

THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

July & August 2020



The Magazine of the
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

SUNDAY SERVICES - SUSPENDED

10.30am every Sunday
with Holy Communion on 3rd Sunday of the month

6.30pm on 1st Sunday only
with Holy Communion

Coronavirus – factors involved in church re-opening

After having weathered eighteen weeks since the ‘lockdown’ was announced, the country is now at a quite low daily figure of coronavirus fatalities compared with the very high daily numbers at the peak of the pandemic.

This has led to a period of easing of restrictions, a very recent one of which is to allow churches to re-open and to hold services once more. The easing has been judged appropriate because there are now fewer people who are known to have the virus, but the virus is still with us and potentially just as deadly as before, once it is contracted. Little has been published regarding the conditions that apply to these easing measures, which, in the case of re-opening churches, are actually very onerous.

Our Synod Moderator, Rev. Paul Whittle has regularly kept us abreast of the latest thinking of our leadership at Church House in London, which is based largely on the various statements made by our Government.

The URC have published guidelines to help churches to prepare for re-opening, and these are for all URC churches from the very largest, to the very smallest. They include comments that are not practicable for all churches so the guidelines are therefore advisory and each church needs to consider them in the light of their own circumstances.

At this point it is worth mentioning that the guidelines for opening the church to hold services include the following:

- two metre social distancing to be maintained;
- everyone to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water on entry to and on leaving the church;
- hand sanitisers to be placed at various locations throughout the building;
- avoidance of the use of Bibles or hymn books;
- no hymn singing to be allowed;
- separate routes for entry to, and exit from, the church to be used.

The Government guidelines also advise those aged 70 or over to minimise contact with others outside their household. For those with underlying health conditions the risk is greater. The URC guidance points out that that the Elders could be held responsible for any perceived failures in the recommendations being followed.

The Elders are carefully considering our position in the light of the guidance. At the same time they will also have to bear in mind the possibility of a second peak arising in a few weeks time following recent very large groups of people gathering together. Distancing guidelines have not been followed in many cases during the demonstrations in London and other cities, and the large weekend gatherings on holiday resort beaches which have taken place. There are also likely to be many more breaches of the guidelines with restaurants and public houses being allowed to re-open.

The Government is grappling with a real, huge dilemma. From the point of view of groups like ours, measures to ease lockdown introduce restrictions that are an irritation and may prove to be very difficult to surmount. From the perspective of the economy of the country, in getting people back to work and earning an income again, the measures are very necessary particularly for the younger age group who are not at risk to the same extent as us.

Meanwhile Oxford University, as readers may be aware, have a team which is working to find a COVID-19 vaccine (as in fact over one hundred other organisations all over the world are doing) but the Oxford work has reached the stage of human trials. Initially trials were carried out with volunteers from the UK, but as the peak had passed and the lockdown was in operation it was found to be uncertain whether the vaccine was actually contributing to the reduced number of people being found to have the virus. Currently tests are being carried out in South Africa and Brazil, which are both countries where the virus is spreading.

The Oxford University team is hoping to be in a position to release the vaccine in October, and they have manufacturers ready to produce 300 million vaccinations at that time. There is ‘light at the end of the tunnel’ and reason to be optimistic that, in the foreseeable future, the deadly COVID-19 virus will no longer be as deadly as it is now and that many of the current restrictions will become unnecessary.

Be of good cheer, and stay safe.

Royston Brackin
Church Secretary

Letter from Adrian

Dear friends,

I wonder if you have ever read any of the biographies of some of the early missionaries. They make some wonderful reading. I remember one account of the start of the mission to the Lisu when two missionaries went out to try to reach the hearts of this tribe. They were out there for ten years working and living with them in their valley, miles from civilisation without a single convert. During this period however there were wonderful signs of the way God was supporting them as he provided for their needs.

This type of story can be retold many times connected with many different groups and people. In areas where the devil has had it all his own way for years the work can seem hard and unrewarding and yet God calls his people to reach out and touch the hearts of each nation and tribe to draw them to himself.

Our own experience here in Hadleigh may bare some comparison with the trials of these men and women of God. Certainly, we are working in an exceedingly difficult area in a difficult time. The response to the Gospel from those outside the church can be seen as fairly negative. Or possibly even worse, the gospel is seen by outsiders to be irrelevant. As we consider our situation, it may be helpful to dwell on the characteristics of people who have worked in similar situations. We may draw encouragement and confidence out of their experiences in order to fortify ourselves for the task ahead.

The first clear ingredient from all these people is a sense of call. It comes in a wide variety of ways. Some hear the call literally as other missionaries speak of the needs of a people group to hear the word of God. Others, it would seem, have an almost Samuel like experience as God speaks into the heart. With still others, it is circumstances which direct them into the area God wants them to work in. It does not matter how that call comes; what does matter is that we are faithful to that call and obey our Lord as we serve him in the place to which we have been drawn.

Then, strongly associated with that call is the love of the people to whom they have been sent. So, it is for us. If we are to be effective in reaching our neighbours, we need to take them to our hearts. Love is infectious if we express in our lives the desire Jesus has for them; if we reach out with his love, ultimately, they will find it more and more difficult to resist. The period we are going through at the moment with the restrictions of Covid-19 may make it difficult to reach others but it also gives us a chance to serve the community in some small way.

Next comes dedication to the work. It may take ten years to get one convert, but the Lord knows what he is doing. When a house is being built, for ages there seems to be nothing happening. During this period the foundations are being laid. Once this has been completed, the building then begins to rise very quickly so that almost overnight it may seem the walls are up and the roof on. So, with the kingdom it takes time for God to sink the foundations he needs but once they are in place it is harvest time. In this period, dedication is the order of the day. We are here where God has placed us, and nothing is going to shift us from His service.

The thing is, you know that our God is good and even in this time of apparent fruitlessness there is always His provision for us. What are the signs that we are in His will? Just the love of our God saying 'yes you have got it right' and 'I will provide for the work to which I have called you'.

As we continue in His work, being no less missionaries because we work at home, he will continue to bless us. In the end, the harvest that He has been preparing will be reaped for the kingdom and we will be seen as faithful servants of the Lord Jesus.

Yours in Him,

Adrian



From the Bible

He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.

Matthew 10:40 (NIV)

From the Editor

Welcome to the combined July and August edition of the *Hadleigh Messenger*. Again, this is not a typical magazine owing to the continued closure of the church building as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

More typically, the magazine is being published later than I would have hoped. This is partly due to a lack of items submitted for publication. Adrian has kindly written his regular letter and

Royston Brackin, our Church Secretary, has provided an item about progress towards re-opening of the church building but I've had no other items or any family news, which is rather disappointing. The delay in production has allowed me to include a report on the recent online General Assembly and there are some other rather random articles, which I hope readers will find interesting.

Malcolm Brown

Family News

Prayer of hope

God of all hope we call on you today.
We pray for those who are living in fear:
Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other's reactions to them.
May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty:
For those people who are worried about attending worship;
For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend;
For those needing to make decisions in order to care for others.
Grant us your wisdom.

Holy God, we remember that you have promised that
Nothing will separate us from your love – demonstrated to us in Jesus Christ.
Help us turn our eyes, hearts and minds to you.

Amen

The Gospel according to you

You are writing a Gospel,
a chapter each day,
by the deeds that you do,
by the words that you say.

People read what you write,
whether faithless or true,
and say, "What's this Gospel
according to you?"

People read and admire
the Gospel of Christ,
with its love so unfailing and true,
but what do they say and what do they think
of the Gospel according to you?

It's a wonderful story,
Christ's Gospel of love,
and it shows that His love is divine:
I hope that its content will be there again
in the story of your life and mine.

You are writing each day a letter to others,
take care that the writing is true -
it's the only Gospel that some others will read,
the gospel according to you.

Author unknown

Deep within us God is holy

Deep within us God is holy,
wisdom planted in the dark.
We are dreaming, searching slowly;
softly will our journey start.

Deep within a seed is growing;
petals form the flower head.
Beauty lights the path that's flowing
through the dried-up riverbed.

In the shimmering we are listening
to the fruitful voice within;
in our waiting, in our glistening,
truthful living can begin.

A hymn by June Boyce-Tillman

URC General Assembly 2020

This is an abbreviated version of the report of General Assembly that appears on the URC website.

The United Reformed Church (URC) held a live-streamed version of its General Assembly – the URC’s main decision-making body – on YouTube on Saturday 11th July.

Rev. John Proctor, outgoing United Reformed Church General Secretary, welcomed viewers to what was the first online act of General Assembly worship in the URC’s history. Mr Proctor then invited Derek Estill, Moderator of the URC General Assembly, to constitute the meeting with prayer. After Mr Estill did so, he confirmed that Assembly was formally constituted.

Roll of Assembly, and the URC’s Statement of Nature Faith and Order

Rev. Michael Hopkins, Clerk to the Assembly, formally placed the denomination’s Roll of Assembly – the official list of people who make up the governing body of the Church – on the Communion table of The Spire Church, a URC and Methodist LEP in Farnham. At the same time, Mr Hopkins spoke the words that allowed for the Roll’s renewal for another year. This is an important legal marker that enables the URC’s work to continue.

An organ prelude from Downing Place URC organists in Cambridge was then played.

After this, four key URC leaders (Rev. Michael Davies, Minutes Secretary of Assembly Arrangements Committee; Rev. Dr Andrew Prasad, Moderator of the URC’s Thames North Synod; Karen Campbell, URC Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries; and Joanna Harris, Moderator-elect of the URC Youth Assembly) then led viewers in stating the nature, faith and order of the URC.

Sermon

Rev. Dr Barbara Glasson, former President of the Methodist Conference, gave the sermon at General Assembly. Dr Glasson also described how she met Rev. Dr John Bradbury, General Secretary of the URC, in Liverpool over a bowl of dough, and referred to the close partnership the URC and Methodist Churches share.

Prayers for the world were then held.

Thanks to John Proctor and Richard Church

Mr Estill then led thanks to Rev. John Proctor, outgoing URC General Secretary, and Rev.

Richard Church, outgoing Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship), for their lengthy service. Mr Proctor, who retires in August, has served the URC for 34 years, and Mr Church, who retires in July, has completed 39 years of URC ministry.

Narrative of call of General Secretary

Rev. Nigel Uden, Immediate-past Moderator of the General Assembly then led the Narrative of the call of the new General Secretary.

“After shortlisting and interview, the Nominating Group discerned that it would be good to invite Rev. Dr John Bradbury to accept the nomination. Following his ready acceptance, the Mission Council of November 2019, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, appointed Dr Bradbury from 1st June 2020 until the end of General Assembly 2027.”

Dr Bradbury is the former Vice Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, and in recent years has served as Minister of Emmanuel, Whittlesford, Duxford and Stechworth and Cheveley URCs in Cambridgeshire.



Mr Uden continued: “Both when reading his application and during the interview, the Nominating Group identified a person of theological acuity, strategic thinking, pastoral sensitivity, and warm personality. It commends him to the church, that we might accept the rigour and promise of John’s ministry. May we all complement what John brings with the faithfulness of our partnership with him; the frequency of our prayer for him; the Christlikeness of our love of him, which will hold him fast through everything we now ask of him and to which we proceed to induct him, at the same time as we induct Clare Downing and Peter Pay to be Moderators of the General Assembly.”

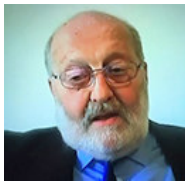
Inductions

Dr Bradbury, Rev. Clare Downing and Peter Pay were then inducted at the virtual meeting of the Assembly.

First, Rev. Nigel Uden, introduced Dr Bradbury to Assembly as the incoming General Secretary and encouraged the Church to offer the General Secretary the gifts of prayer, partnership and love. Dr Bradbury thanked all those who had helped

him discern his call. He reminded the Assembly that the Church needs the help of God to read well signs of the times, and to discover new ways to proclaim the Gospel and to shape the life of the Church. We must set our faces to the cross, he said, and not perpetuate ways which are no longer our call today. Beyond loss of the familiar and loved, however, lie the new beginnings of resurrection. Dr Bradbury concluded: "I look forward to walking that way with you all."

Rev. Clare Downing and Mr Peter Pay are the Moderators of General Assembly for 2020 to 2022. Mrs Downing, the ministerial Moderator, is Moderator of Wessex Synod. Mr Pay, who is an elder at Salisbury United Reformed Church, was inducted as elder Moderator. Their induction continues the URC's tradition in which a minister and an elder lead our Church together.



Greetings from ecumenical and international representatives

After the induction of the URC's new Assembly Moderators and General Secretary, Rev. Clare Downing, Moderator of the General Assembly, introduced video greetings sent to the URC from four ecumenical and international leaders.

First, Hannah Brock-Womack an active Quaker and social-justice and peace activist, who was nominated but prevented from taking up her role as Fourth President of Churches Together England (CTE) due to being in a same-sex marriage, thanked the United Reformed Church (URC) for its support.

Next, Rt Rev. Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the Church of Scotland's General Assembly, extended "the very warmest greetings", noting that his denomination looked forward to furthering partnership, finding new ways of working together and collaborating for the good of God's kingdom.

Pfarrer Martin Henninger, from the Evangelical Church of the Palatinate region in Germany then spoke. Referencing Brexit, the coronavirus pandemic and racism, Mr Henninger championed unity, and prayed for the URC, and its new General Secretary in particular, to be blessed.

Lastly, Rev. Keith Haley, General Secretary of the Guyana Congregational Union, sent "warm and sincere greetings" to URC leaders and members. Noting the challenges that Covid-19 continues to

cause the worldwide Church, Mr Haley said that he hoped "time spent in each other's virtual company will help to shape the way we chart the course for the Church" as it moves into a new phase. His message ended with a blessing.

Vote of thanks

Peter Pay, Moderator of the URC General Assembly, then expressed thanks to Rev. Nigel Uden and Derek Estill, Immediate-past Moderators of the URC General Assembly, and their Chaplains, Revs. Elaine Colechin and David Coaker.

"Friends, it is my privilege and my pleasure to offer, on your behalf, our thanks to our two departing Moderators, Derek Estill and Rev. Nigel Uden. They have provided leadership for us at an unprecedented time in the history of our nations and of the United Reformed Church. Accepting the role of Moderator of General Assembly is a significant commitment of up to six years including the run up and now, time as 'Immediate Past Moderator,'" Mr Pay said.

"As a pair of relative technophobes they have had to chair our first major council held virtually. Derek and Nigel have enabled us to meet and to function in ways unimaginable even at the beginning of their term of office. We have greatly appreciated their calm, good humoured and thoughtful approach to matters as they developed. Thank you and God bless you."

He then thanked the chaplains.

"May I also thank our two outgoing chaplains, Revs. Elaine Colechin and David Coaker; for the support they have given to their Moderators and for the worship they have led us in – both physically and virtually," he added.

Prayers of thanksgiving were then held for Assembly and the Chaplain to the incoming Moderators, Rev. Helen Everard, prayed for the Moderators and General Secretary. She gave thanks for the work of those ministers who celebrate 50, 60 and even 70 years of service, and for those who have died since the last Assembly.

Newly ordained ministers and commissioned Church Related Community Workers then led the Lord's Prayer. Finally, Rev. Clare Downing brought the Assembly to an end with words of blessing.

The next General Assembly will meet at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from 9th to 12th July 2021 or at such time and place as shall be determined.

Daily Devotions – The Basis of Union

For some time, the United Reformed Church (URC) has provided daily devotions by e-mail. Whilst URC churches are closed, a weekly Sunday service in podcast format is also being provided with hymns, readings, prayers and a sermon.

From 13th July, the Daily Devotions will be centred on the URC's Basis of Union. Rev. Andy Braunston, who co-ordinates the production of the Daily Devotions writes:

“Unlike Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox or Lutheran churches we don't always recite a credal statement in our weekly worship; sometimes leading to a sense that we don't have firm or fixed beliefs as a denomination. We do, of course, use the Statement on the Nature, Faith and Order at inductions and

ordinations of ministers and elders and this is reasonably well known in its responsorial form.

Less well known, however, is our Basis of Union. The Basis is a foundational constitutional document of the United Reformed Church which sets out our theology. It was adopted at our formation and can only be amended by the General Assembly after a full consultation process. It is the theological foundation upon which our denomination is built and deserves to be better known.

Over the next few weeks we are going to be reading through the Basis, often with a piece of Scripture, and reflect upon each part of our theological foundations.”

To receive Daily Devotions or to read previous devotions, visit <https://devotions.urc.org.uk>.



Lorem Ipsum

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

If you've ever created a template of a document or had one created for you, then you may have come across text similar to that in the paragraph above. This is known in the printing and typesetting industry as Lorem ipsum. It is dummy text inserted to fill space and illustrate how a document will look once the text has been finalised. It has been used for this purpose since the 1500s and continues to be widely used today by designers and website developers across the world.

Lorem ipsum is not simply random text but has its roots in a piece of classical Latin literature. Richard McClintock, a Latin professor at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, was researching the use of *consectetur*, one of the more obscure Latin words found in the standard version of Lorem ipsum. He discovered that Lorem ipsum is based on sections 1.10.32 and 1.10.33 of *de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* (The Extremes of Good and Evil), a treatise on the theory of ethics written in 45 BC by Cicero, the Roman statesman and philosopher.

The first line of Lorem ipsum, “Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet..”, comes from a line in section 1.10.32 but the Lorem ipsum text used nowadays for dummy text in documents is a corrupted version of Cicero's work with letters and words added and removed.

Versions of the Lorem ipsum text have been used in typesetting at least since the 1960s, when it was popularised by advertisements for Letraset transfer sheets. Lorem ipsum was introduced to the digital world in the mid-1980s when it was used in the popular PageMaker desktop publishing program. Word processors including Pages and Microsoft Word have since adopted Lorem Ipsum as well.

Lorem ipsum is used because it appears to have a normal distribution of letters, making it easier for the reader to get a feel for the layout of a page. Rather than just inserting ‘text to be supplied’ or ‘text to go here’ repeatedly onto a blank page, using Lorem ipsum generates a more realistic layout and appearance to the design, allowing the author/designer to see the how the finished document will look.

It is very likely that you have seen extracts of Lorem ipsum before. Many websites which are still being developed often feature passages of it. Or you may have seen it on a poster or advert where it has accidentally been left in!

Malcolm Brown

More images from the Echo Archive

Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive group obtained a large number of photos and cuttings of local interest when the Echo newspaper (owned by Newsquest Media Group) disposed of a large archive in 2017, prior to moving offices. Some images were featured in the April 2017 edition of the magazine.



**Opening of the Abbeyfield House in Chapel Lane
by Bernard Braine MP in Apr 1983**



**Interior of the newly-built St Thomas More Church
in the High Street in Dec 1982**



**Colin George, Labour candidate for
Southend East, with Tony Benn MP
at a by-election meeting in Mar 1980**



**Derek Barber, Hadleigh historian,
retires after 52 years with Adams
Funeral Directors, Rayleigh, in 1996**



**Joyce Bardell, landlady of The Crown
pub, retires in Jan 1985. (Sadly, The
Crown is shortly to be demolished.)**



**Outside the Choice store in Rectory Road
after a store refurbishment in Aug 1989**



**Brian and Bill Ponton of Ponton's Newsagents, London Road,
after winning the Echo Newsagency of the Year award in 1981**

The latest news is that the Community Archive group recently took possession from Rayleigh Town Museum of 2m+ negatives that originally came from the Echo Archive. The negatives cover the period 1966 to 2000. I'll write more about this amazing resource in a future edition of the magazine.

Malcolm Brown

Hull's 'Three Ships' mural

Anyone who has visited Hull will almost certainly have come across the Three Ships mural in the town centre. This is a large mosaic over the entrance to a 1960s building at 32-38 Jameson Street that once housed a Hull (later Hull & East Riding) Co-operative Society store.



Three Ships mural

The original Co-op store was almost completely destroyed during the blitz in 1941. A temporary store was built whilst the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) planned a new, lavish store. This new store, built from 1955 to 1964, was a modernist's dream in five floors, crowned by a spectacular concrete handkerchief dome over the 'Skyline Ballroom' and restaurant.

As part of the new development, the Wolverhampton artist Alan Boyson was commissioned in 1961 to create three murals in order to "unite the community through art" and acknowledge the importance of Hull as a port. The project architect was Philip Andrews, a friend of Boyson.

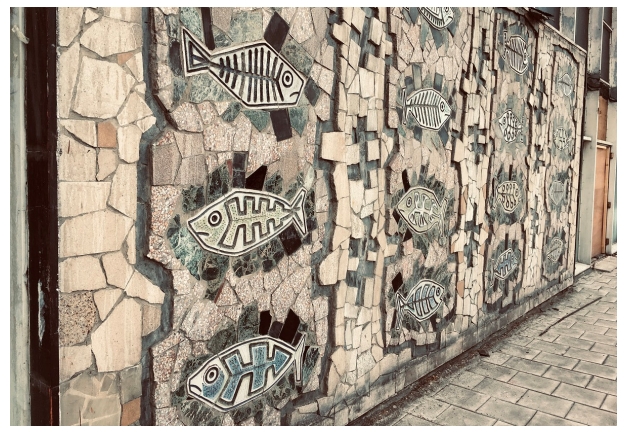
Alan Boyson trained as a ceramicist, first at the Manchester Regional School of Art from 1950-1954 and at the Royal College of Art, London. He then lectured in the Ceramics Department at Wolverhampton School of Art from about 1959-1961 and established his own studio. He designed mosaic and other pieces in several listed buildings and his external, ceramic mosaic Tree of Knowledge mural at the former Cromwell Secondary School for Girls, Salford (1962) was Grade II listed in 2009.

The Three Ships mosaic mural in Hull was unveiled in 1963. It is a bold work of public art adorning the main entrance at the corner of Jameson Street and Waltham Street, and overlooking a wide junction with King Edward Street, now a largely pedestrianised area in the town centre. When it was installed, it was believed to be the biggest mural in Britain. It rises above the ground-floor entrance to roof level and is 66ft high by 64ft wide (20m x 19.5m).

The size of the mural made it too big for the ceramic work which was Boyson's more usual choice for his mural designs. Instead, Boyson's design was executed as a glass tile mosaic fixed to a curved concrete screen. The mosaic mural comprises 4,224ft sq (0.3m sq) slabs, each made up of 225 glass cubes or tesserae imported from Italy; altogether there are 1,061,775 tesserae.

The Three Ships mural is a stylised, modern design intended to symbolise the city's fishing industry. It shows the silhouettes of three sailing boats reflected in the water below. Beneath the boats is a Latin motto - RES PER INDUSTRIAM PROSPERAE, which roughly translates as 'Things by Industry Prosper'.

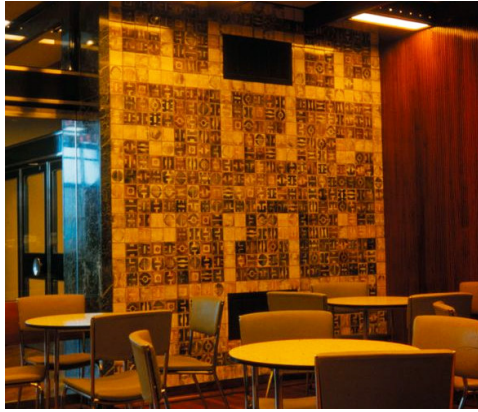
Earlier, in 1961, Boyson had made two smaller interior murals. The Fish mural, located in a corridor near the fourth floor Skyline Ballroom, depicts a shoal of fish.



Fish mural

It is over 22 feet (6.7 m) long and was hand-made by Boyson using his usual high grog content as well as stone, salvaged marble and tile. The Fish mural was re-discovered during refurbishment work in 2011 thanks to Christopher Marsden, a leading authority on Boyson.

The second interior mural was a geometric, sponge-print tile mural installed in the Skyline bar.



Sponge-print mural

The sponge-print mural was only re-discovered in 2018 whilst Christopher Marsden was helping with a project about the Three Ships mural.

Alan Boyson was known for ‘bringing art to the people’ through his bespoke sculptural creations, commissioned by churches and educational, financial and commercial institutions. He created forty seven public artworks, but only eighteen survive – and of those eighteen, seven are either already damaged or vulnerable. The Hull premises are unique in having three of his creations sited in one building.

After the Hull & East Riding Co-operative Society store closed in 1969, a branch of British Home Stores opened in the front of the store in 1970, with other areas later becoming an indoor market.

In May 2007, the Three Ships mural was locally listed by Hull City Council (HCC), who described it as a “superb example of modern public art”.

When BHS vacated the store in the summer of 2016, Hull Heritage Action Group (HHAG), Hull Civic Society and the Twentieth Century Society all foresaw threats to the Three Ships mural and quickly applied for Grade II Listing.



32-38 Jameson Street in 2016

On 4th November 2016, the application for Grade II Listing was rejected by Historic England who argued that the mural, “falls short of the high bar

for listing post-war public art”. HHAG started an online petition in support of the campaign for Grade II Listing. On 22nd November 2016, HHAG appealed to the Secretary of State for Culture to reconsider the decision by Historic England.

In the summer of 2017, Hull City Council announced ambitions to save the Three Ships mural and acquired the building from Manor Property Group, with a view to demolishing it in readiness to recruit a development partner. Surveys were undertaken on the Three Ships and Fish murals to see how viable it was to protect them. Various possibilities were considered, ranging from integration into the new development, known as Albion Square, to relocating the murals elsewhere.

In September 2018, HCC submitted an Outline Planning Application for the Albion Square development. In April 2019 the council planning committee approved an application to demolish the site in readiness for redevelopment, with conditions to retain the Three Ships mural if viable, and to preserve and relocate the Fish and Sponge-Print murals. However, six months later the decision to keep the Three Ships mural was reversed because its concrete sub-structure contained asbestos which would pose a risk to public safety if the mural was dismantled for restoration.

HHAG continued to campaign for Grade II Listing for the Three Ships mural, feeling that Listed status would give Alan Boyson's art the recognition and protection it deserves and would acknowledge the mural's importance to the people of Hull. Then, in a sudden turnaround at the end of November 2019, the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport awarded the mural a Grade II listing for both its architectural and historic interest. The listing referred to the mural as “an unusual surviving example of a bespoke 1960s glass mosaic mural, produced by a renowned and successful artist” and as “a symbol of Hull's nationally important fishing and maritime industries”. Hull City Council was not pleased, having resolved to recreate the image photographically on the replacement structure.

In March 2020, a range of asbestos and strength tests were carried out with the agreement of Historic England. The results have not yet been made public. I will let you know what happens!

Malcolm Brown



Jubilate Deo

In his last blog post as URC General Assembly Moderator, Rev. Nigel Uden reflects on reasons to sing: ‘O be joyful in the Lord; enter God’s gates with thanksgiving’.



Rev. Nigel Uden & Derek Estill

Forty years ago, I entered the gates of the Congregational College, Manchester, to be equipped for the work of ministry. I used vaguely to wonder, then, about various aspects of ministry that over the ensuing years have come to pass. Things like prioritising serving local churches, being fascinated with the world Church, and needing to play a part in the wider Church, too.

Pastorates of local churches in Cheshire, Johannesburg, Lancashire and Cambridgeshire have always been privileges that gave so much more to me than I to them. A period with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa sealed my sense of the global scope of Christ’s body. And a stint as a Synod Moderator enabled me to appreciate the Church as an essentially interdependent covenant community. It’s been great, and often the words I learned as a choir boy have come to my lips, normally in Stanford’s B flat setting: Jubilate Deo: O be joyful in the Lord.

Never, though, did I anticipate being Moderator of the General Assembly. This role, too, has been a privilege, exposing me to the rich diversity of the United Reformed Church, and of some of its partners in other parts of the world. Part of the role has been writing a monthly blog, and, like Derek Estill, my fellow moderator, I have so appreciated the assistance of the Communications

team – including Sara, Charissa and Ann-Marie – in preparing them. In this final essay, I would like to thank the Church for inviting me to one of the Moderators’ chairs. Like every other responsibility I’ve held, it has been a gift of grace to me. Jubilate Deo.

As my term as moderator ends, I am deeply aware that God’s people have always been, and remain, pilgrims. With Abraham and Sarah, Joshua, Ruth, Paul and Phoebe, we are constantly on the move. Water-treading does not lead the Church to thrive; status quo ought not to be in its lexicon. In Jesus, God is constantly renewing things. Pilgrimage and change aren’t synonyms, but they are related. It’s not that one gets the impression God is writing off the past as wrong, but rather that God wants the future of the Church to be as effective and fruitful as its past. And so, Church is forever bidden to continue its pilgrimage.

At the 2018 General Assembly, I spoke of my intention to listen. I have tried to do that. I have heard much. Throughout, there has been what felt like a regular drumbeat of comments urging that the URC sustains the pilgrimage of which our formations in 1972, 1981 and 2000 are significant staging posts. Sometimes the pleas for pilgrimage come from thriving places, where people want to ensure their future stays robust. Sometimes they come from struggling places, where people fear the worst if nothing is done. And sometimes they come from outwith the denomination, as the experiences of others in the ecumenical and global Church, or in the world, urge upon us, challenging ideas and opportunities to move us on.

As Derek and I pass the baton to Clare and Peter, praying God’s blessing for them, I realise that their term will include preparations for the 50th anniversary of the 1972 union of the Congregational Church in England and Wales with the Presbyterian Church of England. Indeed, over recent months, the denomination had already started speaking of it. Such anniversaries require planning; they’re not easily marked spontaneously.

There is something of jubilee about 50th anniversaries. Most often, ‘jubilee’ makes us think ‘celebration’ and celebration will be appropriate. We celebrate above all of God’s faithfulness that God has enabled a determined and durable walking of the Way through 50 years of society’s secularisation and of the URC getting smaller. That determination and durability owe much to people of vision, faith and commitment. Having joined the URC long before its tenth birthday, I have found it humbling to serve amongst you all. So often this Church arouses my *Jubilate Deo*.

Jubilee, though, is about more than celebration. Leviticus 25 is one of the Bible’s primary jubilee texts and it has been suggested that those verses are about ‘restoration to an original state’. Think most pertinently the liberation of slaves, the remission of debts and proper approaches to the purchase and sale of land. For me, the Levitical emphasis upon these matters reminds us that pursuing justice is the abiding purpose of God’s people here and now, too. The URC’s jubilee will not really be a celebration if that sort of restoration isn’t highlighted as key to what we’ve pursued for 50 years, and to what we still exist for.

Thinking of those currently in the headlines, there’s the reimagined life required of us all by the Covid-19 pandemic, the compelling claims highlighted by Black Lives Matter, and the imperative of sustainable strategies to stem climate change. Nor should we forget every other unacceptable force of marginalisation, poverty and abuse. We strive against them in the name of Jesus – the one who embodies Cornel West’s aphorism, that ‘justice is what love looks like in public’. And justice, more than most things, excites my *Jubilate Deo*.

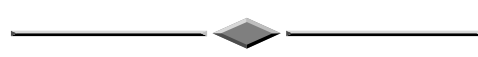
A third element we find in jubilee is reconsideration: pausing to think again, lest, burying our head in the sand, we miss the Kingdom’s goal. Earlier in Leviticus 25, the concept of a seven-yearly sabbatical is briefly mentioned, and maybe jubilee comes as if to crown each seventh sabbatical. If we weren’t already aware of the need to rethink what it means to be the Church in these islands, has the pandemic not stirred us to do so? Even as we respect and learn from the past, we cannot live there. I sense God is calling us to use our jubilee to intensify our alertness to the wind of the Spirit, increasing our pliability to her transforming will, and deepening our readiness to be changed as the ‘enemy of apathy’ continues her work amongst us. That really would get us singing *Jubilate Deo* ... wouldn’t it?

And finally ...

I am so aware of the teamworking that has made these last two years possible. Derek has been so amenable a companion on the Way, and so dedicated as a fellow moderator; John Proctor and Michael Hopkins, General Secretary and Assembly Clerk respectively, have been towers of strength and pillars of wisdom; Elaine Colechin has been exactly the chaplain I needed, and so patiently tolerant of my foibles; John Bradbury, until recently my colleague in Cambridge, bore so much of the heat of the day locally when I was frequently away; and the churches I serve, Downing Place and Fulbourn, epitomised support and understanding beyond what I had the right to expect. I thank them all, but none more than Bethan and Jess, my wife and daughter, who daily enable me to sing *Jubilate Deo*.

Nigel Uden

Posted 8th July 2020



Solution to the crossword in May 2020 magazine

I’ve been asked to print the solution to the crossword submitted by Wilf (John) Tyler in the May edition of the magazine. You were warned that it was a bit tricky!

1	M	2	M	3	M	4	M
5	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
6	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
7	E	E	E	E	E	E	E

Clues across:

1. A river in Germany (and in southern England)
5. Is in debt
6. Old English measurement (plural)
7. Comfort

Clues down:

1. A small burrowing animal
2. Part of a harbour or a unit of measurement
3. A coloured growth on the skin
4. A character in a famous children’s book

Utterly Lost in Translation

From the September 2016 newsletter of Wheatley URC

My Latin teacher at school insisted that we never, ever use “pocket dictionaries” to help us translate English prose into Latin. Why? Because, he said, these dictionaries were too small to give the context for the words and phrases we’d need, so we would make mistakes.

I clearly remember a friend of mine who had wanted to find the Latin for ‘all over the world’. He knew the word for world was ‘mundus’ and found in his pocket dictionary the phrase ‘actum de’ for ‘all over’. So he wrote “actum de mundo”. It turned out that “actum de” does mean “all over” but only in the sense in which the commentator at the 1966 World Cup final between England and West Germany shouted. “They think it’s all over”. By mistake, he’d implied that it was the end of the world.

I remembered this incident when I saw that someone had written a book called *Utterly Lost in Translation*. The idea for the book came to its author, Mark Mason [writing under the pseudonym Charlie Croker] when someone told him of a car-hire company abroad who wanted to warn English-speaking customers how best to deal with errant pedestrians: “When the passenger of foot heave in sight, tootle the horn. Trumpet him melodiously at first, but if he still obstacles your passage, then tootle him with vigour”. The company had clearly not heeded our Latin teacher’s advice!

Mason admits to feeling guilty about finding other people’s efforts to write English amusing, especially since we are so reluctant to speak their languages. But he can’t help smiling when a Prague menu translates “sliced peaches” as “peaches from the execution” and when the safety leaflet that accompanied some electric wire-cutters from China said: “Before use, please read this instruction for god’s sake”.

Few of us are immune to errors in our writing, even in our own language, especially since e-mail makes message exchanges so quick. We might try to check what we’ve said before pressing “Send”, but errors are inevitable from time to time. I very nearly replied to a colleague with the words “Thank you for your massage...” a lucky escape, but of course, I have no idea how many errors might have been sent without realising it.

Imagine, then, the possible confusion that can arise for translators of the Bible. The Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek between the 3rd and 1st century BC, and it was the Greek version that was used by the writers of the New Testament. This means that mistakes in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible were then taken into the Christian New Testament.

For example, the expression: “The voice crying in the wilderness” in the gospels (referring to John the Baptist) was one such error from the Greek. The original in Isaiah 40 had intended to read: ‘A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord”’.

But there is a subtle problem that occurred before the texts were even written down in any language: the hearers of the original stories could not help but remember them slightly differently, or even elaborate them when it seemed right to do so. Scholars tell us that the Parable of the Sower [Mark 4, 3-9] originally may have existed by itself, but an early church sermon has got attached to it [Mark 4:10-20].

The original parable is good news. It speaks about hope in the face of opposition, of continuing to sow the seed even though the response to it will vary. It is deeply encouraging to the struggling early followers, often meeting with rejection. It says: If you carry on sowing, enough seed will fall on good ground. The early church sermon, by contrast, focuses on diagnosing the waverers; it stares down from the pulpit accusingly and says “Which are you – wayside ground, stony ground or thorny ground?”

What message do we need to hear? The parable or the sermon? Both, perhaps, you may think. But ponder this: could you find the courage, right now, to give yourself a break from wondering about whether you’re wayside ground, stony ground or thorny ground: to look at yourself with compassion and generosity and celebrate the fact that someone, somewhere in your past sowed the Word in you, and it has born good fruit.

Impossible as it might seem, here you are, beautiful, loved, just as you are. Lovely in any translation.

Mark Williams

Faith can move mountains but don’t be surprised when God hands you a shovel!

Computer Corner

F8 - Extend mode

**Useful Word
keyboard
shortcut**

Pressing the F8 function key in Microsoft Word switches on text selection extend mode. In this mode you can use the left arrow or right arrow to extend selected text in either direction. However, pressing F8 twice will select the current word. Press it a third time to select the current sentence, once more to select the entire paragraph, and one more time to select the entire document. You can then cut, copy, or apply formatting to your selection. To exit extend mode, press the Esc key.

OBS Studio

**Useful free
software**

OBS Studio is a free and open-source program for recording and live streaming. I recently used it to save a recording of an online event by capturing the content of the window in which the event was being streamed. In addition to real-time video capture, it does encoding, recording, and broadcasting and has pre-sets for streaming websites such as YouTube and Facebook. Versions are available for Windows, Mac and Linux.

Download from: <https://obsproject.com>

2019 Pioneer Day Concert with Sissel - Music for a Summer Evening

**Interesting
video**

I rarely recommend music videos but in this depressing time, I will recommend this uplifting concert. It features the Norwegian soprano Sissel, backed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir - whom some regard as the best choir in the world - and their orchestra. My favourite song is the hymn 'How Great Thou Art', which is based on a Swedish traditional melody and poem. Sissel, who has the voice of an angel in my humble opinion, begins singing in Swedish and switches to the English translation.

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCsRT5smmZM>

Word Search – Pub-related

Inspired by the recent re-opening of pubs.

J	W	Q	D	Q	G	U	C	D	R	A	O	B	T	R	A	D	X	S	R	BARMAID
B	F	Y	L	A	K	N	M	M	J	C	V	N	B	L	G	R	B	S	N	BARREL
E	R	O	B	F	K	F	L	C	V	O	T	C	J	V	Z	O	B	A	B	BITTER
Y	M	E	M	M	Y	D	Y	W	A	U	J	C	F	P	C	L	D	L	T	BREWERY
U	R	V	W	Z	W	G	O	C	S	V	V	V	E	Q	I	D	U	G	F	COCKTAIL
S	T	S	E	E	F	Q	D	V	B	Q	L	X	B	L	N	N	S	D	S	CRISPS
B	W	X	J	V	R	O	S	V	L	E	Z	X	A	D	O	A	V	H	T	DARTBOARD
M	Y	Z	U	J	T	Y	F	C	R	M	S	Y	R	G	T	L	A	S	O	GIN
A	J	L	K	U	F	G	G	R	B	Y	C	J	M	H	U	N	G	D	S	GLASS
R	J	I	E	Z	Y	U	A	Z	W	I	I	Y	A	U	D	P	W	U	P	JUKEBOX
T	Z	A	B	Q	Z	B	T	B	D	X	T	H	I	Y	V	M	Q	Q	S	LAGER
I	R	T	O	X	W	Q	H	U	E	K	P	T	D	O	H	T	N	G	I	LANDLORD
N	O	K	X	M	C	M	H	R	O	J	O	B	E	Q	Z	B	R	C	R	LEMONADE
I	Z	C	Y	Y	L	L	P	P	D	T	M	L	T	R	T	Q	D	H	C	MARTINI
X	X	O	V	D	L	A	I	F	Y	P	S	X	H	Q	N	G	R	E	J	OPTICS
Q	D	C	I	C	S	X	G	F	F	J	Y	Z	Z	C	G	W	A	C	A	PEANUTS
M	K	G	K	A	D	R	R	E	Q	Y	I	V	P	E	A	N	U	T	S	SHANDY
H	Z	Z	N	I	G	P	C	S	R	M	H	X	V	G	W	U	I	D	R	STOUT
J	F	S	V	Q	Y	G	R	C	X	I	L	E	M	O	N	A	D	E	T	TONIC
V	R	P	D	Q	O	S	S	H	F	A	E	B	G	B	W	P	F	N	Y	VODKA

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

Postcard from the Past

In 2016, I discovered the 'PostcardFromThePast' Twitter account where each tweet is an amusing or intriguing fragment from a real message on an old postcard. I featured some of the tweets in the October 2016 magazine. Here are some more...

- I haven't moved into my new house yet. And my wedding anniversary is not till October. Are you confusing me with Dorothy?
- There are too many old ruins. [Postcard of Olympia, Greece]
- Guess who's staying in Hastings for the week in a caravan?
- My dear Jean, I know you're waiting for my answer. There won't be a wedding.
- It is 10pm and if I had any sense, I'd have been in bed half an hour ago. (This is what it does to you.)
- Must bury you here.
- Had another look. I think this should read "Must bring you here." Apologies. Cheers, T.
- I met a lot of Scots people what live here and they all want to go home.
- I must thank you so much for the card you sent us for the Ruby Wedding. It was so kind. We didn't celebrate.
- Norwich would have been glorious if we hadn't seen Ely first.
- We move off tomorrow towards Slough for the Motorvan Show.
- Have you done any more spreadings with xxx? I hope you haven't told anyone.
- At the moment I'm very tempted to throw Edna off one of the cliffs along the river.
- Please destroy card.
- We have been in the local Woolworths and pound shop and had a nice meal of lasagne in Wetherspoons.
- Seagulls wake very early. One we have named "Charlie" is most persistent. Wish I'd brought my gun.
- Great Yarmouth could be said to be a decaying Victorian town trying to be Las Vegas.
- This is where Maxine cut her foot on a bottle.
- We've been to the local cattle market. The boys liked the animals and I liked the farmers.
- The rest has been a tonic. We are actually speaking to one another.
- I am training the seagulls to fly upside down.
- If every time you go out you encounter filthy Margaret, it makes you less inclined to do voluntary work.
- London is like Monopoly coming alive.
- When we are hungry we eat, when we are thirsty we drink, when we are tired we sleep, that is what a holiday is all about.
- Weather great. Nice site. We've got a sex maniac one side and a Russian spy on the other.
- Thought the chap on the front looked like Grandma.
- The little hill in the background is something called Vesuvius.
- The windows don't have curtains. They don't have hot water when I need a shower. This evening's meal was 2 fried eggs & 10 chips.
- Nothing to do and all day to do it in.
- I want to thank you for your invitation to stay with you, but, at this time of year, there is so much to be done, such as hedging.
- The weather is very pleasant and I am doing my best to conceal the sadness that is inside me.
- Heat seems to be quite popular over here and I have sunburn where I didn't know I had body.
- Didn't know a honeymoon could be so tiring.

Malcolm Brown