapton in the company of her niece, Mel, who is over from Australia for several weeks. For those who don't know, Mel is very extrovert character who successfully fought a long battle against a rare cancer whilst living in the UK. At one point she was given just three months to live. When her treatment was over she decided to return Australia.

Mel had organised a quiz about Australia which proved to be quite tough for us pommies. Here are just a few of the questions to give you a flavour:

- What is a lamington?
- In which sea is the Barrier Reef located?
- How long in miles is the coastline of Australia?

The answers are a) A cake. B) Coral Sea c) 23,000 miles.

After the quiz, tea and coffee were served with an array of cakes including scones and frangipanes. Mel very generously gave everyone a small koala bar on arrival and then later handed out either a key ring or a coaster to everyone, regardless of their performance in the quiz, as another memento of the occasion.

### A few photos from the afternoon



Vera with Jim and Jean



Mel dispensing gifts



Peggy & Irene

Our thanks go to Vera for the invitation to host the meeting at her home and to Mel for entertaining us so royally and for very generously providing the Aussie-themed gifts. Mel returns to Australia on 27<sup>th</sup> October so we hope that she enjoys the remainder of her stay and has a safe journey home.

*Malcolm Brown*

# WHAT'S ON

## A round-up of future events in the area

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Tue 9 Oct 2018	- Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, from 10.30am to 12.30pm. With cakes (70p) and savouries (50p to 70p) and unlimited tea/coffee (£1.10).
Wed 10 Oct 2018	- Coffee Morning with home-made cakes at St Michael's Church, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. £2.00 for cake & unlimited coffee.
	ditto - Open Arts Celebration of World Mental Health Day in Hadleigh Old Fire Station. Exhibition from 12.30pm to 3.30pm with Southend Jazz Co-op playing from 1.30pm to 2.30pm.
Sat 13 Oct 2018	- Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church from 10.00 to 12 noon.
	ditto - Hadleigh & Daws Heath Councillors' Surgery in Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00am to 12 noon.
	ditto - Beat and Beans Café at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Live music by Mike Davis, pianist. Refreshments available. Come and go as you please. Free admission.
	ditto - Southend Symphony Orchestra Concert at SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £10.00, conc. £9.00. Phone 01268 755005.
	ditto - Chanteuses present 'Saturday Night at the Movies & Musicals' at Thundersley Methodist Church. An all-female singing group led by Pauline Curtis with accompanist Kay Duell. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £8.00, conc. £6.00, incl. refreshments. Phone 01702 548931.
Tue 16 Oct 2018	- Electric Blanket Safety Testing at Castle Point Borough Council offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley, from 9.30am to 1.30pm. Arrangements can be made for free collection, testing and return. Phone 01268 882461
Fri 19 Oct 2018	- Castle Crafters Meeting at Hadleigh Library from 1.00pm to 2.30pm (every Friday). If you enjoy having a chat and crafting, come along.
Sat 20 Oct 2018	- Hadleigh Library Local History Day from 10.00am to 4.00pm. Guest speakers throughout the day. Local history displays and themed activities. Refreshments available.
	ditto - Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support at Thundersley Methodist Church from 10.00am to 12 noon.
Wed 24 Oct 2018	- Kingsway Community Cinema presents 'The Breadwinner (Cert 12)' at Hadleigh Old Fire Station. Starts at 7.00pm. Tickets £5.00. Book online via <a href="http://www.kingswaycinema.org.uk">www.kingswaycinema.org.uk</a> or pay at the door (if not sold out).
Sat 27 Oct 2018	- Ever Green Singers & Guests in concert at our church. Please see the official poster nearer the date for full details including the start time and ticketing arrangements.
	ditto - 1914 to 1946 Concert with songs, monologues and sketches at Hadleigh Methodist Church. Cottage pie supper at 6.00pm. Tickets £10.00 or £5.00 for concert only. To book, phone 01702 551786.
Sat 3 Nov 2018	- Hadleigh Heritage Coffee Morning & Talk by Ian Yearsley on 'The History of Hadleigh' at St James the Less Church. Coffee served from 10.30am. Talk starts at 11.00am. Free admission.

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More events listed on the HELIX website at <http://www.hadleighsex.info>



# Harvest Festival

The traditional decoration of the church for our Harvest Festival took place on the morning of Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September. Our Church Secretary, Royston Brackin, kindly wheeled a large barrow full of greenery from his well-stocked garden to the church and this was placed around the church and foyer.

At the same time, ladies of the catering team and helpers – Jean Reeve, Heather Brown, Kay Watson and Pamela George – were busy preparing the tables for the Harvest Supper. Several of the ladies returned late afternoon to layout the food for the supper.

The supper was due to start at 6.00pm but I was a bit late in bringing Irene Harrington and Peggy Hughes. However, people were kind enough to wait an extra ten minutes. There were about twenty people present, slightly fewer than expected because some people, who were hoping to come, were unable to do so. These included Keith and June Gargrave and Jim and Sue Tarrant. Before we began to eat, our former minister, Rev. Jack Roche, said a prayer.

The cold buffet on offer was delicious – I was not the only one to think this as there were a number of comments to that effect. There was also a very tempting range of desserts including apple pie and cream, fruit salad, and trifle, not to mention cake and cheese and biscuits.

After supper, everyone moved into the church for the entertainment. There was no hymn-singing on this occasion but I started the ball rolling with a video downloaded from YouTube about the work of the charity Water Aid. Any surplus after costs from the retiring offertory was destined for Water Aid. I followed the video with a short quiz in which all the questions were related to water. I made the quiz multiple-choice so everyone could make a stab at every answer. In the end the prize of chocolates was won by Jim Clubb.

After the quiz, Heather played a piece on the piano – Chopin's Prelude, Op. 28 No. 15, commonly known as the Raindrop Prelude. Before playing, Heather explained how the piece had come to be known as the Raindrop Prelude. Chopin and the French authoress George Sand (real name Amantine Dupin) were staying at a monastery whilst Chopin was composing the prelude.

In one of her books, Sand relates how one evening during a heavy rainstorm, Chopin played a prelude on his piano for her. Whilst playing, Chopin had a dream, seeing himself drowned in a lake whilst heavy drops of icy water fell in a regular rhythm on his breast. Sand pointed out that drops of water were indeed falling in rhythm but on the roof of the monastery. Sand did not say in her book which prelude Chopin played for her on that occasion, but most music critics assume it to be no. 15, because of the repeating A ♭, with its suggestion of the “gentle patter” of rain.

We were hoping that Sue Bialy would be able to sing for us again but she was unable to attend at the last minute. To fill the gap, I had hastily found a couple of Norfolk-based farming videos. The first one featured a farm that grows wheat for thatching and the second one was about ploughing with heavy horses.

On Sunday, our Harvest Festival service was led by John Amos from Christ Church Rayleigh. John apologised for not realising until too late that it was our harvest festival service but he had arranged for Heather to choose three harvest-related hymns. One nice surprise was the presence of two children – Ava and Flo, the granddaughters of Diane Pinnock.

The harvest table had a lovely variety of food items and Heather again made use of the knitted fruit and vegetables made by my mum, Shirley.



Harvest table

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the harvest table. Heather and I later took the fresh produce and some of the packeted food to Little Havens Hospice, where the lady on reception was very pleased to receive it all. The other items were retained to add to the collection for Hopeworx on the first Sunday of October.

*Malcolm Brown*

# My Scottish Holiday

On the 4<sup>th</sup> September, my friend and I went on a five-day holiday to Inversnaid, Scotland. We booked a holiday with 'Lochs and Glens', a Scottish holiday company who run their own fleet of coaches and own their own hotels.

We started our journey at the unearthly time of 5.50am with a pick-up at Victoria House Corner coach stop. Our destination was the Inversnaid Hotel, Inversnaid, Scotland. After many comfort stops en-route, we arrived at our destination thirteen hours later, just in time for our evening meal. The hotel overlooks Loch Lomond and has recently been refurbished so the accommodation was excellent, as was the food for breakfast and our evening meals.



**Inversnaid Hotel**

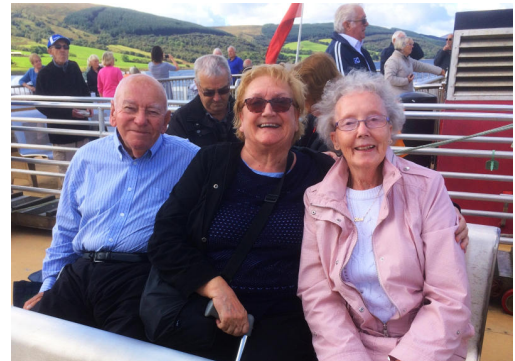
Our first day was spent cruising Loch Katrine, The Trossachs and Killin. Killin is a pretty village famous for the spectacular rapids known as 'The Falls of Dochart' that run through the centre. We wandered around the little village before heading to the beautiful Trossachs.



**The Falls of Dochart**

Whilst cruising on Lock Katrine I sat next to a lady and gentleman whom I recognised from church and it happened to be Rev. Celia Whitman, who preaches at the church from time to time, and her husband Geoff. I made myself known to her and I couldn't believe that I hadn't recognised her on the coach journey. Celia had booked the holiday to celebrate Geoff's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. My

friend took a photo of me with them both on board the cruise ship.



**Geoff, Celia and me**

Our next day was spent cruising the Kyles of Bute. The weather was excellent and the water was very calm. We explored the entwining sea lochs that surround the famous island of Bute. The Kyles of Bute offer some of the most stunning scenery along Argyll's secret coast with hidden glens and secluded beaches along the way.



**Kyles of Bute**

Our final day of sightseeing was to Glasgow to visit two of its finest museums. Glasgow is Scotland's largest city and is famed for its vibrancy and the friendliness of its people. The city is constantly developing and has an energetic atmosphere. Glasgow's industrial roots as the 'second city of the Empire' have given the city its character and Glasgow now offers fabulous art galleries and architecture.

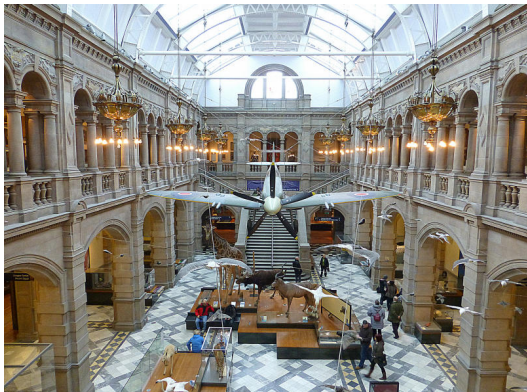


**Riverside Museum with 19<sup>th</sup> Century tall ship Glenlee**



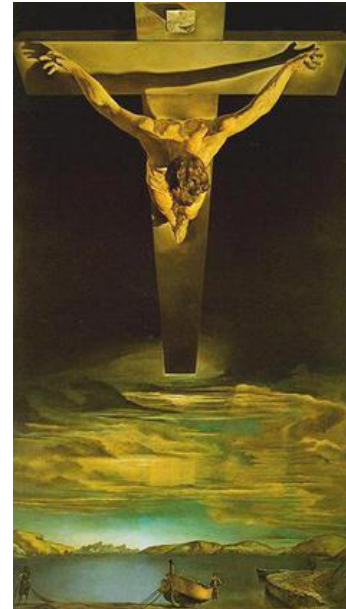
Glasgow is also home to some of the world's finest transport exhibits located in the Riverside Museum, winner of the 2013 European Museum of the Year award. Sitting on the banks of the River Clyde, the museum is home to over 3,000 objects that showcase Glasgow's rich past, from skateboards to vintage cars and prams to powerful locomotives.

The Edwardian Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum houses a wide range of objects from Scotland and abroad.



**Interior of Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum**

My friend was most impressed to see a famous painting by Salvador Dali – Christ of St John of the Cross – painted in 1951. Dali was born in 1904 and died in 1989.



**Dali's Christ of St John of the Cross**

The five-day holiday was very enjoyable, despite the long journey. I know that Celia and her husband also enjoyed it, so much so that she mentioned returning next year.

*Kay Watson*

Editor's note: Dali's painting entitled Christ of St John of the Cross is so-called because its design is based on a drawing by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish friar John of the Cross.

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## Midweek Service

At the Church Meeting in September, the decision was taken to suspend the Midweek Service until further notice. The main factors involved in the decision were the difficulty in arranging preachers and the issue of scheduling. Until Rev. Jack Roche retired last year, the Midweek Services were shared between Jack, Jim Clubb, Heather Brown and myself. Jack has kindly led an occasional service since he left but Jim's spell of ill-health has put more pressure on Heather and myself. Holding the Midweek Service on the same day of the week as the coffee morning has made it awkward to publicise the coffee morning as a weekly event because the exception for the Midweek Service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday had always to be mentioned. We are now making efforts to promote the coffee morning with new posters.

The Midweek Service was initiated by Keith Gargrave over fifteen years ago after he retired as Pastor of Woodham Ferrers Congregational Church. I believe that it was aimed at attracting people who came to the church, for example to the Luncheon Club or to the coffee morning, but who did not necessarily attend a service on Sundays. The few people who have been attending the Midweek Service of late are mainly regular Sunday worshippers. It is possible that the Midweek Service could be relaunched on a different day or at the end of one of the coffee mornings, possibly with a lunch. Alternatively, this may be an opportunity to consider other ways of extending the spiritual life of the church during the week.

At this point, I feel that it is only right to acknowledge Keith's inspiration for the Midweek Service and his dedication in organising preachers and conducting many of the services himself. We thank you Keith for this service in the name of the Lord.

*Malcolm Brown*

## Holy Habits – Breaking Bread

One of the helpful approaches to *Walking the Way: living the life of Jesus today* is to consider the development of holy habits. Here we are going to consider the Breaking of the Bread.

We have all sorts of names for it these days – Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, the Mass – it doesn't really matter what you call it. It is a matter of sharing bread and wine and, through that, remembering how God shows great love for us in all that Jesus has done.

When I was a child, it was all something of a mystery. In the Baptist Church where I grew up, the Lord's Supper was for grown-ups. The service came to its end, and those who were not involved, for whatever reason, left and those who were stayed. I didn't really know what happened in this separate little extra service, just that it happened once a month or so.

Later, as I began ministry in my first church, Communion was a really big thing. It was a big event, once a quarter, because that is how often we celebrated it. That made it important. Then I went to London – and there I discovered that everyone could take part, the children so long as their parents had agreed. After that I got involved with the Church of England, in a Local Ecumenical Partnership, and I became minister of a United Reformed Church that had formerly been part of the Churches of Christ tradition, and so we celebrated Communion weekly. Indeed, because I was the minister, there were some Sundays when I celebrated Communion three times – and so I have learned that Communion can be so special that we only celebrate it rarely, perhaps once a quarter, and that Communion can be so special that we simply must celebrate it every week. As with the whole approach to holy habits, it is not that one is right and one is wrong – it's a question of context and of different perspectives.

All of the holy habits are unique. They each have their special element. That is certainly true of this holy habit. With some holy habits you can just get on and do them by yourself. With some it is about engaging with others. That is very much so here. Yet there is, at the same time, a bit of both. Communion, for me, is a very intimate thing. It has a strong personal element. It is part of my relationship with God, but it is also always a

communal thing. It is something that I do together with others.

How did it start? Mark's account of that comes in chapter 14, verses 22-25. *'While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take, this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'*

It is all so familiar and yet, every time, it is all so special. So what is there to say about our celebrating Holy Communion? How can it be a used to help our broader adoption of holy habits? Well, I would like to think around some of what we are about at Communion and see what that might say, more generally, about holy habits.

Firstly, then, I want to note the fact that we often talk about celebrating Holy Communion. It is a celebration. But I wonder how obvious is that note of celebration – and that goes for the whole of our lives as Christians, not just when we are at Communion. Celebration should be at the core of our lives as Christians. The prophet Nehemiah wrote: *'The joy of the Lord is your strength. The angels announced the birth of Jesus, saying: I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.'* Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit.

Richard Foster concludes his classic book *Celebration of Discipline* with a chapter on celebration. Amongst other things, he says this: *"Celebration adds a note of .. festivity .. to our lives. After all, Jesus rejoiced so fully in life that he was accused of being a wine-bibber and a glutton. Many of us lead such sour lives that we couldn't possibly be accused of such things. .... Celebration gives us perspective. We can laugh at ourselves. We come to see that the causes we champion are not nearly as monumental as we would like to believe. In celebration the high and the mighty regain their balance and the weak and lowly receive new stature."* So what are you going to celebrate over the next 24 hours, and hour? And over the next week, the next month?

The second key element that I want to highlight within the holy habit of breaking the bread is story-telling. One way or another, every time we

engage in this special act we retell the story. In our tradition, mostly we do that by reading one of the Biblical accounts of how it all started, either Paul's description in his letter to the Corinthians or one of the Gospel accounts. But there are all sorts of ways in which the story can be told. Stories are great, and story-telling is great. We all do it, even if we don't think we do. Did you hear about ...? The other day I was ... and so on – and when we hear such a phrase we wonder what's coming. The re-telling of the story is part of the breaking of bread. How ready are we to tell the stories of the good things that God has done for us? I recently watched the first part of the film *Pollyanna* – and I was intrigued by the 'game' that she kept introducing, especially to grumpy folk. She challenged them to complete the sentence, 'I am so glad that ...' or 'I am so lucky because ...' Maybe we should try completing the sentence, 'I find God so wonderful because ...'. Let's tell the story, the stories of how God has affected our lives.

Then, thirdly, I want to say something about thanksgiving. When we talk, as we do sometimes, about the Eucharist, that is, quite literally, the thanksgiving. That is what the term means. Thanksgiving is a central part of the Communion service, the breaking of bread, whatever we want to call it. It is good if we can let that spill over into the rest of life. Do you live thankful, for what you have, or do you live grumpy, because of what you don't have?

The booklet in the 'holy habits' series that looks at this particular holy habit talks about 'eucharistic living'. I like that and how it is explained by a couple of comments in the booklet. Eucharistic living *is about being open to receive the gifts of God through both the dark and light, through the creative and destructive, through the essential otherness of those who are different. It is about an openness to receive that includes the possibility of transformation. It is about gratitude.* We should be living as thankful people.

Fourthly, I want to talk about remembering. 'Do this in remembrance of me.' It is fascinating how

remembering has caught on. Commemorations have a large part to play in reminding and inspiring us. What are the things that you remember that have an effect on how you are now? What do you do with the damaging memories? And what about the encouraging ones? The inspiring ones?

Fifthly, we think about sharing. We share the bread and the wine, and that is symbolic of all the things that we share. But it also raises the question about what it is that we are prepared to share – and what are the things that we don't want to share. I have a favourite story about sharing. It's about two little lads. Let's call them Billy and Tom. They were good friends and they knew about sharing. One day they got into a conversation about it. 'Would you share it if you had a thousand pounds?', Billy asked Tom. 'Course I would,' came the reply. 'And what would you do if you had a hundred pounds?' 'I'd give you fifty.' 'And what about if you had a hundred marbles?' 'I'd give you half.' 'What about if you had two marbles?' A pause. 'That's not fair. You jolly well know that I have got two marbles.' amusing, but amusing because it is so close to reality. How do we get on matching practice to theory? How ready are we to really share?

Then the last thing I want to take from this holy habit – the going out. The Breaking of Bread, Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, comes to an end and we need to go and be God's people in the world around us. That can be a big challenge. But we need to let our holy habits direct how we live. One of the things that we note about Jesus is that he often seemed to be having a meal with one person or another, and it didn't seem to matter to him with whom he shared the table. As we think of some of those occasions when Jesus ate with others, may we be challenged to think about where we should be going when we go out from the special celebration to the ordinary but challenging world.

*Paul Whittle*

Synod Meeting, March 2018

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If someone knows from experience that daily Communion increases fervour without lessening reverence, then let him go every day. But if someone finds that reverence is lessened and devotion not much increased, then let him sometimes abstain, so as to draw near afterwards with better dispositions. – *Thomas Aquinas*

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## Family News

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### Jean Hodges (nee Barber) – 100 not out

It was a pleasure to attend the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for Jean on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September. She is the oldest subscriber to the Hadleigh Messenger. Jean grew up in The Avenue in Hadleigh and was married at our church in 1956.

Until a year ago Jean lived in her own bungalow in Bramerton Road, Hockley (not far from Hockley URC or Bramerton Road Community Church as it is known) but now lives in the Salvation Army care home in Southend known as Bradbury Home. I took Jean's sister, Gwen Bentley, and her friend Ray Hastings with me.

The party was held in an upstairs room and Jean was joined by many of the other residents. After Jean had opened her special card from the Queen and cut a beautiful birthday cake, we enjoyed cake and nibbles with tea or coffee.



Jean with her friend Diane and the cake

After the refreshments, Jean requested that we sing a few of her favourite hymns, namely *To God be the glory*, *The Lord is my Shepherd*, *Amazing grace* and *How great Thou art*.



Gwen and Jean

*We send our congratulations to Jean on reaching the venerable age of 100 and pray that God will continue to bless and guide her.*

### Colin George – Final Farewell

Many readers will remember Colin, who died in July 2015, leaving his body for medical research.

Pamela George writes:

*“On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September, we paid our final farewell to Colin at the South London Crematorium. The committal service is only 10 minutes long and took place at 9.00am.*



*As it happened, Colin's twin sister, Elizabeth, and her husband, Stuart, were in the UK and due to return to New Zealand later that same day, thus enabling them to join us.*

*After meeting the Funeral Director and then the Chaplain, who told us how amazed he was at how much Colin has done for his fellow man during his life, we entered the Chapel to the hymn “Be Still for the Presence of the Lord”.*

*The Chaplain said he wanted to convey the heartfelt thanks of the hospital and all the students to those like Colin who generously bequeath their bodies to assist the progress of medical education and research their studies. That it was so important for the future of our doctors and surgeons, albeit acknowledging the difficulties experienced by their families during this time.*

*He then gave a short reading from The Beatitudes. The reason for this was that when we visited the Holy Land in 1989 Colin read this out at the site of The Sermon on the Mount by the Sea of Galilee.*

*The final blessing was then given.*

*Pamela”*



## Pray for the plight of farmers this harvest

As communities across the United Reformed Church celebrate Harvest this autumn, Christians are being encouraged to include rural communities in their prayers. From a winter remembered for ‘The beast from the east’ to a prolonged drought over the summer, the extreme weather has brought hardship to farmers.

The Rev. Elizabeth Clarke, United Reformed Church and Methodist Rural Officer for Germinate: The Arthur Rank Centre, has collated ideas for harvest services, and written prayers to help churches focus on the realities of food production this Harvest season.

Explaining the current plight of farmers, she says: ‘The “Beast from the East” arrived at lambing time and there were losses of new lambs and ewes as well as cattle. This resulted in cash flow problems with fewer lambs to sell in the autumn and higher prices for replacement ewes.

The prolonged drought in some areas has meant that farmers are now feeding their livestock with forage made for the winter months, as there wasn’t enough nutritious grass. Many will not have been able to produce as much silage (animal feed) as normal and this coupled with early feeding may well lead to shortages and higher prices, resulting in further problems when

hay/silage stocks run out before the winter is over. This in turn causes more stress and financial pressures.’

In the arable sector, the cold spring forced farmers to sow crops late, the dry summer to harvest crops early. The lack of rain also caused variations in the quantity and quality of grains, fruit and vegetables.

Rev. Clarke continued: ‘You may wonder why any of this is important since most people do not farm, but we do all eat, so the state of UK agriculture matters to us.’ She adds that the problems are also affecting other European countries like Russia and the Ukraine.

‘As a global community we need to increase food production if we are going to feed a projected population of nine billion,’ she continues. ‘Years like this remind us how vulnerable our food supply is and can raise serious ethical questions as to how all will be fed rather than just the richer countries.’

The resources can be found in Rev. Clarke’s blog ‘All is safely gathered in?’ at <http://germinate.net/all-is-safely-gathered-in/>

From the URC website

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## Looking back, Looking forward: Resources for Remembrance

The United Reformed Church has produced two downloadable booklets to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. The booklets, available in both English and German, were a collaboration between the United Reformed Church and the Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz (Protestant churches of the Palatinate region of Germany).

*One hundred years after the First World War: Looking back, looking forward* and its companion booklet, *Accompanying worship material on the theme*, offer a rich resource of reflections, stories, poems and hymns designed to help churches, small groups and individuals mark the approaching centenary of the end of the First World War. The resources can be downloaded from <https://urc.org.uk/british-german-remembrance-resources>





## ‘September took me briefly to Germany’

Bemused by the forthcoming and fundamental change in the UK’s relationship to the European Union, I found there was something profoundly helpful in the latest theological consultation between the Evangelical Church of the Palatinate (EKP) and the United Reformed Church. I was grateful to join the small group of URC people who travelled to Neustadt, near Mannheim, for a meeting with EKP counterparts.

Our discussion was inspired by the bi-centenary of the 1818 re-uniting of Reformed and Lutheran Christians in southern Germany. Celebrating that historic reconciliation and enjoying a flourishing contemporary Anglo-German relationship was suggestive of so much to which we can cling while we wonder what it will all be like come March 2019.



(L-R) Manfred Sutter (EKP), Philip Brooks (URC), Martin Henninger (EKP), Thomas Borchers (EKP)

Papers were presented and discussed by our own Donald Norwood and John Bradbury and by the EKP’s Klaus Bümlein and Christoph Picker. Norwood and Bümlein reminded us of the union histories of the URC and the EKP. Bradbury and Picker then explored contemporary implications of ecclesial union amidst political separation.

John’s thesis exposed the irony that Christians gain their definitive identity by being ‘in Christ’, and yet how the uniting of those who are ‘in Christ’ but who come from differing traditions can bring about a bewildering loss of identity. He suggested that if the Church in all its diversity can nevertheless hold together as ‘part of the Church Catholic, the whole body with Christ as the head’, might it not have something to say to

the ‘fast-moving and complex world in which we find ourselves?’

There was also an eloquent challenge from the German representatives, urging British Christians prophetically to engage the issues that leaving the EU raises. We were reminded passionately of how the EU was conceived as a peace-sustaining instrument; now, though, those who hold Europe’s political power and influence cannot possibly have personal experience of how that peace-sustaining felt so vital in the post-WWII years.

We recognised that it nonetheless remains imperative, alongside the need for Europe to offer common answers to important issues that are shaping our future: Picker emphasised ‘affluence and security, climate change, social justice, sharing and globalisation’.

In a post Brexit world, the United Reformed Church’s continuing engagement with the European Church seems as vital as ever, both for the church’s sake and for identifying the best way of navigating the new waters through which Europe must now voyage.

And it is not just as a denomination that we might sustain links to the church across La Manche and Die Nordsee. Hearing reports from EKP and URC congregations that enjoy being twinned – some over several decades – the consultation also stressed how timely the development of more such local engagements would be. Details are available from Philip Brooks at Church House.

In the sermon at our closing communion, Pfarrerin Erdmute Dünkel highlighted how the praying person who cherishes unity, ‘looks through the here and now into another, a larger future ... guided by a vision, a hope, a dream.’ It was a trenchant word of theological perspective as our altered relationships within Europe become ever more imminent.

*Nigel Uden*

Posted on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

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## Computer Corner

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### Aretha Franklin in Sweden 1968

#### Interesting music videos

I have not included any music videos in Computer Corner before because everyone has their favourite artist(e)s. However rules are made to be broken and after the recent death of Aretha Franklin – the Queen of Soul – I came across a superb set of videos on YouTube from a concert she did in Sweden in 1968 whilst in her youthful prime.

Hopefully, some readers will enjoy these as much as I have. The videos include some of Aretha's classic songs such as *Respect* and *Chain of Fools* plus some songs that you would not associate with her such as *There's No Business Like Show Business* and *Satisfaction*.

URL: <https://bit.ly/2Rxa9V2> (This is a shortcut that links to a playlist of the videos.)

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### bitly

#### Useful free service

The bitly website is one of a number that offers a free service to shorten URLs (web page addresses). Bitly is the most popular such service and one of the oldest. I used the service to generate the short URL for the Aretha Franklin videos mentioned above.

URL: <https://bitly.com>

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### GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program)

#### Useful free software

I last recommended GIMP in Computer Corner nearly ten years ago so I thought it was about time that it got another mention. GIMP is a cross-platform, open-source image editing program similar to Photoshop with many features that you may never use. However, I have recently found it useful for removing distortion in photos of articles in bound volumes of the Southend Standard.

Download from: <https://www.gimp.org>

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## Word Search – Water-related

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E	D	J	E	P	T	L	K	V	F	R	E	T	A	W	P	K	V	W	F
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AQUIFER  
BECK  
BILLABONG  
CANAL  
CREEK  
DITCH  
DROPLET  
EDDY  
ESTUARY  
FLOOD  
FOUNTAIN  
LAGOON  
LAKE  
PUDDLE  
RAPIDS  
RESERVOIR  
SPA  
STRAIT  
TARN  
WATER

Words may appear in any direction including diagonally, back to front and upside down.

# CHURCH DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2018

DAY	TIME	EVENT
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am 6.30pm	Morning Service – Rev. Celia Whitman Evening Service with Holy Communion – Mr Jim Clubb
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am - 11.00am 2.30pm	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots Tuesday Fellowship – Mr Mark Pinnock Exhibition & Illustrated Talk on ‘Seven Summits’
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	ELDERS’ MEETING
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Service – Major Geoff Ashdown
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac table for Christian Aid
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	Morning Service with Holy Comm – Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA Mth
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30am - 11.00am	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Concert by The Ever Green Singers & Friends
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Service – Rev. John Ambrose PGCE (Ox)
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup>	No session - Half term	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots

## An October Garden

In my Autumn garden I was fain  
 To mourn among my scattered roses;  
 Alas for that last rosebud which uncloses  
 To Autumn's languid sun and rain  
 When all the world is on the wane!  
 Which has not felt the sweet constraint of June,  
 Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden walk,  
 You are but coarse compared with roses:  
 More choice, more dear that rosebud which uncloses  
 Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,  
 That least and last which cold winds balk;  
 A rose it is though least and last of all,  
 A rose to me though at the fall.

*Christina Georgina Rossetti*