

# THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

April 2019



As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. – Mark 16:5-6 (NIV)

The Magazine of the  
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR APRIL 2019

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	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> Apr	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	10.30am	Easter Day Service with Holy Communion	Major Alan Bennett
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10.30am	Morning Service	Rev. Jack Roche MA

## SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR APRIL 2019

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

## FLOWER ROTA FOR APRIL 2019

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	June Gargrave - in memory of Keith's birthday
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	

### ELDERS' MEETING

Wed 17<sup>th</sup> Apr 7.30pm

### CHURCH MEETING

No meeting in Apr

### HADLEIGH URC OFFICERS

**Minster::**

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.hadleighessexurc.org.uk](http://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.

# An Easter Reflection

*... so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. After that He poured water into a basin and began washing His disciples' feet, drying them with a towel that was wrapped around Him. (John 13:4-5)*

The upper room, which Peter and John had found so they could prepare for the Passover - just as Jesus told them they would - was probably a simple room. Luke tells us that it was large and furnished. What Peter and John weren't told and didn't know was that it would be their last meal with the man who had called them to follow Him three years before. Of course, the One who had sent them knew exactly what was to come.

The Last Supper came during an incredible rollercoaster of a week, which began with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As we have known for these near 2,000 years, it would end for the disciples in total confusion with a sense of numbing defeat, fear and heartbreak. Sunday was coming and all that it would bring on that victorious dawn, but they knew nothing of what Jesus knew.

Mathew, Mark and Luke all write about the Last Supper, telling us how the One who declared Himself to be the 'bread of life (John 6:35) broke bread that evening, as His body would soon be broken. He asked them - and us today - to do this in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19).

And then the wine, His blood "...poured out for the many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28), the creation of the New Covenant, between God and His people, by Jesus "...on the night He was betrayed..." (1 Corinthians 11:23b).

Jesus did something else that night that I never really fully appreciated until quite recently. Matthew, Mark and Luke, for whatever inspired reason, left this part of the story out but John

didn't - telling us that Jesus washed His disciples' feet (John 13:4-5).

The significance of this humble act, reading it many times, didn't really mean much to me, except that it was in keeping with the character and nature of our wonderful Servant King. But in a particular talk in church, the reality of what Jesus had done, as it was explained to me that Sunday, was a defining moment on my personal journey with Christ: for He knew Judas would betray Him, Peter would deny Him, that nearly all of the disciples would desert Him, yet knowing all of this, Jesus still washed their feet. I was blown away.

Recorded only once, in this simple yet profound act, I got a glimpse of what true everyday discipleship should be: following His example with a loving, humble, and all important forgiving heart. I fail so many times to live out the spirit of this awesome act. I can only ask for forgiveness and start afresh, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus' accompanying command to "love one another" (John 13:34b).

With all that is going on in the world, and in this particular corner of it, as followers of Jesus when we think about Easter and the new beginning that He has given us at the cross, we need also to remember where that basin is, find that towel and start to wash.

*Mark Smith*

Press officer for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

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## From the Bible

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.'

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Matthew 26:26-30 (NIV)

## From the Editor

Welcome to the April edition of the Hadleigh Messenger.

March has been a busy time for me. I attended an Eastern Synod meeting at Christ Church Chelmsford, an Area Partnership Pastoral Group meeting at Christ Church Wickford and then a full Area Partnership meeting at Billericay URC. These meetings were in addition to an Elders' Meeting and the Church AGM! There is a report on the Synod meeting

and 'snippets' from the Church AGM in this edition of the magazine.

At a recent meeting that I attended of the bible study group at Hadleigh Methodist Church, the subject of 'love' was discussed. Ron Hurrell recited part of Shakespeare's Sonnet 116 and the beautiful words, which are sometimes read at weddings, are reproduced below.

*Malcolm Brown*

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## Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove.  
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me prov'd,  
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

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## How to write good

Some advice for anyone thinking of writing an article for the Hadleigh Messenger:

1. Avoid alliteration. Always.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. Don't use commas, that, are not, necessary.
4. Avoid clichés like the plague. They're old hat.
5. Comparisons are as bad as clichés.
6. One should never generalise.
7. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors.
8. Don't never use no double negatives.
9. The passive voice is to be avoided.
10. Avoid ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
11. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
12. Proof read carefully to see if you have any words out.

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 Apr & May 2019

Date	Time	Meeting
Tue 2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	2.30pm	Talk: 'Being a Magistrate' by Mrs Peggy Findlay
Tue 16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	2.30pm	Easter Communion led by Mrs Heather Brown
Tue 7 <sup>th</sup> May	2.30pm	Illustrated Talk: 'The Work of MAF' by Mr Richard Cecil

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

Meeting fee £2.00 – first time free

Annual subscription – £3.00

### Extract from the Lent message of Pope Francis

*“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God”* – Romans 8:19

The root of all evil, as we know, is sin, which from its first appearance has disrupted our communion with God, with others and with creation itself, to which we are linked in a particular way by our body. This rupture of communion with God likewise undermines our harmonious relationship with the environment in which we are called to live, so that the garden has become a wilderness (cf. *Gen 3:17-18*). Sin leads man to consider himself the god of creation, to see himself as its absolute master and to use it, not for the purpose willed by the Creator but for his own interests, to the detriment of other creatures.

Once God's law, the law of love, is forsaken, then the law of the strong over the weak takes over. The sin that lurks in the human heart (cf. *Mark 7:20-23*) takes the shape of greed and unbridled pursuit of comfort, lack of concern for the good of others and even of oneself. It leads to the exploitation of creation, both persons and the environment, due to that insatiable covetousness which sees every desire as a right and sooner or later destroys all those in its grip.

Creation urgently needs the revelation of the children of God, who have been made “a new creation”. For “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 *Cor 5:17*). Indeed, by virtue of their being revealed, *creation itself can celebrate a Pasch (Passover)*, opening itself to a new heaven and a new earth (cf. *Rev 21:1*). The path to Easter demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness, so as to live fully the abundant grace of the paschal mystery.

### Easter events

#### **Fri 19<sup>th</sup> April (Good Friday) – United Service followed by Walk of Witness**

The traditional Good Friday United Service will be held at Hadleigh Methodist Church starting at 10.15am. There will be a retiring offertory for Christian Aid. The service will be led by one of the officers from the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple.

At 11.00am, there will be a silent Walk of Witness along the pavement to our church where refreshments, including hot cross buns, will be served. Help with moving tables and chairs during or after the coffee morning on Maundy Thursday would be welcomed.

#### **Sun 21<sup>st</sup> April (Easter Day) – Sunrise Service**

The traditional Easter Day Sunrise Service will take place at Hadleigh Castle starting at 6.00am and will be led by the Salvation Army. Members of the Temple Band will provide music for the singing.

# WHAT'S ON

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

Mon 8 Apr 2019	- Benfleet Horticultural Society Talk - 'History Through Famous People Of Essex' - by Keith Lovell at St Mary's Church Hall, 376 High Road, Benfleet. Starts at 2.00pm. FREE admission with refreshments provided.
Tue 9 Apr 2019	- Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Unlimited tea/coffee £1.10, cakes and pastries from 70p. Cards and present accessories also on sale.
Wed 10 Apr 2019	- Coffee Morning with home-made cakes at St Michael's Church Community Room, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath, from 10.00am to 11.45am. £2.00 for as much coffee as you wish and a piece of cake.
	ditto - Kingsway Community Cinema presents 'Zulu' (Cert PG) at Hadleigh Old Fire Station. Doors open 6.30pm for 7.00pm start. Tickets £5.00 from Eventbrite. Refreshments available. Bring a cushion. A short film about actor James Booth, who lived in Hadleigh, will precede the main film.
Sat 13 Apr 2019	- Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church - 10.00am to 12 noon.
	ditto - Local Councillor's Surgery at Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00am to 12 noon.
	ditto - Beat & Beans Café with Monday Folk at St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Live music with coffee, tea and snacks. Relax and enjoy the performers in historic surroundings. Free admission.
	ditto - Hadleigh Gardening Association Spring Show at Hadleigh Methodist Church Hall. Viewing from 2.00pm to about 4.00pm followed by the raffle draw. Admission £1.00. Refreshments & raffle.
Thu 18 Apr 2019	- Hot Cross Bun & Table Sale at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, from 9.30am to 12.30pm. Refreshments available.
	ditto - Poetry Reading Group Meeting at Hadleigh Library. This month's subject - Thomas Hardy. From 2.30pm to 3.30pm.
Sat 20 Apr 2019	- Traidcraft Big Brew at Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue from 10.00am to 12 noon. Celebrating 40 years of Traidcraft
Sat 27 Apr 2019	- Coffee Morning in aid of Mission To Seafarers at St James the Less Church, High Street, Hadleigh. Starts at 10.00am.
	ditto - Hadleigh Library Community Day from 10.00am to 4.00pm. with events and activities for children and adults. Meet local groups and societies and see what goes in our community.
	ditto - Havens Hospices Concert with SA London North East Fellowship Band, Tilbury Band and Dedicated Divas at the SA Hadleigh Temple. Starts 7.00pm. Tickets £5.00 from Temple reception (Mon-Fri 9.00am to 12 noon).
Sun 28 Apr 2019	- Spring Fair organised by Hadleigh Community Group at Hadleigh Old Fire Station from 10.00pm to 3.00pm. With children's merry-go-round, craft and plants stalls, home-made cakes, raffle. Refreshments available.
Sat 11 May 2019	- Coffee Morning at Hadleigh Methodist Church - 10.00am to 12 noon.
	ditto - Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon.

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

# Eastern Synod Meeting report

The latest Eastern Synod meeting took place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at Christ Church, Chelmsford. This report is based mainly on the minutes of the meeting and covers selected items.

Christ Church is a very large, modern building situated in New London Road, Chelmsford. It was the first time that I had been there.



Christ Church, Chelmsford

**Opening** – The Synod Moderator, Rev. Paul Whittle, welcomed those attending – who numbered 113 – and constituted the meeting. He was delighted to have the Children’s & Youth Synod meeting at the same time. The opening worship was led by Rev. Nigel Uden, Moderator of General Assembly.

**Ministerial Movements and Welcome to New Members** – A welcome and greeting was given to one incoming minister and those attending Synod for the first time. Paul also welcomed Helen Glasse, the new Synod Youth Representative. Helen spoke briefly, saying that she was hoping to visit as many churches as possible and mentioning her Facebook page

**Minutes of last meeting** – The Minutes of the Synod meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were approved and signed by the Moderator.

**Address by Rev. Nigel Uden** – Nigel greeted Synod from General Assembly and also from Derek Estill, the current lay General Assembly Moderator. He spoke about touring many URC churches in his role and then gave an address on the theme of “Blessed to be a blessing: living as those baptised into Christ”. During the address, at various points, he asked Synod to reflect on the nature of baptism, what aspects of baptism speak to them and what each has done and will do with it. Nigel invited members of Synod to stand and renew their commitment to being baptised.

**Address by Rev. Helene Tame (Community Minister at Love’s Farm)** – Helene thanked Eastern Synod for their funding over four and a half years and was grateful for their consideration of a possible extension of contract. She then

talked about her work at Love’s Farm, a new housing developed near St Neots.

She explained how she had built her relationship gradually with the community, beginning with the Community Association and local school. Her school involvement began through offering reading, taking assemblies and then becoming a governor, and this had gradually resulted in various activities including an after-school club, a community money advice service run from the school. There were many things that had been started including Breakfast Church and Muddy Church, the community café (not church but hosted by the church), Youth Club and Little Loves, a parent and toddler group.

Helene shared with Synod how her life had been changed and shaped by being part of the community and said that there were to be 2800 new houses at Wintringham and a further 1100 homes to be built on the Love’s Farm East site.

**Address by Synod Moderator** – After lunch, Paul reflected on 40 years of ministry and showed photos of his life. His address including photos is available on the Synod website.

**Papers and reports** – Various papers and reports were then presented, including reports from Synod Executive Committee, the Pastoral Oversight Committee, the Resources Committee and the Mission Committee. The latter report was presented by Rev. Mark Ambrose (minister at Witham URC and nephew of Rev. John Ambrose). He mentioned that the committee had been considering the General Assembly report on connecting with 20-40 year olds and invited various people to speak including Enid Gear who spoke about the ‘Who Let The Dad’s Out’ initiative at Hutton & Shenfield.

**Future Synods** – The next Synod will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Bury St Edmunds. In 2020, Synods will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March at Lion Walk, Colchester and 10<sup>th</sup> October at Christ Church, Braintree

**Closing** – Closing worship was led by the Children’s and Youth Synod. The Moderator thanked Christ Church for their hospitality and closed the meeting at 4.00pm.

*Malcolm Brown*

## A Visit to Warley Place Nature Reserve

Our daughter Jennifer came home for Mothering Sunday weekend and on the Saturday, I suggested that we have a family outing – along with our two live-at-home sons, Michael and Andrew – preferably to somewhere that we had not visited before. A leaflet about Warley Place, at Great Warley near Brentwood, was then discovered and it was agreed that we should visit this nature reserve, run by Essex Wildlife Trust.

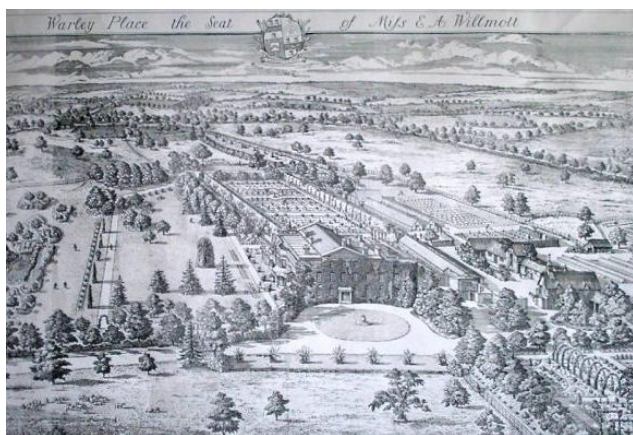
The journey in the car to Great Warley took only twenty five minutes from Hadleigh and the milometer showed that we had travelled seventeen miles. The entrance to the nature reserve is on a bend, next to The Thatcher's Arms pub. It is worth noting that there are no toilets on the nature reserve and no shelter other than a couple of bird hides.

The nature reserve has a fascinating history. Warley Place was formerly the home of one of Britain's most famous women horticulturists. Miss Ellen Ann Willmott.



Ellen Willmott was born in Heston, Middlesex, the eldest of three daughters of Frederick Willmott, a solicitor, and Ellen Willmott.

She and her sisters, Rosa and Ada (who died young of diphtheria), attended the exclusive Catholic convent school Gumley House for several years. In 1875, the family moved to Warley Place at Great Warley, Essex, which had 33 acres of grounds; this was to be Ellen's lifelong home.



Drawing of Warley Place estate

Warley Place was built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, on or near the site of an earlier house. It was designed in 1777 by James Gandon, who exhibited a design of Warley Place at the Royal Academy for his client, Captain Adams, who is known to have owned the land at Warley Place in 1777.

After the Wilmot's purchased the house, it was extended to the north and the east.



Warley Place house

The family were keen gardeners and developed Warley Place's gardens together. One of the most ambitious developments was an alpine garden, including a gorge and rockery, which Ellen's father gave her permission to create on her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Ellen received a substantial inheritance when her godmother, Helen Tasker, died. This enabled her to buy her first property near Aix-les-Bains, France, in 1890. Ellen inherited Warley Place on her father's death in 1892 and continued to develop the gardens, indulging her passion for collecting and cultivating plants. She is thought to have cultivated more than 100,000 different plant species and cultivars and over 60 plants have been named after her.

Ellen's sister Rose married into the Berkeley family in 1891 and moved to Spetchley Park, near Worcester, in 1897. Their mother died in 1898.

In 1894 Ellen acquired the services of a gardener from Switzerland to oversee the alpine garden. Jacob Maurer proved to be brilliant at his job and a real gentleman, and stayed there until she died forty years later. The cottage in which he lived, with his wife and nine children, was South Lodge which still stands by the entrance to Warley Place.



Ellen employed up to 104 gardeners, and was known for being a demanding employer. She was also known for being a prodigious spender. In 1905 she bought a third estate in Ventimiglia, Italy. She also used her wealth to fund plant-hunting expeditions to China and the Middle East, and species discovered on these excursions would often be named after her.

In 1894, Ellen joined the Royal Horticultural Society and became a prominent member. She helped to persuade Sir Thomas Hanbury, her neighbour at Ventimiglia, to purchase the site at Wisley which became the RHS Gardens and donate it to the society, and was appointed a trustee of the RHS Gardens in 1903.

Ellen was one of only two women, alongside Gertrude Jekyll, to receive the Victoria Medal of Honour in 1897 (newly instituted that year for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee). In 1905, she became one of the first women to be elected a fellow of the Linnean Society of London.

Ellen published two books; *Warley Garden in Spring and Summer* in 1909 and *The Genus Rosa*, published in two volumes between 1910 and 1914. It includes 132 watercolours of roses painted by Alfred Parsons between 1890 and 1908, which are now held by the Lindley Library in London. Ellen also commissioned Parsons to paint her three gardens. Queen Mary, Queen Alexandra, to whom *The Genus Rosa* book was dedicated, and Princess Victoria are known to have visited her at Warley Place.

Ellen's prodigious spending during her lifetime caused financial difficulties in later life, forcing

her to sell her French and Italian properties, and eventually her personal possessions. She became increasingly eccentric and paranoid; she booby-trapped her estate to deter thieves and carried a revolver in her handbag. She was arrested on suspicion of shoplifting in 1928, although later acquitted.

Sadly, in some ways, she spent all her money on the garden and her musical and other interests and died, in 1934, almost penniless. Many of the rarer plants were removed to Spetchley Park to be cared for by the Berkeley family, but some of the trees and shrubs exist to this day.

When Ellen died, Warley Place, which had greatly deteriorated, was sold to pay her debts. Permission was sought to turn it into a luxury housing estate. This did not happen (fortunately) but the house was demolished in 1939, the garden reverting to a wilderness. The only above-ground structures remaining are the conservatory and a cloakroom and toilets above the open cellars.

The estate was leased from the grandson of the 1939 purchaser to the Essex Naturalists' Trust (later Essex Wildlife Trust) in 1977 and has gradually been brought up to its present standard as a nature reserve, but still retaining as many as possible of the features of the original garden. The sixteen acres of the old garden show how a once carefully tended area will rapidly become overgrown and revert to woodland.

### **Malcolm Brown**

Information from Essex Wildlife Trust website and Wikipedia.



**Entrance**



**Conservatory and cellars**



**Walled garden**



**Remains of alpine garden**



**Spanish chestnut trees**



**Daffodils covering meadow**

# When I survey the wondrous Cross

The hymn 'When I survey the wondrous Cross' is often sung at the Good Friday United Service at Hadleigh Methodist Church. If you are not able to be there in person this year, perhaps, you could be there in spirit and read these verses on Good Friday morning.

When I survey the wondrous Cross  
on which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
then am I dead to all the Globe,  
and all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

## *Isaac Watts*

**Isaac Watts** (17 July 1675 – 25 November 1748) was a Christian (Congregational) minister, hymn writer, theologian, and logician.



**Isaac Watts portrait by unknown artist**

He was born in Southampton, England in 1674 and was brought up in the home of a committed religious nonconformist; his father, also Isaac Watts, had been incarcerated twice for his views.

Watts had a classical education at King Edward VI School, learning Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He could not attend Oxford or Cambridge because he was a nonconformist and these universities were restricted to Anglicans. He went to the Dissenting Academy at Stoke Newington in 1690.

Following his education, Watts was called as pastor of a large independent chapel in London, Mark Lane Congregational Chapel, where he helped train preachers, despite his poor health. He held religious opinions that were more nondenominational or ecumenical than was common for a nonconformist Congregationalist. He had a greater interest in promoting education and scholarship than preaching for any particular sect.

Watts took work as a private tutor and lived with the nonconformist Hartopp family at Fleetwood House on Church Street in Stoke Newington. Through them, he became acquainted with their immediate neighbours Sir Thomas Abney and

Lady Mary. He eventually lived for a total of 36 years in the Abney household, most of the time at Abney House, their second residence.

On the death of Sir Thomas Abney in 1722, his widow Lady Mary and her unmarried daughter Elizabeth moved all her household to Abney House from Hertfordshire, and she invited Watts to continue with them. Watts lived at Abney Hall in Stoke Newington until his death in 1748; he was buried in Bunhill Fields.

On his death, Isaac Watts' papers were given to Yale University in the Colony of Connecticut, which nonconformists Puritans and Congregationalists had established. King Edward VI School, Southampton, which he attended, named one of its houses "Watts" in his honour.



**Abney Park Cemetery**

The stone statue in front of the Abney Park Chapel at Dr Watts' Walk, Abney Park Cemetery, was erected in 1845 by public subscription. It was designed by the leading British sculptor, Edward Hodges Baily RA FRS. A scheme for a commemorative statue on this spot had first been promoted in the

late 1830s by George Collison, who in 1840 published an engraving as the frontispiece of his book about cemetery design in Europe and America; and at Abney Park Cemetery in particular. This first cenotaph proposal was never commissioned, and Baily's later design was adopted in 1845.



The Church of England and Lutheran Church remember Watts (and his ministerial service) annually in the Calendar of Saints on 25 November, and the Episcopal Church on the following day.

The earliest surviving built memorial to Isaac Watts is at Westminster Abbey (see left); this was completed shortly after his death.

His much-visited chest tomb at Bunhill Fields dates from 1808, replacing the original that had been paid for and erected by Lady Mary Abney and the Hartopp family.



**Bunhill Fields, Islington**

The earliest public statue, erected in 1845, stands at Abney Park, where Watts had lived for more than 30 years at the manor house, where he also died. The park was later devoted to uses as a cemetery and public arboretum.



**Southampton**

A later, rather similar statue was funded by public subscription and erected in a new Victorian public park named for Watts in Southampton, the city of his birth.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the Congregational Dr Watts Memorial Hall was built in Southampton and named after him. After World War II, this building was lost to redevelopment. The Isaac Watts Memorial United Reformed Church was built on the site.



**Isaac Watts Memorial URC, Southampton**

*Malcolm Brown*

Source: Wikipedia

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## A prayer for Easter Day

Dear God,

Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you for the victory and power in your Name. Thank you that you hold the keys over death, that by your might, Jesus was raised from the grave, paving the way for us to have new life with you. Thank you that you had a plan, that you made a way.

We confess our need for you...fresh...new...again. We ask that you renew our hearts, minds and lives for the days ahead. We pray for your refreshing over us.

Keep your words of truth planted firm within us; help us to keep focused on what is pure and right; give us the power to be obedient to your word. And when the enemy attacks our way, we trust that your voice will speak louder and stronger, reminding us we are safe with you and that your purposes and plans will not fail. We ask that you will be our defence and rear guard, keeping our way clear, removing the obstacles, and covering the pitfalls. Lord, lead us on your level ground.

Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set your way before us. May all your plans succeed. May we reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing.

Thanks be to you God, for your indescribable gift! To you be glory and honour, on this Resurrection Day, and forever.

In Jesus' name, *Amen*



## Snippets from the Church AGM

The Church Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019 at 12.30pm. All the annual reports were accepted.

- Election of Officers – Royston Brackin agreed to continue as Honorary Secretary and Acting Honorary Treasurer.
- Election of Elder – Heather Brown was re-elected as a serving Elder.
- Coffee Morning report – There are a few more people attending the coffee mornings and there is a happy and friendly atmosphere. The rota for serving refreshments is covered by Jean Reeve and Kay Watson. The sum of £225 was donated to the Homeless Action Resource Project (HARP) during 2018.
- Ladies Recreation Group report – A letter had been received from Susan Brackin tendering her resignation as leader of the group, as she has been unable to attend for some time. A new leader has not been appointed but the duties are being shared.
- Alphabet Club report – Numbers attending have been very low. Heather Brown said she would need to discuss whether or not to continue with the club once she has recovered from her fractured pelvis.
- Wives Fellowship report – Kay Watson said that she had found it difficult to book speakers in 2018, but that, at the Wives' Fellowship AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019, she had agreed to continue arranging meetings for the time being.
- Midweek Fellowship report – Midweek services were suspended after the September 2018 service because of difficulties in arranging leaders and a desire to be able to promote the coffee mornings as being held every week.
- Men's Breakfast Meeting report – Breakfast meetings were held on a quarterly basis in 2018. Kay Watson and Jean Reeve are willing to continue providing breakfasts for the rest of 2019. Malcolm Brown said that the opportunity to meet for good food and fellowship is much appreciated by the men who attend.
- Church Accounts – The accounts were accepted. A vote of thanks was recorded for Wilf Tyler's work in examining the accounts.

*Malcolm Brown*



## Holy Habits films

In 2018, the magazine featured articles on a number of Holy Habits, which formed part of a new URC initiative to nurture Christian discipleship. A series of films about the Holy Habits has gradually been released over recent months and is available on YouTube. Directed by Kevin Snyman, Mission Enabler in the URC's West Midlands Synod, these short films offer a brief glimpse into some of the ways which the ten habits, described in a book by Andrew Roberts, are lived out within the URC.

The latest film to be released is entitled 'The Holy Habit of Prayer'. In the film, Andrew Roberts says that prayer can 'sometimes be as easy as breathing, but on other days it's a struggle'. But, he says, it's important to remember that prayer is a habit to practice day by day.

Through Trinity Learning, based at Trinity Church, Abingdon, a local URC and Methodist ecumenical partnership, the film shows how children and young people are encouraged to pray. An initiative at Lillington Free Church, in Leamington Spa, called 'prayers for every household', is also featured.

To watch the films, go to the URC's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/URCUK> and select the Holy Habits playlist.



## 'Places of blossoming'

Arriving for an early March visit to United Reformed Church House in London's Tavistock Place, I was stopped in my tracks. The walk from Kings Cross station takes one through an estate of unexceptional flats, but as I emerged to approach our offices, the winter-despatching sight of cherry blossom was a joy. It punctuated the urban scene with prettiness, it enhanced the 1950s building and it lifted my spirits.



It also alerted me to how different a superficial image can be from the reality inside. As I enjoyed the pink prunus blooms, I recalled the internal remedial works taking place inside Church House. A year or so back, building works took place to transform of Church House. But since then, further works have been needed to correct issues with the basement. This work has been essential and unavoidable. Although disruptive to the working conditions of many of our staff, they have worked on, uncomplainingly, and to great effect. From a moderator's vantage point, I find myself impressed and grateful in equal measure for all our staff, some of whom have had to steer the project for far longer than it was ever anticipated to last, and others of whom have borne its not inconsiderable consequences whilst maintaining their work so fruitfully.

Musing upon all this, my mind then left London, and went on a virtual tour of the 13 synod offices. There similar work goes on only with more regional emphases, from Glasgow in the north to Taunton in the south west, via Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Nottingham, Birmingham, Cambridge, Southampton, London,

Croydon and Cardiff. I looked them all up in the Yearbook and thought gratefully and prayerfully of those whose ministries are based there – administration, oversight and support. Having worked in one of them, I have some insight about what is involved. In truth, though, I do not presume to know exactly what it is like, for as the world changes so it changes the Church, and consequently the demands that synod offices and their personnel are required to meet. It isn't as it was when I worked with a synod through the noughties. That dynamic change is persistent, as we strive to be the best we can be as the United Reformed Church for years to come. In their service to the local churches, I believe we are all in debt to these dedicated colleagues – some paid and many more volunteering. Moreover, it's not all cherry blossom; there are days when the brickbats our synod staff receive outnumber the affirmations. All the more reason then, to say how essential and how valued their oil is to the smooth running of the URC and particularly its congregations.

This took my mind to those 1383 local churches, without which we would not be the United Reformed Church at all. Their life and work are similarly undergirded by the dedicated ministry of a wide range of people. When I think of the three that I serve, one has quite a team of staff, alongside many hard-working volunteers, and the other two each thrive with a few people who give hours of their time without counting the cost. As I share with Derek Estill in the privilege of visiting churches throughout these islands, I meet so many of these people. My hope is that our visits convey something of this appreciation but I am also eager to put it across through this blog.

Springtime's cherry blossom is short-lived – an annual delight – but our gratitude is best when it carefully punctuates every season of church life – the tricky times and flourishing ones. After all, there is nothing like being appreciated to stir us to be our best.

*Nigel Uden*

Posted 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

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## Computer Corner

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### How do we know about Jesus?

**Interesting video**

A short video from the Methodist Church's Worship: Leading & Preaching course, presented by Rev. Dr Calvin Samuel, Methodist Presbyterian, and Principal of London School of Theology since 2017. Rev. Dr Samuel discusses the Gospels, pointing out how and why they differ and how they represent different portraits of Jesus as painted by the Gospel writers.

URL: <https://vimeo.com/248150648>

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### How to Create a Strong Password (and Remember It)

**Interesting article**

A post on the How-To-Geek website that gives advice on password generation and how to devise passwords that are both strong yet memorable.

URL: <https://www.howtogeek.com/195430/how-to-create-a-strong-password-and-remember-it>

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### Fred's Shed

**Interesting website**

Springtime is a good time to remind readers about the Fred's Shed website that provides impartial, expert advice on a wide variety of tools. All tools are tested by Fred Walden, garden writer and equipment consultant to various organisations world-wide including the National Health Service, charities and universities. Tools that fail the test are not featured. Those that pass the test are the best of the bunch from a range of manufacturers who value quality and design. None of the tools are cheap, but many are bargains. Fred looks for tools that last a lifetime and work better to save you time and money.

URL: <http://www.fredshed.co.uk>

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## Word Search – Spring-flowering plants and trees

B	J	K	N	C	M	L	X	M	O	W	C	D	T	B	F	M	Q	S	L
C	U	V	Z	X	A	U	B	D	Q	Y	L	Z	V	W	U	U	W	U	O
M	M	O	W	D	G	U	L	B	D	V	O	D	M	T	T	I	J	H	E
R	J	J	F	F	N	A	I	H	T	Y	S	R	O	F	A	L	G	P	P
A	B	F	Q	N	O	R	D	N	E	D	O	D	O	H	R	L	L	L	W
O	Z	O	E	Q	L	H	N	K	C	X	H	P	C	G	T	I	D	E	U
P	Z	A	G	S	I	P	A	N	S	Y	A	O	H	W	V	R	Q	D	Q
B	Y	E	L	J	A	W	I	K	Z	Z	M	N	M	N	Z	T	H	A	B
H	E	L	L	E	B	O	R	E	M	A	B	Z	E	R	G	G	T	L	U
C	V	I	V	H	A	Q	M	F	Y	I	K	Z	B	N	W	O	U	I	S
R	X	C	G	C	Z	H	V	J	R	A	J	H	N	C	O	E	L	H	N
O	H	A	A	O	U	X	I	A	O	R	A	J	N	D	B	M	R	P	O
C	S	M	S	Y	F	A	C	V	S	S	R	X	N	E	G	X	E	E	W
U	L	E	I	Y	H	S	L	O	E	A	U	V	L	B	G	N	D	N	D
S	O	L	R	U	U	I	A	L	V	B	O	L	K	W	Y	T	Y	L	R
S	F	L	I	M	T	W	N	S	I	A	U	Z	M	H	S	T	S	U	O
A	I	I	R	W	D	P	S	V	J	U	P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E	P
E	H	A	H	T	N	I	C	A	Y	H	M	S	C	I	L	L	A	J	W
Z	M	O	Y	K	R	L	W	Y	M	Z	P	K	Q	V	I	V	B	J	J
U	Z	S	T	Z	E	L	I	D	O	F	F	A	D	I	X	M	E	I	Q

ALLIUM  
ANENOME  
AZALEA  
BLUEBELL  
CAMELLIA  
CROCUS  
DAFFODIL  
FORSYTHIA  
HELLEBORE  
HYACINTH  
IRIS  
MAGNOLIA  
MUSCARI  
PANSY  
PHILADELPHUS  
PRIMROSE  
RHODODENDRON  
SCILLA  
SNOWDROP  
TRILLIUM

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

## CHURCH DIARY FOR APRIL 2019

DAY	TIME	EVENT
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup>	No session - cancelled	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship – Mrs Peggy Findlay Talk: ‘Being a Magistrate’
	No session - cancelled	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
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>	No session - cancelled	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Palm Sunday Service – Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant MA MTh
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	No session - cancelled 2.30pm	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots Tuesday Fellowship – Easter Communion led by Mrs Heather Brown
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	ELDERS’ MEETING (one week later than usual)
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac table for Christian Aid
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>	10.15am	Good Friday United Service at Methodist Church followed at 11.00am by Walk of Witness to our church
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	Easter Day Service with Holy Communion – Major Alan Bennett
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	No session - BH	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	No session - cancelled	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Service – Rev. Jack Roche MA
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup>	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Ladies Recreation Group
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup>	No session - cancelled	Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots

### A Prayer in Spring

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers to-day;  
And give us not to think so far away  
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here  
All simply in the springing of the year.

And make us happy in the darting bird  
That suddenly above the bees is heard,  
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,  
And off a blossom in mid air stands still.

Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,  
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;  
And make us happy in the happy bees,  
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.

For this is love and nothing else is love,  
The which it is reserved for God above  
To sanctify to what far ends He will,  
But which it only needs that we fulfil.

*Robert Frost*